

Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology

By Richard J. Mouw, Mark A. Noll




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While many evangelical congregations have moved away from hymns and hymnals, these were once central fixtures in the evangelical tradition. This book examines the role and importance of hymns in evangelicalism, not only as a part of worship but as tools for theological instruction, as a means to identity formation, and as records of past spiritual experiences of the believing community.

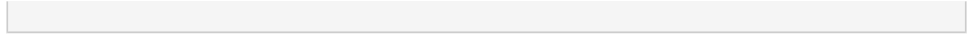
Written by knowledgeable church historians, *Wonderful Words of Life* explores the significance of hymn-singing in many dimensions of American Protestant and evangelical life. The book focuses mainly on church life in the United States but also discusses the foundational contributions of Isaac Watts and other British hymn writers, the use of gospel songs in English Canada, and the powerful attraction of African-American gospel music for whites of several religious persuasions. Includes appendixes on the American Protestant Hymn Project and on hymns in Roman Catholic hymnals.

Contributors:

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Esther Rothenbusch Crookshank
Kevin Kee
Richard J. Mouw
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- Sales Rank: #1406328 in Books
- Published on: 2004-03-02
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .79" w x 6.00" l, .94 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 308 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

Joel Carpenter

"At least since the time when Paul and Silas sang from the depths of the Philippian jail, praising God with hymns has been central to the Christian faith. Isn't it odd, then, that so little careful study has been devoted to popular hymnody? True religion, Jonathan Edwards once said, can never be doctrinal knowledge only, 'without affection.' Vital faith is rather 'a ferment, a vigorous engagedness of the heart.' Few human acts can so powerfully fuse heads, hearts, hands, and voices like singing, and these authors show how multidimensional vocal praise has been. For American Protestants, hymn singing is nearly sacramental; it also can be political. Hymn singing expresses theological ideas, challenges common wisdom, defines and enacts community, and roots the gospel in culture. *Wonderful Words of Life* models the kind of scholarship we need for every time and place where Christianity has gone, to understand the powerful effects of ordinary people singing praise to God. "

John Wilson

"Collections of scholarly essays typically gather dust, their spines hardly cracked, their pages pristine and unread. By contrast, copies of this superb book will soon be as well-thumbed as your grandmother's hymnal. If you want to understand the evangelical stream of what gets called 'religion in practice' these days, there's no better place to start. "

William Hutchison

"This stimulating collection provides much-needed coverage and enrichment in a neglected sector of American religious experience. The thoughtful and thought-provoking essays do not 'their own appointed limits keep,' but venture in illuminating ways beyond the American scene and beyond evangelical Protestantism. Teachers of cultural and religious history will be indebted to these authors."

Journal of the American Academy of Religion

"A welcome addition to our knowledge and evaluation of important strands of American hymnody."

From the Back Cover

Foreword by John D. Witvliet

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Written by knowledgeable church historians, under the supervision of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, "Wonderful Words of Life explores the significance of hymn-singing in many dimensions of American Protestant and evangelical life. The book focuses mainly on church life in the United States but also discusses the foundational contributions of Isaac Watts and other British hymn writers, the use of gospel songs in English Canada, and the powerful attraction of African-American gospel music for whites of several religious persuasions. Includes appendixes on the American Protestant Hymn Project and on hymns in Roman Catholic hymnals.

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About the Author

Richard J. Mouw is president and professor of Christian philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. His many other books include *Uncommon Decency*, *Praying at Burger King*, and *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal*

Mark A. Noll is Francis A. McAnaney Professor of History at the University of Notre Dame.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Fincher:

The ability that you get from Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology may be the more deep you digging the information that hide in the words the more you get considering reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to be aware of but Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by anyone who read the item because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This particular book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this kind of Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology instantly.

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Charles Lee:

The book untitled Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains your ex idea with easy technique. The language is very clear and understandable all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read that. The book was written by famous author. The author will bring you in the new time of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site and order it. Have a nice study.

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