

An Analysis of *R. Paul Drummond's Psalm 34*

By

Dr. Amy Dunker

www.amydunker.com

Voicing: SATB a cappella

Composer: R. Paul Drummond

Text Author: Isaac Watts

Language: English

Harmonic Language: Tonal (G Major)

Duration: 3 Minutes

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Dedication: A Fuguing Tune for V.J. Lowrance, Jr. and Seguin, Texas High School

Composer Biography:

Dr. Robert Paul Drummond (d. 2007), long-time ACDA member and Central Methodist University professor of music and director of choral activities since 1981, held a doctorate of arts in choral conducting and literature from the University of Northern Colorado. He held a master's degree in music from Eastern New Mexico University and a bachelor's degree in music education from North Texas State University.¹

Fuguing Tune:

A fuguing tune a form of hymnody developed by American composers of the so-called First New England school during the period of the American Revolution (1775–83). The term fuguing tune is a shortened form of the English phrase “fuging psalm tune,” a type of hymn setting popular in England in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Minor features of style—angular melodic writing, rhythmic simplicity and precision, and diatonic harmony (*i.e.*, little use of notes foreign to the composition's key)—and the placement of the fuguing section in the next-to-last, not the last, line distinguish the American fuguing tune from its British parent.

¹ American Choral Directors Association <http://www.acdaonline.org/news/drummond-memorium.shtml>
(accessed 01/27/08).

A typical fugging tune places the tune in the tenor voice and harmonizes it with block chords. In the next-to-last phrase, called the fugging section or fuge, each of the four voices enters in turn singing the tune or a slightly varied version of it. The last phrase is again chordal. Unlike the classical fugue, in the fuge all four parts follow each other in melodic imitation and do not utilize contrapuntal development techniques.²

Form:

- A ms. 1 – 8
- B ms. 9 – 24
- B ms. 9 – 24

(Repeat)

Theme 1:

Tenor (Soprano)

mf

Come, let us learn to fear the Lord; And that our days be long,
 God's eyes a-wake to guard the just, God's ears at-tend their cry:

Theme 2:

De-part from mis-chief, prac-tice love,
 I'll bless You Lord from day to day;

Tessitura:

- Soprano D4 – G5
- Alto B3 – C5
- Tenor E3 – G4
- Bass B2 – C4

² Britannica Online <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9035572/fugging-tune#131637.hook> (accessed 01/27/08)

Text:

Come let us learn to fear the Lord;
And that our days be long,
Let not a false or spiteful word
Be found upon our tongues.

Depart from mischief, practice love,
Pursue the work of peace;
So shall the Lord our ways approve,
And set our souls at ease.

I'll bless You Lord from day to day;
How good are all Your ways!
Ye humble souls that used to pray,
Come, help my lips to praise.

God's eyes awake to guard the just,
God's ears attend their cry:
When broken spirits dwell in dust,
The God of grace is nigh.

*Dr. Amy Dunker is an Associate Professor of Music at Clarke College in Dubuque, IA, USA
where she teaches composition, theory, aural skills, trumpet and directs the new music ensemble.*

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