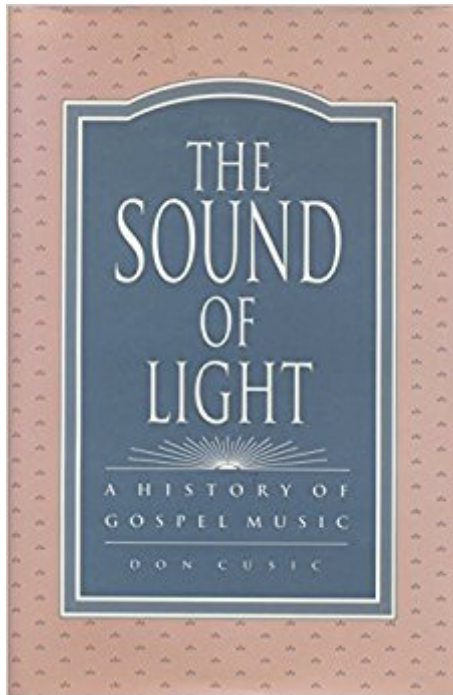




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The Sound Of Light: A History Of Gospel Music



Synopsis

Don Cusic presents gospel music as part of the history of contemporary Christianity. From the psalms of the early Puritans through the hymns of Isaac Watts and the social activism of the Wesleys, gospel music was established in eighteenth-century America. With the camp meetings songs of the Kentucky Revival and the spirituals and hymns that stemmed from the Civil War and beyond, gospel music grew through the nineteenth century and expanded through new technologies in the twentieth century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Don Cusic is Professor of Music Business at Belmont University as well as a writer and songwriter in Nashville, Tennessee. He is the author of many books on music and popular culture including *Cowboys and the Wild West* and *Willie Nelson: Lyrics 1957-1994*.

A very thorough treatment of biblical music through the ages. The reason I gave this fine book 4 and not 5 stars, is that when I checked in the index for the Christian composer of approx. 1000 songs and hymns and especially literally dozens of Christmas and Easter cantatas, Dr. John W. Peterson, I felt that he missed an outstanding composer, but instead he zeroed in on people who made more money on pop music sales and I thought that was unfair for such a large tome.

Good reading

Dr. Cusic is to be commended for doing an excellent job of tracing the chronology of Gospel music all the way from its beginnings in the Bible to the present day. The documentation is thorough. His writing style is easy to follow. Fans of Gospel music are indebted to him for compiling the pieces of the puzzle in this volume. In the introduction he defines Gospel music. He breaks it down into various subcategories and describes the differences between them. In the first chapter he goes on to talk about the musical heritage found in the Bible. Chapter two contains a history of early church music. He says church music moved away from the use of instruments for a time because of the association of instruments with pagan rites, the theatre, and the circus. John Calvin and Martin Luther are two sixteenth century figures in the spotlight in chapter 3. Their theology that an individual could communicate with God had ramifications for Christian music. Chapter four discusses Luther as a songwriter. In chapter five we arrive on American soil and the story continues as we're told of the first seeds of Gospel music in this country. This book is full of anecdotes of well-known personalities and the audiences they sought to reach. It provides coverage of a niche that has frequently been overlooked. Thanks to Dr. Cusic and other researchers it is now gaining attention.

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