Thoughts After Your Extraordinarily Beautiful
Performances of
Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*

When I was almost a young man, singing in the choir of the
First Christian Church on the northeast corner
of "A" and Vine in the little Southern California town
of Ontario,
I must say our God was magnified each and every Sunday morning
according to an entirely different scenario.

Even the words of something so obviously foreign, to God and man
as *Symphonie de Psaumes*.
Could only have interested a Deity bedizened by jewels, gold,
marble, incense and the generally idolatrous customs
of a small group of scribes and Pharisees
who wore dresses and lived with each other
and maybe even women on the other side of the world
in a place called Rome.

And, as for the music of his symphony, there certainly was
no way you could expect the God who gave us
Plymouth Rock, Chautauqua and the Boy Scouts of America
to respond to anything so inappropriate and
absolutely appalling,
Certainly not the God of something as comforting and beautiful
as Softly and Tenderly you know Who's Calling.

But, now that I'm somewhat older and have been exposed
to several different varieties of religious experience
-- intellectual, aesthetic and emotional,
It becomes a little easier as time goes on to distinguish between
those aspects of worship which are still humbly seeking,
and those which are largely self-promotional.

And, I want to say to somebody, even if it's only in a
chorus weekly-letter,
Year by year Stravinsky's kind of God is sounding better and better.

Alleluia, you-all-ya,

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