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Addressing, Teaching, and Admonishing One Another in Psalms

by John H. Starks, Jr.

In November of 1995, the chorus of the Cole Mill Road Church of Christ presented to the congregation a program of songs and scripture-readings based on the Psalms. That presentation was accompanied by a bulletin article introducing the Psalms as vehicles for worship. Both the article and the program are reprinted here.

The poetry and music of the Psalms have, for centuries, inspired God's people to worship him with heart and soul. They were the songbook of the children of Israel and first-century Christians alike; the words continue to be set to music that supports their message for audiences of diverse times and cultures. The Psalms rest on the balance between the human passion for music and the grand spiritual theme of psalmic poetry, a natural language for music.

The Psalms continue to be recast as songs because they mirror every facet of our day-to-day relationship with our God. First and foremost, they recognize God himself in all his many aspects: Creator, Ruler, Protector, Provider, Avenger, Redeemer, Father, Friend. The psalmic themes span the unbe-

lievable gulf that we sometimes feel must exist between the God of absolute majesty and power and the God of intimate acquaintance and reassurance.

The Psalms are equally powerful as the honest outpourings of the human spirit at its spiritual best and worst. They express our sincerest hopes and our deepest fears, our most profound joys and our bitterest tears, our most cherished beliefs and our most troubling doubts. They are our prayers elaborated to the highest level of expression, but expressed from the deepest recesses of our hearts.

Because of these inspirational powers inherent in the Psalms, our Chorus is very proud to offer today a few musical settings of both grand and personal psalms that reflect the diversity in the book. Their musical settings, like the texts, range from traditional to contemporary, from Russian canticle to African-American spiritual. We thank God for the talents he has given us, and for the opportunity we have been given by him and the church here to praise his name and to inspire others through a musical expression of the words of the Psalms. In this we proclaim with James, "Let anyone who is happy, sing a Psalm!" (James 5:13).

Glory, Praise, Honor: Psalms in Song and Scripture

presented by the Cole Mill Road Church of Christ Chorus

Sunday, November 12, 1995 1:30 PM

Welcome, Introduction, and Reading: Psalm 117	John Starks
<i>Psalm 117: O Praise the Lord</i>	John Timothy Laverty (1955)
Readings: Psalm 42: 1-5	Mark Matson
Psalm 40:1-5	Michael Claxton
<i>A Psalm of Hope</i>	Robert H. Young (1995)
Reading: Psalm 96	Paul Watson
<i>Sing Ye Unto the Lord</i>	Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)
Reading: Psalm 113:1-8	Robert Broadus
<i>Psalm 113 (Praise Ye the Lord)</i>	M. Ippolitof-Ivanof (1859-1935)
Reading: Psalm 23	Mark Shoun
<i>The Lord's My Shepherd</i>	Jessie S. Irvine (1872)
Reading: Psalm 122	Davey Twombly
<i>I Was Glad</i>	Stephen Curtis Lance (1988)
Reading: Psalm 9:1-11	Jerry Pence
<i>They That Know Thy Name</i>	Jerry Wesley Harris (1990)
Reading: Psalm 121	Wilton Dubois
<i>I Will Look to the Hills</i>	Charles Garner (1988)

John Starks is one of the song leaders of the Cole Mill Road Church of Christ. He and his wife **Kathy** jointly lead a congregational choral group.