Spiritual Music for Spiritual Growth

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Date: 26 November 2017

Preacher: Edward Norman

[0:00] Well, brothers and sisters, already it's been declared that Ed Norman, the distinguished organist of whom we were just hearing, is going to lead this session of Learners' Exchange and I have been deputed as one of his old friends to introduce him, as if you need to have him introduced to you. This I am now doing and I'll do it as briefly as I can. Ed and I are both displaced Brits, as you probably know.

We've become Canadians and we don't regret it. It's very good to have Ed, as we do have him, as a member of St John's, that's to start with, and then an outstanding talent he really is on the organ doing such things as he's going to do this afternoon. This morning what he's planning to do is to speak, if I understand it right, to a theme that you state like this, spiritual music for spiritual growth. Am I saying it right, Ed? Absolutely. Okay. And having announced that, I think you will agree, I've done everything that I need to do and I've to get you to get out of the way. And yes, this I will do. There is Ed and he will come and take his place behind the podium and speak to us. And we shall, I think, be all ears listening to what he has to say because this is a topic which, if I'm any judge, needs to be explored very thoroughly. We're not really sure of ourselves when we come to talk about the music that furthers faithfulness and devotion and growth in Christ. And if you can help us along that path, Ed, we should be permanently grateful. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. That's for a very gracious introduction. Not really deserved, but I feel a bit like a kind of disco guy here. Anyway.

[3:36] Whoops. You show too, right? Yeah, well, you know, I've got a few things here for you all, and I hope you'll enjoy it. Feel free to dance, you know. So, Dr. Packer has touched on the issue that we both share, and I know many of you do too.

I think music, if I draw parallel with food and music, it's the best analogy so far I've even to come up with. And I think I've mentioned it before.

If you take your beloved, your nearest and dearest friend out for a celebratory meal, you probably won't go for baked beans on toast or McDonald's or my favourite, KFC.

You'll go somewhere special where, not necessarily exorbitantly expensive, but where the chef has gone to great trouble to prepare something, you anticipate what it will be within a framework.

There's a menu, or the restaurant is known for a certain kind of production, a product, atmosphere. But you also expect to be surprised.

[4:52] And chefs, I gather, if you can afford it, are very happy to surprise you. You know roughly what you're getting, but there's always that, oh, moment. I think that's a mark of music at its best.

I don't want to be negative, but you can go on down to the food we eat as students, KFC, and things that you can bring home quickly and not think much about.

They are prepackaged. They anticipate what you want, sometimes at the expense of your health, through salt and sugar. And at the end of it, if we don't make variety in our intake, we're not the better for it.

And I think this is a problem that faces the church, not just the evangelical church anymore, it's widespread, that we have underestimated the potential of music, like a food.

So the incredible electron microscopic photographs and images of our inner ear, like a stack of organ pipes, I'm no expert, but it's incredibly complex, must have been given us by our Lord to enjoy sounds to a degree that perhaps has atrophied through the ages.

[6:12] I don't know. At any rate, what I'm anxious to show today is how music can nourish us, as thick of it as a food. And of course, I have to be very selective.

Just some brief illustrations and then some slightly longer reflections on two or three composers. But first of all, I'll stop and let's cheer ourselves up with...

This is Joseph Haydn, 18th century composer, whose faith is quite evident in writings that we have.

And his good cheer, his joyfulness is evident in so much of his music. This is his trumpet concerto, which actually is going to be played this afternoon at Ryerson.

So there's flourish, there's a major key, a fast tempo, which gets the foot tapping. This is Wynton Marsalis, by the way. You just feel the body starts to get engaged.

[7:37] And as Catherine, who's playing this afternoon, observed yesterday when we rehearsed, she said, Ed, this is like a conversation, isn't it?

I say it, the orchestra says it, or vice versa. It's a dialogue. She's watching it.

Mmm. Mmm. Mmm. Mmm. There's also, of course, an energy of forward movement.

There's tension. Timing. Resolution. You're back home.

I'm sorry to have to cut some of these things down, but we'll never get through it otherwise. But it's extraordinary also to see what this joyful, positive musical figure can do with something as profound as this passage.

[9:07] Sorry. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void. And darkness was over the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, let there be light. And there was light. This is the most extraordinary piece of picture painting in music for its time.

Listen to the dissonances in it. I've cut in. Haydn's creation. He's really taking you there, isn't he?

He's really presenting this. These bursts of silence. Silence. Rising figure. Expectation. It Ah Asmaq responsible.

The microscope and without of theorisauraisres' character. Long Down■ Eats. Sarah■■■ der Fleet Rising figure, expectation.

[10:36] It's very moving, I find. The clarinet, which is relatively newcomer on the scene at this point. A lot of chromaticism moving by semitones, half steps.

And then, you have the account, it's in German. But you'll hear the choir eventually coming in.

So in the beginning...

He's trying to convey the void and the lack of form.

So the world was out for, the earth was without form.

[11:54] Darkness over the deep.

Then the choir comes in. The Spirit of God... ...was hovering.

Think of all the devices Haydn has used so far. Choral, orchestral, solo, harmonic, exploration.

And God said, let there be light. To God's heart... ...the spirit of the earth...

And there was light. To God's heart... That's the most extraordinary piece of work.

[13:35] When you think we're in the 18th century, we're not in the 19th century. Haydn lived just into the turn of the arrival of the 19th century. Actually, he taught Beethoven for a while.

He was his composition teacher. But that is... It's very much advanced, looking ahead to what music can do to express wonder and power and change.

Music can also, of course, reflect anger. Even... We're not out of the... Well, let's put it another way.

We're not into the romantic period yet. But Haydn is one example. But so is Handel. Some of you will be going to hear this, no doubt, this season.

Why do the nations so furiously rage together? Listen to what he's doing with the strings. And the voice.

[14:37] Why do the nations so furiously rage together? Why do the people imagine a vain thing?

Why do the nations so furiously rage together?

Why do the nations so furiously rage together?

So just... He's keeping the harmonic structure quite simple. No chromaticism here. It's just hard-edged, simple harmonic shifts. The busyness, of course, lies in the voice.

Music Also, the text is set syllabically, which gives it...

[15:48] Mostly, which gives it this punch. One syllable per note. Music Changes key there.

And changes the mood. Into a minor mode. That's another sort of emotional potential of music.

But it... The chef now is really busy in the kitchen trying to come up with all these different... Flavours. Different presentations of the raw material.

To what end? That you are engaged and fed, so to speak, by what he's done or she's done. And in the case, just to bring it a little more relevantly to bear, where we learn from this music.

I think I do, anyway. Why do the nations sing like that? By the way, that's Teddy Tahoe... What's his second name? Rhodes. Teddy Tahoe Rhodes. A New Zealand bass.

[17:07] Young, very young bass singer. And that's the orchestra of the Antipodes. That sticks in my mind, and I know many of your minds, as a setting of that biblical text, which helps, as we think on that aspect of the Old Testament words.

It wasn't always easy to express deep emotion and bring things to life in these kind of ways, and not to mention what's coming up through the 19th and 20th centuries.

So composers rested on different... In the West, rested on different techniques, sometimes enriching the texture to convey glory.

They didn't go in for dramatic... There were some instances of it, but not enough to call it a style. For instance, this piece, this beautiful piece, Onata Lux, we're wandering into Advent territory now, by Thomas Tallis, make sure I've got the right...

Right here. Come on, old D's. Excuse me. What he does is, instead of having a four-part choir, he decides to enlarge it to five voices.

[18:29] So he has two tenors enriching the texture right in the middle. Very, very, very short piece. And... And... It's reflecting on the glory of the Lord.

This is... I'm just trying to find... I had the text ready for you. It's been before... I do have it. But where is the...

Can you see? Mmm... Mmm... Mmm... Mmm... Mmm... Mmm... Mmm... Oh, light... Excuse me. Oh, light of light by love inclined, Jesus, redeemer of mankind, with loving kindness, deign to hear from supplicant voices praise and prayer.

Thou, who to raise our souls from hell, didst reign in fleshly form to dwell, vouchsafe us when our race is run, in thy fair body to be won.

So, that comes out of a 16th century collection of verses, and this is, in Latin, how Thomas Tallis said it.

[19:35] Ah, yes. It's a commercial. Jesus, redeemer.

Jesus, redeemer. With loving kindness, deign to hear.

Praises. Laudes, praises. Jesus, redeemer. The falling phrase dominates the structure melodically, probably an Advent reference, Christ coming down.

It doesn't all come down, but it's significantly there enough to suggest that. can be called for Nancy He, and this is, in that favor of letting Seen to be one with you.

And there it is, a beautiful consonant final. Chord. With a sort of upper note over the top. I can't go into detail into the Renaissance music.

[21:35] That would take a week. But there are wonderful examples of composers striving to bring life to the texts and handling. The other thing I love about these 16th century, especially the English 16th century composers and Tudor composers is that they weren't afraid to tackle texts which are a little awkward.

One of Talus' famous anthems, which I know Terry does, is, If You Love Me, Keep My Commandments. This is not quite so popular a text today with composers who tend towards the praise text.

All I mean by that is texts which simply say, praise God. They're safe because you're not challenging. But these guys would, probably partially under instruction, would set texts which were for the day, in the calendar, and do so fearlessly, which is, I wish there was more of that.

We're going to hear how there are people doing that in just a minute, especially if I get a move on. One of the things, oh well, let me go on to good old William Purcell.

William Purcell, here's an example of taking the text of rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

[23:03] Let your moderation be known to all people. And with prayer and supplication make requests known unto God. Purcell, who had spent time in France during the interregion, comes back and brings with him some of the dance influence of the French and continental Baroque.

Also, the role of instruments to set up a text presentation. So we get this. It's a walking bass throughout which carries the music along.

It doesn't ponder it at this point. These are authentic instruments, viols, not the modern reinforced instruments.

gut strings, Baroque bows. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. And again, it's a bit like in the Haydn trumpet concerto, there's this dialogue back and forth, the instrumental group, the choir, and the soloists.

[24:48] Or soloists. No, no, they're soloists, I forgot. So this is derived from the old dance suite.

So, door hops along. It's a very joyful statement or reinforcement or cooking of the text of the faith.

Preparation, that's a better word. So you've got time to think about what's just been sung before the next bit comes in.

Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, and again, but God is a second time. Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

We are to have all the later and the greater and the greater and the greater and greater we are unto her. The Lord lives at hand, the Lord lives at hand, great church and the greater we are to have all the and the greater we are to have all the A congregation could even join in the tune after hearing that three times.

[26:32] I doubt that that was done in the chapel royal where he served, but that could have been in a church, could be done. A dear our spirit A dear our spirit A dear our spirit Charming music I find, it's transparent, it's not affected, and it's not exploitive of us as listeners.

It seems to, to me, this is all very subjective, it seems to reach out and say, listen to this text, and sets it like setting a jewel or a precious stone in some kind of appropriate metal and creating something jewel-like from it.

That's one of his famous anthems. He wrote many. If I switch now to my hero, J.S. Bach, we have a very interesting example of how to take your ingredients if you like, I mustn't take this too far, in the kitchen and see what you can do.

First of all, this is the material the grocer has just delivered. Lock it up. Sleepers awake. An advent here.

We sing that from time to time. I wonder if we'll sing it next week, probably. The whole thrust of this text is, of course, sleepers awake.

[28:11] Anybody asleep? Okay. Why? The bridegroom's coming. This is the parable of the virgins who were not prepared. The warning, the expectation, the hope, it's all built into the text of the original hymn, though it's gone through many, many various versions through the centuries.

Its essence has remained. See, this is what Bach does with it.

Here it's sung in German. The actual chorale melody itself goes up the natural tones of the warning trumpet of the town crier of the day.

That's not Bach's, to Bach's credit, but that's a characteristic of the melody. But he plays on that.

See your dirty express voice in faithful hark with joy.

[29:48] They rise in haste to greet their Lord. The next phrase is see he comes the victor.

victorious. Your Freund kommt von Himmel from heaven. Suggestions have been made, can't prove it, that this is a kind of gentle nothing, no urgency bed of sound laid down and then this trumpet-like call cutting through it.

See he comes. So you can just imagine that as a kind of single trumpet call in a city square.

A kind of the name Nun kommt du Werther Kron.

Now come, thou crowned one, holy one. Coming up. Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn.

[31:31] Hosanna. Then very interesting, the original hymn takes off here, We Follow, Wir Folgen All.

We Follow the Freudensaal, the joyful call. We Follow the Freudensaal.

And we Follow the Freudensaal. Once again, the theme of joining and becoming one with Christ eternally, Just as in the talus.

Now then, we did this with the Regent College Choir a couple of weeks ago. It was very exciting to do it. And the only sadness was that Jane Long got sick and couldn't do the solo work, although a very, very capable, in fact, indeed brilliant, substitute filled in.

But anyway, we did this cantata. And it's fascinating to see what Bach does with the first chorus in the cantata. That's number four. It comes halfway through.

[33:03] But this opening one is, just to get a sense of the text and what he's doing. First of all, Bach takes that rhythm, which in Baroque music, like the opening of the Messiah, is a courtly, it's a French device, is a courtly statement.

It has something to do with royalty, something to do with imperial, something to do with majesty. It's a device, but that's the signal it gives off.

And still, I feel, does. So there's that. And then he puts that same hymn tune, that same chorale, over the top in the soprano line, in very slow triple movement, whilst all this is going on underneath.

But you'll hear it very clearly. But underneath, there are all these agitated eighth note statements. Wake, wake, wake, ye maids, or virgins. Listen to the call.

And it comes in, he sticks all this agitation underneath each statement of the chorale theme. And then there are these gaps while the orchestra sort of responds.

[34:16] And then those gaps start to close up. And he creates a sense of impending excitement, impending, well, wonder and victory.

See what you think. It isn't very long, but I would like to play it all. Make sure we've got the right one. Just think, this is original contemporary Christian music.

Bach wrote these cantatas. They're hot off the press for church use. Then, no doubt, he repeated a few, but it's extraordinary. How he did it, we don't know.

200 cantatas, including some secular ones. Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach, Bach.

So the hymn tune is in slow motion over the top, like a great arch.

[35:49] I did actually start this a little way in. So, where, where, where is it? Wo, wo. Wo. Actually, it's, sorry.

It's, where, where are you? To the virgins. Sorry. So that, da-dum, da-dum, is still going on in the bass.

Oh, no.

I need to fade it out, otherwise you won't get through the bass. You get the idea. The, the chef has done a wonderful job in preparing this meal of depicting that, which we, I think, have every reasonable right to assume lies behind the passage or augments it authentically.

Um, and of course there's very much more in the cantata. There are solos and, uh, but it's Bach's grip of an understanding of what these scriptural texts mean that is so startling.

[37:08] His own, his own private Bible was so heavily annotated that one critic has suggested it's as good as a commentary. Just loaded with, uh, observations and reflections.

Yes, I have to keep moving on because I'd like now to make a huge jump into the 20th century. Um, so, and I hope not to pack a will forgive me for skipping over Wagner.

And book Brooklyn. But time's against us. I did want you to hear this extraordinary man we've heard before, Arvo Pert, the Estonian Christian, a bit of a recluse, uh, composer of extraordinary music.

Um, and in one piece in particular here caught my eye because Trinity Western Choir with, uh, under Joel Tranquillo is going to do this work.

Um, and this is the passage that he sets. Now, when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment.

[38:24] And she poured it on his head as he would climb at table. Now, this is not the English translation that this choir is using. Nevertheless, it's, it's quite to the point.

When the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, why this waste? This could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor. But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, why do you trouble the woman?

For she's done a beautiful thing to me. You always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.

Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her. And this is how Arvo Pert sets it.

And you notice now that he is using sparseness, space, pace. Quite extraordinary piece of music, I think.

[39:22] See what you think. Ah, I wish that wouldn't do that. In the hearts of silent, I let it roll.

najng The Lord of us, the Lord of us, the heavenly precious Lord.

This is a King James version, I think, or Revised Standard. Use of dissonance to create tension. As he reclined at table.

So there's the ointment. But when it is by the song, they have indignation, with indignation, to what purpose is this waste?

For this ointment I have been sold for much, and given to the Lord.

[41:29] He takes a text and carries it. There's no repetition or melisma. It's just a straight presentation of the Gospel. These girls are the most open.

This is a choir to die for. It's Arts, Copenhagen. Why do you trouble the woman?

For she hath brought a good work upon me.

For she hath brought a good work upon me. So that's Christ's voice set in baritone range.

But me, dear, hath brought always.

[43:01] For in the Today's Day, Flourist, Flour60.

For in that She hath brought only side, and on my■■, she hath brought a good work upon me.

To my burial. To my burial. Space.

Wherever the gospel is preached.

What she has done will be in memory. Earth had done.

[45:01] Dictorian. Memorial. Memorial. Memorial.

Memorial. I don't know about you, I find it incredibly moving.

The interesting thing about that kind of music is, well, it's twofold. First of all, you need a stunning choir to bring it off. That close seconds, minor seconds, and so on, and the intervallic tuning has to be perfect.

And if it isn't, people start going, I don't think they've got all the right notes. But when it's done like that, it's very convincing.

The other thing is, it's not the kind of music you probably stick on for entertainment, or perhaps wouldn't take that on a cassette to somebody who's having a hard time in hospital.

[46:15] But it can function, well, yes, I'd be fine too. It can function at a teaching level, maybe that's it, where we have to just say, no, it's not what I prefer, it's what I need to hear.

Okay, this dish is not my favorite for Brussels sprouts, but even done by a gourmet cook. But I know it's good for me, and I should listen to it.

I don't know if there's a place, I think there is, for that. But, of course, to try and impose it, like then you become an arrogant chef and maitre d'. Right, so, Avel Pert.

There's another approach that one can take, which is to, once or more, on the tradition of Bach and others we've heard this morning, you can take a tune as seasonal as this.

A Sistine Rose in Sprungen, a rose, very much an Advent text.

[47:30] The beauty of the singing in some of these more straightforward pronouncements, like Vacherdauf at the beginning and then this, just the beauty, the care over the performance, like the care over preparation, the hospitality or a meal, registers at a level I can't quite justify.

You need to look at Roger Scruton on Why We Need Beauty on YouTube to get that explained to us. He thinks beauty redeems to some extent.

Okay. And then, listen to what this Swedish... This Swedish composer, yeah, Sandström, has done with it.

When I find it. When I find it. When I find it.

When I find it. When I find it. When I find it.

[49:03] Lord, I come to God. Gl ■■ donde sig singer de suente abue. In this country, what I call his guitar? What you are. Peace rise and hope. In this country, what you call his darle and the title of par excellence is.

so clearly setting up an atmosphere of wonder the coming of Christ out of the darkness this is an incredible choir it's Voches 8 young people they're graduate student age in fact nearly all the choirs you've heard are young so much for the music of the young once again you need perfect tuning to sustain this the tune is almost buried it's hinted at but it's there that's what's still there

So we have what we expect, and then we are surprised with the serving up of the dish.

This is not souped up.

This is authentic acoustic recording in a nice building. It almost sounds electronic in places. I found that extraordinary.

[52:28] So there we are. I've just given you a selection, just one more to go to conclude, of how a music like food can nourish us at different levels by enhancing a text, casting light on a text, causing us or giving us a moment to reflect on a text, like perhaps this, and as well as the basic emotions that we need to have fed in a healthy way.

Cheering up, made to think, rest, activity, energy, repose.

So just to conclude, from a contemporary Welsh-English composer, Carl Jenkins, he has set, very brief, and by way of closing, he has set the first two statements of the Gloria that we sing at Communion.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace towards all. And this is how he has set the first two statements of the chef that night.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace towards all. XIZING CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

[55:09] CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS there for us to enjoy and and I think there is there's modeling here for the future for the church doesn't have to be this sophisticated it's a question of sort of which road we take and whether our meal or meal may be very simple but is it going to be nutritious is it going to nourish us or is it going to be same old there's a danger in any style in the church and in fact as someone's deposited in England currently in a set of essays people are beginning to turn to the concert hall for church they that's not wise but it's happening it's not measurable but it's a feeling amongst musicians there the danger with that is you're not getting teach so so these are the angels of the birth of Christ they get more and more frantic frantic angels in society will you

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Yes? This idea that, I mean, one would suspect that what you just said, which is quite provocative, would be true that people are going to the concert hall then to experience a luminous kind of understanding of whatever that they're not, you're worried that they're not getting that in church.

So they still long for it, and they're going elsewhere? Is that sort of...? Well, that would be the argument. I wish I brought the book, because I can't remember the details. It's put out by an Oxford don. He's actually warden of a college, and he's gone to all the...

[59:26] He's gone to James McMillan, he's gone to Christopher, Christopher's the director of the Sixteen, and all these conductors and composers. I think he got hold at one point of Alvo Perth, but he had James McMillan as a very strong Christian voice.

And in their kind of roundtable assumptions, it is, or thoughts, it is that people, whereas once, certainly up to the time of Bach's death and Handel's death, you simply went to church to hear, well, either to hear or would hear fine music.

That's where it was contained for the average listener. The court would be the other place. After the... because it coincides with a number of things, the Enlightenment, of course, but there's this snap in 1750.

Bach dies, J.S. Bach dies, C.P.E. Bach's son, starts writing very much in another style. Johann Christoph Bach starts writing in a style that looks way ahead, more to the music that leaves the church and goes into the concert hall, the recycle hall, and the opera house.

It already was in the opera house, but it goes increasingly there. And the arts kind of leave the church in... not altogether, but in a rather serious way.

[60:54] Certainly in our heritage, in England, music takes a nosedive after the death of Handel. And there's a bleak, bleak, bleak period until the late Victorian era, and that's not to everyone's taste, but at least there was a revival.

This left things in the hands of Mendelssohn, who wasn't really English. And his music was infected very much by a Victorian sort of correctness.

There's no violence in Mendelssohn's music. So, I think it... And the music I grew up with in churches in England was appalling.

I'm sorry. Largely Victorian. Some Edwardian stuff, some very fine, but beyond the reach of most choirs and many an organist. And so you would... you grew up with, as most of my mates did, with very well-meant, I'm sure, and willingly volunteered music-making of a low level.

And you knew that the high level, or the best, the more exciting and engaging, lay in the concert hall or the local recital society. I remember the pianist Solomon came to perform in Scarborough, in Yorkshire.

[62:08] We were blown away. An occasional visiting organist would pop up at Bridlington Priory. We were knocked flat by this. Hadn't heard anything like it. Then you had the BBC, which helped if your radio worked.

And... Which in close four years it may not. We could pick up recordings, performances from Hilversum Radio. So the standards of music-making on the continent were very, very striking, especially in the matter of organ music, as it happens, but also choral music.

America was just a closed... was closed off to us in the class I grew up in. So yes, I think, take that on several decades, and people have kind of...

I meet people who are in despair, many Catholics who are in despair about music in the parish churches. And they will tend to sort of refill by going to Vancouver Chamber Choir or cantata singers or...

There's nothing wrong with that, and it can be a supplement. It's good. But there is just this possibility, it's a little bit of sheep-stealing from the churches. Sorry, I've just got one person at the back.

[63:20] Yeah, so I think... Francis Schaeffer did an analysis. I think it was John Page. I don't know if you're familiar. Yes. You know, he had written a piece where he just randomly chose a bunch of notes.

Yes. And what he was trying to do is kind of mimic the randomness of his worldview. Yeah. And I remember the piece was called Booing Yourself or something like this, where the orchestra played the piece, and of course it sounded dreadful.

Yeah. And at the end, the player just turns to kind of hiss. And, you know, what Schaeffer was pointing out is that this is the worldview that they actually did believe, or at least probably a good number of them had embraced, rejected God, embraced this randomness to the universe, and how can you produce beauty if there is actually randomness?

Mm-hmm. And so what my question to you is, is do you think there might be any kind of postmodern corollary to this? Like, that was obviously a modernist who was trying to, you know, explain randomness in music.

How do postmodernists deal with postmodern ideas in music and composition? Well, music tended to take it, I'm not a philosopher, but my understanding is music tended to take its independent course.

[64:35] It follows what you're saying to an extent. The modernist period, I think, is the most troublesome, where he fits in, along with Schoenberg and the Viennese school.

So, I played a symphony concert, I think Dr. Packer was at it. I was hired, because I used to play the organ for the symphony, I was hired to play harmonium in Schoenberg's six pieces, is it, for orchestra.

They last about 30 seconds each. It's a bit of an exaggeration. But they're very, you know, very finely constructed.

But there were people there who thought the orchestra was just tuning up, and they talked to each other. So there is that. And I think it was Schoenberg who announced that his music was, his new atonal language, which he perfected, the 12-tone scale, was the music of the next thousand years.

And a critic said, I think we've heard that somewhere before. It was an age that Boulay and Boulay's people like that, and Stravinsky in his more esoteric period, although he was a very thoughtful Christian man, nevertheless, they alienated a bulk of listeners, people who could have been friendly.

[65:52] But now, it's interesting that it's come back, especially through the choral music, because choral music has to be singable, otherwise you can't do it.

So Eric Whittaker, and I could go on, although you may not agree, and people like that. Suddenly, tonal music is back in.

It's okay. James McMillan, very much so. But it's peppered with this dissonance, as you heard in the Arvo Pert. So it kind of, I think if music holds too fast to some secular philosophy, it will die.

There has to be this back and forth exchange of ideas with always an eye on an audience. You've got to have an audience, otherwise. The BBC in England knows this. They want to introduce music, new music at the promenade concerts, but they really have to watch it.

Because if they're not careful, they'll end up with an empty house. It's very interesting. And under the old patronage of the church, up to the middle of the 18th century, you knew that you had to keep your cardinals and your church bosses happy.

[67:07] When the case of Bach, your session or your consistory, is that the right word? Happy, otherwise they'd be after you. And they were after them. They complained to Bach that they didn't like the harmonies he was using in some of the chorales.

Can you imagine saying that? So, I don't think it parallels the secular drifts precisely.

I think, if anything does, probably pop music does more. And the thing that holds it on a very steady course is, as Susan, my beloved wife, points out all the time, it's the words.

The music is totally predictable. There are no surprises like we've heard there. It won't work. And the length of pop songs, very much determined by things like the early days of radio broadcast and promotion.

You can't run a disc too long. Four minutes for a song, maximum. And it had to fit on a 45 RPM or a 10-inch 78 to go into the jukeboxes. So, artistic life is shaped.

[68:22] I was going to comment or add to the comments from the previous question. How about the, well, the cathedral choirs and some of the better parish churches?

Yes. And, of course, the college chapels as well. Yes. They have produced a lot of very religious and text-based music. Yes.

Going back to Vaughan Williams. Ah, yes. And John Rudder. Yeah. And other composers. Yes.

And in the Britain? Thank goodness, thank God for them, too. But you're right. You've put your nail, you've put your finger, you've hit the nail on the head. It is very much located in precisely those places you mentioned.

So if you, I sort of, personal stories may get tedious, but living in the wilds of East Yorkshire, we knew there was beautiful music at York Minster, 40 miles away, if you could afford the petrol or the bus fare to get there.

[69:23] And we couldn't, so we didn't go, and I never heard it. You could hear it if you were a BBC faithfully broadcast choral even song every Wednesday afternoon before, but I was at school, so I took care of that.

Well, I was in London, so. Ah, right. You see, the big cities always, you're always at an advantage. But on the broader scale. Okay.

One last question. We do need to finish. Yes. Okay. I have an outrageous suggestion. Right. So we hear this beautiful music, and thank you for this.

It was wonderful. But we have a group of amateurs who are able to let the pipes open and sing the Hallelujah Chorus a couple of times a year in our own church.

To what extent are directors of music not trying to include us in things that need not be perfect in order to make a glorious sound to the Lord?

[70:26] Yes. Good point. I think it's a matter at the moment of a batting average. I think there's lots of room for that. And I think personally, it's funny, because when I went to the States, we did it there for our Christmas concert.

We included the audience in that very piece. We knew it was going to be raucous, but it was great. But it had been set, once again, like a die. This is a jewel, that piece.

In an appropriate setting of music performed and things that they could join in, but there were descans that were done carefully over the top, just like Terry does with the Nine Lessons and Carols.

I think a quick last example answer is the music. I haven't played any of Paul Halley, who was in Halifax.

Brilliant, brilliant guy. He came from Ottawa, was in Victoria at the Cathedral briefly, but then went to St. John the Divine New York. He has written fantastic settings of Christmas carols.

[71:27] And we can just sing through the verses like that, but all around it, there's a brass quintet doing this, a choir singing over the top, an organ beefing the thing up in accordance with the text as it requires it.

And so it's a melding of the individually created and the participation of the people it's aimed at. And then, in a way, Bach did the same, but it's not quite the same.

So with that Bach cantata I played excerpts from, at the end there's a statement of Wacheta which everyone would have been encouraged to join in. So I don't think, mind you, it is different.

When you come to a Cambridge college, a famous story by Bernard Naylor, who retired in Victoria, his dad had been organized there, and this is an old story. And his dad heard somebody singing during the psalm from the congregation.

So he ran down the steps and said, you can't sing in here. He said, why not? It's the house of God, isn't it? He said, no it's not. It's Trinity College Chapel and don't you forget it.

[72:35] That's the extreme we have to avoid. Okay, well we've been lavishly nourished today.

Thank you very much. Dr. Packer will have the last word thanking Ed. Well, if you want to. I can't add substance to what you've already said.

I thought that it was really a magnificent presentation that Ed has given us. In my listening, it opened any number of doors through which I never listened analytically to deserve what was going on.

And, well, the doors must stand open. And I must listen analytically in future.

And I think that there's a great deal of listening that I need to do if I'm to enjoy the fullness of what God is giving us so lavishly.

[73:58] And us means persons with the broad Christian heritage that we have.

It's the us of the Western world with all of that and the tensions that have operated within it by people who, basically, are concerned to embrace it.

So, in, how can I say it? Listening this way will, I think, convince me increasingly that just as one becomes conscious in these days of disruptive forces, in the world of music making, so, I won't say equally, but I wonder whether equally isn't the right word.

So, what is operating side by side with that in the world of the professional music makers is a series of drives towards togetherness.

The togetherness, I mean, of themes, orchestral effects, contrasts within, I think, within a pattern.

[75:47] Words fail me beyond that. Okay. But, let me say it.

You asked for a word. I am... Now, here's the word. Okay. I am very glad that at the age of 91, I have been privileged to hear Ed talk as he's talked today and open all these doors of understanding, as I hope it is, and I think it is.

Open these doors of understanding as to what's going on. And, well, I don't know how long I shall be around to go on digging into this.

But, the clear knowledge that Ed has given us, that it's there to be dug into, that is something that I regard as precious.

Ed was, as I say it, a great friend already before we gave this talk.

[77:16] So, thank you, Ed. Thank you very much, Jeff. Thank you very much.