

# The Singer's Special Gift:

TEXT

Dr. Pattye Casarow  
Clearwater Christian College

## The Singer's Special Gift: TEXT

- WORDS: What separates the singer from other musicians.
- DICTION:
  - Understanding
  - Meaning
  - Color

**UNDERSTANDING:** If the audience can't understand our words, we are useless.

- <sup>7</sup>If even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is played? <sup>8</sup>And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? <sup>9</sup>So with yourselves, if with your tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is said? For you will be speaking into the air. <sup>10</sup>There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, <sup>11</sup>but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me...
- <sup>15</sup>What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. <sup>16</sup>Otherwise, if you give thanks with your spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say "Amen" to your thanksgiving when he does not know what you are saying?...<sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

1 Corinthians 14:7-11, 15-16, 19 [ESV]

## Vowels vs. Consonants

- Vowels:
  - Louder than consonants
  - Reverberate 2-3 seconds
- Consonants:
  - Less sounds than vowels
  - Sound lasts fraction of time

Vowel ●—————●

Consonant ●———●

# Classification of Consonants

- Voiced and Voiceless
- Partners (produced in same place and manner)

VOICED	VOICELESS
B	P
D	T
V	F
G	K
J	CH
S	SH
Z	S
W	WH
TH	TH
No corresponding partner:	
L, M, N, R	H

# Problem Consonants

- R, L, S, Sh, V
  - Tongue flat and in formation of previous vowel
  - Don't linger on final consonants
- M, N
  - Least audible
  - Produce with energy

# Five Simple Rules of English Diction

1. Vowel Articulation
  - Eliding before initial vowel
  - Slight glottal

Sing This	Not This
Come all	Co-mahl
Those I	Thos-zye
God of	Gaw-duv
I always am	I-yal-weh-zam
Way over	Way-yover
King eternal	Kin-ge-ter-nal

# Five Simple Rules of English Diction

2. Final D, T, B, and P
  - Clarify by adding syllable to the release (DH, DIH)

AND THEY THAT DAY IN THE      AN - DIH THEY THA - TIH DAY IH - NIH THE      AN - D'THEY THA - T'DAY IH - N'THE

- “Stop consonant” for words with same final and initial consonant

## Five Simple Rules of English Diction

3. Th and V
  - Intensity!
4. W versus WH
  - “W”
    - “ooWe”
    - “oowill”
    - “oowin”
  - “WH” = air flow
    - “what”
    - “when”
    - “where”
    - “why”

## Five Simple Rules of English Diction

5. Diphthongs
  - Place second sound as far to the right as possible (e.g. on release)
  - Intensify second vowel for color affect

Diphthong	Passive	Colorful
Thy	Thah-ih	Thah-ee
They	Theh-ih	Theh-ee
Thou	Thah-u	Thah-oo
Though	Tho-uh	Tho-oo
Joy	Jaw-ih	Jaw-ee

## MEANING: Singing expressively

1. Syllable Inflection
  - Emphasis vs. De-emphasis
    - Stress/Diminuendo (“di-stant”)
    - Crescendo/Stress (“for-get”)
    - Cresc/Stress/Dim (“be-got-ten”)
    - Stress/Dim/Dim (“per-se-cute”)
    - Cresc/Cresc/Stress/Dim (“e-du-ca-tion”)
    - Cresc/Stress/Dim/Dim (“e-nun-ci-ate”)
  - Syllables preceding stress – energy and crescendo
  - Syllables following stress – diminuendo

## MEANING: Singing expressively

2. Word Inflection
  - Not all words equally important
  - **Connectors** (is, a, the, etc.) vs. **main words** (nouns, adjectives, verbs)
    - Connectors spin forward
    - Analyze the phrase  
“From all false-ness, set me free”  
1 3 5 1 3 2 5
  - No two consecutive words should receive equal emphasis

## COLOR: Adding feelings

- Word Nuance
  - Great actors in a dramatic role
  - Mental, emotional, and physical effort
  - Facial expression

Song – Sing

Touch – Caress

Move – Force

Light – Shine

*“Take the language seriously. It sets us apart from all other musicians. It allows us to speak directly to an audience and make an indescribable impact on their hearts, minds, and lives. The language, however, must be (1) understood, (2) projected, (3) filled with the substance of emotional expression.”*

- Donald Neuen