

Abstract

How do hymns transmit the substance of theology, support faith, and carry the gospel? Can hymns become a systematic theology for laypersons? How do hymns present the message of Christian truth, and interpret this gospel in different times? This article is based on the Hymnal *Sèng-Si* (1964 and 2009 editions) of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan General Assembly, and offers research on the common hymns in the first 500 years of Christian history about how the church countered heresy, instituted the Nicene Creed, and made hymns its important apologetic tool. The essay presents seven models about the theological function of these hymns and discusses its practical implication for modern believers.

The heresies modern Christians face are usually about distortion of doctrines. They share common features of denying Christ's divine nature, His birth from the Holy Spirit, and only accept the humanity of Jesus. They also deny the doctrine of the Trinity, exalt the founder of the organization as the supreme lord and promote doctrines of their own to attract followers. The author argues that it is when Christians are able to sing what they believe and believe what they sing in worship as well as in daily life that they will encounter the Lord, revive their spirituality, and bring revival to the church.

Keywords: early hymns, doctrine of Trinity, theology, heresies, early Christianity

摘要

聖詩如何傳達神學的實質，輔助信仰，承載福音？聖詩可以成為平信徒的系統神學嗎？聖詩如何呈現基督宗教的信息真理，並在歷世歷代詮釋此真理？本文以台灣基督長老教會 1964 年和 2009 年出版的《聖詩》為範圍，探索初代教會五百年間具代表性的會眾詩歌。其中，教會面臨異端的挑戰，制定信經，聖詩也成為重要的護教工具。筆者將早期聖詩歸納出七項神學功能，也探討這些聖詩對今日信徒的實質涵義。當代的基督徒普遍面臨的異端都在曲解教義的部份。這些異端一方面或多方面否認聖經中啟示的耶穌基督，否認祂是聖靈感孕，否認祂的神性，只接受祂的人性。這些異端更進一步的否認三一神論，各自高舉創教的教主或只接受自訂的教義思想，迷惑眾人。筆者認為落實聖詩教育，使信徒唱其所信，信其所唱，在禮拜和靈修生活中確實與主相遇，必能帶來教會的復興與祝福。

關鍵詞： 早期聖詩、三一神論、神學、異端、早期基督教