

# Preparing for Easter

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 06 March 2016

Preacher: Edward Norman

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, it is always a great privilege to be asked to do these, for I am not an academic, I am not a doctor, although UBC for a long time, when I taught the organ there, I addressed all my correspondence to Dr. Norman, so I wrote a letter saying, look, you need to be clear, I am not a doctor, I don't have a doctorate.

So they wrote back, thanking me very much, in an envelope, marked Dr. Edward Norman. So I just gave up. So I'm, the idea of preparing for Easter embraces not only the triumph of Christ's victory on the cross, the killing of the great enemy, death, and the opening up of both personal relationship, relationship with the church, and for all of us, eternity.

It also embraces the lead up to that, of course, through Passion Week, and through Lent itself. I do, but you can get these hints of Easter coming.

But it poses a problem, you know, musically, artistically, how does one go about depicting all this? George Herbert, who was born around 1600, just shy of it, said this.

Shall I then sing, skipping thy doleful story, and side with thy triumphant glory? Shall thy strokes be my stroking, thorns my flower, thy rod my posy, cross my bower?

[ 1 : 37 ] How then shall I imitate thee, and copy thy fair, though bloody hand? So if he struggled with it, it's a small matter that I've struggled with it a bit today.

If we jump sort of to the end of the plot, to the divine plot, this music perhaps sums up things very well. Let me know if it's too loud or not loud enough.

This is Handel, one of the Shandos anthems. And you'll hear the words. It's wonderfully set. The words are from Psalm 86.

Let God arise and his enemies be scattered. Let God arise and his enemies be scattered. To be sure to live in the sound of the slouch network in And keep your ruin of the slouch network in And continue to be scattered.

Dicus is grounded. Let God arise, let for the slouch lover in And yell and at hand, and he pleases sigliers in And catching up his early yap I poursen floor in And keep your ruin hyales espí continue to be scattered.

[ 3 : 19 ] Let all those that hate him flee.

Flee. Wonderful word painting. Thank you.

The End I love that piece.

So that's a kind of thread that goes through preparation for Easter, it seems to me. A lot of this is terribly personal, but that's how it strikes me, is his enemies will be vanquished.

The ultimate enemy certainly will be. And of course there's also something of an eschatological aspect to it as well. When Christ returns, there will be judgment and things will be set right, as Sam says to the Lady Galadriel.

[ 5 : 26 ] Things really will be set right. But during Lent, of course, we have the penitence, the self-examination, we have the trying to walk with Christ through those appalling circumstances that lead to his mock trial and corrupt, the whole corrupt so-called justice system that ends in his execution.

It's interesting, just as the Baroque language of Bach and Handel and their contemporaries seems to handle scriptural truth so readily, it's almost as though you don't need anything more.

But as we all see, that's not quite the case. So the guys who came before, so Handel dies in 1759, and then he was born in 1685.

But one century earlier than that, Richard Ferrant, a 16th century, obviously, composed a writing at that very difficult time where, are you Catholic?

Are you Protestant? Your life may be at risk if you don't give the right answer. But he and many of his contemporaries, Richard Bird and Talis and so on, wrote very touchingly in another kind of language of some of these texts.

[ 6 : 54 ] Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake, lay not our sin to our charge, but give us that is past, and give us grace to amend our sinful lives, to decline from sin and incline to virtue, that we may walk in perfect heart before thee now and evermore.

And these guys took scriptures which you tend not to see set to music so readily today, the real meat of both the gospel and the epistles. I notice a lot of modern composers shy away from that and go for, you know, praise the Lord all you people, or something a little more, a little less specific. It's interesting, for instance, in the Handel's Messiah, that if there are cuts to be made, it's usually in part three, where there's some Pauline texts set. It's not as picturesque as the first part, with shepherds and angels.

These guys had a, I can only call it a kind of authenticity, a minimalist approach to the text, and it's very refreshing. This is, as I say, Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake, Richard Ferrant.

This is Westminster Abbey.

[ 8 : 24 ] It's very simple.

Syllabic. Yet there's imitation.

Other voices come in, in response. A sense of community singing, almost. It's almost got a walking pulse.

It's almost got a walking pulse. That music, of course, was written, and most of the leading 16th century composers, Elizabethan composers, were attached.

To some marvelous acoustic. Could have been the Chapel Royal, or it could be Westminster Abbey. There are a number of places where these gentlemen operated, but they were writing for an acoustic that would carry this glorious sound, and create a kind of musical environment, and create a kind of musical environment, a little world in which these sounds almost collide with each other.

[ 10 : 44 ] Which, just as the architects of those buildings, I think, hoped, though I'm no expert, that this would be some kind of hint of heaven. Best we can do for now.

The other discipline that we are familiar with through Lent and in Passion Tide is, though it gets into slightly balancing territory in Protestantism, is Christ on the cross.

We don't normally, we don't let it stop at the crucifix, nor should we. Nevertheless, it's easy to skip that, and so we don't think much on the, perhaps, on the sufferings of our Lord.

The significance of the Roman spear in the side, the blood coming forth, and the water coming forth. Yet, this old text of Ave Verum Corpus, it does refer to all those things.

Now, this setting is, well, they're all sung in Latin, sorry. No, there are some English translations, actually, though not commonly. It's usually sung in Latin.

[ 12 : 00 ] It's being set by composers from the 16th century and earlier, right through to the present day. I hope you don't mind listening at a little more length to this.

It's by Imant Raminj, who's a Latvian composer, born in 1943, and lives in the interior. He gained quite a remarkable name for his compositional work, with this being one of the, sort of, first of his products.

And choirs and directors were bowled over by it. It's a gorgeous setting. So, Imant Raminj, R-A-M-I-N-S-H, Ave Verum Corpus.

Clearly, this is less functional than Ferent.

It's also trying to create, through its pacing and sustained textures, reflection, allowing us to reflect, momentarily at least, on the text.

[ 13 : 40 ] It's a Canadian choir, conducted by Noel Anderson.

To see Elora Festival singers. So, that's the flowing of the blood.

So, that's the flowing of the blood. Thank you. That's the side, pierced by the spear.

It's repeating. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. This has to do with your death.

[ 15 : 57 ] We reflect on your death as an anticipation of our death. Thank you. Thank you.

And now, we cannot rest. To be continued...

O Jesu, sweet Jesus, Jesu Pie, holy Jesus, Jesus, son of Mary, have mercy on me. Amen.

You feel you ought to have one of the distinguished art depictions of our Lord's passion to gaze on during this kind of music.

I find that deeply moving. I don't know if you do, but no, it's not easy to hear all the words.

[18:14] That's partly because these recordings are all done in these sumptuous acoustics. But if one does know the text, perhaps through repetition or liturgical repetition, or you're told or given a translation, it can be very powerful.

That's a very specific reflection, and perhaps if you prefer always to have it in plain English, there are some wonderful things that reflect on Christ's work through this time that we're celebrating now or acknowledging now.

This work, I think, is a fine piece of music by the Canadian composer Paul Halley, based in Halifax. I think I may have played it before, but anyway, it doesn't matter.

He takes the beautiful hymn, Jesus, the very thought of thee, which is a Latin text from the 12th century, with a tune from our time almost.

Gordon Slater, who I met, so it can't be that far ago, Oh, I suppose it could be that, no. Was an organist at Lincoln Cathedral, and he wrote this wonderful tune, which you'll catch in just a sec.

[19:23] But the words are important. Jesus, a very thought of thee with sweetness fills the breast. This is a 19th century translation, so there's much sweetness, and also quite a few breasts about.

But sweeter far thy face to see, and in thy presence rest. No voice can sing, no heart can frame, nor can the mind recall a sweeter sound than Jesus' name, the Saviour of us all.

O hope of every contrite heart, O joy of all the meek, to those who ask, How kind thou art, how good to those who seek. You may recognise it as having sight. Jesus are only, well, there's more, But what to those who find are this, Nor tongue nor pen can show.

The love of Jesus, what it is, None but his, It says lovers, no, in this translation. Jesus, our only joy be thou, As thou our prize wilt be.

In thee be all our glory now, And through eternity. So this is how Paul Halley takes that hymn. He takes the tune, too, And does this with it.

[20:28] I think Terry has done this here, I think. The tricky little organ part. So it's kind of, almost a fluid kind of calming accompaniment.

What I have done, Ho'iv, what I am young one, For at the juricional level gives the creator's grace to live and the voice of Jesus.

Your thyme is written for your... The seeder of my life The worden■■ The worden continued Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

Oh, my God.

[23:38] Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

[25:14] Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Oh, my God. so there we are a Canadian composer, Canadian choir singing supremely well my goodness me which is a sideline, these performances are so carefully crafted it brings them to life in a wonderful way now there's a fascinating composer, committed Christian very much alive and well, called Arvo Perth and he's Estonian and he has a very interesting take on the text he handles this is back into Latin again one of our great struggles one of the great struggles for any church musician, especially working in an evangelical Protestant tradition is that so much wealth of music, historically and currently even, is with Latin texts it's a language that fits music very very well or music can handle it best, I think of all the languages but again it rests on the assumption that people kind of know what's being sung anyway just as when in many an Anglican church you'll start off with Kyrie eleison Kyrie eleison Christi eleison we know it means have mercy upon us Lord have mercy upon us Christ have mercy upon us because you're taught anyway he's working on something of that assumption when he sets this todayim do you remember the todayim?

[27:39] we don't sing it much now but it was a critical part of the morning prayer service in the prayer book and it's an ancient Christian hymn we praise the old Lord we acknowledge he to be it's a marvellous text and very much worth reflecting on through through this period that we're in now

just a reminder we praise thee O God we acknowledge thee to be the Lord all the earth doth worship thee the Father everlasting to thee all angels cry aloud the heavens and all the powers it's a model of praise because it starts there not here and then moves on to here at the end which is a bit we're going to listen to to thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry holy holy holy and so it goes the second bit says the glorious company of the apostles are praising you it says the goodly fellowship of the prophets are praising you the noble army of martyrs are praising you the holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee the Father what a set of statements that's the way to get going thou art the king of glory

O Christ and on and on when thou then turns into the period we're considering when thou hast overcome the sharpness of death thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers you sit at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father we believe that thou shall come to be our judge so it's a the credo in this is extraordinary we therefore pray thee help thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood now it starts turning in on us make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting O Lord save thy people and this is where I'm going to cut in because it's a long long work he extends it I'm just going to cut in oh yes O Lord have mercy upon us have mercy upon us O Lord let thy mercy lighten upon us as our trust is in thee O Lord in thee have I trusted let me never be confounded and he adds our men holy holy holy this at any rate I hope you'll be patient with this it may not go to the top of your top 20 play at home discs but it's fascinating also because of the stunning acoustic it's very hard to hear the words I'm afraid fiat misericordia tua love love love love

In thee is our trust.

Let me never be confounded. Let me never be confounded.

[ 32 : 05 ] Let me never be confounded.

Let me never be confounded. Let me never be confounded again.

Let me never be confounded. Let me never be confounded.

Amen. I think this is the amen. Let me never be confounded.

Let me never be confounded. I think this guy has caught a vision. Something to lift at him, as it did with Handel and the Messiah, but in a different way.

[ 33 : 22 ] This is not something just to be thrown off. It's... There's a time dimension here. So there's this weightiness.

This is... Sanctus. Holy, holy, holy.

Thanks. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks, guys.

Thank you.

I don't know what to say.

[ 34 : 54 ] How and where to put these things on and present them to the church universal, I don't know. Because it is, of course, concert material. You can't do that in the course of a service.

It's a long work, and people would start to... It's a shame, though, isn't it? I know as a child, going to our little parish church in East Yorkshire, the thing I dreaded most was a tideon, because it went on and on and on.

I wasn't a Christian. I didn't know what it was about. And the choir was appalling, and the organist wasn't much better, and half my mates were in the choir, which made it even worse.

My memories are not positive, but this is so moving. And it is a historic hang of the church, and I think with so many of these thoughtful treatments of texts, there's a spotting that we shouldn't be hemmed in by the time.

This chronometer approach to worship, the Orthodox Church has learned that, because from the word go, you might be there three hours. Or for that matter, as a Catholic, you might go to the watch night service, one of which I played for, and it goes on, and it's late, and there are children there.

[ 36 : 15 ] But yes, this is what we do. You don't do, as they kept saying at a certain church I worked at in America, every time, please be seated and be comfortable. I think it's, please listen and be uncomfortable.

And that's the role of the word. There's comfort, of course there is, but don't come with an expectation all the time, or predictability.

Don't look for the predictability, because our Lord isn't. He is at one level, but not at another.

Anyway, I'm babbling. I'm sorry. The person, I think, brings a wonderful sense of humor to our condition, which should be a cause for great reflection and solemnity, is Handel.

I mean, really, so we're all like sheep. How much... He's using that scattering technique that he used in Let God Arise.

Scatter. Scatter. We have fun. We have fun. We have fun. We have fun.

[ 37 : 51 ] We have fun. We have fun. We want to live away.

Of course, it's great.

Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great.

Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great.

Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great. Of course, it's great.

[ 39 : 30 ] We want to live away. And then, he reminds us of, Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Complete change in mood. So, we've all gone like sheep, but...

And then, he said, And then, he said, That's great. And then, he said, That's great.

And then, he said, That's great. That's great. It's just inspired, isn't it?

It's a gorgeous performance. That's one of the best messiahs, I think. At least the critics feel so.

John Butt and the Dunedin Consort. He himself, the conductor, being a committed Christian, seems to make a difference.

[ 40 : 52 ] Then, it's not long after that, that Handel sets a beautiful aria. Time doesn't permit to play it. But thou didst not leave his soul in hell. Beautiful song.

There is another approach to our preparation for Easter. I think I've used... I've quoted from her before. This is...

Mandy Pryor. This is for Ephesus 4, Easter Day, of course. Christ the Lord is risen today.

Hallelujah. Sons of men and angels say. Hallelujah. This is... This is...

She's trying to recreate the gallery music tradition that preceded the period in the 19th century when parish churches felt obliged to imitate cathedrals. Hallelujah.

[ 41 : 52 ] Again, at my little parish church in Yorkshire, make it very plain through the old prints that the choir was in the back in a gallery with a few stray musicians and a rather beaten up old organ.

That was where the music came from. There were no robed choirs in the parish churches by and large. But with the impact of the Tractarian movement, what we loosely call the High Church movement in the 1840s roughly, parishes all over Great Britain and then into the...

The Empire. And... Felt, no, no, you have to have a robed choir up at the front. And with the clergy and the organs are pushed to the front. The choirs moved up to the front.

And this kind of music making, kind of folk music making almost, from the back, went by the board. Not in every case, but... The result was, my choir, that I heard of my parish church, trying desperately to sing music that was beyond them.

And... It didn't really work. Great thing is to do it well, however simple it is.

[ 43 : 13 ] I'd love you to just listen to a clip. I want to leave room for discussion, but I'd love you to listen to this clip. It took a bit of tracking down from Tapestry on CBC. Peter Tognier, Christian, Catholic, host of Choral Concert, resigned from that job, or retired from that job, and they interviewed him.

And it was really quite a revelation. The actual performance, unfortunately, I think is mono of the disc, because it's archival material, but that doesn't matter. It's Bird's Heikdias, which is, this is a day the Lord has made, and it's traditionally sung on Easter Sunday.

And this is how the interview went. But you do have a piece of music for us to hear, and I'm really intrigued now. What sounds like Easter to you? Tell us about this piece of music.

This really sounds like Easter to me, because it's a pure joy. It's a piece of a cappella choral music from the 16th century, music by the great Renaissance master William Byrd.

And I like it because, to tell you the truth, some music that's, Easter music is too overblown, I think. I mean, that's fine to celebrate, but this is contained, and what can I say, it's sentiment without sentimentality.

[ 44 : 30 ] Ah! Sorry, sorry, sorry. Sorry, sorry. Sorry, sorry. The text is Heikdias, the text translates to, this is the day that the Lord hath made, hallelujah. It's often sung in the Easter service.

It's not long, it's just two minutes, but it's two minutes of perfect everything. It's intricate, it's difficult. I think the listener and the performer have an equal kind of thing going on here.



looking at Easter.

There are other things here, but I want to leave time for comments, discussions, or the rotten tomatoes. Would you like some help in facilitation?

Yeah, if you can bully them, that would be good. Sure. I'll keep them in the line. Okay, Kurt. I'll quote the CBC host.

[ 56 : 02 ] I feel impoverished. I mean, I started my music lessons in a kindergarten, a musical kindergarten, when I was quite a little bit. And I wish I was more disciplined than say in a piano school and practice.

Yes. The very first piece you played by Handel, Psalm 86. Yes. I've done a question, but where is that from? That word from? It's one of the Chandos anthems.

He wrote a set of anthems made up of about four or five pieces within that title for the Duke of Chandos in London. So they were commissioned. And anyway, C-H-A-N-D-O-S.

That's the head. There are several of them. I forget how many, but that's just Arise. Let God Arise is just one of a set. And who is the writer of the lyrics? Oh, that's Psalm 86.

Okay. Yeah. Would it be the same person who did the words for Handel? Yeah. I don't know in the case of these anthems.

[ 57 : 05 ] He may have just been given the prayer book and go to it kind of thing. I'm not clear about that. I'm so glad I've been here. Thank you very much. Kurt, you sound like another little boy who wanted to go outside and play.

John? Yeah. I used to go to the UBC Recital Hall at the New Oregon. There's a Renaissance Baroque music. Music you've been playing.

Would that be Baroque or is that classical? Well, Handel, of course, and Bach are the pinnacle of Baroque. But the 16th century English composers belong to the Renaissance.

Yeah. Yeah. And so it's too clear cut because, of course, there's a lot of bleeding across. But really the Baroque period starts, or Baroque period starts in the 1600s.

And then you've got your later Renaissance from 1500 to 1600. I mean, it's just a thumbnail guide.

Yeah. And then Mozart and Haydn kick in by 1750.

[ 58 : 08 ] And then by the time you're in the 19th century, you're into the Romantic period. So that's roughly how it breaks down. Martin? So you've been just a couple of works from modern composers from the Baltic Republic.

Yes. What's going on there? Is there a lot going on or is it just a place? I don't know what's behind it all. The, I can't explain the phenomenon of Avopert.

But maybe coming out of their appalling oppression under the Soviet system, they're very cruelly treated. That may drive out this kind of musical expression.

There is a Russian composer, but I can never get her name right. It's not Gudabalina, but I think it might be something like that. I should know because I interviewed her for CBC.

And she showed, they were doing a piece at, I think it was an Owen series, Owen Underhill series. And it was an anthem to the Holy Spirit.

[ 59 : 12 ] But she explained to me she could call it no such thing when she wrote it. It had to be a celebration of the five-year plan or something. So I think, I do think oppression can call, can give rise to very rich music.

The nationalist movement through the 19th century in Czechoslovakia, Bohemia, Italy, Germany. It just gives rise to music. And then people cheer that and they rally around that.

Sibelius in Finland, same thing. And of course the Baltic folk have a long history of being oppressed. Yes. By many peoples. Oh indeed, yes. Pardon? The evangelical tradition, of course, of women's glories is studying scripture and even in small groups.

Is there a way that we could integrate serious music into that tradition to bring back good music into our midst? I mean, I've just, this seems so set apart, such a glory, but it seems set apart from our tradition.

Yeah. I mean, I do mention it. Well, it's a, yeah, it's a dilemma. Because that, I, there's a separation there that's occurred. And I think it occurred roughly around the death of Bach and Handel.

[ 60 : 28 ] Because music shot off into the secular realm after that. You went to church to hear music until 1750. And this is very, very brief and thumbnail.

But roughly speaking, you went to a local monastery or church to hear music. That was the chief patron. And then through a number of circumstances, not least of all the arrival of the

Enlightenment, music shunts off into the opera house and the concert hall and the recital hall. And is not really seriously challenged by the church. And I think the Lutheran church might have been the solution because it worked in harmony with some brilliant composers through its later years.

But the church, I understand, I'm no expert, but I understand that the very preaching itself in the Lutheran church by that time had deteriorated to rhetorical kind of displays.

But now the music is so portable. Yes. Modern technology says, take it with you. Yes. So, I mean, I want you to dream of this unintegration again.

[ 61 : 36 ] Right. Well, there are some initiatives out there. And guess what? They're unfortunately coming from within the church. When I wanted to play you a little bit, if there's time I will, of a piece by Eric Whittaker, which is an aliyue.

And I wanted to play it as a interesting, a bit like the aliyue, a quiet aliyue of the utmost beauty. It's a virtual choir.

I don't know if any, I've only just discovered this. And you do a kind of Skype. There must be some kind of audition process. Thousands of people from 75 countries will practice their part.

And it's sent in and digitally lined up. This, well, look. This... One chord.

Does it... Well, that won't be much... But this is what it sounds like. And it has a bit of a...

[ 62 : 43 ] Now, that's obviously a solo voice on top. And if you look it up online, Eric Whittaker, virtual choir, they have a background with little tiny squares with all the singers in them.

Thousands of singers. I don't think this would work with Bach. But these slower pieces.

Yes. So there's one approach. Skype. Skype. I think, to be serious, what we've got to do is break down this fear of conceit in the arts.

That because it does... Expertise has been needed in all the samples I've played. Otherwise, it wouldn't have been recorded. We shy off and think, oh, we can't do that. We don't have to do Avopert.

But we can do some other things very beautifully. And introduce them. I've got a real feel right now. I don't know where it's going to go.

[ 63 : 51 ] For the children here. At the children's level, we can introduce them to fine hymns. I'm not sure if it helped, but I wrote three hymns for Christmas for the children, which they've used downstairs.

And if people within the church, like Owen is doing, write music for the church, I think that breaks down one barrier. I don't know where that it's this us versus them crumbles a bit.

But the thing that has to go is the notion of music as a utilitarian thing. It's just there to be used.

There I would really take issue with Rick Warren.

Music's just a bundle of notes. It's the words that matter. That is an ignorant statement and regrettable. And has done a lot of harm and just reinforced a very superficial approach to music in the evangelical realm.

The other extreme, of course, is extreme manipulation through music. But that depends on a kind of commodified, commercial, filmic kind of use of music.

[ 65 : 00 ] Okay. In the back, George and then Sheila. I just wanted to bring up the subject from the TDM. Yes. The words of prayer and praise are just wonderful.

There are some great musical settings to the TDM. I know it's quite lengthy, but that's probably the only reason I can think of why it isn't used in the traditional service.

Yes, that is the reason. Is there a shortened version of it that can fit into the time constraint or anything like that? There's a paraphrase in that hymn book, psalm book that John Stott's church, also Langham Place, put out.

We used it for a while in my time at St. John's. Not much. I don't know. I find, poetically, we don't come out the better for those kind of efforts.

Sometimes we do, but it just seems... There's a breadth there which is embedded in the language, a set of dimensions to the meaning, which gets foreshortened and almost trivialized sometimes.

[ 66 : 04 ] I think we have to make room for more listening and being fed, as well as participating in things which are worth taking time over.

Because it would only be done at morning prayer. Yes. In morning prayer, yeah. In morning prayer is a shorter service. Yes. I know you're not in charge of the format of the service anymore.

No. But it seems strange to me. It's a shame. I used to get around it a little bit. I don't know if Terry has. I expect he will. I used to have it as an anthem.

That's one solution. George? Ed, first thanks for this wonderful, inspiring presentation.

Several of the questions and several of the things you've said, I think, focus our attention on the vast accessibility of music.

[ 67 : 14 ] At the highest or lowest level. In the technology of production, of reproduction, of distribution, the markets of music are absolutely unprecedented.

As we all know, we could go home, most of us, if we've got access to an internet. We can hear anything. Almost anything. I mean, on my Apple Music, iTunes, I've got, I don't know how many versions of Bach's Christmas oratorio.

And I can't make up my mind as to which one I should play this year or next year or in between.

What would you, just say a few things about the context for all of this.

You've talked about commodification and the subversive and dark elements of all of this. But is this a time going from when you only heard music in a chapel or in a church to where you can take it anywhere and you can get it anywhere?

I think the danger, well, not so danger, the issue with it is that we stop passing any kind of, dare I use the word, judgment on what we hear.

[ 68 : 40 ] Because we're persuaded that it's all, it's all at one level. I think that's one danger that comes from this accessibility. And with our tendency to once, when we're in the mood, to go for the easier road, I think there's a danger that we'll flip channels, so to speak.

On the other hand, I think it should be an area, a territory that Christians should explore and really listen. And just type in your favorite text or hymn or issue, theological issue or theological concern and see what comes up.

But it's somehow being able to say, well, I've heard this idiom before. It's used a lot. Last time it was in Safeway. I want to hear something. There's got to be something better.

And there it's easier to find now. So I think it can go two ways. What interests me is the incredible growth in interest in choral singing and singing good music.

I've mentioned before, I think, the new music director, choral director at Trinity Western. Wes did fantastic work. But this guy, his shtick is to bring to the students who are coming from sometimes quite strict, even, I dare say, fundamentalist backgrounds.

[ 70 : 07 ] And he's introducing them to music, which is hot off the press and is very much along the Avouper lines. And you think, I think, as the accompanist, I think, they're not going to go for this.

They do go for it. And they say, wow, just like Mary Hines did in her CBC interview. She says, wow, yeah. And I have encountered this several times.

Young people, usually young, will say, perhaps coming to an Advent Carol service here, they say, we've been missing out, as one student said to Susan. I've been missing out. Very much like I feel impoverished.

And I think my little, trying to wrap up, my little warning sign is that I personally believe equality, and I know a number of people have written on this, of popular idiom, popular culture, is that it blocks out choice.

It's a bottom line industry. It's not interested in you going off and finding something different. It wants you locked in to the predictable. And it's a shame to see many, not all churches, falling for that.

[ 71 : 17 ] Because, as Lauren Wilkinson said, there's so much more to worship with out there.

Before we get to Sheila, I'd like to take the privilege of interjecting just a little bit into this conversation that's just been had.

We went, we went, we went, we went, we went to a concert like a week and a half ago at the Jewish Community Center.

Victoria Hanna. You cannot hear her recorded. She does not record. Huh. Huh. And she did a number of things that she based on the Song of Songs.

Oh. She comes out of an Orthodox tradition. Yeah. She's not doing what she's supposed to be doing. It was very interesting. I bet. Anyway, I just wanted to interject that.

Sheila? Well, this has been a really rich experience. And sort of zero to Calvary and beyond. And I really liked that last one you did.

[ 72 : 25 ] It was like dawn breaking at the very end of it. Yeah. But I have a technical question because my ear was not telling me the truth. The piece that has a very long face continuum.

I thought it was hard to be arguing who else to do this. But it sounded more like a string. A string instruments, yes. Is it? Yeah. In the Avopert. Yes. With the longest bow in the world. That's right. They were probably crossbowing, yes. Ah, yeah. Yeah. You know, it's something. There's another little thread here. I wish I could have played it. But frankly, it's too heartbreaking. I can't break up when I play it.

It's by James McMillan, Christian, Scottish composer. A Child's Prayer. I mean, I've got it here. But really, it's... The text is this. Welcome, Jesus.

Deep in my soul, forever stay. Joy and love. My heart are fitting on this glad communion day. It's called A Child's Prayer. But unfortunately, the sad thing is it's in commemoration of the Dunblane massacre of school children.

[ 73 : 28 ] And how McMillan's got around it is just amazing. But it is too heartbreaking to play. It's... So, the text, he treats very sensitively.

But the piece is very slow and reflective. And there are these two troubled voices. Children's voices going over the top. I mention that only because there...

I can think of situations where that would be maudlin and manipulative and would draw on a whole series of cliches to bring us to tears.

For perhaps, perhaps, perhaps the wrong reasons. Or at least the wrong initial reasons. So, there are all these things to steer through. You bring us back to your comment on sentiment and sentimentality.

Oh, yes. Well, thank you very much, Ed. I think we have to go ahead. A close. Thank you. And we look forward to your return.

[ 74 : 29 ] Oh, you do. Thank you very much.