Compiled by Lester Ruth, Research Professor of Christian Worship, Duke Divinity School

From 1989 through the August 2016 (1015) list of top-25 CCLI songs (118 songs total)

Compared against the 70 most-republished evangelical hymns from 1737-1860[[1]](#footnote-1)

(Both bodies of song reflect American usage.)

**Numerical Name Comparisons**

Comparison: Explicit Trinitarian (3 Person) Songs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | All 3 Persons clearly named in song | God worshiped for being Triune | Other songs naming all 3 as worshiped |
| EH (70) | 3 songs (4%) | 1 song (1%) | 1 song (1%) |
| CWS (118) | 5 songs (4%) | 2 songs (2%) | 2 songs (2%) |

Comparison: Explicit “Binitarian” (2 Person) Songs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Possible reference to 2 Persons | 1st and 2nd Person songs | 2nd and 3rd Person songs |
| EH (70) | 17 songs (24%) | 10 songs (14%) | 7 songs (10%) |
| CWS (118) | 19 songs (16%) | 15 songs (13%) | 4 songs (3%) |

*Note: 1 song in CWS is indeterminable for which 2 Persons are named*

Comparison: Explicit Naming of the 1st Person (God the Father)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Explicit 1st Person reference | Explicit use of “Father” | Direct address to 1st Person |
| EH (70) | 16 songs (23%) | 11 songs (16%) | 6 songs (9%) |
| CWS (118) | 19 songs (16%) | 7 songs (6%) | 8 songs (7%) |

Comparison: Explicit Naming of the 2nd Person (Son, Jesus Christ)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Clear 2nd Person reference | Explicit use of Son, Jesus, or Christ | Direct address to 2ndPerson |
| EH (70) | 52 songs (74%) | 39 songs (56%) | 28 songs (40%) |
| CWS (118) | 59 songs (50%) | 46 songs (39%) | 24 songs (20%) |

*Note: Difference in first and second columns due to songs which use other names for deity but the context makes clear that it is the 2nd Person in mind.*

Comparison: Explicit Naming of the 3rd Person (Holy Spirit)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Explicit 3rd Person reference | Direct address to 3rd Person |
| EH (70) | 10 songs (14%) | 4 songs (6%) |
| CWS (118) | 11 songs (9%) | 6 songs (5%) |

Comparison: General Naming of Deity: Lord

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Occurrences of “Lord” | Unable to determine which Person meant |
| EH (70) | 41 songs (59%) | 16 songs (23%) |
| CWS (118) | 69 songs (58%) | 38 songs (32%) |

Comparison: General Naming of Deity: God

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Occurrences of “God” | Unable to determine which Person meant |
| EH (70) | 41 songs (59%) | 20 songs (29%) |
| CWS (118) | 52 songs (44%) | 24 songs (20%) |

Comparison: General Naming of Deity: King

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Occurrences of “King” | Unable to determine which Person meant |
| EH (70) | 17 songs (24%) | 4 songs (6%) |
| CWS (118) | 24 songs (20%) | 7 songs (6%) |

Comparison: General Naming of Deity: No Explicit Name or Title

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Texts | No explicit name or title |
| EH (70) | 1 song (1%) |
| CWS (118) | 10 songs (8%) |

**Numerical Verb Comparisons**

Comparison: Number and Range of Verbs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Texts | Total instances of verbs | Total number of different verbs |
| EH (70) | Divine: 445; Human: 850 | Divine: 188; Human: 276 |
| CWS (118) | Divine: 531; Human: 671 | Divine: 193; Human: 184 |

Most Used Divine Verbs with Number of Instances in EH and CWS

(Verbs with 4 instances or more in EH or CWS)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Verb | EH instances | CWS instances |
| Save | 26 | 18 |
| Love | 20 | 23 |
| Redeem | 16 | 4 |
| Make | 13 | 18 |
| Come | 10 | 19 |
| Give | 9 | 13 |
| Take | 9 | 10 |
| Die | 8 | 11 |
| Let | 8 | 9 |
| Reign | 7 | 11 |
| Bid | 7 | 0 |
| Promise | 6 | 5 |
| Call | 6 | 6 |
| Can/Be Able | 6 | 4 |
| Rise | 6 | 6 |
| Lead | 6 | 2 |
| Bring | 5 | 9 |
| Ransom | 5 | 3 |
| Shine | 4 | 9 |
| Stand | 4 | 5 |
| Forgive | 4 | 3 |
| Heal | 4 | 3 |
| Send | 4 | 4 |
| Teach | 4 | 3 |
| Live | 3 | 7 |
| Go | 3 | 5 |
| Deliver | 3 | 4 |
| (Not) Fail | 3 | 4 |
| Fill | 2 | 9 |
| Speak | 2 | 6 |
| Do | 2 | 6 |
| Hear | 2 | 4 |
| Pour | 2 | 5 |
| Open | 1 | 8 |
| Set | 1 | 5 |
| Embrace | 0 | 4 |
| Have | 0 | 4 |
| Lay | 0 | 4 |
| Break | 1 | 5 |

Create 2 4

Show 3 4

Most Used Human Verbs with Number of Instances in EH and CWS

(Verbs with 4 instances or more in EH and CWS)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Verb | EH instances | CWS instances |
| See | 27 | 23 |
| Sin | 27 | 18 |
| Sing | 22 | 31 |
| Can/Be Able | 21 | 16 |
| Fear | 19 | 6 |
| Die | 18 | 4 |
| Come | 16 | 9 |
| Hope | 14 | 8 |
| Love | 13 | 13 |
| Praise | 11 | 28 |
| Know | 11 | 12 |
| Let | 11 | 8 |
| Hear | 11 | 7 |
| Join | 11 | 1 |
| Rest | 11 |  2 |
| Rise | 10 | 7 |
| Find | 9 | 9 |
| Rejoice | 9 | 6 |
| Pray | 9 | 2 |
| Bring | 8 | 3 |
| Behold | 8 | 1 |
| Live | 7 | 16 |
| Give | 7 | 13 |
| Stand | 7 | 11 |
| Go | 7 | 5 |
| Meet | 7 | 1 |
| Fly | 7 | 0 |
| View | 7 | 0 |
| Feel | 6 | 5 |
| Dwell | 6 | 0 |
| Lie | 6 | 0 |
| Bless | 5 | 7 |
| Seek | 5 | 6 |
| Proclaim | 5 | 4 |
| Make | 5 | 3 |
| Take | 5 | 2 |
| Thank | 5 | 5 |
| Awake | 5 | 1 |
| Raise | 5 | 1 |
| Reign | 5 | 1 |
| Mourn | 5 | 0 |
| Triumph | 5 | 0 |
| Adore | 4 | 8 |
| Bow | 4 | 9 |
| Have | 4 | 9 |
| Think | 4 | 5 |
| Trust | 4 | 5 |
| Believe | 4 | 5 |
| Hail | 4 | 2 |
| Cease | 4 | 1 |
| Taste | 4 | 2 |
| Depart | 4 | 0 |
| Pant | 4 | 0 |
| Stay | 4 | 0 |
| Travel | 4 | 0 |
| Worship | 3 | 15 |
| Say | 3 | 10 |
| Call | 3 | 9 |
| Walk | 3 | 7 |
|  |  |  |
| Fail | 3 | 4 |
| Reach | 3 | 4 |
| Lift | 2 | 15 |
| Want | 2 | 7 |
| Lay | 2 | 5 |
| Shout | 2 | 5 |
| Long | 1 | 6 |
| Offer | 1 | 5 |
| Exalt | 1 | 4 |
| Fall | 1 | 4 |
| Glorify | 1 | 5 |
| Look | 1 | 4 |
| Turn | 1 | 4 |
| Cry | 0 | 7 |
| Magnify | 0 | 4 |

Desire 2 4

Follow 2 4

Gather 0 4

1. For the list, see Stephen A. Marini, “Hymnody as History: Early Evangelical Hymns and the Recovery of American Popular Religion,” *Church History* 71, no. 2 (2002): 273-306. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)