

GOOD HYMN, BAD HYMN

Let Us Love and Sing and Wonder

by John Newton (1725-1807)

Let us love and sing and wonder,
Let us praise the Savior's Name!
He has hushed the law's loud thunder,
He has quenched Mount Sinai's flame.
He has washed us with His blood,
He has brought us nigh to God.

Let us love the Lord Who bought us,
Pitied us when enemies,
Called us by His grace and taught us,
Gave us ears and gave us eyes:
He has washed us with His blood,
He presents our souls to God.

Let us sing though fierce temptation
Threaten hard to bear us down!
For the Lord, our strong Salvation,
Holds in view the conqueror's crown:
He Who washed us with His blood
Soon will bring us home to God.

Let us wonder; grace and justice
Join and point to mercy's store;
When through grace in Christ our trust is,
Justice smiles and asks no more:
He Who washed us with His blood
Has secured our way to God.

Let us praise and join the chorus
Of the saints enthroned on high;
Here they trusted Him before us,
Now their praises fill the sky:
"Thou hast washed us with Your blood;
Thou art worthy, Lamb of God!"

Hark! the Name of Jesus sounded
Loud, from golden harps above!
Lord, we blush, and are confounded,
Faint our praises, cold our love!
Wash our souls and songs with blood,
For by Thee we come to God.

(See www.cyberhymnal.org/html/l/e/letuslove.htm)

Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen

by Susan Palo Cherwien

Rise, O church, like Christ arisen,
from this meal of love and grace;
may we through such love envision
whose we are, and whose our praise.
Alleluia, alleluia;
God, the wonder of our days.

Rise, transformed, and choose to follow
after Christ, though wounded, whole;
broken, shared, our lives are hallowed
to release and to console,
Alleluia, alleluia;
Christ, our present, past, and goal.

Rise, remember well the future
God has called us to receive;
present by God's loving nurture,
Spirited then let us live.
Alleluia, alleluia;
Spirit, grace by whom we live.

Service be our sure vocation;
courage be our daily breath;
mercy be our destination
from this day and unto death
Rise, O church, a living faith.

(ELW 548)

What's Wrong. What's Right.

The Cherwien hymn, above, is a "we, we, we" hymn. It's all about us – and how we are good and do "soft" good works. God is even defined in reference to us: Stanza 1: "God, the wonder of our days", 2: "Christ, our present, past, and goal," and 3: "Spirit, grace by whom we live." It's all about us.

"God" is nice and neutered – not a God of "holy love" who hates sin and evil. Finally, "God" is vaguely Trinitarian = God, Christ, Spirit, but never Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who mutually identify each other.

What a contrast to the glorious Newton hymn about how Jesus Christ alone saves us sinners.