



# LARRY HURTADO

I urge you and others genuinely concerned about worship, music, and Biblical teaching to read carefully a recent study of contemporary worship music and how it fails to reflect Christian teaching of God as Holy Trinity. Lester Ruth's "*Lex Amandi, Lex Orandi: The Trinity In The Most-Used Contemporary Christian Worship Songs*" [pages 342 - 359] in "*The Place Of Christ In Liturgical Prayer: Christology, Trinity, And Liturgical Theology*" (2008) edited by Bryan D. Spinks, and available from Liturgical Press. Lester Ruth's perceptive study shows the problems: a lot of "*contemporary*" worship-music focuses on sentiment, and measures success by intensity of sentiment, but with scant regard for the truth of the Gospel and the revelation of God. It isn't holistic, failing to take seriously the need to love God with our hearts, minds, souls, and strength. Early Christian worship had no instruments, no elaborate melodies, certainly no musical groups, or sound-systems. If you study what we believe to be the earliest songs [for example, Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20; Revelation 4:11; and Revelation 5:9-10], they focus on the work of Christ, and the glories of God, always defining Jesus with reference to God the Father, in words packed with profound theological meaning. Nothing light, fluffy, and sentimental there! Music can not be a substitute for God. God's dear Son, Jesus Christ, is our sole mediator with God, and we can get no closer to God than the cross of Christ can bring us. The Holy Spirit is God's power that enables true worship. Music, and all other such efforts, are at best only human responses to God's prior and enabling actions. Music can't bring us to God, or God to us. Only Jesus brings us to the Father, and only the Holy Spirit makes our worship true and effective.



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“AT THE ORIGINS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: THE CONTEXT  
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