

The Comprehending Soul: Open Minds and Hearts

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King Benjamin begins his powerful speech to his people with these words:

I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak, but that you should hearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view. [Mosiah 2:9]

I quote that scripture not to set up the expectation that my address today will begin to compare to his, nor to caution you against trifling with my words, but to ask you to consider Benjamin's entreaty for his people to listen not only with ears but also with hearts and minds.

You know that it is not just King Benjamin who uses these words. Many other prophets throughout scripture make frequent reference to, and coupling of, *heart* and *mind*. Often, especially in the Book of Mormon, the reference is a caution against hard hearts and blinded minds, but there are other references, some of which I will quote later, that encourage open minds and soft hearts as we strive to live the gospel.

The need for coupling minds that think, reason, and evaluate with hearts that perceive, feel, and experience has been on my mind a great deal, especially these last months. In fact, when I was asked to give this devotional address, the issue I wanted to consider was immediately clear to me.

One month from now the forty members of this past year's edition of Brigham Young University Singers will reunite here for a week of intense rehearsals before departing for Australia, where we will be the United States' representative to the Fourth International Choral Symposium. We will sing three concerts at the symposium, the first of which is to take place in the Sydney Opera House. You can imagine how a sense of intimidation has tried to overwhelm us in this opportunity to bring the name of Brigham Young University to this astute international gathering.

But we have countered such misgivings with a commitment to prepare ourselves for

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performances that are full of heart and mind, performances that will not only have the capacity to be aesthetically challenging and satisfying but also to bring the Spirit into the willing hearts and minds of those who listen.

I am gratified when issues of professional growth relate to an increase in knowledge of—and ability to live—the principles of the gospel. Music and gospel living are both very important to me. And as I speak, in this university community setting, from my expertise in music, I hope you will consider the parallels I attempt to establish between good music-making and gospel living—and then draw your own personal conclusions that will help you integrate, organize, and perhaps even simplify the important facets of your lives.

Just a moment ago you heard Veronica and Kaarin sing a beautiful American hymn that became much more meaningful to me as I learned its history.

In 1876 Horatio G. Spafford bid farewell to his wife and four daughters as they departed on a ship to visit relatives in Europe. Some days later their ship collided with another steamship in the mid-Atlantic. Before it sank, Mrs. Spafford prayed with her daughters and committed them to the mercy of the Lord. She never saw her children again in mortality. Mrs. Spafford was rescued and sent this cable to her husband, “*SAVED ALONE.*” While on the Atlantic, on his own voyage to bring his wife home, he wrote the words to this hymn:

*When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

What occurred here? While suffering the tragic loss of his children and undoubtedly knowing his wife’s trauma and sorrow, how is it that a man can come to such an expression? Here is a stunning example of heart and mind functioning together for the wellbeing of the

soul. In sorrow, disappointment, or frustration, the answer—though seldom, if ever, easy begins with our ability to keep mind and heart connected and working together.

This issue is a strong example of the analogies that can be drawn between good music-making and gospel living. Music is a felicitous combination of science and art, where laws of physics, something understood at a cognitive level, are manipulated into sounds that express something to be understood at a feeling level. That is the ideal—the summoning of mind and heart, both in composition and in performance of music. But often that ideal is not realized because one or the other is not, for whatever reason, roused or invited to play its full role.

I am sure you have witnessed the sounds of musical compositions being served up by way of computer technology. For a while the experience is arresting because the musical sounds are perfect—in pitch, dynamics, rhythm, and meter. Perfect. Perfectly boring! The subtle nuance resulting from personal expression of that which is understood only at a feeling level—the heart—is missing. On the other hand, listen to this line from a recent review—not a very nice review—by Bernard Holland, music critic for the *New York Times*: “The sincerest passions do little good without the thoughtful application of detail” Performances founded only in the emotion of music often become reckless, confusing, or maudlin, whereas performances based only on the science or techniques of music-making are wooden, mechanical, cerebral.

If we are accustomed to meeting music only on the grounds of its ear-titillating value, experiencing it only at a feeling level, we may balk at the idea of bringing the mind to the experience as well. The peculiar “par excellence” emotionality of music may enthrall to the extent that a mindful consideration of the music’s construction or design is seen as superfluous. Music is built by craftsmanship and a sense of order. But there are those who feel

that embracing this fact will, in some way, decrease the degree of its inspiration or leave it emotionally sterile. The great American conductor Robert Shaw says, “There is a spiritual quality to pattern itself, the awareness of which may be one of the chief qualifications of the mature artist.”

Or if we are accustomed to meeting music only on the grounds of its construction—its pattern or design—or its value to the eye more than the ear, we may find the process of bringing the heart to the experience highly suspect, even embarrassing.

It is not difficult to see good reasons for this approach. Our culture is based on excess. Material abundance and the pace, cacophony, and crowdedness of life leave our awareness blunted, our senses dulled. There is a great call today, our own Church leaders being some of the strongest voices, for us to recover the sharpness of our senses, to heighten our awareness, to learn to see more, to hear more, to feel more. And not only just in performance but in composition of music as well, if the music is to be vital. As a moral force, possessing the ability to communicate at any deeper level, it must have heart and mind: feeling or emotion coupled with a sense of reason, substance, and form.

Be careful when judging music only on how it makes you feel or whether or not it makes you cry. On the other hand, don’t dismiss Mozart because there are too many notes or Bach because the walls of sound in his majestic structures are sometimes difficult to penetrate to realize their consummate beauty.

A few years ago a good sister in my ward asked me to give the outlined Relief Society lesson dealing with one of the church cantatas of Bach. I was grateful for the opportunity to examine with those sisters some of the reasoning and the feeling behind the detail that can be so formidable in his works: the florid melodic decoration of the word *Freude* or *joy*; the accidental sharp signs—which at Bach’s

time were written as crosses—appearing in the music as Bach tells of the Crucifixion; or the brilliant upward flourish of notes composed to the word *Auferstehung* or “resurrection.” I was so pleased that those who had never experienced Bach this way began to share my own affinity for this great preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As with so much else in life, one has to bring both heart and mind to Bach. You cannot check either at the door if you want to taste the full reward of the experience. Logic does not militate against the expressiveness of art, and feeling is a creation’s breath of life.

An even better description of this issue can be drawn from a review of several years ago that greatly praised a concert given by the American cellist Yo Yo Ma. The program consisted not of one but of all six of the dense, slow-moving Suites for Unaccompanied Cello by Bach.

Just one of the suites [the review states] is usually considered a challenge enough for an artist and a heavy burden for an audience to bear. But the sell-out audience in Carnegie Hall was even more enthusiastic at the end of the concert than when the artist first came to the stage.

The review then relates parts of the critic’s conversation with Ma, in which the artist speaks of his strenuous preparation process for such a performance.

All of my preparation [he says] was designed to build enough mental and emotional as well as physical stamina to allow me to share something of what the music means. When such preparation works, you are so into the music that you don’t control it anymore. You are led by it. Bach takes you to that very quiet place within yourself, to the inner core, a place where you are calm and at peace.

For me, the necessary elements for such an unusual triumph begin with a person’s God-

given gift, to be sure. But then comes the intellectual and physical preparation that allows the artist to solve the great technical problems and also a preparation involving his heart and mind that allows him to communicate the profound expressions of great music.

But now let's expand the thought not just to all of the arts but to all of life. Mary Caroline Richards writes that "all the arts we practice are apprenticeship. The big art is our life" (quoted by Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way*, [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1992], p. 83).

I remember my high school English teacher attempting to inspire us to experience the total beauty of some poetry we were studying. Our questions of "What does it mean?" were countered with a gentle "No, how does it mean?" "Where does the poem take your thinking and your feeling?"

I remember that teacher often when I have reason to study Isaiah. Perhaps Isaiah has been set to music so often because that book requires the heart, because it needs so much understanding at a feeling level. Yet the true value of reading, studying, and meditating upon any scripture is to be realized only to the extent we bring both open mind and heart to the experience. And the same is true with prayer. *The New Jewish Prayer Book* says, "Make every effort to pray from the heart. In the eyes of the Lord the effort is precious, even if you do not succeed."

At the time of the well-publicized explosion of a highly unconventional family, the man, in explanation of his misbehavior, said simply, "The heart wants what the heart wants." But he tragically forgot that the mind does *not* have to give the heart what it wants, that the ability to feel and think is what lifts us above the rest of the animal kingdom and makes us only "a little lower than the angels" (Psalm 8:5).

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the elders of the Church at Kirtland are told:

Be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.

Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind. [D&C 64:33–34]

Several years ago at the funeral of a man who had served as dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications, one of the speakers, who had been the deceased man's counselor in a stake presidency, spoke of the man's ability to be "romantic without being a Romantic." I am sure he meant that the man was visionary, able to dream of a better world, able to yearn for the ideal, but all without compromising his sense of fact, his ability to be realistic and practical, his sense of right and wrong.

Here is the combination of heart and mind, striving to find the best of all possible worlds. The heart, with its power to feel, is disciplined by the mind with its power to reason. The mind, with its power to understand at a cognitive level, can be tempered, appeased, and taught patience by the heart with its power to understand at a feeling level.

As we are encouraged to study the scriptures, we are sometimes told that "it is one thing to know the gospel is true, and another to know the gospel." We hear and read stirring testimonies of people who knew by spiritual manifestation that the Book of Mormon was true as they first took it into their hands or as they heard someone else bearing testimony of its divine origin. Although that sort of testimony—an understanding at a feeling level—is of greatest importance, it will only grow, strengthen, and endure as one seeks to understand at a thinking level the doctrines recorded in the book.

And then there are those principles, a testimony of which comes only as we live them. We can be taught a particular principle by leaders we hold to be prophets, seers, and revelators and understand the principle very well at a cognitive level. But the understanding at the

feeling level comes only as we strive to incorporate the principle as a consistent part of our lives.

Left long enough without the mitigation of the heart, the mind becomes cruel, divisive, tactical, hypercritical, vain, obsessive, disillusioned, or cynical. Without a stabilizing mind, the heart becomes impulsive, manipulative, mawkish, insipid, dark, cold.

It seems to me that if either the mind or heart assumes singular control without the tempering value or the discipline of the other, we are left facing the “natural man,” that “enemy to God,” which we are told is to be “putteth off” (Mosiah 3:19). Some call this the shadow side of our lives that attempts to block coordination of heart and mind in our behavior so that openness, flexibility, perspective, and progress are thwarted.

The putting off of the natural man then becomes one of life’s greatest challenges and adventures. Robert Shaw writes:

There is no landscaped, easy-approach to beauty and truth. You scratch and scramble around intellectual granites. You try to diffuse or tether your emotional tantrums. You pray for the day when your intellect and your instinct can co-exist, so that the brain need not calcify the heart nor the heart flood and drown all reason. But in that struggle lies the tolerable dignity and a tolerable destiny.

As we proceed with heart and mind together, this putting off of the natural man becomes more of a unifying process as we seek, according to the Savior’s charge, to reconcile ourselves to our enemy. With heart and mind working together, passions and appetites can be bridled and brought within the guidelines the Lord has set. By finding appropriate means for their expression, these ambitions or passions can be elevated to high and holy purpose. We come to terms with the shadow side of ourselves without compromising our commitment to gospel living. And as we are taught

in 2 Nephi 10:24, we reconcile the natural man to our spiritual selves as we strive to be reconciled to God through his grace.

The scriptures and Church history are full of dramatic stories involving this reconciliation process. And it is in an analogous reconciliation process that art is often born—where soulful imaginings find expression through the control of form and technique. For example, consider the anguished outcries in the extreme dynamics and dramatic percussive effects in the glorious music of Beethoven as he sought personal reconciliation to growing deaf.

The natural man wants us to proceed in life’s challenges and adventures with only one of the two necessary parts of ourselves in operation. James Hillman was writing about a particular field but could have been writing about the general shifts in educational thought ever since the Enlightenment when he wrote:

Psychology has been unconcerned with myth and imagination, and has shown little care for history, beauty, sensuousness, or eloquence—the Renaissance themes. Its pragmatism, whether in clinic or laboratory, kills fantasy or subverts it into the service of practical goals. Love becomes a sexual problem, religion an ethnic attitude, soul a political badge. No chapters are more barren and trivial in the textbooks of psychological thought than those on imagination, emotion, and the living of life or the dying of death.

On the other hand, there are those of us who lose ourselves so much in a particular passion or become so absorbed in a specific search that we lose a sense of equilibrium or perspective in our lives. My own passion for music, for example, would take every bit of time and attention I possess and then still ask for more. As we follow only where the heart or the mind separately might lead, we find ourselves physicians without mercy, scientists without conscience, artists without morals, scholars without scruples.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14, Paul says, “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

With coordination of mind and heart we continue the process of reconciling the natural man to the spiritual man. By working with mind and heart together, we best prepare to understand and assume responsibility for our choices. And with mind and heart both participating in those choices, we can find our way to self-reliance, morality, principles, character, and integrity.

But what a balancing act! There are endless complications: We will not escape hurt feelings. We *will* experience loss and disappointment. The gifts we offer, which we may view as the best and most appropriate things within us, may be received with little appreciation, with disdain, or they may be refused altogether. The heart will want to harden or close and leave the mind free to take offense or seek retaliation or retribution, or it will want to rebel against what an otherwise connected heart and mind know to be true.

By design we are asked to live with the stress of unanswered questions, paradox, incongruity, enigma, and seeming absurdity, which will try our tenacity, patience, and faithfulness. Our thinking will be challenged, our powers of reason will be overwhelmed, leaving the heart free to wander toward an unrealistic world of self-deception.

I received a call from a student with whom I had worked closely during her undergraduate work here. This anxious telephone call began an exchange of correspondence that was very inspiring to me, especially as it all began as my son lay in a coma as a result of an accident on his mission in Namibia. With her permission I will tell you some of the circumstances of her story to make my point.

While at BYU this student had distinguished herself as a vocal music major. She

sang beautifully, she was very strong academically, and she played the piano very well. After graduation she and her husband moved on for graduate work at a very reputable university, where she was enjoying continued progress and some wonderful and important solo opportunities.

She anxiously told me in that first telephone conversation that she had been in final rehearsals for a major opera production in which she had been cast in a leading role and that she was preparing for one of her graduate recitals. She said that the realization of how she was being blessed had brought her to a point where she had consciously rededicated her ability and opportunities to sing to the Lord for his glory and the furthering of his work. But then something she hardly expected occurred.

“I’ve forgotten how to sing,” she said. “My voice, especially my high notes, has been taken away from me!” She was devastated.

She was a singer who sang not just with beautiful tone but with enormous expressive ability and musical accuracy and security as well. A lot of heart and mind there! This was in large measure the means by which she had been defined in the minds of others, and even to some extent in her own mind. How ironic that at the very time she had purposely and consciously rededicated her ability and hard work to the Lord, it all seemed to be taken away. She was heartsick. So much so that—quite naturally—her heart was running away from her power to think, to reason, and then to trust.

I asked if her testimony of a loving Father in Heaven and an atoning Savior was still strong. At her positive response, I encouraged her to use that testimony as a means to begin reasoning through her painful circumstance. I asked what she would do if she could never sing again. She had trouble facing that thought. I told her that the situation seemed to me to be one where, because of her preparation, she

was well into some advanced study in some of those cardinal virtues of life: faith, love, trust, patience, and knowledge of self—including purposes and potentials.

I said to her, “You were saying, ‘Lord, I am ready,’ and he, of course, takes that as a cue to initiate you further along the prickly path of spiritual, emotional, soulful progress.”

In subsequent letters I wrote:

You dedicated to Him what you perhaps saw as the most valuable part, the most meaningful facet of you. And what happens? He throws a wrench in the whole consecrating process—or so it might seem. But He knows us. He loves us more than we can even imagine. He is never far away from us, especially when we are suffering. And we can rely on that love and support to sustain us no matter what. Though all else fails, though our fondest hopes and plans be dashed, though we be rejected or refused by the world or any who inhabit it, He is there. Though we feel devastated, He sees the lovable, beautiful, perfect facet at our core that is worthy of His sustenance and supportive grace. If we can sense His love, His concern, His attentive presence, then we can be at peace just putting one foot in front of another, attempting to walk uprightly before Him, willing to submit to all that He asks, being quick to set our path aright when we come to our senses and realize we have strayed, willing to sacrifice our talents or intentions or desires or position or a friendship or a son or . . . or . . . or, all because we know that everything will work to our best good in the end, that all loose ends will find reconciliation in Him.

Perhaps this is not just a two-week or two-year trial period for you. Perhaps you never will sing again, which would be difficult for many of us to understand. But perhaps this is a rough and irritating grain of sand that has been placed into that most tender, sensitive, essential part of you. Perhaps this is a struggle in your life that will continue to cause you a heavy heart and many sorrowful tears. If this all be the case, I would challenge you to use your bright mind, enormous energy, and vivid

imagination to make your suffering fruitful. You can seize the opportunity to learn to be very sensitive and receptive to the Comforter and all the ministering angels that Father in Heaven puts into our paths.

You can use the experience to discover what the Lord wants you to know about yourself, and the full measure of your creation. Then you can learn to get more outside yourself to a greater appreciation of others, especially their dignity in the face of their own struggles and heartaches. And because of your own suffering, you can be a mortal “ministering angel” to their needs. Because of your suffering, you will know what to do and how to do it. And through such positive fruits of your sorrow, and by the atoning grace of the Savior, that painful, hard grain inside you can be coated again and again by your righteous efforts until the day you can place a beautiful, precious pearl into His sacred hand, all in appreciation for His atoning sacrifice and all He has taught you.

We all have felt, just as did this wonderful young woman, the natural inclination to allow the heart to overbalance or sometimes even exclusively rule our behavior when we are desolate. Or we have felt the opposite, and just as common situation, where our thinking has closed the heart and is in sole control. I think our lives consist mostly of subtle shifts back and forth between these two situations. This is an interesting micro-reflection of the larger, more dramatic swings back and forth from the objective to the subjective in the history of the humanities. But with us as individuals, the Holy Ghost can touch our minds when the heart is in trouble, or our hearts when the mind has misstepped, so that each can again balance, discipline, and complement the other.

As we live in but not of the world, our growth will require taking risks dealing with difficult issues such as our own passions or yearnings, our preoccupations or fears. But as we strive to employ both heart and mind, keeping them connected—equally yoked—we

can remain open to the promptings of the Holy Ghost. And rather than enduring passively or suffering in unproductive silence, we can remain connected to our creativity and our ability to change and repent, to improvise, to be spontaneous, to make the most and do the most with what we have been given.

I was so heartened and uplifted as President Hinckley spoke in the concluding session of April conference and shared with us some of the anxiety he was feeling about the broadcast of the *60 Minutes* segment about the Church to be shown later that evening. It was obvious he was still experiencing misgivings about the risk he had taken to advance the Lord's work. His keen knowledge of whom and what he represents was adding to his apprehension in this dangerous situation. Of course I rejoiced as I saw how successfully he met the situation and how favorably he and the Church were depicted. But of even greater significance to me was our mighty leader asking for our understanding while showing us how to successfully meet the anxiety of challenge and risk with heart and mind.

There are those times when the Holy Ghost speaks with great force to both mind and heart. Oliver Cowdery—whose story, by the way, includes a long and difficult reconciliation process—desired to share the opportunity to translate the plates. The Lord, in preparing him to do so, said: “Behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart” (D&C 8:2).

It is a deep, spiritual experience when such inspiration comes to us—when we are told in both our mind and in our heart. Such an experience is to be treasured up and not spoken of lightly or often. Notwithstanding my strong feelings to the contrary, I have been repeatedly prompted to share with you a personal experience of this nature that is sacred to me but helpful, I trust, to someone else just now.

In 1991, as the world marked the 150th year since the death of Mozart, the BYU Singers were invited by the Israel Chamber Orchestra to join them for a series of all-Mozart concerts performed throughout their country. We faced enormous opposition as we were preparing for the trip. We thought for a long while that the Kuwaiti-Iranian conflict had finished all plans for the trip. But as that conflict ended, President Lee told us to proceed with faith and confidence.

We arrived in Israel with great excitement and anticipation and found, much to my chagrin, that the greatest conflict we were to meet was a conflict with the orchestra itself. This is a professional orchestra, made up of sophisticated musicians, most of whom have immigrated to Israel from Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, and the United States. I am sure they were grumbling to themselves as this totally unknown, probably inexperienced choral conductor from a department of music of one of those American universities was introduced at the first of our two rehearsals. To make matters worse, the orchestra had been trained to play with a delayed attack, coming after the ictus of the conductor's beat. That means that rather than playing at the point where my conducting pattern would create the beat, they would slightly delay the sound. I have observed and been puzzled by conductors who work this way and *was* inexperienced when it came to that sort of music-making.

Although the attitude of the orchestra changed noticeably as they heard the musical preparation and sound of our choir, the rehearsal was riddled with precision problems that were totally unacceptable in any music, but doubly so in Mozart, where precision of articulation, dynamic shifts, attacks, and releases is elemental to the music's sound and style. Though the music had held together generally, I left that rehearsal sick at heart. What was I going to do?

We were the orchestra's guests in the country. We knew of the delicate relationship of our Church, particularly the university's Jerusalem Center, and the Israeli government. We were on a mission to build goodwill. We had been told by then Elder Hunter that our mission was not to harvest, probably not even to plant, but to clear away a few more stones. And I did not want to start throwing verbal stones at members of that orchestra and impede our greater purpose for being there.

We were lodging at the Jerusalem Center because the Gulf War had forced cancellation of the Semester Abroad Program that season. I spent most of that night standing at the window of the room where my wife and I were staying, looking out over the Old City wondering what more I should have done to prepare and praying earnestly for the right way to approach our last rehearsal the following morning.

Morning came, and when Jan was ready to go up to breakfast, I told her to go without me, that I wanted to fast. After she had left, my heart was increasingly heavy, and I knew I had to speak my anxiety aloud. I walked over to my bed, and as I knelt down, even before I could address Father in Heaven, two words were spoken forcefully and simultaneously to my mind and to my heart: "Be strong."

"But be courteous," I added of my own accord.

And then the words came a second time, as forcefully as before: "Be strong."

I knew then and know now that this was a great blessing, given not so much for me as for the small contribution toward the unfolding of a very large work. On the bus from Jerusalem down to Tel Aviv, Jan squeezed my hand and asked what I was going to do. "Be strong," I answered. As we began that last rehearsal, I stated my expectation as clearly and as firmly as I could. The orchestra understood, and with only the need for small reminders, we found

the precision, the musicality, the greater communication we all sought.

"Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind" (D&C 64:34). Only with heart and mind working together—or, in more common language, only with a broken heart and a contrite spirit—can we come to that state of serenity that Paul calls a peace "which passeth all understanding." But listen to the way Paul communicates this promise: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

Several years ago I encountered an old Shaker hymn that in text and music is a stunning example of the very sort of life made possible as mind and heart are combined in faith and testimony to meet and rise above the clamor and woes of the world. The text evidences a heart and a mind that are meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to the Lord. The text possesses a directness and fervor that invoke a nobility in the pursuit of righteousness. The text is borne to mind and heart by an arresting melody, seemingly shaped or worn by lifetimes of tears and suffering. Yet it is a melody out of whose perfection in design emerges a sense of comfort and peace.

In closing I offer you an arrangement of this exquisite hymn taped two years ago by the Brigham Young University Singers, together with my testimony, which I bear in the name of Jesus Christ, that priesthood power is real; that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Redeemer; that his gospel is true; and that as we strive to live it with heart and mind, our might and strength will be focused and magnified.

The music shall be my *Amen*.

"How Can I Keep from Singing"

*My life flows on in endless song;
Above earth's lamentation*

*I hear the real though far-off hymn
That hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing;
It sounds an echo in my soul:
How can I keep from singing.*

*When tyrants tremble sick with fear
And hear their death-knells ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near,
How can I keep from singing.
In prison cell or dungeon vile
Our thoughts to them are winging,
When friends by shame are undefiled,
How can I keep from singing.*

*What if my joys and comforts die,
I know that Truth is living.
What though the darkness 'round me close?
Still Truth its light is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that Rock I'm clinging;
Since Love is Lord of heav'n and earth:
How can I keep from singing.*

*I lift my eyes, the cloud grows thin,
I see the blue above it.
And day by day this pathway smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.
The peace from love makes fresh my heart,
A song of hope is springing.
All things are mine since Truth I've found:
How can I keep from singing.*