

PENTECOSTAL MEETING

59 voices that blend inharmoniously,
59 mouths that distend ignominiously,
hymns by assembly-line ending untidily.

They sing not as a choir, but as a crèche
of gurgling infants flailing both desire
and satisfaction .A general harmony
of middle-ranged and undulating tones
is undergirt by low, embarrassed drones
of youths whose voices have not yet the strength
of men's. And somewhere at the back, eyes closed,
heart throbbing with the uneven joy, a tuneless soul
wails plaintively above the rest,
indifferent to the melody's set key.

The piano keyboard dances to the touch,
of lanky fingers splashing wide sprayed notes,
new-improvised. The accordion squeezes out
extruded harmony. Guitars and drum,
like clock-beats, measure unrelenting time.

The song is changed, the rhythm jerks
into a higher gear. Two hands are clapped
and as the sound waves sputter out, new hands
bestir themselves. The rhythmic smack, smack, smack
of flesh on flesh sets toes to trembling,
wriggling shyly in dark comfort of their shoes,
delighting in the life that throbs pulsating
in the arteries of song.

Analyse

this romping, jangling spontaneity.
Ignore the murmuring boys, the shrilling crone.
This sound is young. No disillusioned, bored
and weary sigh, nor sound of dirge or chant
glooms over it. Spirit and life stir deep,
infectious, scintillating, breaking rules.
Its harmony of soul, its heart of joy
well compensate the lack of style and class.

Some may prefer the sculptured, tomb-stone grace
of perfect total unity. But I
enjoy this bouncing, kindergarten song
of folks alive in faith.

Reality

of spirit has a beauty that defies
the law of regularity. Wild flowers glow
with charm that ordered gardens never show.

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About Dr Barry Chant

Barry Chant is Senior Pastor of the Wesley International Congregation in Sydney, Australia. He is a regular speaker at church services, seminars, conferences and conventions. Hundreds of thousands of his books have been sold around the world. He has degrees in arts, theology and ministry, a diploma in education and a PhD in history. He was the initiator and former president of Tabor College, Australia.

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