

Learning to love Jesusy love songs

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I grew up on evangelical praise choruses. I cut my musical teeth playing them at church. As a young adult I found a home in a more liturgical church, and I turned against choruses with a vengeance. I adopted two go-to arguments: worship isn't about me and my personal-relationship-with-Jesus, and its purpose isn't to pump me full of arena-rock enthusiasm.

I'm still not a big fan, but I've softened a bit on choruses. Time has dulled my reactionary, know-it-all edge. I'm also aware that, while outsiders lob the same old criticisms at praise bands, sharper and more attentive internal critiques have been made and heard--resulting in some better, less individualistic, more substantive songs. Most importantly, I'm less prone these days to speak in restrictive terms about what worship is and isn't. Instead, a decade of observing the liturgical calendar has formed me to think about worship as rightly containing sharply different ideas at different times--especially as defined by the church year's cycles of seasons and readings.

So lately, I've stopped bemoaning the boyfriend/buddy Jesus of popular evangelicalism and thought instead about how there might be some value there... (Continue reading [at Holy Covenant UMC's blog.](#))