

Peter Bloesch

How Can I Keep from Singing?

Version with revised (non-religious) text

Arranged by Peter Bloesch
for SATB chorus with piano accompaniment
Duration: ca. 4:15

Commissioned by University of Wisconsin –
Whitewater Concert Choir, Dr. Robert Gehrenbeck, conductor

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Words and music by Robert Lowry (1869), both in the public domain.

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Description:

This beloved song by Robert Lowry has the sound of a folk tune – simple, direct, and memorable. Lowry was an American preacher and popular writer of gospel music, including the famous “Shall We Gather at the River.”

My arrangement of “How Can I Keep from Singing?” seeks to highlight the gentleness and inward peace of the song, but in the last verse, the affirmation of “No storm can shake my inmost calm” shines forth with confidence and joy.

The words are as apt today as they were in 1869: They encourage us to sing on in the midst of any personal or global troubles. After all, the universal language of music has the power to heal us, and to unite us all in love. I hope that we will never keep from singing!

Text:

My life goes on in endless song, above earth's lamentation.

I catch the sweet, though far off song that hails a new creation.

No storm can shake my inmost calm while to my hope I'm clinging.

When love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from singing?

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear that music ringing.

It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?

(Refrain)

What though my joys and comforts die? My love, it always liveth.

And if the darkness gathers round, my heart, a song it giveth.

(Refrain)

My peace and joy make fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing!

All things are mine since love goes on! How can I keep from singing?

(Refrain)

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Serenely (♩ = ca. 74)

PIANO
mp gently flowing

S./A.
Poco rit. SOPRANOS & ALTOS *mp* A tempo

PNO.
Poco rit. 1. My A tempo

Ped. ad lib.

S./A.
life goes on in end-less song, a-bove earth's lam-en-ta-tion. I

PNO.
mp

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13 SOP. *mp*

S./A. catch the sweet, though far off song that hails a new cre - a - tion. No

13 PNO. *still gently*

17 S. *mp*

storm can shake my in - most calm while to my hope I'm cling - ing. When

A. *p* *Mm.* *mm.* *mp*

Altos, div. *p* *Mm.* *mm.* *mp*

17 PNO.

21 S.

love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?_

A.

love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?_

love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing - ing?_

21 PNO. *8va*

25

S. *mp*
2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I

A. *Unis. mp*
2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I

T. *mp*
2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I

B. *mp*
2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I

PNO. *p*
L.H. R.H. L.H. R.H.

29

S. hear that mu - sic ring - ing... It finds an ech - o in my soul. How

A. hear that mu - sic ring - ing... It finds an ech - o in my soul. How

T. hear that mu - sic ring - ing... It finds an ech - o in my soul. How

B. hear that mu - sic ring - ing... It finds an ech - o in my soul. How

PNO. *p*
L.H. R.H. L.H. R.H. L.H.

33 *mf with spirit*

S. can I keep from sing - ing? No storm can shake my in-most calm while to my hope I'm

A. can I keep from sing - ing? No storm can shake my in-most calm while to my hope I'm

T. can I keep from sing - ing? No storm can shake my in-most calm while to my hope I'm

B. can I keep from sing - ing? No storm can shake my in-most calm while to my hope I'm

PNO. *mp* *p* *mp*

38

S. cling - ing... When love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?_

A. cling - ing... When love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?_

T. cling - ing... When love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?_

B. cling - ing... When love is shared through all the earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?_

PNO. *mp* *f*

43 TENORS & BASSES *mp*

T./B. 3. What

PNO. *mf ma dolce*

47 *p* Ah, ah, ah, Ah, ah, ah, *gru*

T./B. though my joys and com-forts die? My love, it al - ways liv - eth. And

PNO. *p dolce* *mp dolce*

51 *mp* No *mp* No *mf* No *mp* No

S. ah. No

A. ah. No

T. if the dark - ness gath-ers round, my heart, a song it giv - eth. No

B. if the dark - ness gath-ers round, my heart, a song it giv - eth. No

PNO. 51 (8)