

Songs in the Heart

In *Meditations from a Prison Cell*, F. Olin Stockwell, one of the last missionaries to leave Communist China, wrote about his imprisonment at a center where the Communist leaders were indoctrinating young people in Marxist ideology.

Every afternoon and evening, the leaders would teach the young people and then set the teachings to music. China was singing herself into the Communist worldview, Stockwell wrote.

Writing on the subject of music and its impact, Dr. David Jeremiah, senior pastor of the Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif., pointed out in his book *Turning Points* that everyone “has had the experience of hearing a song on the radio or a hymn from childhood and being able to sing along ‘by heart’ because of the emotional ‘hooks’ these songs set in us. And it is from an emotional level – the level of the heart – that God wants us to worship Him as well as from the mind.”

Jimmy Rhodes, master musician who has performed concerts for residents in Life Care and Century Park centers all across the country, has told story after story of how these senior men and women respond to music by tapping their feet, clapping their hands and singing along. Some residents with Alzheimer’s disease, who haven’t spoken for long periods of time, suddenly burst into song at the sound of familiar tunes.

Some of the most heartfelt and theologically oriented worship in the Bible is found in the Psalms, the hymnbook of Israel, Dr. Jeremiah said.

“With the abundance of edifying Christian music available today in varying audio formats, there is no reason for the home and heart of every Christian not to be filled with worshipful songs,” he said.

Since God knows you “by heart,” make sure yours is a heart of rejoicing.

My heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him (Psalm 28:7).

– Beecher Hunter