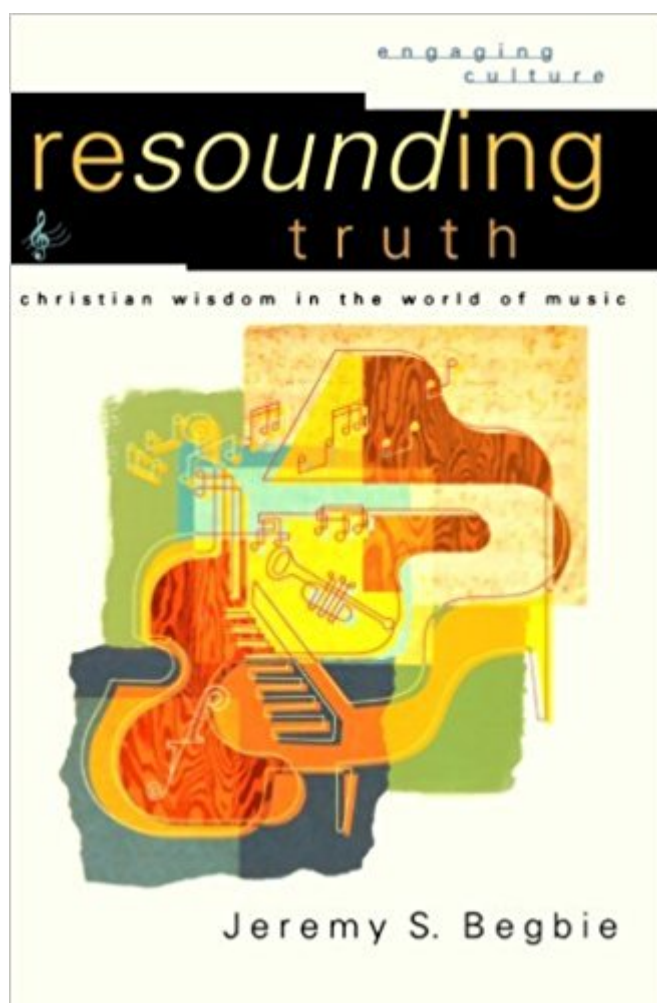


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# Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom In The World Of Music (Engaging Culture)



## Synopsis

Even fallen humans compose beautiful symphonies, music that touches emotions as nothing else can. Resounding Truth shows Christians how to uncover the Gospel message found in the many melodies that surround us. Theologian and musician Jeremy Begbie believes our divinely inspired imagination reveals opportunity for sincere, heartfelt praise. With practical examples, lucid explanations, and an accessible bibliography, this book will help music lovers discover how God's diversity shines through sound. Begbie helps readers see the Master of Song and experience the harmony of heavenly hope.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

From the iPod to the car radio, from movie soundtracks to Muzak at the shopping mall, from singing in the shower to the concert arena, music is an unavoidable part of our lives. Not only is music ubiquitous, it is powerful: creating moods, evoking memories and images, uniting people, and providing an outlet of expression for even the most tone deaf among us. Besides its prominent position in culture, music has obviously had a key role in the worship of God's people. This well-rounded study examines the connections between music and theology by engaging Scripture, musical history, and contemporary culture and exploring how God's truth sounds and how it might "re-sound" in the realm of music. Resounding Truth will help readers develop discernment and wisdom, both for thinking about music in the church and Christian life and for engaging with one of

culture's most influential touchstones."A profound, rigorous, and original work. Very few new books in theology or religious studies show this level of freshness and imagination. I hope it will be a landmark essay in this crucial field of reflection on theology and the creative arts."--Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury"Jeremy Begbie is musician/theologian par excellence. Whatever music you enjoy and wherever you are on the journey of faith and understanding, he will delight, surprise, challenge, and inspire you. A wonderful book by a wonderful writer, thinker, and musician."--N. T. Wright, Bishop of Durham"Jeremy Begbie has published a number of fine books in which he, as both a Christian theologian and a practicing musician, reflects on music; but this is his finest. It is theologically acute, deeply informed by both the history of music and the history of reflections on music, and throughout displays Begbie's wide-ranging engagement with music of many kinds from both the past and the present. A rich contribution!"--Nicholas Wolterstorff, Yale University and University of Virginia"Jeremy Begbie's thinking emerges out of a fusion of the best musical thinking about theology and the best theological thinking about music. The resulting text is charged with energy and insight--and not just for musicians and theologians. This vital work is poised to energize and strengthen the entire Christian community."--John D. Witvliet, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship"This book resounds with the thoughtful, dynamic, and always engaging voice of Jeremy Begbie. Marked by a breathtaking range, driven by a creative vision, and packed with judicious insights, it will no doubt shape conversations about theology and the arts for years to come."--Roger Lundin, Wheaton College

Jeremy S. Begbie (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen) is Thomas A. Langford Research Professor of Theology at Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina. He previously served as honorary professor of theology at the University of St. Andrews; associate principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge; and an affiliated lecturer in the Faculty of Divinity at the University of Cambridge. A notable pianist, he has lectured widely in the U.K., the U.S., and South Africa. He is the author of *Voicing Creation's Praise: Towards a Theology of the Arts and Theology, Music, and Time* and the editor of *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation through the Arts* and *Sounding the Depths: Theology through the Arts*.

This is an important book to read to gain insight into the role that Worship music has in our worship services. It goes a long way to help churches plan a theology of worship in churches. It is an excellent book and should be required reading within Music groups in churches.

Excellent work, just the sort of "theology of music" text I've been looking for. Of course not

exhaustive (how could a book on such a subject be?) but rich, sympathetic and highly thought-provoking. A draught of cool water to a lifelong music fanatic, particularly classical and sacred choral.

Begbie draws on numerous disciplines such as music theory, music history, philosophy and Christian theology to explore music and Christianity. He also connects with modern culture and how music is approached in both sacred and secular contexts. Among the most interesting points were his discussion of time and creation and how they relate to our view of music. It's a very well written book, and was more interesting and easier to read than most academic books. Because of the depth of theological discussions this book would probably even be of interest to people who are interested in Christian theology even if music is not a primary interest.

Everything was great!

This is one of the first books I read on Christianity and the arts, and I found it very helpful. Jeremy Begbie explores the world of music and covers a lot of ground. He discusses the power of music and its important role in our daily lives. A large portion of the book is dedicated to the history of music and to the history of music theory. From the ancient Greeks to Luther, Calvin, Barth, and Bach, the book traces the prevailing theories regarding what music is and how it works. This includes both philosophy and theology. Begbie also discusses some intriguing facets of music that can aid us in the way we think about God (and the Trinity in particular). I would caution the average reader that this book is written at the scholarly level, which means that it's well researched and carefully nuanced, but this will likely be a barrier for most readers. For my brief review on this book and most of the books out there on Christianity and the arts, see: [theologyforreallife.com/artsbooks](http://theologyforreallife.com/artsbooks)

**RESOUNDING TRUTH: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music (Engaging Culture) (Paperback)** by Jeremy S. Begbie  
Jeremy Begbie is professor of Theology at Cambridge University. Most of his work deals with cross-pollination between Christian theology and the arts. There is currently a Youtube link with a fine presentation by Begbie called "THE SENSE OF AN ENDING: The Musical Self" from University of California TV back in the 90s. [...]After seeing that video (which you can buy online and I recommend), I wanted to read his writing and finally found this reasonably priced volume aimed at a non-academic audience. It is a kind of introductory course on how Christians have sought to understand what music really is and to discover both the source of, and proper uses of, the powers

of music to enhance life and deepen faith. He starts with a historical review of thought on the subject including classical views and includes a nice section on Luther's views on music--as well as of Calvin, Zwingli, and other influential Christian thinkers. He includes the work of several "modern" composers with a spiritual bent. (E.g. He discusses how these have found ways to represent timelessness as well as temporality in their works.) He discusses the tensions between composer and performer. He discusses the ambivalence of many Christians regarding the fleshly and the spiritual powers of music. He overviews everything that the Bible says about musical instruments. In the main part of the book he presents his own work and thoughts on the subject, covering but amplifying what is in the Youtube video. It is very thought provoking, profound, and wonderful--a rich and pretty much non-technical presentation. I imagine a musician would get more out of it than me, but he lets the reader share in a musician's insights. As a confessional Lutheran, I am irritated to see the word "Theology" taken to mean merely "thinking about God" (beyond what can be derived from the Scriptures), but at the same time, I believe that thinking about God in all aspects of life, including music, and seeking all kinds of sound wisdom is a worthwhile activity, as long as it supplements and serves rather than replaces in our life the bigger foundational messages of the Scriptures. In Begbie, you get a beautiful and compelling picture of how a Christian's life work is enriched by integrating it with his faith. He is a world-class scholar, a fine Christian and a gifted teacher. He is NOT a modernist or post-modernist in his views, but appears to be Biblically sound, committed to following the teachings of Scripture rather than deconstructing them.

Covers the history of the philosophical conversation about music's meaning and truth, significant theologians' regard and use of music, and the musical strategies of various composers to convey theological ideas.

I have finished reading *Resounding Truth* and, to put it bluntly, find myself liberated from the claws of dualism. Certainly I've (unconsciously) inherited loads of Augustine, Calvin, Zwingli, and the like in my Christian upbringing. After reading *Voicing Creation's Praise* a couple of years ago (and specially now) I can very clearly see how much of my worldview has been pervasively poisoned by Neoplatonism--because of which, as I look back, a lot of life has been sucked away from me. Thankfully, however, these books have helped me to reevaluate unhealthy presuppositions--and, in doing so, simultaneously keeping me from falling into Schleiermacher's opposite alternative. Gladly, I now find myself invited to part company with Luther, Bach, Barth, Bonhoeffer, and many others who acknowledge the good, God-given wonders of sound. What a gift, truly. Thank you, Jeremy, for

your clarity of thought, for the grace with which every page is filled, for your insightful and imaginative wisdom, for your discomfort with easy answers. I cannot emphasize how much this material has (already) opened up a world of possibilities of knowing God through music: it will take a lifetime to unpack.

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