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## ***THE SATANIC ATTACK ON***

# SACRED MUSIC

**David W. Cloud**

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*Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book*

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# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Emotions and the Music Issue.....	9
The Spiritual Environment of the Music Issue: The Church and the Home .....	14
The Environment of a New Testament Church .....	15
The Environment of a Godly Home.....	21
The Age of Music .....	27
Biblical Principles of Music .....	29
Music's Role in the Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists ..	70
Bob Jones University, Majesty Music, New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys.....	81
The Gettys Are a Bridge to New Reformed Calvinism.....	86
The Gettys Are a Bridge to the Charismatic Movement .....	90
The Gettys Are a Bridge to the World of Secular Rock Music.....	91
The Gettys Are a Bridge to C.S. Lewis .....	92
The Gettys Are a Bridge to Roman Catholicism .....	93
The Gettys Are a Bridge to the World of Warcraft .....	94
Lancaster's Role in the Downgrade .....	96
Coastline Baptist Church, Oceanside, California .....	99
Rock Hill Church, Fontana, California .....	99
Grace Gathering, Santa Barbara, California .....	100
Ambassador Baptist Church, Fresno, California .....	101
Southridge Church, San Jose, California.....	102
Citypoint Baptist Church, Tempe, Arizona .....	102
Contemporary Christian Music a Bridge to Dangerous Waters...104	
The Dangerous Waters.....	107
Examples of Shipwrecks in the Dangerous Waters .....	132
The Language of Music Styles .....	134
Training for Song Leading.....	159

1. Everything should be done on purpose with a biblical plan....	
161	
2. Examination of the two key passages on congregational singing .....	161
3. Principles of song leading .....	171
Plea to Southern Gospel Music Fans .....	199
We Are Living in a Time of Great Change .....	200
Shallow Lyrics .....	208
History of Southern Gospel .....	215
The World's Singing Techniques .....	232
Vocal Sliding and Scooping .....	233
Improvisation .....	237
The Emotional Power of Music .....	240
The Music Issue in a Nutshell .....	250
We Are Living in the Midst of End-time Apostasy. ....	250
Men of God Have Warned about the Danger of Contemporary Christian Music .....	252
Contemporary Music Brings a Different Philosophy. ....	253
Contemporary Music Is a Bridge to the One-world Church. ....	254
Changes Happen Incrementally .....	255
Unregeneracy, Carnality and Worldliness Is a Fundamental Issue .....	255
Soft Rock Is Where the Battle Is Won or Lost .....	257
The Southern Baptist Convention Is More Dangerous Than Ever .....	258
Emotions Are Not a Dependable Test of Music .....	260
We Live in the Age of the Internet .....	260
Winning This Battle Requires Leadership and Education ....	261
Standards for Music Personnel .....	262
Standards of Church Music .....	267
Resources on Sacred/Contemporary Music .....	274

# Introduction

This is the syllabus for *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, a video course available for free viewing and downloading at:

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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**There are 11 presentations in this video series with some of the presentations spanning multiple segments**

- Emotions and the Music Issue
- The Spiritual Environment of the Music Issue: The Church and the Home
- Biblical Principles of Music
- Music's Role in the Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists
- Bob Jones University, Majesty Music, New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys
- Lancaster's Role in the Downgrade
- Contemporary Christian Music a Bridge to Dangerous Waters
- The Language of Music Styles
- A Plea to Southern Gospel Music Fans
- Song Leading
- The Music Issue in a Nutshell

## **Things We Learn in This Series**

- We are going to look at the amazing and frightful changes that are happening among Fundamental Baptists and the role of contemporary music in these changes.
- We are going to document the change in music standard at BJU and Majesty Music.
- We are going to consider a soft style of Christian music vs. a more militant style.

- We are going to consider why CCM transforms churches.
- We are going to consider why using CCM is different than using traditional Protestant hymns.
- We are going to show that conservative evangelicals are not safe partners.
- We are going to show that the Southern Baptist Convention is more dangerous than ever.
- We are going to show how to distinguish between sacred and worldly music styles.
- We are going to show how to recognize soft rock.
- We are going to consider human emotions and the music issue.
- We are going to examine the great changes in Southern Gospel today.
- We are going to consider why we should be concerned about “little” changes in music.
- We are going to describe the only kind of church that will be standing in a few years.
- We are going to examine the essential role of the home in the music battle.
- We are going to look at the role of good congregational singing in protecting a church from CCM.- We going to learn about the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, the ecumenical movement, theological liberalism, New Evangelicalism, the Emerging Church, modern Bible versions, contemplative prayer, cultural liberalism, the encyclopedic view of the Bible, the New Reformed Calvinism, the Jesus People movement, theistic evolution, homosexual Christianity, the downgrade in hell, secular rock, Getty-Townend Music, Matt Maher the Roman Catholic apostle of unity, Hillsong, Rick Warren,

Robert Webber, William Young and the Shack, C.S. Lewis, Chuck Swindoll's heretical doctrine of grace

- We are going to show why knowing about these movements and people is very important to your life, home, and church. We are going to show that these things are not "out there" somewhere; they are very near, and CCM is a bridge to these things.

### **My Credentials to Speak on the Music Issue**

I played first section clarinet for six years in large, award-winning junior and senior high school bands. I took private music lessons most of that time, was chosen to take summer workshops at a university, and was invited to play in a city symphony orchestra.

I lived the rock & roll lifestyle for many years before I was saved, using and selling drugs, hitchhiking across America, joining a Hindu society. Rock is not merely music; it is a philosophy and a lifestyle, and I understand that at the most intimate level.

I was led to Christ by an old-line Pentecostal and have done intensive research into the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, which fathered CCM.

I built a 7,000-volume research library.

I have written more than 200 books, including six on rock music and Contemporary Christian Music totaling more than 2,100 pages, plus video series on this subject.

- 1974, *Mom and Dad Sleep while the Children Rock in Satan's Cradle*
- 1998, *Contemporary Christian Music under the Spotlight*
- 2000, *Rock Music vs. the God of the Bible*

- 2006, *Contemporary Christian Music: Some Questions Answered and Some Warnings Given*
- 2011, *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Music*
- 2012, *Music for Good or Evil*
- 2014, *Baptist Music Wars*
- 2016, *A Plea to Southern Gospel Music Fans*

I have spent a huge number of hours researching contemporary Christian music. I have read most of the books defending CCM. I have listened to hundreds of contemporary songs and studied the lyrics. I have analyzed the most popular artists and bands.

I have traveled widely to do research into CCM and ecumenism. I have attended services at many of the churches that are most influential in contemporary worship, such as Saddleback Church, Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, the Vineyard in Anaheim, Mars Hill Church in Seattle, International House of Praise, and Willow Creek Community Church. I have attended many large ecumenical conferences with media credentials where contemporary music is most at home.

Further, I am an ordained preacher and missionary with 46 year's experience, including 30 years in South Asia.

Those are my credentials for speaking on the Christian music issue.



# Emotions and the Music Issue

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

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## Contents

The Power of Music to Affect Emotions

The Definition of Emotion

The Bible's Teaching about Emotions

Spiritual Control of the Emotions

## The Power of Music to Affect Emotions

Music has been called “the language of the emotions.”

“[Music has the] ability to instantaneously produce very powerful changes in emotional states” (Dr. Richard Pellegrino, brain specialist, *Billboard*, Jan. 23, 1999).

Rock & roll is all about impacting the emotions (Sam Phillips, Sun Records, “It all came out of that INFECTIOUS BEAT and those young people wanting to FEEL GOOD by listening to some records.” Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins)

Contemporary worship music is oriented to affecting the emotions.

“The of singing began to give way to an expectation that ... God would visit us, and we'd experience his presence in a tangible sort of way” (Graham Kendrick).

Southern Gospel music is all about impacting the emotions (getting excited and whooping and hollering).

Consider responses to “A Plea to the Clark Family.” The report was gracious; it was pleading; it was filled with Bible and biblical reasoning, but the responses were purely emotional. These people don’t have their affections under control with truth. Consider some examples: “David Cloud, may God strike you dead and send you to hell for condemning another Christian’s music like the Clarks.” “I just wanted to congratulate you on officially being the most nauseating writer I have ever chosen to waste my time reading after in my life. I am an Independent Baptist pastor. You are a modern day Pharisee. Get a life, man, and get right with God.” “You are a bully doing nothing more than turning sinners against christianity. So congratulations on that, you worthless sack of air.” “Retarded. Get saved.”

### **The Definition of Emotion**

Emotion is a “strong feeling, sentiment, sensation, passion, excitement.”

In modern society, a feeling is feeling; there is not a clear distinction between right and wrong emotions. Emotion is something that should be accepted and followed. Consider falling in and out of love. In 1994, Amy Grant told her husband Gary Chapman, “I don’t love you anymore. ... I’ve given my heart to another man.” In 1999, she divorced and in 2000 she married Vance Gill, who had left his wife for her (*CCM Magazine*, January 2000). We see the issue of emotions in dress and fashion. People choose certain types of dress on the basis of how it makes them feel. I asked a young man why he had tattoos, and he said, simply, that he liked them. He didn’t have a cognitive reason.

Emotion rules in pop music. It is all about being “hooked on a feeling.” The lyrics have never been the most important element. Pop music is not so much about thinking as it is about emoting. Bob Pitman, founder of MTV, said, “The

strongest appeal you can make is emotionally. If you can get their emotions going, make them forget their logic, you've got 'em" ("MV Is Rock Around the Clock," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Nov. 3, 1982).

This is because of the influence of Darwinian evolution. Since Darwin, emotions have been thought of as purely physical. Darwin studied the emotions of animals and treated man as an animal; humanistic psychologists followed Darwin. *Wikipedia*--"[Emotion is a] mental state associated with the nervous system brought on by chemical changes variously associated with thoughts, feelings, behavioral responses, and a degree of pleasure or displeasure."

### **The Bible's Teaching about Emotions**

There is danger in human emotions because of the fall. The Bible teaches that there are good and bad, right and wrong emotions. The child of God cannot follow his emotions wherever they lead. Just because something makes me happy or gives me pleasure doesn't mean it is right. There are the "desires of the flesh" (Eph. 2:3), "vile affections" (Ro. 1:26).

### **Spiritual Control of the Emotions - Galatians 5:16-25**

The flesh has strong emotional desires and passions - affections and lusts (Ga. 5:24); "Affections" is *pathema*, which is often translated "suffering" ("sufferings of this present world," Ro. 8:18). It is translated "motions of sins" (Ro. 7:5). It refers to a stirring, a passion, a strong feeling or emotion, but it is not a spiritual emotion. "Lusts" is *epithumia*, which also means a strong desire, a longing. It is translated "desire" ("with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you," Lu. 22:15). But when translated "lusts" it refers to wrong lusts.

Therefore, just because something stirs up strong feelings in me, even happy feelings, pleasant feelings, doesn't mean it is

right; a rock song; meeting a girl or boy online; a video game; sports; me as a young Christian (hair, music, pro baseball)

The life of the Spirit is only for those who are saved (Ga. 5:24-25); ***“they that are Christ’s”*** refers to those who know Christ by saving faith; they belong to Him; He has received them and redeemed them. They ***“have crucified the flesh”*** means they have trusted His blood to take away their sins; they know that their sins were crucified with Christ. See Col. 2:10-13. The believer is in Christ before God. He is accepted in Christ (Eph. 1:6). This is to ***“live in the Spirit.”*** Before you are saved you are only flesh; after you are saved, you have flesh and Spirit; there must be a supernatural conversion, a clear before and after. See Romans 8:9, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

The life of the Spirit is warfare with the flesh (Ga. 5:16-17). These cannot be reconciled. You are either living after the Spirit or after the flesh at any moment, any day. Choices must be made. The flesh must be denied.

Consider my email to Mark Rasmussen. “You and Travis [Clark] are great rock singers, Mark. But there is nothing spiritual about it. Your music is sensual, showy, entertaining, satisfying to the flesh, addicting. I could like that music, but I learned 45 years ago coming out of a hippy lifestyle that God doesn’t allow me to pursue everything I like.”

The life of the Spirit is called ***“walk”*** (Ga. 5:16). It is a step by step thing; it is a daily lifestyle. The life of the Spirit is called ***“led of”*** (Ga. 5:18). The Spirit leads, but the believer must follow. The life of the Spirit is called ***“sow to”*** (Ga. 6:8). To sow is a choice. It is how one lives his daily life. The life of the Spirit is called ***“mind the things of”*** (Ro. 8:5). “Mind” is the Greek *phroneo*, meaning the thinking and desires. It is translated “think” (Ac. 28:22), “savour” (Mt. 16:23),

“regard” (Ro. 14:6), “care” (“your care of me,” Php. 4:10), “affection” (“set your affection on things above,” Col. 3:2). To mind the things of the Spirit means to control my thinking and my desires by choosing God’s way and will. The life of the Spirit is called “**be filled with**” (Eph. 5:18). This is to be controlled by the Spirit as a drunk is controlled by wine. The life of the Spirit is called “**yield**” (Ro. 6:13). Yield refers to a decision, an act of the will, a surrender.

Denying the flesh and walking in the Spirit, is not the path of misery. The life of the Spirit encompasses every good thing. God has given a bounty of right things upon which to set our affections. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (Jas. 1:17); “the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” (1 Ti. 6:17); “at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Ps. 16:11); “delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart” (Ps. 37:4). God Himself is the greatest delight! The Bible is an infinite delight! This world is filled with good things to enjoy in God’s will. Forty-six years ago I chose to reject the world and to walk with God, and I’m almost embarrassed to testify of the blessings in my life!

# **The Spiritual Environment of the Music Issue: The Church and the Home**

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Every fundamental Baptist church is in great danger. We are witnessing a great falling away. Compared with the 1970s, far less than half of the churches are holding to the same biblical principles, we would estimate.

What I would ask as we go through this series on music is that you be a serious Bible student. Don't just listen. Give serious attention; learn; capture the messages well enough to pass a test. Write down things you want to discuss with your family; write down what you need to change; write down questions. We ask that you test this series by God's Word, not by your emotions, or by your personal likes and dislikes, or by your own thinking, or by some human tradition.

The music issue doesn't exist alone. It exists within a certain environment. Sacred music exists within a certain environment, and contemporary music exists within a certain environment. A proper environment must exist for an individual, a home, or a church to choose spiritual music and to hold to it and to avoid the world's music.

Unless or until you are saved, surrendered to God, seeking God's perfect will, living as a pilgrim in an enemy world, testing everything by the precepts of the Bible alone, you won't be convinced by anything I say in this series.

At a recent Bible conference, I was asked to speak on the subject of music one evening after the scheduled services, but

I spoke on spiritual lukewarmness instead, because they told me that they had no young people in their churches who are “on fire for the Lord.” This is the fundamental issue. What is the spiritual condition of the members? of the youth? What lifestyle is reflected on their social media? What music do they love? What is the condition of our churches? of the homes?

We see two houses in 1 Timothy, and they must work together. First, we see the “house of God” (1 Ti. 3:15). This is the New Testament church. The context is a church with pastors and deacons. Its purpose is to nurture, protect, train, equip, prepare, and discipline God’s people. Second, we see one’s “own house” (1 Ti. 3:4, 12; 5:8). This is the Christian home. Its purpose is to raise up a godly seed for God’s glory. Children do not belong to parents; they belong to God. “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine...” (Eze. 18:4). Malachi 2:15 says that God seeks “a godly seed” from the homes.

The church is not the home, and the home is not the church. Both are divine institutions, and they are to work together in harmony. It is the church’s job to build up the homes and to work together to raise up a godly seed for God, generation after generation until Jesus comes, and it is the home’s job to build up the church for its God-given work of the Great Commission.

## **The Environment of a New Testament Church**

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy

Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:36-42).

Only a spiritual church will hold to spiritual music. A spiritual weak church will love carnal music.

Acts 2 describes the first church, and though there were temporary characteristics of that church that are not patterns for today (e.g., apostles, apostolic signs, communalism), the fundamental characteristics described in verses 41-42 should mark every New Testament church throughout the age.

### **Salvation (Acts 42:41)**

The fundamental mark of a New Testament church is a regenerate church membership.

A regenerate church membership requires the preaching of the gospel (Christ crucified and risen, Acts 2:22-36; "many other words" Acts 2:40). It is the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation (Ro. 1:16). Salvation requires coming unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Ti. 2:4). It involves obeying from the heart "that form of doctrine which was delivered you" (Ro. 6:17). Christ taught that the gospel is to be preached to every creature, and those who believe the gospel are those who are saved (Mr. 16:15-16). The gospel is beautifully summarized in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

A regenerate church membership requires conviction (Acts 2:37). This is the supernatural work of the Spirit, drawing, enlightening, convicting. There is no salvation apart from this work.



A regenerate church membership requires repentance (Acts 2:38). Repentance is commanded by Christ ("except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," Lu. 13:3, 5) and by Paul ("God now commandeth all men every where to repent," Ac. 17:30). Paul preached "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ac. 20:21). Repentance is to turn to God in submission. It is a change of mind that results in a change of life. Repentance is not works salvation; it is a change of mind, not a change of life. But it produces a changed life. Paul preached "that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (Ac. 26:20).

A regenerate church membership requires glad faith (Acts 2:41). Their faith was not manipulated or pressured. When the Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip if he could be baptized, Philip replied, "if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (Ac. 8:37).

A regenerate church membership requires conversion (Acts 2:42). True salvation is regeneration. It is being made a new creature in Christ (2 Co. 5:17). It is to be translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

Supernatural salvation is the fundamental of fundamentals for a sound New Testament church. We have gotten ever more careful about this.

### **Baptism (Acts 2:41)**

This is believer's baptism by immersion. It depicts the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which is the gospel, and the believer's identification with Christ (Ro. 6:4-5). It is commanded by Christ (Mt. 28:19). It is a fundamental doctrine and practice.

Salvation and baptism are the requirements for church membership -- "and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

**Discipleship (Acts 2:42)**

They continued stedfastly. This is a strong emphasis on their obedience, zeal, and faithfulness.

The most common name for a New Testament believer is “disciple” (*methetes* in Greek). The term “believer” appears two times (Acts 5:14; 1 Ti. 4:12); “Christian” appears three times (Acts 11:16; 26:28; 1 Pe. 4:16); “saint” appears 62 times; “brethren” appears about 135 times; but “disciple” (referring to a disciple of Christ) appears about 268 times. Jesus defined a true disciple as follows: “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed” (Joh. 8:31).

**Apostles Doctrine (Acts 2:42)**

The members of the first church loved doctrine. They loved Bible study. No one had to order them to be present in Bible teaching meetings. I can relate to this. As soon as I was saved at age 23, for the first time in my life, I loved to read and study the Bible and was eager for good Bible preaching/teaching, and by God's grace, that has not waned in 46 years.

This is evidence of true discipleship. “He that is of God heareth God's Words” (Joh. 8:47). “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (Joh. 8:31-32). “My sheep hear my voice” (Joh. 10:27).

They loved *sound* doctrine. They continued in the apostles' doctrine, not in the doctrine of heretics. A church that continues in apostolic doctrine has a testing mindset. See 1 Th. 5:21-22. A New Testament church exercises a ministry of proving, evaluating, analyzing, judging. This is not a critical attitude. It is a godly, truth-loving, protective attitude. The objective is a positive one to avoid error and to “hold fast that which is good.”

A church that continues in doctrine is a serious Bible study church. We aim to make every member a serious Bible student. “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in

Christ Jesus” (Col. 1:28). “... for every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:12-14). We are convinced that the equivalent of a Bible Institute education is the *beginning* of the level of Bible knowledge that is required for a fruitful Christian life in God’s will.

A church that continues in doctrine involves the right kind of preaching/teaching that feeds the sheep and builds them up in the faith and teaches them how to study and understand the Bible for themselves.

### **Fellowship (Acts 2:42)**

The members of the first church loved the brethren. This was their family, their crowd. They loved zealous brethren.

True fellowship is spiritual. It is not just eating and playing together. The world does that. The spiritual character of a church will be seen in what the members love to talk about. What do the young people talk about? The men? The women?

### **Breaking of Bread (Acts 2:42)**

The members of the first church loved the Lord’s Supper. Compare Acts 20:7.

It is an important and essential practice. It is the time of remembering Christ, of learning of Christ, of expecting Christ’s return.

It is a very serious practice. It is a time of heart searching (1 Co. 11:27-32) and an element of church discipline (“with such an one no not to eat,” 1 Co. 5:11).

### **Prayers (Acts 2:42)**

The members of the first church loved prayers (plural). It was a praying church.

Prayer is mentioned at least 415 times in Scripture; 129 times in the NT; 35 times in Acts; 25 times in Paul's epistles. It was a major emphasis of Christ's teaching.

The true disciple is a praying Christian. His life is a life of prayer. He loves prayer. He has a daily prayer closet. He has seasons of prayer. He intercedes in prayer. He prays without ceasing. He is in communion with his God all through the day. He prays with his wife and family. He loves corporate prayer. He loves praying with the brethren. He has prayer partners.

This is in great contrast to the typical church today. How can a church claim to be a New Testament church if its people don't "continue in prayers"?

This is the *image* of a New Testament church; this is the *test* of a New Testament church.

An Acts 2:41-42 church is not a church without sin and without problems. Compare Acts 5 and 6. But it is a *far* more spiritually serious church than the typical church today.

We need to stop following tradition, including fundamental Baptist tradition. Tradition has weakened churches, not strengthened them.

I think of the Southern Baptist church in Florida that I grew up in. All the kids made professions of faith, but there was no caution, no wisdom, no looking for evidence, and the professions were never questioned later on, regardless of how empty they proved to be. My former best friend died at age 62, having lived a Christ-rejecting, filthy life, and being steeped in Native American spirituality, which is demonism, but his Southern Baptist mother, a former Sunday School teacher, thought he was in heaven because of his empty childhood profession.

I think of **Highland Park Baptist Church** in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in its heyday. The governing principle seemed to be "get as many as you can as fast as you can." When Lee Roberson became pastor in 1942, the membership was 1,000,

the Sunday morning attendance was 400, and the mid-week service attendance was about 10 (James Wigton, *Lee Roberson: Always about His Father's Business*, 2010, p. 22). So 60% of the members were nowhere to be found and only 1% had enough Christianity to attend a mid-week service. That was and is typical, both for Southern Baptists and for fundamental Baptists. That pattern never changed at Highland Park even as the numbers exploded. When Dr. Roberson retired in 1982, Highland Park's membership was 63,000, but Wednesday night attendance was about 3,000. That is the best measure of active membership, and that would leave 60,000 unaccounted for! The huge membership numbers got Highland Park listed as the world's largest church, but since the vast majority of those "members" were not active, what did it mean?

Acts 2:41-42 Christianity is not "negative" or "boring" to saved people. Our young people enjoy their Christian lives. There is *zero* pressure from them that the church provide entertainment. They love separation from the world because they don't want God's will and they don't want to be devoured by the devil. They have turned from drugs, given up beautiful but worldly girlfriends, given up worldly social media, given up addictions so video gaming, given up immodest dress, given up secular education that was hindering their spiritual lives. They love serious prayer meetings. They love studying the Bible. They love playing and singing sacred music. They love Christian ministry.

### **The Environment of a Godly Home**

The battle for spiritual music is won or lost, second of all, in the home.

A friend recently replied as follows to my question as to how many young people in his church are on fire for the Lord:

“A few of the young people are pretty serious. Most not. Pastor preaches hard. The parents are failing their kids by not following through on what they are hearing. The key is the home. They are getting the right stuff from the pulpit. Those who put into practice what they hear being preached have been pretty successful. Those who don’t have failed miserably.”

The church should build godly homes that raise a godly seed for Christ. The church and the home are both divine institutions that should work together.

The home is not the church. In Colossians 4:15, both are mentioned (“the church which is in his house”). Here is a church that met in a house. This is in contrast to “home churches” in which the home is preeminent. Some years ago, I preached a Bible conference in Australia, and a family with many children attended the Sunday morning service and even participated in the music ministry, but they didn’t return for the rest of the services. When I inquired about this, the pastor said, “They only attend Sunday mornings; the rest of the time they attend to family business.” This is a family that is confused about God’s will in this present age.

It is the church that is called the pillar and ground of the truth, not the home (1 Ti. 3:15).

The church is not the home, but the church is to build up the home. The church should not weaken the home (by worldliness, by lack of seriousness, by lack of spiritual and biblical depth, by lack of true discipleship, by avoiding discipline). And the home should not weaken the church by unfaithfulness, worldliness, and halfhearted discipleship.

The instruction about the home is given in the context of the church. The instruction is incorporated into the church epistles (Eph. 5:22 - 6:4; Col. 3:18-21; Tit. 2:4-5). It is the church that is to teach husbands how to be good husbands and how to be the spiritual leaders of their homes, wives how

to be good wives, parents how to discipline their children, mothers how to be keepers of the home, children how to obey and honor their parents, plus all the other things that make a godly, fruitful home. It is the church that is commissioned by Christ, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have taught you” (Mt. 28:20).

An important measure of the spiritual character of a church is the condition of the homes. Not every home will respond properly to the church’s ministry, but the church cannot escape responsibility. Only if a church is doing everything it can to build godly homes is its responsibility finished.

Recently a pastor’s wife asked, “What about children that go wrong in good homes?” My answer is that God has given powerful promises about the children. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Pr. 22:6). “Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Pr. 23:13-14). But training children as disciples of Christ is a large job that entails many things, and most families aren’t fully engaged in this business and aren’t doing the things that are necessary.

*Keeping the Kids: How to Keep the Kids from Falling Prey to the World* is a training course that is the product of experience, Bible study, reading, feedback from questionnaires, interviews.

Following are some fundamental elements of the home that is the right environment to preserve sacred music:

1. Husband and wife having good Christian character; consistency in Christian living; hypocrisy is one of the most destructive things
2. Good husband/wife relationship

3. Commitment to and faithfulness to and serving in a sound New Testament church.

4. The father the spiritual head of the home.

5. Dad and mom 100% committed to raising the children for Christ; a major priority. One man said, "Turning our daughter out right for the Lord is the highest priority we have. It's EXTREMELY important to us. It's like life and death to us. So, it gets a lot of our thought, prayers, and attention." A missionary to Japan said, "Both sides of our families were broken. My parents got divorced after 25 years of marriage. My wife's parents divorced after 25 years of marriage. Both sides have illegitimate children. Both of us have grandparents that were divorced or a mess. And we just covenanted when we first got married that we would break the cycle from our generation forward. We had no background at all in godly parenting." A missionary to Brazil said, "Right from the start my wife and I started having devotions together and it was a deep desire in our hearts to have a godly family and to raise godly children." These types of parents make this priority the major factor in all decisions (church, job, lifestyle, possessions, entertainment, education, relationships with family, etc.)

6. Mom and Dad being prayer warriors

7. Biblical child discipline; this needs to be a serious matter of study and application.

8. The mom a keeper at home (Titus 2:5). This requires parents who are putting God absolutely first, parents who are living by faith and know how to trust God for their needs. I'm glad that all of my daughters and daughters-in-law are keepers at home for their young families. A young mother wrote to me recently, "----- turned 1 on the 11th of last month and ----- will be 3 on the 21st of this month. It is going by fast. We have such a short time with our children to



teach them truth. I'm so glad I'm able to stay home with the boys and be fully present. Brian always wanted it that way." Note that her husband, Brian, is fully on board with her being a keeper at home. This young couple has learned how to live wisely and frugally on a single salary, and yet with God's blessing they have everything they need and far more. When Christ said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you," He meant it! Another mother wrote as follows: "We have 7 children. We followed your advice years ago about not giving them unlimited, unsupervised access to the internet and are very thankful for your wise counsel. We have found that if the mothers would obey God's commandment to be keepers at home the need for children to have a smart phone would be diminished. Also if a family takes Deuteronomy 6 seriously, this also protects against needing a smart phone by homeschooling children. God's Word is a shield, a high tower, it protects us and allows us to see dangers a far off. We have warned our children that the Lord sees everything, hears everything and knows our motives, our heart. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Don't post anything you don't want read aloud in front of the church. Use social media to exhort, bring people to Christ, proclaim the gospel and teach the word. For God says for every idle word man shall give account. Surely a serpent will bite without enchantment and a babbler is no different. A fool is known by the multitude of his words, even a fool when he holdeth his peace is esteemed wise. The cure for social media problems is knowing the Word of God and teaching it to our children."

9. Serious Bible education (training the children to be Bible students). 2 Ti. 3:15, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The children

need to be taught to have a daily Bible reading habit. As they mature, they gradually learn how to be serious Bible students.

10. Wisdom and extreme caution about education in general. God's Word warns repeatedly about evil associations, which has a direct and clear application to education (Ps. 1; 1 Co. 15:33; 2 Co. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11). In a great many places, Christian parents follow the culture in exalting secular education too highly and not being wise enough about this matter. The only way that a young person can attend a secular school with any degree of safety is that he be a saved, serving, growing Christian who is faithfully serving (not merely attending) in a good church.

11. Separation from all evil things (1 Jo. 2:15-16; Eph. 5:11); constantly examining, evaluating; toys, books, entertainment, recreation, clothing, friends, relatives, everything

12. Wisdom and extreme caution about the Internet, smart phones, computers, social media (pastor's son who became atheist; pastor's daughter whose heart was stolen by the world)

13. Wisdom and extreme caution about bringing the children to salvation. One of the main things that weakens churches is lack of wisdom in dealing with children. Lack of patience and prayer; lack of looking for evidence. See "Careful Child Evangelism," [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

God's people must focus like a laser on building true New Testament churches and godly Christian homes. For the most part, it is here that the battle for spiritual music will be won or lost.

# The Age of Music

We are to “prove all things” (1 Th. 5:21), and certainly one of the “all things” is music, one of the most important influences in home, church, and society.

If ever there were an age when God’s people need to take particular heed to the issue of music, it is today! This could be called “the age of music” because technology has made it ubiquitous. Most people are immersed in music every day of their lives. This is a brand new thing in human history. There was no music on demand from Eden until the 20th century, except for kings and the most wealthy who could afford to have musicians on their payroll, and even their choices were severely limited. The music revolution began with the phonograph (record player). It was invented in 1877 by Thomas Edison and he rightly predicted, “The phonograph will undoubtedly be liberally devoted to music.” Twenty years later he observed that “people are willing to pay to be amused more than anything else.” How right he was! Modern communications technology has made this the age of amusement, and music is at the very heart of the amused culture. By the turn of the 20th century, record companies were popularizing music recordings. In 1920, “Crazy Blues” by Mamie Smith sold one million copies. The explosion of commercial radio in the 1920s hastened the popularity of music listening and increased record sales. Music pieces began to be written to fit the time available on a record. The result was the three-minute pop song. It was the first time in history that an individual could listen to whatever music he pleased, and the first time that an individual could immerse himself in music in isolation. It was the dawn of the age of “me.” RCA’s 45 rpm vinyl record of 1949 was another major step in the music revolution. The 45 rpm players were small and more portable than anything that had previously existed,

and some featured tall spindles that would automatically play stacks of records. It was the inexpensive, portable 45 that propelled the rock & roll revolution of the 1950s. It was the record of the rock party, the record shop, and the ubiquitous jukebox. In 1955, Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" sold 3 million copies. When I began my personal venture into the world of rock in about 1962, the 45 was still a prominent technology of the pop culture. The popularity of 45 rpm records peaked in 1977 with 200 million sales. Beginning in the 1950s, television furthered the music listening craze, particularly of pop music, with shows such as *American Bandstand*. The handheld, battery-powered transistor radio of the 1950s took portability of music to a new level. The Sony Walkman of 1979, that played the compact cassette tape, was revolutionary in making "my music" available 24/7, even while walking, running, etc. The iPod digital music player (2001) and then the iPhone (2007), with its constant connection with the Internet, took this to an even higher level. The iPhone plugged the listener into the vast world of streaming services and on demand music such as Spotify, iTunes, and Amazon. The technology-empowered music revolution is the heart and soul of the global pop culture with its licentious "me first" philosophy.

# **Biblical Principles of Music**

This is a study of what the Bible itself says about music. It is a study of every major passage that deals with music, with application to the New Testament church and modern times.

Churches need to train the people in music so well that they can test it by biblical standards. They must be able to discern such things as soft rock, honky-tonk, dance rhythms, chords as used in CCM, and worldly vocal styles.

It is not enough to publish a list of unacceptable music. Such lists are helpful, but any list will be obsolete in a short time. Further, no list is exhaustive.

The following principles from Scripture on the music issue are for the ongoing education of the entire church:

1. Man was created with the ability to sing, and the chief purpose for this is the worship of God.
2. The Bible is filled with references to music.
3. The largest book of the Bible is a hymnbook.
4. There was singing in the Old Testament temple.
5. Christ's kingdom will be a singing kingdom.
6. Christ's church is to be a singing church.
7. Church music must be sung and played by Spirit-filled saints who are indwelt with God's Word.
8. Church music is for singing to one another and unto the Lord.
9. Church music must be sound in doctrine (Col. 3:16).
10. Church music must emphasize "melody" (Eph. 5:19).
11. Church music must be sung from the heart.
12. Music is not "neutral"; it is a language and the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics.

13. Church music must be holy and separate from the world (Ro. 12:2; Eph. 4:17-19; 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 4:4; 1 Pe. 2:11; 1 Jo. 2:15-16).
14. Church music must edify.
15. Church music should be joyful.
16. Church music must not borrow from and build bridges to the world of contemporary Christian music (Ro. 16:17-18; 1 Co. 10:21; 15:33; 2 Co. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11; 2 Ti. 3:5; Re. 18:4).
17. Church music must not be designed to produce a charismatic style mystical experience (1 Peter 5:8).
18. Church music must be skillful (1 Ch. 15:21, 22; Ps. 33:3).
19. Church music must be unquestionably right and safe.
20. Church music must guard against incrementalism (1 Co. 5:6; Ga. 5:9).
21. Church music must aim for that which is excellent (Php. 1:10).
22. God's people should aim to learn to sing and play music.
23. Pastors must oversee the church's music.

### **1. Man was created with the ability to sing, and the chief purpose for this is the worship of God.**

Man sings because he is made in God's image. God gave man the equipment for singing (physical, intellectual, emotional). Consider the physical. The four main parts of voice production are as follows: **The power source**, which is the air exhaled from the lungs. **The vibrator**, which is the larynx (voice box) that sits on top of the windpipe or trachea. It is an incredibly complex organ consisting of two folds (known also as vocal cords) that vibrate when air passes over them when activated by the individual. (When we aren't speaking or singing, the air passes over the vocal folds without producing sound.) When activated, the vocal folds vibrate from 65 to 1300 times per second, being controlled by muscles in the

larynx. The muscles of the larynx adjust the tension of the vocal folds to tune the pitch and tone. **The resonator or vocal tract**, which is the throat, mouth, cheeks, palate, nasal cavity, and nose. The **articulators** are the tongue, the lips, the hard and soft palate. (Source: “How the Voice Works,” American Academy of Otolaryngology.) “Together with the teeth and jaw, the lips, and the hard and soft palate, all more or less controllable by conscious intention, the flow of air, having come already vibrating from the larynx, is tuned to articulate speech and imbued with feeling from the opening, trembling or closing of the various sounding chambers of the nasal cavity, the sinuses, and even of the throat and chest. The fundamental tone is created by powerful wind blowing across and between warm, moist, moving, finely controlled membranes and cartilaginous surfaces in the voice box; but this sound is only the raw material that will be shaped again and again until it passes through the lips and nostrils” (Frederick Turner, “The Human Voice” Newington-Cropsey Cultural Studies Center, *American Arts Quarterly*, Spring 2010).

According to Ingo Titze, director of the National Center for Voice and Speech at the University of Utah, it would be nearly impossible to create an instrument that could elongate and vibrate exactly the way human vocal cords do (“15 Throaty Facts about Vocal Cords,” *Mental Floss*, Nov. 15, 2016).

The range of the human voice is vast. The loudest recorded human voice is Jill Drake, a teaching assistant who lives in England. Her scream is 129 dBA, equivalent to an AC/DC concert. The lowest note ever sung was G(-7) by Tom Storms, eight octaves below the lowest G on a piano. Storms also holds the record for the widest range, a full 10 octaves, more than 3 times the average singer’s range of 3 octaves.

The human voice can express every human emotion. “The tone of the human voice may be modulated in various ways to express our emotions such as joy, happiness, anger, sadness and surprise” (“Amazing Facts about the Human Voice,” Sep. 7, 2015, [worldwithtj.wordpress.com](http://worldwithtj.wordpress.com)).

The first purpose of man’s singing ability is to worship God, because this is man’s chief reason for existence. The first commandment is “thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might” (De. 6:5). Man is commanded to sing praises unto God. “For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding” (Ps. 47:7).

Men have corrupted God’s gifts and used them for their own selfish, wicked purposes, with no thought for God’s glory. But in redemption, through the blood of Christ, the fallen sinner is restored to his place as God’s son and can live for the glory of God.

Christ, the perfect man, the last Adam, sings. Zephaniah prophesies of Jehovah God singing with joy over redeemed Israel. “The LORD thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing” (Zep. 3:17). We know that this refers to Christ. The writer of Hebrews cites Psalm 22:25 and applies it to Christ singing praises in the midst of the church. Imagine the Son of God singing to the Father and to His people! He is the one who invented song and created the marvelous human voice. Pavarotti has been called “the voice of the ages,” but surely, Jesus is the true Voice of the Ages, the Singer of singers! He will sing in His glory as the eternal Son of God.

Christ is the example for every redeemed saint.



## **2. The Bible is filled with references to music.**

It should be obvious from the following study that music is no small issue in Scripture:

Satan is mentioned in connection with musical instruments before his fall (Eze. 28:12-14).

The angels sang together at the creation (Job 38:7).

Cain's offspring made musical instruments (Ge. 4:21).

Moses and Israel sang in the wilderness (Ex. 15:1-21; Nu. 21:17).

Israel made worldly music when they committed idolatry and immorality (Ex. 32:4-6, 17-19, 25).

Deborah and Barak sang at the downfall of Sisera (Ju. 5:1-31).

The Levites were organized to sing and make music in praise to God. See 1 Ch. 15:16-28; 16:4-42; 23:3-6, 27-30; 25:1-8; 2 Ch. 5:12-13; 20:19-28; 23:13; 29:25-28; 31:2; 35:15, 25; Ezr. 2:64; 3:10-11; Ne. 12:42-47.

The Psalms contain 150 musical psalms to God.

The wicked make music to entertain themselves in their rebellion to God (Job 21:12-14) and in connection with moral debauchery (Is. 5:11-12; 24:8-9; Am. 6:5-6).

Israel sang when God fought against Moab and Ammon (2 Ch. 20:14-23). David sang to comfort Saul (1 Sa. 16:15, 16, 23).

The Israelite women sang at the return of the armies from battle (1 Sa. 18:6-7).

David made many musical instruments and organized music for the worship of God (1 Ch. 23:5; 2 Ch. 7:6; 29:26; Am. 6:5)

Solomon made musical instruments (1 Ki. 10:12; 2 Ch. 9:11; Ec. 2:8).

There are songs of fools (Ec. 7:5).

Israel sang at the coronation of Solomon (1 Ki. 1:39-40).

Israel sang at the coronation of Joash (2 Ch. 23:12-13).

Nebuchadnezzar required music to be played at his idolatrous festival (Da. 3:4-16).

Israel sang at the rededication of the temple by Hezekiah (2 Ch. 29:20-36).

Israel sang at the dedication of the rebuilt temple (Ezr. 3:10-11).

Israel sang at the dedication of the rebuilt wall in Jerusalem (Ne. 12:42-47).

Jesus sang with his disciples (Mk. 14:26; He. 2:12).

The churches are commanded to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

Paul and Silas sang praises to God in the jail (Ac. 16:25).

The earth will break forth in singing during the Millennium (Is. 14:7).

The end-time Babylonian world system loves music (Eze. 26:13; Re. 18:22).

There is singing in heaven (Re. 5:8-10; 14:2-3; 15:2-3).

Miscellaneous other references to music in the O.T. - Ge. 31:27; Ju. 11:34; 2 Sa. 19:35; Job 30:31; Pr. 29:6; Is. 5:12; 12:5; 14:7; 16:10; 23:16; 30:29-32; 44:23; Eze. 26:13; 33:32; 40:44; 8:10; Hab. 3:19.

### **3. The largest book of the Bible is a hymnbook.**

There are 150 psalms that deal with every facet of God's character and every situation in human life. Psalms is infinite in teaching. It is a whole world of revelation. William Law said, "Singing psalms awakes all that is good and holy within you, calling your spirits to their proper duty, setting you in your best posture toward heaven, and tuning all the powers of your soul to worship and adoration."

Since the largest book in the Bible is a songbook, we see the importance of sacred music before God.

The name of the book in Hebrew is *te'hillim* (songs of praises). In Hebrew, the individual psalms are called *miz'mor*, meaning melody of praise. *Psalmos* (*Psalms*) is what the book is called in the New Testament (Lu. 20:42; 24:44; Ac. 1:20; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 5:13). *Psalmos* is from *psallo*, which refers to touching or plucking the strings of a harp.

*The Psalms were sung by Israel* (Ps. 66:8). Israel invented special musical instruments for singing the Psalms (2 Ch. 7:6)

*The Psalms were sung by Protestants.* A metrical Psalter is an edition of the Psalms meant to be sung. The Psalms are translated and adapted in such a way that they can be sung to one or more meters or tunes. The premillennialist Isaac Watts (1674-1748) published the most influential English psalter (1719). He is known as “the father of English hymnology.” He spent 19 years producing his Psalter and wrote another 697 hymns. Watts was a pioneer in adapting the Psalms so that New Testament truth is incorporated. He wrote,

“Far be it from my thoughts to lay aside the Book of Psalms in public worship. ... But it must be acknowledged still, that there are a thousand lines in it which were not made for a Church in our Days, to assume as its own. There are also many deficiencies of Light and Glory, which our Lord Jesus and his Apostles have supplied to the Writings of the New Testament. ... You will also find in this Paraphrase dark expressions enlightened, and the Levitical ceremonies and Hebrew forms of speech changed into the Worship of the Gospel, and explained in the language of our time and nation” (Preface, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707).

He also said,

“I have not been so curious and exact in striving everywhere to express the ancient sense and meaning of David, but have rather exprest myself as I may suppose David would have done, had he lived in the Days of Christianity. And by this means perhaps I have sometimes

hit upon the true Intent of the Spirit of God in those verses farther and clearer than David himself could ever discover, as St. Peter encourages me to hope, 1 Pet. 1:11, 12” (Preface. *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*, 1719).

Watts’ Psalter, with its five meters (tunes), is an example of singing hymns to simple melodies (“making melody,” Eph. 5:19).

Psalm 1 (sung to the Common Meter - “Oh God Our Help in Ages Past”)

1. Blest is the man who shuns the place  
Where sinners love to meet;  
Who fears to tread their wicked ways,  
And hates the scoffer’s seat;
2. But in the statutes of the Lord  
Hath placed his chief delight;  
By day he reads or hears the Word,  
And meditates by night.
3. He like a plant of gen’rous kind,  
By living waters set,  
Safe from the storms and blasting wind,  
Enjoys a peaceful state.
4. Green as the leaf and ever fair  
Shall his profession shine,  
While fruits of holiness appear  
Like cluster on the vine.
5. Not so the impious and unjust;  
What vain designs they form!  
Their hopes are blown away like dust,  
Or chaff before the storm.
6. Sinners in judgment shall not stand  
Amongst the sons of grace,  
When Christ the Judge, at His right hand  
Appoints His saints a place.
7. His eye beholds the path they tread.

His heart approves it well;  
But crooked ways of sinners lead  
Down to the gates of hell.

*The Psalms were sung by Baptists.* Charles Spurgeon's Metropolitan Tabernacle hymnbook of 1866 contained Watts' Psalter, in addition to other hymns. The 1991 edition of Metropolitan Tabernacle's *Psalms & Hymns of Reformed Worship* has selections from Watts, Charles Wesley, Henry Lyte, Philip Doddridge, Nahum Tate, and others. The tunes are published in a separate music edition.

An edition of the Scottish Psalter is published by the Free Church of Scotland. It includes 193 tunes, and each Psalm can be sung to three or more tunes.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America publishes a Psalter that includes the musical notations together with the lyrics.

#### **4. There was singing in the Old Testament Temple.**

David organized the music worship program for the Tabernacle. This began on the occasion of bringing the ark of God from Gibeah to Jerusalem (1 Ch. 15:1-24). After the ark was set in a tent in Jerusalem, David appointed a continual music program (1 Ch. 16:1-7, 37-42). When David was old, in connection with the charge to Solomon about the building of the Temple, he further organized the Levitical music program, assigning 4,000 priests to this task (1 Ch. 23:1-5; 25:1-31). He did this by divine revelation (2 Ch. 28:11-13).

Suddenly the Tabernacle was filled with holy worship music. There had been no such thing from the time of Moses until David. The divine Tabernacle service is described in Exodus and Leviticus, and there is no music. There were no Levites appointed to music. There was no hymnal.

With David, a new era begins. We are moving further along now toward the coming of Christ! David is promised an eternal throne and kingdom, ruled by his Son, who is Christ (2 Sa. 7:12-16).

In a foreview of that glorious kingdom, David begins to write the Messianic hymnal. The last five psalms of the hymnal explode with Messianic praise. "Praise" is mentioned here 50 times. These psalms are about "an everlasting kingdom" (Ps. 145:13; 146:13). The words "for ever" and "everlasting" and "all generations" appear nine times. These psalms prophesy of the time when the LORD will "build up Jerusalem" and strengthen the bars of her gates and "gather together the outcasts of Israel" and make peace within her borders and fill her with the finest of wheat (Ps. 147:2, 13, 14). Then the entire universe will resound with praise the LORD; the angels, the sun and moon and stars, the heavens and the earth, the mountains and hills and trees, the beasts and flying fowl, the kings, the princes, the judges, the young men and maidens, old men and children (Ps. 148:1-13). Then the Lord's people will execute vengeance upon the heathen (Ps. 149:6-9). Then the LORD will be praised with the sound of the trumpet, the psaltery and harp, the timbrel and dance, the stringed instruments and organs, the loud cymbals and the high sounding cymbals (Ps. 150:3-5). Then everything that has breath will praise the LORD (Ps. 150:6)!

In 2 Ch. 5:12-13, we see the music ministry operating full blown in Solomon's Temple.

"Also the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets;) It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up

*their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD.”*

All of these passages contain instruction for the churches. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning...” (Ro. 15:4).

This does not mean that we are to construct grand buildings and have magnificent professional choirs and orchestras like the Mormon Tabernacle. The New Testament church is a pilgrim church. We live in tents, so to speak, like Abraham. We are composed of the weak things of the world rather than the noble (1 Co. 1:26-29). We are ever waiting and ready for the call, “Come up hither” (1 Th. 1:9-10). We are not laying up treasures on earth, but in heaven (Mt. 6:19-21). Our affection is not on earth; it is in heaven where our Saviour resides (Col. 3:1-4).

But there are important lessons from the Temple music service for New Testament churches. Following are some of them:

***The instruments were harps, psalteries, cymbals, trumpets and cornets*** (1 Ch. 15:16, 28). Though some churches don’t believe in using music instruments, it is obvious that God loves sacred worship music that incorporates instruments. There should never have been a debate about this in churches; the Psalms are not just for the Mosaic era. Today the church is the house of God and the things in the Old Testament are our example (Ro. 15:4). We are specifically instructed to sing Psalms, which takes us right back to the Psalms and the instruments mentioned therein. Observe that these are not the type of instruments used to create worldly dance music. There were no drums, for example. (Drums can be used properly in sacred music, such as in the timpani section of an orchestra, but drums as used in pop music to

emphasize the dance back rhythm are not sacred.) Cymbals are percussion instruments, but there can be no doubt that when used in the Temple worship, they were not continually banged together to create a discordant racket. That would be more in keeping with Babylonian music. The cymbals were not used as in a rock band. The instruments mentioned in 1 Chronicles 15:28 were used in accompaniment to the singing of the priests, so it is obvious that they were used in moderation so as not to drown out or overwhelm the voices.

***The singers and musicians were skillful*** (“excel,” 1 Ch. 15:21; “skilful,” 1 Ch. 15:22; “cunning,” 1 Ch. 25:7). One qualification for ministry is ability. When God calls an individual to a ministry, he gifts and equips him for that ministry. For example, the elder must be apt to teach and must be able to exhort and convince false teachers (1 Ti. 3:2; Titus 1:9). If a man cannot do this work, he is not called to be an elder.

***They excelled*** (1 Ch. 15:21). They wanted everything to be as perfect as possible; mediocrity was unacceptable. Anything we do for the Lord should be done right, with the highest level of expertise and preparation that we can produce. He is most worthy of our very best. God’s people need to be getting better educated, stronger in every area, moving in the opposite direction of most churches. This is the path of victory and revival.

***They were trained*** (1 Ch. 25:7). Churches should do everything they can to provide training for their singers and musicians to the glory of the Creator. It is one thing to be untrained and ignorant, but it is quite another thing to be content to remain untrained and to offer unto God something less than our best. Every church must be a serious Bible training institute.

***They were well organized; there was oversight; they submitted to God’s order and to the authority figures God***



***had put over them;*** they were assigned their places (1 Ch. 15:17, 19; 25:2, 6). The lot was used (1 Ch. 25:8) so that God's will would be done in the appointment of the singers and musicians and so that no favoritism would be exercised by the leaders. The lot was used to determine God's mind. There is no place for jealousy and carnality and favoritism in the church's music ministry. All things should be done by the mind of God and for the glory of God rather than for man. Compare 1 Co. 12:7. We don't need to use the lot today, because we have the indwelling Spirit and the complete Word of God. Submission to God-ordained authority is the way of peace in the congregation (1 Th. 5:12-13).

***The music was a ministry of the priests*** (1 Ch. 15:16). Compare 1 Pe. 2:5, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." This is a description of a church that is much more serious and wise and spiritually zealous than the vast majority of churches in these last days. It is a church of a regenerate membership ("living stones"). It is a spiritual house, not a carnal, worldly, flippant affair. It is a holy priesthood. Each member of a true New Testament church is a priest of God! His or her job on earth is to offer up spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God, works that show God's holy character to an unholy world, lives that shine light into this dark world,

***They sang and played with enthusiasm and joy*** (1 Ch. 15:16). God's people should follow this example in the churches, and the music leaders should teach and encourage it. I believe that congregational singing is a reflection of a church's spiritual character. Many of the Lord's people do not sing, or they sing so softly that no one can hear them, but the song service is not about me and whether or not I feel like singing or whether I like to sing, and it's not a time to be entertained. It is about singing to God and edifying one another, and it should be done with exuberance.

***They prophesied*** (1 Ch. 25:1-3). Compare 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 which says that all the saints should prophesy. This doesn't mean that every member preaches. Paul limited the actual prophesying or preaching to two or three (1 Co. 14:29). 1 Corinthians 14:3 says prophesying is speaking "unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort." Any of that is prophesying. For all to prophesy means that every believer participates in and responds to every part of the service from the heart: to the singing and playing, to the preaching and teaching, even to the corporate prayer. I like the practice I have seen in Korean Baptist churches. During public prayer, as one brother is leading, the brethren say a loud "amen" after every statement. This is prophesying! This is unity in corporate prayer. When visitors see that the members are enthusiastically involved in the services, they understand that the brethren really do believe in Christ, and they are convicted of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

***They sang God's Words*** (1 Ch. 25:5). Compare Colossians 3:16. Worship must be based solidly upon Scripture; it must not be heretical or frivolous or shallow. The first test of Christian music is the test of whether its message is Scriptural. Worship music should flow from lives that are filled richly with God's Word, and from lives that understand the Word and practice its precepts wisely in daily living. This is what creates a spiritual song service. Yet in my experience, the average member of Bible-believing churches is ignorant of God's Word and doesn't have the wisdom to apply it to daily living. No wonder our services are so lukewarm.

***They gave thanksgiving to God*** (1 Ch. 25:3). This is the first and foremost purpose of the Christian life and church. There are two kinds of spiritual songs: those that teach and edify the brethren and those that praise the Lord (Col. 3:16). The churches need to make sure that they sing hymns of worship and not only songs for the edification of the saints. True worship is not a rock & roll dance party; it is not a

performance. True worship is glorifying God with the mind and heart for His attributes and character and works. See Psalm 100. True worship is to give thanks to God. God's people owe Him everything, natural life and spiritual life. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (Jas. 1:17-18). He saw us, loved us, planned our salvation, accomplished our salvation, call us by the gospel, saved us by His grace, lives in us by His Spirit, gave us the very riches of Christ. How wicked we are when we fail to give thanks for everything! "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

***They sang in unity*** ("the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard," 2 Ch. 5:12-13). The singing and playing were one voice. It was harmonious rather than discordant. It was not a bunch of individuals doing as they pleased. Every individual was submitted to the Lord and to one another and to the leadership as one body. God made the amazing human voice, and its first purpose is to praise God. How lovely it is for God's people to use their God-given voices to unite in teaching and admonishing one another and in proclaiming thanksgiving to God!

Whenever there was a revival in Israel, the Temple music "program" was revived. We see this in the days of Hezekiah.

"And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for *so was* the commandment of the LORD by his prophets. And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering

began, the song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and all this continued* until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped” (2 Ch. 29:25-30).



There were rooms in the Temple for the singers and instruments. In Herod's temple, they were located below the Nicanor Gate that led from the Court of the Women to the place of the sacrificial altar before the Temple proper. In front of the Nicanor Gate was a series of semi-circular steps and a platform on which the singing priests presented themselves.

In ancient Israel, when she was right with God, the music associated with worship was carefully prepared and skillfully performed with godly oversight.

All too often a church's song service is led by individuals who know almost nothing about what they are doing, who lack the skill, enthusiasm, and spirituality to do a good job and aren't interested in getting a proper education to improve their ministries.

No wonder many are tempted to move to a church that has an enthusiastic contemporary worship service. No wonder young people often think of church as dull. I received an email recently from a woman who informed me that her family left an independent Baptist church that was lifeless and that they are now happy members of a lively, contemporary Southern Baptist congregation. That's too bad, but I wonder how many people have turned away from the truth because it was presented in a lifeless, incredibly boring manner!

A doctrinally sound church that is dull, half-hearted, half-dead, and mediocre does not glorify the Lord. God's people are instructed to do everything *heartily* ("And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men," Col. 3:23).

If a church is half-hearted and boring, it is not a true NT church, because Jesus Christ and the Bible are the most exciting "things" on earth!

If a church is young and the congregation small, it is understandable that there might not be proper musicians and song leaders. No one expects a young church to have everything that a more established church has. Under such conditions, the church must do the best it can with what it has and beseech God for growth. We are referring here to churches that *could do better* in this matter but don't simply

because it is not a priority. They are content with mediocrity and dullness.

We need to be getting better educated, stronger in every area, moving in the opposite direction of most churches, which is weaker, less cautious, more ignorant. To get stronger is the path of continual revival.

### **5. Christ's church is to be a singing church**

Singing was practiced by Jesus in His little flock (Mt. 26:30).

It was practiced in the first churches (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

Congregational singing died in apostasy (priestcraft destroyed the priesthood of believers).

*Congregational singing was practiced by Anabaptists.* Baptists of old loved to sing. Their songs and hymns were sacred in character and biblical in doctrine. They put entire sermons or Bible stories or histories of martyrdom into song. Some of their hymns had 45 stanzas! Balthasar Hübmaier's hymn "A Song in Praise of God's Word" is 18 stanzas and covers the whole Bible from Adam to Christ. Hübmaier (1480-1528) was martyred for his faith. We found that this hymn can be sung to the tune of the Common Meter ("Our God Our Help in Ages Past"). Following are the first two stanzas. (For complete lyrics, see "Hymn of an Ancient Baptist Martyr," [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

Rejoice, rejoice, ye Christians all,  
And break forth into singing!  
Since far and wide on every side  
The word of God is ringing.  
And well we know, no human foe  
Our souls from Christ can sever;  
For to the base, and men of grace,  
God's word stands sure for ever.

O Adam, Adam, first of men,

What future did fate send you?  
After your fall in Paradise  
How did your God befriend you?  
His holy word from him you heard,  
That word which faileth never,  
To tend'rest age, to hoary sage,  
God's word stands sure for ever.

*Congregational singing was practiced by Protestants.* Martin Luther is one of the fathers of congregational singing in modern times. He understood the importance of singing in the Christian life and church. He wanted all of the people to sing, unlike in the Catholic Church where the singing was usually done by choirs or was in Latin rather than in the people's language. He used melodies that were easy to learn and remember for all classes of people. He did not use drinking songs or songs that would remind the listeners of the evil things of the world.

*Congregational singing was practiced in times of revival.* There was a great spiritual revival in the late 1800s and early 1900s and it was accompanied by a great hymn writing movement (e.g., Philip Bliss, Fanny Crosby, Ira Sankey, Frances Havergal, Charlotte Elliot, Augustus Toplady). Exuberant singing was a major factor in the Bible conference movement and the camp meetings. There was the shape-note singing movement. There was a proliferation of hymnals. (For more on this, see *The History and Heritage of Fundamentalism and Fundamental Baptists*, "Interdenominational Fundamentalism - Hymn Singing, Dwight L. Moody, and R.A. Torrey" [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org). For studies on Philip Bliss and Homer Rodeheaver, see the report "The Evangelist/Revivalist Movement," [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

## **6. Christ's kingdom will be a singing kingdom.**

The musical worship in Solomon's Temple looks forward to the Millennial Temple when Christ will be seated on the

throne of His glory and the priests will sing and play to His glory and the people will worship Him.

The prophecies emphasize that Christ's kingdom will be a singing kingdom.

“And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:10).

“Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion...” (Isa. 51:11).

“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing” (Ps. 100:1-2).

“Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion” (Jer. 31:12).

Singing priests will be in the Millennial Temple (Isa. 40:44).

In that day, the whole creation will praise the Lord. Singing to the glory of God will be heard everywhere. See also Psalm 108:1-3; 147; 149; 150.

The church-age saints will be there, ruling with Christ as kings and priests (Re. 1:6; 5:10). The apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the tribes of Israel (Mt. 19:28; Lu. 22:30).

The Lord Jesus Christ will sing in the congregation in the kingdom. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee” (Heb. 2:12). This is quoted from Psalm 22:22, a prominent Messianic prophecy. Verse 22 was fulfilled in Christ's incarnation when He sang with His little flock. “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives” (Mt. 26:30), and it will be fulfilled in the kingdom



when Christ reigns from Mt. Zion. Christ is the Creator of the human voice. He is the Creator of singing. God made man for music. How wonderful it will be to hear the Singer of singers sing and the glorious heavenly melodies and harmonies! This world's best singers only provide a bare glimpse into glory.

### **7. Church music must be sung and played by Spirit-filled saints who are indwelt with God's Word.**

“be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18-19).

“let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom ... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).

When dealing with the music issue, God begins with the spiritual condition of the church and of the individual singers and players. Sound congregational singing requires a spiritual house made of living stones, referring to born again people who are actively functioning as holy priests. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Pe. 2:5).

We find the definition of Spirit filling in the context of Ephesians 5:18. It means not controlled by anything other than the Spirit of God (not alcohol or drugs, “not drunk with wine,” not the works of darkness, Eph. 5:11). Spirit filled means not spiritually asleep, carnal, lukewarm (“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,” Eph. 5:14). Spirit filled means not careless and foolish but rather walking in God's will (Eph. 5:15-17). “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

To “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” is another description of the foundation of a spiritual song service (Col.

3:16). Note that the word of Christ is to dwell in “**you**” (plural). It is to dwell in the entire church body, not just in a few. Every member is to be filled with the Spirit by being filled with God’s Word. This happens when every member is born again and surrenders to God’s will and becomes a serious Bible student and an obedient disciple of Christ. The Word of God is to dwell “**richly**.” It is to fill our minds and hearts. The church must be immersed in Scripture. Note that each believer is to “**let the word of God dwell**.” It is a choice. I can fill my life with Scripture. I can read it. I can learn how to study it and understand it. I can delight in it and meditate on it day and night (Ps. 1:2). I can test everything by it and thereby exercise my spiritual senses (Heb. 5:14). Note that the word of Christ is to dwell in the believers “**in all wisdom**.” The Word of God must produce spiritual wisdom in the lives of God’s people. It is not an intellectual exercise only. It is not a matter of rote reading, learning, and memorizing. The Word of God must get down into every part of the believers’ lives and conform them to God’s will.

To sing “with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16) is a description of born again people who are engaged with the Lord from the heart. They are abiding in Christ, communing with Him, walking with Him, walking in the light with Him. They are people who are saved by grace and walking in grace and loving grace. No other kind of people can sing in such a manner.

If the spiritual condition of a church deteriorates, so does the spiritual character of the song service.

“We must desire to be godly in character since we are ministering godly music. Our example sings loudest. We must be exemplary (1 Ti. 4:12). Worldliness cannot be sanitized. God doesn’t just accept whatever people offer. Do we personally listen to bad music? This will affect us. How can we pray for God’s blessings and at the same time

shake hands with the world? Are we attracted to or addicted to worldliness in music?” (Chris Starr, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Brogue, Pennsylvania).

## **8. Church music is for singing to one another and unto the Lord.**

“Speaking to yourselves ... singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19).

“... teaching and admonishing one another ... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).

The two-fold purpose of church singing is to edify the saints and to worship God. This is emphasized by means of repetition, being repeated in two of the church epistles.

*Sacred music is for teaching and admonishing **one another**.* The song service is a “one another” ministry. Sacred music is a function of the church body (Eph. 4:16) and of the church as a holy priesthood (1 Pe. 2:5). I have heard it said that the song service is preparation for the preaching. That is the “revivalist” viewpoint (e.g., D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday), but Paul teaches that the congregational singing is to be an important teaching ministry in itself. Each member is commanded to teach and admonish the other brethren, so church singing is not about me, not about my choices, my pleasure, my feelings; it’s not about whether or not I want to participate. It is about dying to the old self and submitting to God’s authority and being a holy priest and ministering to the brethren.

“Mr. [Charles] Spurgeon evidently takes delight in the service of song, and is anxious above all things that every man, woman, and child in the place should sing. In announcing the hymn he generally makes some remark, such as, ‘Let us sing joyfully the 48th Psalm,’ – ‘Dear friends, this hymn is full of joy, let’s sing it with all our hearts,’ &c.” (J.S. Curwen, *Studies in Worship Music*, 1880).

Ministering to “one another” involves first ministering the message of the song or hymn to oneself.

*Sacred music is also to be sung “to the Lord.”* Singing to the Lord is pure worship. “The Lord” is Jesus Christ. He is Lord of lords. He made me; He owns me; He loves me; He redeemed me; my sole purpose is to live for His pleasure and glory. “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Ro. 11:36). “he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things” (Ac. 17:25). “for in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Ac. 17:28). “by him were all things created ... And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17).

We should include pure worship songs in the congregational singing and instruct the people to sing those directly to the Lord as prayers from the heart. Examples of hymns that are prayers directed to God or direct praise about God are as follows: “All Hail the Power,” “Cleanse Me,” “Come, Thou Almighty King,” “Come Thou Fount,” “Draw Me Nearer,” “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” “I Need Thee Every Hour,” “Jesus, I Am Resting,” “Jesus Lover of My Soul,” “Jesus! the Very Thought of Thee,” “Lead Me Gently Home Father,” “Lead Me to Calvary,” “Make Me a Blessing,” “More Love to Thee,” “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” “My Jesus I Love Thee,” “O To Be Like Thee!” “O Worship the King,” “Open My Eyes That I May See,” “Our Great Savior,” “Rock of Ages,” “My Faith Looks Up to Thee,” “To God Be the Glory,” “Whiter Than Snow.” Some hymns are a combination of singing to the brethren and singing directly to the Lord. Examples are “Day by Day,” “Living for Jesus,” and “I’m Pressing on the Upward Way.”

**9. Church music must be sound in doctrine (“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom,” Col. 3:16).**

The words of the songs must be theologically sound according to the teaching of the Bible.

A great deal of Contemporary Christian Music is unacceptable because it represents ecumenical charismatic doctrine or it presents a vague message that lacks doctrinal clarity and strength.

And we want more than just theological soundness, we want theological depth. We want richness of truth that will edify deeply and broadly. The lyrics must be examined carefully to make sure that we are not singing heresy and also that we are not singing vapid, emotional, sweet nothings. This is why we avoid shallow Southern Gospel songs such as “I’ll Fly Away,” “Just a Little Talk with Jesus,” “Step into the Water,” “There’s a Rainbow,” and “My God Is Real.” In “I’ll Fly Away,” the words “I’ll fly away” are repeated 24 times in the short song. The Stamps-Baxter hymns were often characterized by biblical shallowness, if not outright heresy.

This is also why we don’t want a diet composed only of revivalist songs. These were geared for a mixed-multitude, interdenominational, evangelistic forum, such as the the crusades of D.L. Moody, R.A. Torrey, and Billy Sunday. They often lack theological depth. Examples are “Tell Me the Old Old Story,” “There’ll Be No Dark Valley,” “Wonderful Words of Life” (the title words are repeated 10 times), “Trusting Jesus,” “The Cleansing Fountain,” “When We All Get to Heaven,” “Showers of Blessing,” “Will the Circle Be Unbroken,” “Tell Mother I’ll Be There,” “A New Name Written Down in Glory,” and “God Will Take Care of You.”

Some hymnals, such as *Hymns* and *Bible Truth Hymns* and the *Sword of the Lord’s Soul Stirring Songs*, are heavy on revivalist songs. At the same time, there are many doctrinally solid hymns in these hymnbooks (e.g., “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me,” “Take My Life and Let It Be,” “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” “Love with Everlasting Love,” “How Firm a Foundation,” “Day by Day”).

The point is that the church's music people must be careful to choose songs with good theological content and spiritual depth rather than those that are shallow or merely sentimental. We need more spiritual meat and potatoes hymns and less Rice Krispies and donuts.

We recommend singing the Psalms with psalteries such as Isaac Watts. N.A. Woychuk's *Singing Psalms with Isaac Watts and a Biography* is a good study of and presentation of Watts Psalteries.

God's people must weigh every song and hymn by the absolute standard of God's Word. Just because a song is in a good hymnbook doesn't mean that it is sound. Just because it has a pleasant tune and people like it doesn't mean that it is acceptable. For example, the chorus "Spirit of the Living God" is a prayer addressed to the Spirit, which we never see in Scripture. We are taught to pray to the Father (Mt. 6:9). And the idea of the Spirit falling fresh on me isn't Scriptural. He doesn't fall on God's people; He indwells them. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" teaches the liberal social gospel. The author, Julia Ward Howe, was a Unitarian universalist who rejected Jesus Christ as the Son of God. She interpreted the Union armies of the American North as the coming of Christ. The "watch-fires" of the Union army camps are the altar of God, and "the burnish'd rows of steel" bayonets are the gospel. "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations" teaches the post-millennial heresy that the preaching of the gospel will bring in Christ's kingdom by "conquering evil" and "shattering the spear and sword."

"Godly music is word-enriched and loaded with sound doctrine. Godly music packages Bible doctrines in memorable format" (Chris Starr).

## **10. Church music must emphasize “melody” (“making melody in your heart,” Eph. 5:19).**

Melody is the simplest part of music. It is the basic tune. It is the part that can be sung and hummed and whistled. An individual can't sing harmony and chords.

A good melody reinforces the words and helps God's people remember the words and edify themselves with the words all their days.

By emphasizing melody, God's Word teaches us to keep the music simple so it doesn't distract from the message of the words. There should be a good singable melody, and the rest of the music should never overwhelm the melody. In sacred music, particularly for congregational use, a simple musical arrangement is superior to an overly complicated one.

“In common life the music presides. But in Godly music, the words (lyrics, or the message) preside. The music serves as an accompaniment to the message. Godly music is the harmonious balance between tunes that fit or compliment the lyrics” (Chris Starr).

## **11. Church music must be sung from the heart.**

“singing and making melody in your heart” (Eph. 5:19).

“singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).

The singing and playing of sacred music is a heart affair.

By the heart, we are not talking primarily about the emotions but about man's fundamental interior. In the Bible, the heart refers to the center of man's thinking, emotions, and will. The heart thinks (Pr. 23:7), understands (Pr. 2:2), meditates (Ps. 19:14), considers (De. 4:39), purposes (Da. 1:8), takes counsel (Pr. 20:5), reasons (Lk. 5:22), desires (Ro. 10:1), has intents (Heb. 4:12). From the heart proceed all the actions and motivations of man (Pr. 4:23-27; Mt. 15:18-20).

Both the mouth and the heart are to be fully engaged. Sacred music is not something that is done by rote or by vain tradition. It is not unthinking, not unfeeling, not religious ritual, not mere duty, not habit or tradition, not just mindless loud singing like a boisterous child.

“Godly music is interested in the heart condition as much as the mechanics of good singing or instrumentation. Add to this that God is a heart-inspector (1 Sa. 16:7; 1 Ki. 8:39b; 1 Ch. 28:9b; Ps. 7:9; Je. 17:10; Ac. 1:24). What is the embouchure of your heart? Is your heart tuned to God and His Word?” (Chris Starr).

## **12. Music is not “neutral”; it is a language and the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics.**

The foundational philosophy of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) is the idea that music is neutral or amoral and that any style of music can be used in the service of God. The Christian Rocker’s Creed says, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all music was created equal, that no instrument or style of music is in itself evil—that the diversity of musical expression which flows forth from man is but one evidence of the boundless creativity of our heavenly Father.” Harold Best says, “[Music is] morally relative ... [It is] essentially neutral in its ability to express belief, creed, moral and ethic exactitudes, or even world view” (*Music Through the Eyes of Faith*). Don Butler, former head of the Gospel Music Association, says, “Every style and form of music can become gospel, whether it’s jazz, pop, rock ‘n’ roll, or rap.” Rick Warren, Southern Baptist megachurch pastor, says, “There’s no such thing as Christian music. There are just Christian lyrics” (SuperConference 2003, Liberty University).

This is why Contemporary Christian Music encompasses every sort of pop music style: blues, ragtime, boogie woogie, jazz, big band swing, country, rock, urban, techno, metal, thrash, punk, rap/hip hop.



The concept that music is neutral is fundamental. As soon as this is accepted, the battle is lost. It erases all boundaries, and the very concept of “sacred music” is lost.

But no one except defenders of contemporary Christian music believes this. If all musical styles are neutral, why does a military march never sound like a romance ballad, and why does a baby lullaby never sound like a punk rock concert? The reason is that music is *not* neutral; music is a language.

Rock & rollers don't believe that music is neutral. Timothy Leary, 1960s LSD guru and pop culture hero, said, “Don't listen to the words, it's the music that has its own message.” Rock historian Robert Palmer says, “The transformative power of rock lies ... in the music itself ...” (Robert Palmer, *Illustrated History of Rock & Roll*).

Movie text painters (creators of sound tracks) don't believe that music is neutral. They know that different styles of music create different emotional responses, and they must use the right type of music to fit the message presented by the scene's pictures and words. John Debney, one of the top composers of movie films, says: “I think music is the voice of the soul of the emotional fabric of the film” (“The Passion of the Musicians,” *Christianity Today* web site, Aug. 31, 2004). Debney is talking about the power of music as a language.

Orchestra composers and conductors don't believe that music is neutral. Each style of music played by an orchestra creates different feelings and thoughts in the listeners. Howard Hanson, who directed the prestigious Eastman School of Music for 40 years, said, “Music can be philosophical or orgiastic. It has powers for evil as well as for good” (cited from Frank Garlock *The Language of Music*; Garlock is a graduate of Eastman).

The Christian Rocker's Creed, that no musical *style* is evil, denies that man is evil and that he can create evil with his art.

The first musical instruments were made by the sons of Cain who were in open rebellion to God's holy laws. It is ridiculous to think that they were using those instruments for anything other than evil.

The *Christian Rocker's Creed*, that no musical style is evil, denies the existence of Satan as "the god of this world." It would deny his role in the human arts. It would deny that men walk "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). The devil hates God and has attempted to corrupt everything that God has created. He is called "the god of this world" (2 Co. 4:4) and "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). He has corrupted religion, literature, art, fashion--you name it. Music is one of the most powerful influences in society. To think that the devil has not corrupted music for his own wicked purposes and for the sensual enticement of fallen man is contrary to everything the Bible teaches. The issue, then, for a Christ-honoring believer is to find the devil's fingerprints in music and to reject such music.

The Bible plainly teaches that music is not neutral, that different styles of music present different messages and have different emotional effects. The Bible describes a party sound (Ex. 32:17-19) and a refreshing sound (1 Sa. 16:23). Paul teaches that music is a language in 1 Corinthians 14:7-8, "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

Music is a language, and in fact it is one of the most powerful languages in human society! It has been called "the language of the soul" and "the language of the emotions."

In Christian music, therefore, the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics and both must be spiritual in character. This is the very definition of sacred music.

There are styles of music that preach a message that is contrary to the Bible and should be avoided in the service of a holy God.

We must, therefore, exercise discernment. We must ask, "What kind of message is this music presenting? Does the message of the music fit the message of the lyrics?" We must do exactly what the Bible says. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Th. 5:21-22). "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14).

Since music is a language, God's people must carefully, wisely test the language of every piece of church music.

**13. Church music must be holy and separate from the world (Ro. 12:2; Eph. 4:17-19; 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 4:4; 1 Pe. 2:11; 1 Jo. 2:15-16).**

"Spiritual" means set apart for God, different from the world. Spiritual is that which is under the control of the Spirit of God, as explained in the verse previous to Ephesians 5:19. "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." Spiritual is the opposite of carnal, fleshly. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." Spiritual is the opposite of the unfruitful works of darkness that are mentioned in Ephesians 5:11 in the same context as Ephesians 5:19. Spiritual is the opposite of worldliness. "And be not conformed to this world..." (Ro. 12:2). "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the

eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 Jo. 2:15-16).

By requiring that our songs be spiritual, Paul is saying that God’s people are to sing songs that are holy, sacred, that are set apart for God, that are not carnal and fleshly, that are different in quality from the songs of the world, that are morally pure, that are of a heavenly flavor rather than a worldly.

This means that the church’s music will not sound like the world’s pop music and the music that the world uses for dancing and drinking and partying. The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life is a perfect definition of modern pop music, and this is admitted by rockers. Deborah Harry of Blondie says, “The main ingredients in rock are sex and sass.” The music of a holy God should contain no aspect of the world’s sensual ways. To borrow from the world’s unholy music is confusion. It is sin. It is a reflection of the end-times “after their own lusts” apostasy (2 Ti. 4:3-4).

Pop styles of music that we purposefully avoid are the backbeat, beat anticipation, honky-tonk (ragtime, boogie woogie, etc., that are popular in Southern Gospel), sensual vocal styles (e.g., scooping, sliding, breathiness, vocal fry), soft, overly emotional styles that are created by the wrong use of chords (e.g., unresolving chord cadences). The “soft sound” softens the power, dynamism, majesty, spiritual conviction, and militarism of sacred music.

We avoid the use of drums and electric guitars in church music, because they are so totally identified with rock music and so easily used in a pop music fashion. (An exception is the use of drums in a timpani section of an orchestra.)

(For more education on this see “The Language of Music Styles” and “Bob Jones, Majesty Music, New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys,” which are two segments of the

video series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, available for free viewing and downloading from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

#### **14. Church music must edify.**

“How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. LET ALL THINGS BE DONE UNTO EDIFYING” (1 Co. 14:26).

The words “edify,” “understand,” “meaning,” and “knowledge” are used 17 times in this chapter.

“Edify” means to build up in the faith by means of hearing and understanding the truth of God’s Word. Webster’s 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* defined edify as “to instruct and improve the mind in knowledge generally, and particularly in moral and religious knowledge, in faith and holiness.”

*All things being done unto edification means that sacred music must emphasize the message.* The message must be clear so that it speaks to the people’s minds and hearts and thus edifies. Nothing must be allowed to detract from this. Musical instruments can be too loud and drown out the message. Music can be so complex that it hinders the message because the words are not clearly heard.

*All things being done unto edification means there is no place for entertainment in sacred music.* Entertainment is about the performer, but sacred music is about Christ. Entertainment is for man’s pleasure, but sacred music is for God’s pleasure. We want to purposefully and emphatically avoid anything that speaks of entertainment. This is why we do not applaud special music. This is why we don’t use sensual vocal techniques that draw attention to the singer (scooping, sliding, breathiness, vocal fry). This is why we don’t use video cameras to spotlight the singers and musicians and highlight them on video screens. These things are the way of

performance and entertainment, not the way of true worship. It is carnally distracting. It is impossible to conceive of such things being used in Solomon's Temple or the Millennial Temple.

*All things being done unto edification means that each song should be selected because of its message.* If the message is theologically wrong (e.g., "The Battle Hymn of the Republic") or weak (e.g., "Church in the Wildwood"), there is no edification.

*All things being done unto edification means there must be education.* If the message of the song is spiritual but couched in words that are not understood by the congregation, there is still no edification. Many of the old hymns use words that must be explained. The song "A Mighty Fortress" contains the words, "Lord *Sabaoth* is His name," and "Come, Thou Fount" says, "I will raise mine *Ebenezer*." Other songs speak of "Hephzibah" and "Beulah Land." Unless the meaning of these words are known by the congregation, there is no edification. The song leader should briefly define any uncommon words.

*All things being done unto edification means the people must be taught and reminded to think about the words of the songs.* No matter how spiritual the songs are, if the people are not meditating on them, no edification is accomplished.

### **15. Church music should be joyful.**

"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise unto the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Ps. 95:1-3).

Congregational singing should be enthusiastic and cheerful. God's people are coming into His presence. The great King of kings is listening and He requires a joyful noise!

To teach and admonish one another in song and to sing unto the Lord is not a half-hearted thing. Since Christ hates lukewarm, He must hate lukewarm singing (Re. 3:15-16).

We don't always "feel like" singing unto the Lord, but we must control our feelings and stir ourselves up with the truth of God's Word. When coming to the church's song service, I must say to myself, "It is time to worship the wonderful God who has loved you and redeemed you and who cares for you. It is time to forget your problems and focus on the Great Redeemer and your priestly work for Him."

**16. Church music must not borrow from and thus build bridges to the world of contemporary Christian music (Ro. 16:17-18; 1 Co. 10:21; 15:33; 2 Co. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11; 2 Ti. 3:5; 4:3-4; Re. 18:4).**

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Co. 15:33).

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Ti. 3:5).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Ti. 4:3-4).

Contemporary Christian Music is a major element of building the apostate one-world church and represents this world with all of its doctrinal, spiritual, and moral dangers

This is evident by examining the history of this music as well as the lives and beliefs and associations of contemporary musicians as we have done in the free eBook *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*. See also the video presentation "CCM a Bridge to Dangerous Waters," which is one of the segments in the video series *The Satanic Attack on*

*Sacred Music*, available for free viewing and downloading at [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

In former times, God's people were not in much danger of being influenced by the authors of songs and hymns. But the Internet has changed that dramatically. Now if a song is sung in a church, the people can go online and find the author and communicate quite intimately with him or her and his associates and his "world."

**17. Church music must not produce a charismatic style mystical experience** ("be sober," 1 Peter 1:13; 5:8).

Sober is the Greek *nepho*, which is always used in the context of watching (1 Pe. 4:7; 5:8; 1 Th. 5:6; 2 Ti. 4:5). It means to be in control of one's mind. It means to guard the mind against wrong thoughts and to think right thoughts according to God's Word.

To be sober forbids the believer to follow the "be open to new experiences, don't quench the Spirit by testing" philosophy of the charismatic movement and contemporary worship.

Contemporary worship music is largely a rock & roll feeling-fest. It is designed to create an emotional experience, a sensual experience, as opposed to a sacred music style that edifies through the understanding. It is designed to carry the listeners along on an emotional roller coaster. Graham Kendrick, one of the biggest names in contemporary worship, says, "The old way of preaching and singing began to give way to an expectation that ... God would visit us, and we'd EXPERIENCE HIS PRESENCE IN A TANGIBLE SORT OF WAY" (interview June 11, 2002 with Chris Davidson of Integrity Music).

To produce "experiential worship," contemporary musicians use music with sensual dance rhythms, non-resolving chord sequences, repetition, electronic modulation, and other



things so that people will get carried away emotionally. There is a hypnotic effect.

But the Bible tells us to be sober-minded and not to allow anything to capture our hearts and souls other than God and His Word. We are not supposed to open ourselves up unquestioningly to any force or experience, but we are to test everything continually by the standard of God's absolute Truth (Pr. 14:12; 2 Co. 10:5; 1 Th. 5:21-22; Heb. 5:14). Thus we refuse to be controlled by highly emotional music.

### **18. Church music must be skillful.**

“And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obedom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith TO EXCEL. And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, *was* for song: he instructed about the song, because he *was* SKILFUL” (1 Ch. 15:21-22).

“Sing unto him a new song; play SKILFULLY with a loud noise” (Ps. 33:3).

Jesus Christ is worthy of our very best. The hymn says, “Give of your best to the Master,” and that is what we want to do with sacred music. We want to lead it, sing it, and play it with the highest level of expertise and preparation that we can produce, not for our glory, but for God's. We want to be getting better educated, better prepared, stronger in every area. This is the path of spiritual victory and revival. Pastor Chris Starr says, “Let's keep the regular church service music excellent and a cut above the average. Our music must reflect excellence because our God is excellent in all that He does. Refuse and resist the casual look and casual feel.”

Far too many times I have heard singers say something like, “Well, folks, we haven't been able to practice much, but we hope you get a blessing anyway.”

**19. Church music must be unquestionably right and safe.**

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Th. 5:21-22).

We are to prove all things and hold fast only that which is good, avoiding even the very appearance of evil.

That is the highest possible standard for music. This is one reason why we avoid the use of snare drums and electric guitars. Even if they are used to play the right kind of sound, they are too intimately identified with rock music, and we want to avoid all such identity.

This is our fundamental music standard. If a song or hymn is questionable, we want to avoid it. If we aren't sure if it is right, sound, and healthy, we want to avoid it. There is a wealth of unquestionably sound, doctrinally strong, spiritual, non-worldly, non-charismatic music, that is not associated with the contemporary worship movement. To avoid a piece of questionable music never harms a church, but using questionable music can definitely bring harm.

This standard requires continual testing of the church music.

This is the standard of wisdom and safety.

**20. Church music must guard against incrementalism.**

“a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (1 Co. 5:6; Ga. 5:9).

When it comes to church music, little can be big. The wrong music usually enters a church gradually, not overnight. One way it enters is through specials, choruses, and youth ministries. I witnessed this some years ago on a preaching trip to 12 churches in three countries. In each of the churches, the congregational music was sacred, but in about half of the churches, the special music was at least mildly contemporary. I saw that the men in charge of the music did not know how to discern contemporary music and therefore

it was slipping in unawares. When this happens, the church is doomed to continue moving away from spiritual and toward contemporary unless there is a dramatic move to stop the progression, which is exceedingly rare.

“As the pastor, I have tested and made some judgments regarding the music we have in our church. ... [Some genres of music] have slippery slopes, and we want to be far away from the slope in our church music” (Chris Starr).

## **21. Church music must aim for excellence.**

“that ye may approve things that are excellent” (Php. 1:10).

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Co. 10:31).

Everything about the church’s music must be done on purpose, with biblical and spiritual wisdom, always aiming for the very best, the very highest, never satisfied with mediocrity, progressing in excellence. This is not for the glory of man, but for the glory of God. If the world strives for excellence for human profit and glory, how much more should God’s people strive for excellence for God’s glory!

We must aim for excellence in the standards for singers and musicians, in the selection of every song and hymn, in the conducting of every aspect of the song service, and in the quality of the singing and playing.

This standard requires continual education of the entire church in the issue of music. The goal is not merely to “hold the line,” but to grow in wisdom and knowledge and discernment in order to please the Lord at an ever higher level.

## **22. God's people should aim to learn to sing and play music.**

We are commanded to praise God with trumpets, psalteries, harps, timbrels, stringed instruments, organs, loud cymbals, and high sounding cymbals (Ps. 150). That is an orchestra!

Born again Christians are priests (1 Pe. 2:5, 9), and the priests in the former dispensation were singers and players of instruments, as we have seen.

Children and young people in the churches should be learning music so that they can glorify and serve God, and they should be ever learning how to discern sacred from contemporary music styles. Pastor Chris Starr says, "It would be good to encourage parents to invest in lessons for their children rather than to try to teach themselves. Get lessons for your children. It pays off in the long run."

This is a good incentive to holiness and to the wholesome use of time.

## **23. Pastors must oversee the church's music.**

"the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Ac. 20:28)

"obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls" (Heb. 13:17)

"taking the oversight thereof" (1 Pe. 5:2)

We are putting this point last, but it is actually first in importance. Pastor Chris Starr rightly observes, "The point that the pastors must oversee church music might be better put toward the top. All the other principles can be true, but if a pastor does not take the responsibility of training, inspecting, teaching, expecting, overseeing, then the other principles won't be taught, enforced, promoted, etc."

Pastors are called “bishops,” which means overseers or superintendents. As God’s stewards, they must watch over every aspect of the congregation’s life and ministry to see that things are done according to God’s will. They must know what is happening in order to protect the flock from danger and error.

Pastors must, therefore, study the issue of music, because it is a biblical issue and because it is a major force in modern society and therefore a major potential influence on God’s people. They must educate themselves about sacred music and know how to discern various popular sounds of music, such as soft rock, and they must increase their education. They should learn how to read music, at the very least. That is not a very difficult project. A good start in this education is to go through all of the materials recommended at the end of *Church Music Standards and Training Course*.

Pastors must appoint the *right people* to be in charge of the church’s music. If there are no right people, they must pray that God will bring them from outside or raise them up in the congregation.

Pastors must approve all special music and/or appoint a wise person to do this under their direction. There must be a proper gatekeeper or the wrong music will slip in and become leaven that will increase.

# Music's Role in the Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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A great many formerly conservative Baptist churches have converted to a New Evangelical rock & roll philosophy. Contemporary music is not the only force operating in these transformations. It is unregeneracy, spiritual lukewarmness, worldliness, and carnality that allows contemporary music to enter. But the music acts within that atmosphere as a transformational agent to carry the church far from its original principles and vision.

Men of God have been warning of this for nearly 40 years.

Victor Sears, editor, *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981 - "It is THE NEW TROJAN HORSE MOVE OF MODERNISM TO DEADEN OUR CHURCHES TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH" (*Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981).

John Ashbrook, 1991 - "As the message declines, so does the music" (*New Neutralism II: Exposing the Gray of Compromise*).

Ernest Pickering, 1994 - "Perhaps nothing precipitates a slide toward New Evangelicalism more than the introduction of Contemporary Christian Music. This inevitably leads toward a gradual slide in other areas as well until the entire church is infiltrated by ideas and programs alien to the original position of the church" (*The Tragedy of Compromise: The Origin and Impact of the New Evangelicalism*)."

Gordon Sears, evangelist, 2001 - "When the standard of music is lowered, then the standard of dress is also lowered. When the standard of dress is lowered, then the standard of conduct is also lowered. When the standard of conduct is lowered, then the sense of value in God's truth is lowered" (*Songfest Newsletter*, April 2001). Brother Sears preached with the famous pianist Rudy Atwood and travelled with the Sears Family. He was very saddened before his death by the dramatic change that was occurring in many fundamental Baptist churches.

Frank Garlock, BJU chapel, March 12, 2001 - "If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards. You need to draw a line concerning your music."

David Sorenson, third generation fundamental Baptist pastor, 2001 - "When a church begins to move to the left, one of the first changes is its music. It is symptomatic of a church moving from a fundamentalist to an evangelical stance. The basic issue of CCM is a conformity to the world and the world's music. **It is a musical rejection of the biblical principle of separation.** When the music shifts, a repudiation of separation in general is often not far behind. Dress standards are lowered or eliminated. Preaching against the world and its pursuits evaporates. Fellowship and association with groups and preachers toward the liberal side of the theological spectrum develop" (*Broad Is the Way: Fundamentalists Merging into the Evangelical Mainstream*, 2014).

Contemporary worship music is not just music. Even when its lyrics are biblical and its rock rhythm is toned down, it represents a philosophy of Christianity that is opposed to what fundamentalist churches stand for. Contemporary worship music represents a philosophy of

- Judge not
- Be positive

- Don't criticize, be tolerant
- Be openminded
- Lighten up, so be so strict
- Pursue liberty rather than narrowness
- Don't draw sharp lines of separation
- Have a big tent of associations

This philosophy is attractive and enticing, particularly to the youth.

The old hymn writers were not all Baptists, but they never turned a separated Baptist church into something completely different. But this is precisely what contemporary Christian music is doing.

Consider some examples:

**BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL (BBFI)** was founded in 1950 by pastors who left J. Frank Norris's World Baptist Fellowship. Prominent among the 100 founding pastors were G.B. Vick and Noel Smith. They founded the Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri. Smith was editor of the *Baptist Bible Tribune*, which was outspoken at that time in warning about sin and error. Smith warned about Billy Graham, Southern Baptist liberalism, communism, the National Council of Churches, the World Council of Churches. Smith said that Norman Vincent Peale's hugely popular book *The Power of Positive Thinking* should have been titled "The Sorry Confession of a Flabby, Whitelivered Coward." In the 1990s, there were 3,300 pastors listed in the BBFI directory and 880 missionaries working on 111 mission fields.

But even by the late 1980s, the music was moving in a contemporary direction. Canned CCM was used for the specials. In the 1990s some prominent BBFI pastors, such as Billy Hamm, supported the ecumenical Promise Keepers.



The 2002 BBFI National Meeting was held at **BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA**. The church featured a praise team led by four young women. One preacher's wife who attended sent us the following testimony: "All of us from our church got up and walked out. It was sickening to see the cutesie young women in their tight pants and high boots ... I was stunned. A far cry from what I had known when I attended in the 1970s." That year, Bethlehem Baptist's pastor, David Stokes, said, "With regard to dress and modesty issues, we enforce no rule on our folks ... apparel issues are really of no concern to us." Stokes led the church to shift to the modern versions. He preached from the New American Standard Version and the New Living Translation, among others. In 2002, the church paper featured a photo of the new youth pastor, Rob Hoerr, bedecked with a goatee, an earring, and a P.O.D. shirt. P.O.D. is a rock band. They curse in interviews, smoke, watch R-rated movies, listen only to secular rock, and criticize kids "who want to segregate themselves from the world."

As it has moved down the slippery slope of the contemporary program, Bethlehem Baptist subsequently renamed itself Fair Oaks Church and then Expectation Church.

**TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH, Detroit Michigan.** It was pastored by J. Frank Norris from 1936-1950 and by G.B. Vick from 1950 to 1975. In 1990, Brad Powell became the pastor. The church began having CCM concerts in the 1990s. At first it was the softer style CCM like Steve Camp. In 2000 the church changed its name to Northridge Church. In 2010, Northridge had a Hillsong rock concert, demonstrating that it had arrived at a full-blown, charismatic, ecumenical rock philosophy.

**HIGH STREET BAPTIST, Springfield, Missouri.** This was the "flagship" church of the BBFI. It helped form Baptist Bible College in 1950 and provided classroom space. Today it is

into total rock and roll. On August 25, 2019, High Street hosted comedian Andrew Stanley, The emphasis today is on “kingdom building.” - “High Street Youth ... are kingdom builders.” In 2017, High Street joined the Southern Baptist Convention. The church is dually aligned with the BBFI and the SBC. Pastor Eddie Lyons, who was International President of the BBFI at the time, said, “We have the same heart, the same calling” (*Baptist Press*, Feb. 15, 2017). Pastor Lyons said, “There is no difference between us” (BBFI and Southern Baptists).

Consider the Southern Baptist Convention today.

Church discipline is almost unknown.

The churches are incredibly worldly. Pointed preaching against worldliness is extremely rare.

Christian rock is almost 100% accepted.

Deacons exercise unscriptural authority.

Every strange Bible version is accepted.

There is modernism in the liberal arts colleges.

Charismatic heresies are rampant.

New Reformed Calvinism is spreading like wildfire.

Women preachers are accepted (e.g. Beth Moore and Anne Graham Lotz).

Ecumenical evangelism with Rome is 100% accepted (the SBC is Billy Graham's denomination).

More than one million SBC members are yoked with the Masonic Lodge and Eastern Star.

The churches are filled with heresies such as *The Shack* and contemplative prayer.

Southern Baptist President J.D. Greear said in sermon about homosexuality, Jan. 27, 2019, that “the Bible appears to whisper when it comes to sexual sin compared to it shouts about materialism and religious pride.” We wouldn't call God's

judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah or Paul's description of homosexuality in Romans 1 a whisper!

At the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, top denominational leaders donned long-haired wigs and performed Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama" for the pleasure of the worldly SBC pastors in attendance. And SBC President J.D. Greear danced onstage with two other men to Whitney Houston's filthy "I Wanna Dance with Somebody" during a youth event. The crowd "laughed and cheered" to this ungodly performance. They sang, "When the night falls loneliness calls; oh! I wanna dance with somebody. I want to feel the heat with somebody."

In 2019, Southern Baptist preacher Beth Moore said that she has come to the conclusion that men who oppose women preachers are jealous and carnal and have "the stench of hypocrisy."

The root problem in SBC congregations is unregeneracy. In 2005, SBC evangelist Jim Elliff said, "Our denomination, as much as we love it, is on the main, unregenerate" ([www.ccwonline.org/sbc.html](http://www.ccwonline.org/sbc.html)). He presented the fact that only 10% or less of the members of the typical SBC church show up for anything other than a Sunday morning service.

The Southern Baptist Convention today is a fulfillment of 2 Timothy 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Many Independent Baptists are joining the Southern Baptist Convention because they are moving along with the same spirit of apostasy. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

**THOMAS ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, Lynchburg, Virginia.** It was founded in 1956. When I was saved in 1973,

it was a conservative fundamental Baptist church. It started using CCM in the 1980s. Pastor Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority in the 1980s as political action group, and it was eventually composed of 30% Roman Catholic. In his 1987 autobiography Falwell spoke of “my Catholic brothers and sisters” (*Strength for the Journey*, p. 371). In 1995, Falwell praised Billy Graham for his “long and faithful ministry.” In 1997 Falwell’s paper boasted of three Billy Grahams at his Liberty University: Billy gave the commencement; Franklin gave the prayer; and William Franklin IV graduated that year. Yet Graham’s working policy since the 1950s was to yoke together with all churches and to send his “converts” to any church, including Roman Catholic. “If Catholics step forward there will be no attempt to convert them and their names will be given to the Catholic Church nearest their homes” (David Cline, crusade vice-chairman, *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 5, 1984).

In 1996, Thomas Road Baptist Church joined the Southern Baptist Convention.

In 2019, Liberty University allowed a group of students to conduct a day-long demonstration in support of homosexual rights. They were protesting the statement made by Jerry Falwell, Jr., and his wife, that they were going to raise their granddaughter “as a girl” because “God makes the choice and God decided she would be a girl.” The demonstrating Liberty students called this “hate speech.” They want to “create an environment where comments like this aren’t welcome.” No action was taken against the students by the administration.

**HIGHLAND PARK BAPTIST CHURCH, Chattanooga, Tennessee.** Lee Roberson pastored Highland Park from 1942 until 1983, and it was an old-fashioned fundamental Baptist church. It regularly ran 4,500 on Sunday mornings. There was no hint of theological liberalism. Roberson said, “I believe the Bible from the first word of Genesis to the last word of Revelation! Not a single line, not a verse, not a chapter, not a

story, not a miracle, not a parable would I omit from the Word! This is God's Book, and I believe it." There was no hint of questioning the substitutionary blood atonement or an eternal fiery hell or salvation being only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. There was a godly emphasis on pilgrim Christian living, separation from the world, being filled with the Spirit, dying to self. The music was conservative and sacred. Hymn writer and evangelist Charles Weigle lived at Highland Park for the last 15 years of his life. He wrote "A Garden of Roses" during that time. Of Weigle's 1,000 hymns, there was no hint of the world.

A major theme at Highland Park was the imminent return of Christ and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The song "Behold, I Come" was sung every Sunday. The church gave half of its income to missions. Annual conferences featured 80-100 missionaries. It was the home of Tennessee Temple, which had 3,000 students in the 1970s. Temple was founded in 1946 to train preachers and Christian workers for world missions. By the late 1980s the school was changing. They began using soft rock, which is always how it begins. There was strong influence from Liberty University and Word of Life, which were New Evangelical and promoted the modern versions, including the Living Bible. In 2005, Tennessee Temple held a rock concert featuring ecumenical rockers Bebo Norman, Fernando Ortega, and Sara Groves. In 2005 the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* featured a picture of Temple students "worshiping" to contemporary rock music on Wednesday evening. 2006 College Days featured Toddiefunk and the Electric Church, which has produced songs such as "Holy Ghost Thang," "Naked," and "Crazay." In the 2000s, Tennessee Temple Seminary had Dallas Willard for the Spring Lecture Series. He believed people can be saved "without knowing Jesus." He called the traditional doctrine of Christ's blood atonement "a theory." He said the gospel is more about building the kingdom of God than being saved

from sin. He promoted Roman Catholic-style contemplative mysticism.

In 2008, Highland Park rejoined the Southern Baptist Convention. In 2013, Highland Park ceased to exist. The church relocated and changed the name to “Church of the Highlands.” It is a rock & roll Southern Baptist church. The new pastor said the Church of the Highlands “will be the funnest church around” (*Chattanooga Times Free Press*, Sep. 10, 2012). In 2018, the property formerly owned by Highland Park was purchased by Redemption to the Nations Church, a charismatic church pastored by a husband-wife team.

#### **JOYFUL WOMAN AND JOHN R. RICE’S DAUGHTERS.**

The *Joyful Woman* magazine was founded by the daughters of John R. Rice in 1978. They were raised to dress modestly and to sing only sacred styled hymns. John R. Rice preached against “bobbed hair.” He believed that the woman’s long hair was a covering and a sign of submission to authority as taught in 1 Corinthians 11. There is a video on YouTube of the Rice sisters in the 1970s at a Sword of the Lord conference singing John Rice’s “So Little Time.” This was the old fundamental Baptist world. It was Christ-centered, Bible-centered, separated, modest, a pilgrim lifestyle, zealous for world evangelism, emphasizing Christ’s imminent return. Elizabeth Rice Handford published *Your Clothes Say It For You* in 1976. By the 1990s, *Joyful Woman* magazine was reflecting a New Evangelical philosophy. The May-June 1994 issue featured James and Shirley Dobson. Dobson has a close relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. He appeared on the cover of a Catholic magazine that promotes praying to Mary. The Sept.-Oct. 1994 issue of *Joyful Woman* featured Elisabeth Elliot, who spoke at Roman Catholic institutions such as the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, and Notre Dame. When her brother converted to the Roman Catholic Church, she stated publicly that this was acceptable. In 2003, *Joyful Woman* magazine shut down, though Joyful

Woman Ministries continues to sponsor conferences and publish newsletters and Bible studies. The *Joyful Woman* statement of faith has seven points. Unlike their dad, the Rice sisters take no stand on the premillennial return of Christ. Point 7 says, “We believe in the unity and fellowship of all true believers in Christ.” This is an ecumenical statement. Unlike their dad’s *Sword of the Lord* ministry, the Rice sisters have no statement whatsoever about separation from worldliness, error, and compromise. **By the 1990s, the Rice sisters were members of contemporary churches. MARY RICE HIMES**, who died in 2011, was a member of Grace Baptist in Chattanooga, a church with a “blended worship service” and New Evangelical speakers such as David Platt. Grace Baptist sings contemporary worship songs such as Hillsong’s “Stronger.” **ELIZABETH RICE HANDFORD** and her husband, Walt, moved Southside Baptist Church of Greenville, SC, from a fundamentalist to a New Evangelical stance in the 1990s. In January 1995, *Calvary Contender* issued the following warning: **HANDFORD’S CHURCH TAKES NEW-EVANGELICAL STANCE**—Dr. Walt Handford’s Southside Baptist Church in Greenville, SC, has long been on a toboggan slide to New Evangelicalism. This has been evident in the speakers, the associations, and the CCM (contemporary Christian music).” In September 1993, Southside hosted Ray Boltz for a CCM concert. That same year, Southside gave up the King James Bible in favor of the New International Version. Today Southside is a full-blown rock & roll church with the darkened worship stage and big screen monitors, but Elizabeth Rice Handford has continued her association with the church. The church’s magazine for Summer 2017 lists Elizabeth Handford as a contributor. In 2012 **JOY (RICE) MARTIN** said that she supported the new direction of Highland Park Baptist Church as a Southern Baptist, rock & roll congregation. The long-time independent, fundamentalist church had gone back into the SBC in 2008, and in 2012, the church’s name was changed to

the Church of the Highlands. That year, the new pastor, Jeremy Roberts, said it was going to be “the funnest church around” (“Chattanooga’s Iconic Highland Park,” *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, Sept. 10, 2012). Joy Martin was quoted as saying that she supported Highland Park’s new philosophy and direction and believed that Lee Roberson would be excited about it, as well (“Highland Park Baptist Selling,” *nooga.com*, Sept. 10, 2012). This is complete nonsense, of course, as Lee Roberson was no kind of “funnest church” rock and roller! Today Joy has bobbed hair and wears low cut dresses. She gave John R. Rice’s papers to the Southern Baptist Southwestern Theological Seminary instead of finding a fundamentalist institution to house them. John Rice was not a Southern Baptist, and there is no reason to believe that he would be a Southern Baptist today. But his daughters might as well be. In 2011, John R. Rice’s oldest grandson, **ANDREW HIMES** wrote, “When I asked my aunts and uncles whether they still considered themselves ‘fundamentalists,’ I was surprised when they all said, ‘NO, OF COURSE NOT!’” (*The Sword of the Lord: The Roots of Fundamentalism in an American Family*).

We could trace the same downgrade in hundreds of other churches which have departed from their founding biblical principles.

Music has played a major role in all of these changes.



# Bob Jones University, Majesty Music, New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

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Keith and Kristyn Getty partner with Stuart Townend to form Getty-Townend Music (GTM). Their music is hugely popular and influential. The Getty-Townend hymn “In Christ Alone” has become one of the most famous hymns ever written, with an estimated 40 to 50 million people singing it in church services each year.

The Getty-Townend lyrics are more theologically serious than many of the contemporary worship songs. Their printed music is fairly conservative in style and tends to avoid rock music building blocks such as the backbeat and beat anticipation. Their printed music is fairly conservative in style and tends to avoid rock music building blocks such as the backbeat and beat anticipation.

The Gettys are pied pipers to bring CCM into fundamental Baptist churches. GTM songs have been performed as specials at Crown College and West Coast Baptist College. Soundforth's web site features at least 13 Getty/Townend songs. *Hymns Modern & Ancient* has 31 songs by Getty/Townend. It is compiled by Fred Coleman who heads up Bob Jones University's Department of Church Music. It is published by Steve Pettit Evangelistic Association. Pettit is the president of BJU. Majesty Music's new hymnal, *The Rejoice Hymnal*, has 13 songs by Getty/Townend.

We are very sad to say that Frank Garlock has changed his position. From the 1970s, he taught that CCM is wrong and dangerous, no exceptions. He warned that the music itself is a message. He warned that using CCM is a slippery slope. In 2003 we published “A Salute to Frank Garlock” for his good stand on the subject of music.

In 1971, Garlock published *The Big Beat*, warning about the danger of the rock beat in Christian music. In those days, I wasn’t saved and was living the big beat lifestyle.

In 1973, Garlock founded Majesty Music with his daughter Shelly, and her husband Ron Hamilton. That was the year that I was saved and gave up rock & roll music.

In 1981, Garlock’s son-in-law Ron Hamilton began publishing Patch the Pirate programs. By 2018, there were 39 albums and Majesty Music had sold more than one million recordings. In 1984, they founded Patch the Pirate clubs, and within 10 years 10,000 children were enrolled. *Adventures of Patch the Pirate* radio broadcast aired on 450 stations and was America’s third largest religious program for children.

In 1992, Garlock published *Music in the Balance* and *The Language of Music*. He said, “THE STYLE ITSELF REFLECTS AND PROJECTS A PHILOSOPHY.”

In 2002, he published *Pop Goes the Music*, warning about the danger of the pop rock sound.

But all along there was subtle compromise in Patch the Pirate and Majesty music. The Hamiltons are likable, conservative, very talented, sincere Christians, but they have pushed the boundaries of music, and this is having big consequences today. There was always the use of worldly styles: a little mild boogie woogie here, a bit of honky-tonk there, a dab of blues and a smattering of Caribbean.

Alan Ives played in a rock band before he was saved and had an evangelism and music ministry for many decades. In 2000,

he examined some of the *Patch* albums. Following are only SOME of the examples he shared with me of the world's pop sounds in Patch music:

*Kidnapped On I-Land*, 1985 - "Will U. Waite" is a very mild "soft shoe." "Do It Now" is calypso-style on the chorus, syncopated like a song from the Caribbean Islands.

*Misterslippi River Race*, 1987 - "Ballad of Big Toe" is a take-off from three 60's songs-- "Alley-Oop," "The Monster Mash," and "Big, Bad John."

*The Calliope Caper*, 1988 - "Hippo Critter" is more calypso.

*Camp Kookawacka Woods*, 1989 - "Clean It Up" is a Latin-American/Spanish rhumba.

*Custards' Last Stand*, 1990 - "Chocolate Fever" is more boogie-woogie, done ever so lightly and cheerfully.

*Once Upon a Starry Knight*, 1992 - "Heart and Soul" is boogie-woogie; its a feel-good rhythm, but it is carnal.

In 1997, Dr. C.T. Spence of Foundations Bible College wrote, "The simple, soft music of *Patch the Pirate Goes in Space* has mutated into an eclectic fashion of contemporary sounds in *The Misterslippi River Race*. The next recording in the series, *The Calliope Caper*, literally increased the eclectic approach to the music" (*Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*).

*Patch the Pirate* was always marketed as "an evangelical Christian" ministry rather than "fundamentalist." The goal was to have a broad appeal. There is a great danger of compromise in commercialism. And it promoted an entertainment format. It has created an appetite for entertainment. In the May/June 2000 issue of *The Fundamentalist Digest*, Don Jasmin wrote, "This editor firmly believes that children who become 'addicted' to Patch's music could develop a light frivolous approach to Holy Scripture and sacred Biblical truth."

They have pushed the boundaries. In this way, they have created an appetite for “catchy” music in two generations of fundamental Baptists.

That issue aside, in 2001 Dr. Garlock was still sounding a clear warning against CCM. Note that he said that even if a church just “STARTS USING” CCM, it will eventually lose all other standards. He was saying that the path to full-blown contemporary music begins small and proceeds incrementally.

By 2013, twelve years later, Dr. Garlock had changed this stance. By then the ministry was passing from Garlock and the Hamiltons to the Hamilton’s children. In 2013, Garlock wrote a Postlude to Shelly Hamilton’s *Why I Don’t Listen to Contemporary Music*. The book is misnamed, because it actually endorses using “SOME” contemporary Christian music. This “small” change is actually a DRAMATIC change that opens the door to an ever-increasing move toward CCM.

I am convinced that this “small” change in standard will undo all of the good that Dr. Garlock tried to do over his half-century career of education and warning.

We will give one more example of the widespread move toward the acceptance of contemporary music. In 2012, Pastor Brian Fuller of Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, NH, defended the use of contemporary worship hymns in his blog. Fuller rejected the idea of a “slippery slope.” He wrote that the issue of dangerous associations is “irrelevant, illogical, and extra-biblical.” He claimed that the Gettys are conservative and don’t represent the typical world of CCM.

This is a position of ignorance. The Gettys are a bridge to the one-world church as surely as Hillsong or any of the others.

The Gettys are attractive, highly talented, interesting people. We have no doubt that they are sincere Christians. But they are bridges to a most dangerous world.

The Gettys are representative of evangelicalism today. At the heart of modern evangelicalism is “a renunciation of separatism,” as Harold Ockenga stated it in the 1940s. They follow the example of Billy Graham who was called “Mr. Facing Two Ways.” The Gettys say they love sound doctrine, but they don’t separate from heresy. They say they love righteousness, but they don’t hate worldliness. They don’t draw clear lines as the Bible requires. They don’t speak out against error as the Bible demands. They keep everything on a positive note.

When their song “In Christ Alone” was chosen to be performed for the enthronement of England’s Archbishop of Canterbury in 2013, Keith Getty said, “We are so honored that one of our hymns would be used for such an historic occasion in British life” (“In Christ Alone Featured,” Mar. 22, 2013, NeuFutur.com).

To be faithful to Christ and Scripture, Getty should rather have said that he was ashamed to be associated with the terrible apostasy of the archbishops of Canterbury. Consider a few examples:

William Temple, 1953 - “... there is no such thing as revealed truth” (*Nature and God*).

Michael Ramsey, 1961 - “I expect to see many atheists in heaven” (*London Daily Mail*, Oct. 2).

Robert Runcie, 1982 - “As to why Jesus suffered on the cross, I am an agnostic” (*Sunday Times*, Apr. 11).

Rowan Williams, 2008 - The Church of England officially apologized to Charles Darwin for rejecting his doctrine of evolution.

The Gettys would do well to heed God’s warning.

“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, NEITHER BID HIM

GODSPEED: For he that biddeth him Godspeed IS PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL DEEDS” (2 John 10-11).

There are times when positive speech and smiles and unity are treacherous to the cause of Christ.

Because of the lack of boundaries, the Gettys are a bridge to the exceedingly dangerous world of the one-world church as surely as Hillsong or any of the others.

Let’s examine exactly who and what the Gettys are holding hands with.

### **The Gettys Are a Bridge to New Reformed Calvinism**

Keith Getty leads worship at Parkside Church, Cleveland, Ohio, pastored by Alistair Begg. This is the world of John Piper, R.C. Sproul, Al Mohler, Jr., Mark Driscoll, John MacArthur.

These are men who are studious and who preach expositively and are attractive in many ways, and many “younger fundamentalists” are gravitating toward them. But Reformed Calvinism is a path to the world of Augustine, the Church Fathers, John Calvin, Protestantism, and the great heresy of infant baptism.

John Calvin was a heretic who trusted a false doctrine of salvation. Calvin was strongly influenced by Augustine, who “describes his so-called ‘garden experience’ and water baptism as initial stages of a lifelong, progressive conversion” (David Beale, “Augustine: His Life and Influence,” in *Historical Theology In-Depth*, 2013).

Calvin never renounced Rome’s infant baptism and baptismal regeneration. He did not hold to biblical salvation, and salvation is a major fundamental of the faith! I read Calvin’s *Institutes of Christian Religion*, and concluded that he was a

religious philosopher, not a Biblical preacher. I don't respect John Calvin. He is not my teacher. I don't use his commentaries; I don't quote him.

New Reformed Calvinism is a path to Replacement Theology (the church is Israel). It is a path to Amillennialism and the rejection of the imminency of Christ's return and the loss of the great spiritual benefits of that important doctrine.

And unlike old Reformed Calvinism, New Reformed Calvinism is ecumenical. The old Reformed men believed that Rome is the great whore of Revelation 17, drunken with the blood of the martyrs. But the new Reformed have ecumenical relationships with Rome, or are at least open to it and aspire to it. Consider The Gospel Coalition (TGC). The Getty's pastor, Alistair Begg is a prominent member.

On the TGC web page "Should Christians Be Ecumenical," we find the following: "Can evangelicals and Catholics truly be together? ... Jesus' prayer for unity in the Body obligates me to see the ecumenical task as important for Christianity." (The article was written by Trevin Wax, a Southern Baptist Wheaton College professor who associates with the Gettys.) The Gospel Coalition is dead wrong about John 17. Jesus' prayer has nothing to do with ecumenism. In fact, Christ emphasized obedience to God's Word and the importance of truth (Joh. 17:6, 8, 14, 17, 19), which are *incompatible* with ecumenism.

In November 2019, Alistair Begg spoke at Baylor University's National Preaching Conference with, among others, Beth Moore, who has "visions" of ecumenical unity, promotes Roman Catholic contemplative prayer, and rails on those who believe that she is not authorized to preach God's Word to men. Baylor has been a hotbed of heresy since the 1920s, when Samuel Dow taught evolution there. In 2010, the Fantastical Church Music Conference at Baylor featured Rob Bell, who holds a false gospel and a false christ and denies the

fire of hell. Bell's God is "a force, an energy, a being calling out to us in many languages, using a variety of methods and events" (*Love Wins*, Kindle location 1710-1724). Bell's christ :doesn't even state that those coming to the Father through him will even know that they are coming exclusively through him ... there is one mountain, but many paths. ... People come to Jesus in all sorts of ways ... Sometimes people use his name; other times they don't" (*Love Wins*, Kindle location 1827-1840, 1865-1878, 1918-1933).

There are no clear biblical boundaries with neo-evangelicals like Begg and the Gettys. They don't believe in biblical separation. They don't like it; they are enemies of it. The Gettys associate in music ministry with almost anybody: Pentecostal, Charismatic, Roman Catholic, deniers of the blood atonement (C.S. Lewis), theistic evolutionists (John Lennox), universalists (Pedro Eustache).

And new Reformed Calvinism, unlike old Reformed Calvinism, is not separated from the world. In July 2019, longhaired rocker Alice Cooper gave his testimony at the Getty's Parkside Church. They should rather have reproved him for his association with the vile world of rock & roll. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

New Reformed Calvinist and former TGC member Mark Driscoll said, "We are theologically conservative and CULTURALLY LIBERAL." His church in Seattle, Mars Hill, had New Year's Eve champagne dance parties.

Consider the issue of dress. Kristyn Getty is one of the few CCM singers who wears a dress of any kind. That's commendable as far as it goes, but it is not who she really is. What you wear sometimes is not necessarily who you really are in regard to the issue of modesty. Based on photos posted on the web, Kristyn Getty wears tight pants, tights as pants, short dresses, low cut dresses, and tight dresses. These types



of clothing are very sensual and have no place in the Christian life. A few years ago, when we asked for feedback from Christian men about how various types of female dress affect them morally, many made the observation that tight clothing is as seductive as slight clothing. The following was typical: "I would say the number one problem is any garment that is form fitting, be it jeans, pants, skirt, dress, shirt, whatever. Anything that is tight, no matter how long it is, leaves nothing to the imagination, and that defeats the whole purpose of covering the skin in the first place!"

In August 2019, I visited the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and saw the special exhibit on Mary Quant. She created a revolution in women's fashion in the 1960s. She invented the mini-skirt. She popularized pants on women and short hair on women. She was revolutionary. She promoted liberation, unisexuality, self-expression. Yet Mary Quant's fashions were more modest than what most church women wear today, because they are mindlessly following the pop culture. They are living by their emotions and affections rather than the Word of God. Most churches have no practical teaching about modesty. It is as if it were a total non-issue. *It is a non-issue with the world, but it's not a non-issue with God.* "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array" (1 Timothy 2:9). The first fundamental of biblical modesty is not to present oneself in a sexy manner, because the Bible teaches that sexual lust is fornication. The second fundamental of biblical modesty is to maintain a clear distinction between the sexes, because "God made them male and female." The fashion industry aims to destroy both of these. It aims for sexiness and unisex. So the woman who loves God will be exceedingly careful about fashion. The biblically modest female can be attractive, but she will never be looked upon as "hot" or "foxy" or "sexy" or manly. The

biblically modest female is shamefaced and sober and will avoid the borderline, the questionable, the doubtful. She won't try to get as close to the world's ways as possible.

The Gettys represent the “cool New Calvinism” that is sweeping through evangelicalism and the Southern Baptist Convention and is capturing large numbers of “young fundamentalists” and is having a rapidly growing influence at Bob Jones University.

In October 2019, BJU president Steve Pettit participated in the “Greenville Conference on Reformed Theology” at the Second Presbyterian Church. The other two speakers were Joel Beeke and Richard Phillips. Beeke is a professor at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and Phillips serves on the board of The Gospel Coalition, among other things. On November 11-12, Andy Naselli was the guest speaker at BJU for the Stewart Custer Lecture Series. Naselli is a professor at John Piper's Bethlehem College & Seminary and an elder of Bethlehem Baptist Church. Naselli is also on the staff of The Gospel Coalition.

Bob Jones University's growing sympathy with new Reformed Calvinism is possibly why the school is being drawn to the Gettys.

### **The Gettys Are a Bridge to the Charismatic Movement**

Consider the Gettys' close association with Stuart Townend. Their music company is GTM (Getty Townend Music). Townend leads worship at the Church of Christ the King, a New Frontiers church in Brighton, England. New Frontiers is a network of charismatic churches that believes in modern apostles and prophets. Townend supports the “extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit,” which refer to demonic/fleshly charismatic mysticism such as gibberish tongues,

prophesying, spirit slaying, holy laughter, and shaking. Townend believes worshipers can hear a “full blown thus saith the Lord prophecy” during worship times. The Gettys’ close association with Townend proves that they accept these things at some level. “How can two walk together except they be agreed”? (Amos 3:3).

### **The Gettys Are a Bridge to the World of Secular Rock Music**

As we have mentioned, their printed music is fairly conservative and doesn’t use rock music building blocks such as the backbeat and beat anticipation. They do this to broaden their influence into the most conservative of churches. But they play out-and-out rock music in their performances, and their vocals incorporate rock stylings such as slipping and sliding and vocal fry. There are no real boundaries in their music. They are a bridge to any type of music. The Getty’s music is syncretistic. They “fuse the music of their Irish heritage with the sounds of Nashville, their newly adopted home.” But Nashville is the Hollywood of the pop music industry. Rapper Trip Lee was featured at the Getty’s Sing! 2019 conference (“Getty Music Continues Their Five-Year Journey,” Sep. 24, 2018, [gettymusic.com](http://gettymusic.com)). The Gettys list the Beatles as a major musical influence. In a July 2013 interview, Keith Getty mentioned vile rocker Sting and homosexual rocker Elton John in a positive light, with not a hint of warning (Dan Wooding, Assist Ministries, Frontpage Radio).

In the same interview Keith Getty heaped praise on Bono of the Irish rock band U2. He called Bono a “brilliant theological thinker” and saying that Bono “cares for a lot of the things that Christ asks us to care about.” Getty often quotes Bono and refers to Bono in a positive way and has no warning about him. Bono says that he believes in Christ and

“is holding out for grace,” but Bono’s “grace” is a grace without repentance, a grace that does not produce a regeneration change of lifestyle, a grace disassociated from holiness. Bill Flanagan, who traveled extensively with U2, described them as heavy drinkers and constant visitors to bars, brothels, and nightclubs (Flanagan, *U2 at the End of the World*). Bono says that he lives “a fairly decadent kind of selfish-art-oriented lifestyle” (Flanagan, p. 79). Bono’s language is so vile that it often cannot be quoted in a Christian presentation. In October 2008, *Fox News* reported that Bono partied with teenage girls on a yacht in St. Tropez in the French Rivera.

Any bridge that Bible-believing churches build to the Gettys is a bridge beyond to the filthy world of secular rock.

### **The Gettys Are a Bridge to C.S. Lewis**

In the 2013 interview with Dan Wooding (broadcast on Frontpage Radio), Getty claimed C.S. Lewis as a major theological influence.

C.S. Lewis is extremely dangerous. He was a terrible heretic. He had no biblical testimony of the new birth. His autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, describes a mere change of philosophy. He believed in baptismal regeneration (*Christianity Today*, Dec. 2005). He rejected the doctrine of Christ’s substitutionary atonement, believing that it is not Christ’s blood that saves. He rejected the historicity of Jonah and Job. Lewis believed in prayers to the dead and confession to a priest. Lewis held to theistic evolution, believing that “man is physically descended from animals” and calling the Genesis account of creation “a Hebrew folk tale” (Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*). Lewis denied the eternal torment of hell. Lewis taught that followers of pagan religions can be saved without acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (*The Chronicles of Narnia: The Last Battle*).

## **The Gettys Are a Bridge to Roman Catholicism**

In July 2012, the Gettys and Townend joined Roman Catholic Matt Maher on NewSongCafe to promote ecumenical unity. They played and discussed the Getty/Townend song “The Power of the Cross.” Yet Rome has destroyed the power of the cross with its sacramentalism! Maher calls himself a “musical missionary” to unite Protestants and Catholics (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 27, 2009). He believes the consecrated wafer of the mass is Jesus. He prays to Mary and believes that she assists in salvation. His church, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Tempe, Arizona, is named in honor of the Catholic Mary who is the Queen of Heaven. The Brown Scapular of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is supposed to guarantee Mary’s help in salvation. “Mary” allegedly appeared to Simon Stock in the 14th century and promised that those who die wearing the Brown Scapular will be saved. Maher’s church has a sign saying, “Mary, Mother of Life, Pray for Us.” Maher’s wife is Methodist and they are raising their son in both “churches.” This is the one-world church! Maher sings “Lord, I Need You,” but what Lord?

Keith Getty also collaborated with Roman Catholic Margaret Becker in the song “Jesus Draw Me Ever Nearer.” In an interview, Becker said, “One of my missions has been to say, let’s not label ourselves, let’s not put up walls between each other” (*CR Magazine*, June 1, 1995). Getty collaborated with Roman Catholic Máire [pronounced Moya] Brennan in writing the song “With the Early Morning.” Brennan says, “Christians fighting Christians, Catholics and Protestants! It breaks my heart, because we’re all stemming from the same rock” (“Maire Brennan Talks to Christina Rodden,” [rootsworld.com](http://rootsworld.com)).

## The Gettys Are a Bridge to the World of Warcraft

At their Sing! 2019 worship conference, the Gettys featured flautist Pedro Eustache. He talks about Jesus, but his Christianity is not Bible-based. His gospel is so vague as to be meaningless. There is no mention of sin, the blood atonement, repentance, or saving faith. The Bible warns of false christs, false spirits, and false gospels, so God's people must carefully test these things. He claims that everything is "spiritual" and that nothing is "secular" ("Pedro Estache," interview, July 28, 2016, [isharehope.com](http://isharehope.com)). He has no problem playing background music for the occultic *World of Warcraft* video game and a wide assortment of wicked Hollywood movies.

The Gettys issue no warnings to those who would be influenced by Pedro Eustache.

This is the ecumenical world of the Gettys. They are fairly conservative in their own theology and lives, but they have no boundaries.

Therefore, any bridge that Bible-believing churches build to the Gettys is a bridge to heretics such as C.S. Lewis and to Bono and to Pedro Eustache, to the Roman Catholic Church, to the Charismatic movement, even to the filthy world of secular rock.

We are living in the age of end-time technology, which means that one can no longer use songs and hymns without the listeners being able to come into communication with the authors with great ease. Today, church members are only a Google search away from communing with these people *and with all of their associates*.

Let's say someone hears the choir perform "In Christ Alone" or "The Power of the Cross" by the Gettys. He likes the music and decides to check them out on the web. He finds links to the Gettys rocking out at their concerts and begins to

question his church's stand against rock music. He sees how liberated Kristyn Getty is in her dress and begins to think, my church is legalistic! He sees the Gettys associating with anyone and everyone and begins to question biblical separation. "The Gettys seem so sincere and Christ-loving; maybe I've been too hard-nosed and strict in my Christianity." He comes across Keith Getty's interview with Assist Ministries and hears Getty speak well of Bono and C.S. Lewis, so he decides to take a look at these people, and by so doing he begins to question fundamental Bible doctrines. After time, because of the bridge that was built by his own church to the Gettys, a soul who was once a contented member of a Bible-believing church, raising his children in a Bible-believing path, is on the road to the emerging church, and his children and grandchildren will end up who knows where.

Pastors who are allowing bridges to be built from their churches to these people will answer to God for the souls that cross these bridges to this dangerous spiritual world.

## Lancaster's Role in the Downgrade

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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The last 20 years has witnessed a great change among fundamental Baptist churches. In "Music's Role in Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists" we have documented the dramatic move to a contemporary New Evangelical program.

Since the 1980s, warnings have been given about the role of contemporary music in the departure of a church from its biblical foundation, but they have been widely ignored.

Victor Sears, editor, *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981 - "[Contemporary music] is THE NEW TROJAN HORSE MOVE OF MODERNISM TO DEADEN OUR CHURCHES TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH" (*Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981).

John Ashbrook, 1991 - "As the message declines, so does the music" (*New Neutralism II: Exposing the Gray of Compromise*).

Ernest Pickering, 1994 - "Perhaps nothing precipitates a slide toward New Evangelicalism more than the introduction of Contemporary Christian Music. This inevitably leads toward a gradual slide in other areas as well until the entire church is infiltrated by ideas and programs alien to the original position of the church" (*The Tragedy of Compromise: The Origin and Impact of the New Evangelicalism*).

Gordon Sears, evangelist, 2001 - "When the standard of dress is lowered, then the standard of conduct is also lowered. When the standard of conduct is lowered, then the sense of



value in God's truth is lowered" (*Songfest Newsletter*, April 2001). When I met Gordon Sears in 2001, he told me that invitations dropped significantly in the late 1990s because so many churches were changing their music standards.

Frank Garlock, BJU chapel, 2001 - "If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards."

David Sorenson, 2014 - "When a church begins to move to the left, one of the first changes is its music. It is symptomatic of a church moving from a fundamentalist to an evangelical stance" (*Broad Is the Way: Fundamentalists Merging into the Evangelical Mainstream*, 2014).

Contemporary worship music is not just music. Even when its lyrics are biblical and its rock rhythm is toned down, it represents a philosophy of Christianity that is opposed to what fundamentalist churches stand for. Contemporary worship music represents a philosophy of

- Judge not
- Be positive
- Don't criticize, be tolerant
- Be openminded
- Lighten up, so be so strict
- Pursue liberty rather than narrowness
- Don't draw sharp lines of separation
- Have a big tent of associations

The old hymn writers were not all Baptists, but they never turned a separated Baptist church into something completely different. But this is precisely what contemporary Christian music is doing.

Lancaster Baptist Church of Lancaster, California, is having an increasingly large role in these changes. Lancaster is the home of West Coast Baptist College. Paul Chappell is Senior Pastor. Lancaster is the largest fundamental Baptist college and perhaps the largest church. They have a massive

influence through their conferences, literature, recorded music, and Paul Chappell's blogs. Lancaster has been using contemporary worship music for at least 10 years. We first warned about it in 2011. Lancaster has used a wide variety of contemporary worship songs by Hillsong, Chris Tomlin, Casting Crowns, Graham Kendrick, Rebecca St. James, MercyMe, Getty/Townend, Matt Redman, and others. Lancaster uses a praise team, a darkened building, and big video screens in imitation of the contemporary program.

Paul Chappell's list of recommended books is also a loud warning of the direction toward "evangelicalism." The list includes Chuck Swindoll, John Maxwell, Max Lucado, John Piper, Eugene Peterson, Peter Drucker. These are very dangerous men, but Pastor Chappell is not a preacher who gives clear warnings, so he only says, "We don't agree with everything in these books." Chuck Swindoll is one of the fathers of the "grace means I don't have to be strict in separation" doctrine. He taught this in his book *Grace Awakening*. Eugene Peterson was author of *The Message*, one of the most perverted translations ever made. Max Lucado is an ecumenical Church of Christ pastor. "My faith has been supplemented by people of others groups ... Pentecostal ... Anglican ... Southern Baptist ... Presbyterian .. Catholic." John Piper is one of the fathers of the New Reformed Calvinism. He is the author of *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*. Rappers perform at his church. Peter Drucker is one of the fathers of the emerging church.

Lancaster/West Coast's "do not criticize" philosophy doesn't allow for church members and students to be properly educated and warned of such men and their heresies. Therefore bridges are built from the church and student body to evangelicalism and beyond by contemporary worship music and the use of unsound authors.

Lancaster itself is still fairly conservative, but its associates and graduates are founding a steady stream of contemporary churches. In many cases, the pastors of the contemporary churches are sons of Lancaster's leaders, staff, and teachers. Any man can have a son or student who goes in a different direction philosophically, but that is not the case here. These contemporary works have not been renounced by the fathers. In fact, they speak highly of the sons.

### **Coastline Baptist Church, Oceanside, California**

Coastline is pastored by Paul Chappell's brother, Steve. Coastline is closely associated with Lancaster. Paul Chappell's son, Matt, spent a few years at Coastline as youth pastor before he started Rockhill in 2017. Coastline is a full-blown contemporary church. Robert Bakss, a rock & roll pastor with an emerging philosophy who has caused a lot of confusion in Australian Independent Baptist churches, spoke at Coastline on February 5, 2017. Bakss' book *Worship Wars* is a full-blown defense of contemporary worship music and the use of rock & roll. Bakss even claims that the stance against contemporary worship music is of the devil. See *Baptist Church on a Slippery Slope*, available as a free eBook from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org). On Coastline's website the staff lists their favorite super heroes. They list Wolverine, Captain America, Batman, Spiderman, and Wonderwoman. That is a huge green light for church youth to immerse themselves in worldly, sensual things that are forbidden by God's Word. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). In June 2019, Paul Chappell spoke at Coastline.

### **Rock Hill Church, Fontana, California**

Rock Hill was founded in 2017 by Paul Chappell's youngest son, Matt, after he spend some years at Coastline Baptist as

youth leader. Paul ordained Matt for this work in 2016. He said Matt is the product of Lancaster Baptist Church and West Coast Baptist College. Paul tweeted, “Awesome ordination service for Matt Chappell. So thankful for his time at Coastline and excited for his future.” Paul has expressed praise for the new work multiple times. Rockhill Church uses full blown contemporary music, including Hillsong. The room is dark for the worship service and it is dark for the preaching. Matt’s messages are littered with motivational, positive-thinking, emerging language such as “leveraging a new beginning.” The messages are very light on sin and holiness and very heavy on grace, and it is not a Titus 2:11-15 grace. It is a Chuck Swindoll grace. Matt’s preaching is filled with non-critical references to the pop culture. In his first message he non-critically referenced a basketball star, rocker Taylor Swift, and the Los Angeles Lakers. In a blog dated September 15, 2017, Paul Chappell again commended Matt’s work. Larry Chappell, an assistant pastor at Lancaster, is scheduled to speak at Rock Hill’s February 2020 conference.

### **Grace Gathering, Santa Barbara, California**

Grace Gathering was founded by Todd Weaver, a graduate of West Coast Baptist College and the son of Toby Weaver who is listed on the staff page of West Coast.

Grace Gathering’s goal is to “partner with God to build to advance his kingdom.” They don’t do missionary work; they do “holistic,” “missional” work. They say the church’s work is to “usher in the kingdom of God” and “partner with God to build to advance his kingdom.” Grace Gathering is called to “serve, care for, and cultivate the earth.” Everything is very emerging at Grace Gatherings. Instead of a statement of faith, they have a “Theology Narrative.” Instead of the Bible being infallibly inspired by God, it is an “authoritative narrative.”

Grace Gathering describes itself as “a people that “respect differences of opinion and encourage dialogue.” That is 100% New Evangelicalism.

Grace gathering “is deeply connected to God and each other and we trust that Love Wins in the end.” *Love Wins* is the title of Rob Bell’s heretical book promoting universalism. He calls the preaching of eternal hell “misguided and toxic,” a “cheap view of God,” and “lethal.” He says that any God who would send people to eternal judgment is “unbearable.”

On March 13, 2019, Toby Weaver tweeted, “Sure proud of Todd.”

### **Ambassador Baptist Church, Fresno, California**

Ambassador Baptist Church (also known as Fresno Church) was pastored by Mark Irmeler until it was turned over to his son, Joshua, in 2007. Mark has taught at West Coast and is promoted on Paul Chappell’s Ministry 127 blog. Joshua is a West Coast graduate. On May 9, 2018, Josh tweeted, “Hard to believe it was exactly 15 years ago that I graduated from West Coast Baptist College. Thankful to Dr. Paul Chappell for his testimony and leadership.”

In November 2016, Josh spoke at Lancaster Baptist Church and West Coast. On November 4, he tweeted, “I really enjoyed my time in Lancaster. Thankful for the invitation by Paul Chappell to speak today.”

In March 2016, Stephen Chappell spoke at Fresno Church.

Under Joshua’s leadership, Fresno Church has a full-blown contemporary praise program and philosophy. In 2017 they used Rick Warren’s *40 Days in the Word* program.

## **Southridge Church, San Jose, California**

Southridge Church was founded by Micaiah Irmmler, brother of Joshua Irmmler of Fresno Church. He is another son of Mark Irmmler who is associated with Lancaster Baptist Church of Lancaster, California, and is promoted on Paul Chappell's Ministry 127 blog.

Southridge is a full-blown rocking, contemporary church.

On October 24, 2018, Josh Irmmler tweeted, "Had a great time getting to hear my brother, Micaiah, speak at the California SBC Convention. He's doing an incredible job launching Southridge Church in San Jose. I'm excited about his future!"

## **Citypoint Baptist Church, Tempe, Arizona**

Citypoint was founded by John Guy, who was an assistant pastor at Lancaster and helped lead the worship there. Guy spoke at Lancaster's Majesty Music Conference in March 2018. CityPoint is a full-blown contemporary church. One of the staff members at CityPoint is Mark Rasmussen, Jr., son of Mark Rasmussen, Vice President of West Coast Baptist College. Mark, Jr. had a prominent role in the music ministry at Lancaster in former years, singing in the choir and in the praise teams that stood in front of the choir. Today, Mark, Jr. is an out-and-out contemporary rocker.

Not all West Coast graduates are planting out-and-out contemporary churches, but that is the overall direction, and the seeds are being sown at Lancaster itself. I don't know any who have spoken out against what is happening.

A discerning pastor commented: "Pastor Chappell has produced this legacy. This is the fruit of his labor to embrace pragmatism and soften the lines of Independent Baptists. I would guess that 75% of WCBC grads end up this way within 10 years of graduating."

## VERY SAD TO SEE THESE YOUNG MEN ON A WRONG PATH

It is very sad to me that these young men (the Matt Chappells and the Mark Rasmussen Jrs and the John Guys, etc.) are on a wrong path, a path that will lead to anywhere within the “broader church.” Only time will tell where they and their followers will end up.

They are young, talented, studious, zealous, visionary. They could be starting strong Bible churches that would stand and bear fruit and be a bright light in an evil day. They could be starting churches that are biblically stronger and wiser than any that have existed in my lifetime. They could be testing everything by God's Word alone and rejecting every tradition that is unscriptural. But this entails going back to the New Testament church described in Scripture, which is a pilgrim separatist church, rather than following the “after their own lusts” pattern of end-time apostasy (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

Sadly, that is not what we are seeing as the fruit of Lancaster Baptist Church and West Coast Baptist College.

# Contemporary Christian Music a Bridge to Dangerous Waters

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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Contemporary Christian Music is a bridge to dangerous waters.

This is really the heart and soul of our new series on music, and it is what is missing from the vast majority of discussions on the music issue today. This is not being dealt with by Majesty Music and Bob Jones and The Wilds and West Coast and Crown, etc.

Understanding Bible prophecy is one of the fundamentals to understanding the music issue. Prophecy enables us to understand our times.

Prophecy teaches us that we live in a time of terrible apostasy. There has been an explosion of apostasy in the past 100 years, and it is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. We live in the midst of terrible apostasy.

The apostasy is described in the great prophecy of 2 Timothy 3-4. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy..."

The essence of apostasy is that men shall be lovers of their own selves (2 Ti. 3:2). It is the selfie age. It's all about my life, my music, my fashion, my tattoos, my sunglasses, my shoes, my social media page, my chosen sex! This is rebellion against the Creator who owns everything.



The apostasy pertains to Christianity. Verse 5 makes this clear. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5). The church and the world will merge in the end.

Apostasy denies the power of true Christianity. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Ti. 3:5). Two of the fundamental powers of true Christianity are supernatural salvation and the infallibly inspired Scripture.

Apostasy describes the course of the church age. “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Ti. 3:13).

In 2 Timothy 4:3-4, we have a description of apostasy in a nutshell: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (1) We see apostasy defined: “turn away their ears from the truth.” It is willful; it is a heart problem. (2) Apostasy does not endure sound doctrine. “Endure” is the Greek *anecho*, “to suffer” (Mt. 17:17), “bear with” (Ac. 18:14). (3) Apostasy is to have ears that itch for something new. We see two major characteristics of apostasy: fables and lusts. (4) Apostasy turns to fables (e.g., transubstantiation, Peter’s throne, Mary Queen of Heaven, Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon, evolution). (5) Apostasy lives according to its own lusts. This is a perfect description of CCM. (6) Apostasy is led by heaps of teachers. Never in the history of the church age have there been so many teachers, and the vast majority of them are not teaching the truth.

Jesus described the apostasy in the parables of the mystery of the kingdom in Matthew 13. “Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the

whole was leavened” (Mt. 13:33). Here the apostasy is described as increasing until it leavens all of Christianity.

The apostasy is described in 2 Thessalonians 2 as “the mystery of iniquity.” This is the devil’s plan to put the Antichrist on the throne of the world. This will involve a one-world government and a one-world church. “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (2 Th. 2:7-8). The one-world government and one-world church are described in Revelation 17:1-8. The beast is the Antichrist and his government, and the woman is the apostate church. The mystery of iniquity is the spiritual force behind the move for unity. It is the spirit of ecumenism. It is the spirit of globalism. It is powered by modern communications technology. There is a global culture. We are on the verge of a cashless society.

What does all of this mean?

Spiritual danger will increase as the coming of Christ approaches. God’s people must be very diligent and vigilant. Lukewarm will not succeed. The church that is not going against the flow is moving into apostasy.

The coming of Christ is imminent, and the hour is very, very late. We must do the work of God while we can.

The doctrine of apostasy teaches us to expect apostasy in church music. It is insane to believe that the devil does not have his hand in church music. Music is the heart and soul of the global pop culture and the ecumenical movement.

Biblical separation is more important than ever before. It is not Phariseeism. It is a matter of obedience to God. It is spiritual protection. It is the path of wisdom. Separation is commanded at the heart of the chief passage on apostasy. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: FROM SUCH

TURN AWAY” (2 Ti. 3:5). The Bible forbids bridge building to false and evil things. “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Co. 15:33). “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Co. 6:14). “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; AND AVOID THEM” (Ro. 16:17). “And have NO FELLOWSHIP WITH the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

The fundamental of the music issue is Bible separation. It is impossible to mess around with contemporary music and NOT build bridges to evil things.

### **The Dangerous Waters**

1. Charismaticism
2. The Latter Rain miracle revival
3. The Jesus People Movement
4. The one-world church
5. The world of secular rock
6. Homosexual Christianity
7. Contemplative Prayer
8. Modern Bible Versions
9. Cultural Liberalism
10. Downgrade of Bible Inspiration
11. Process Salvation
12. Salvation apart from faith in Christ
13. Theistic Evolution
14. Downgrade of hell
15. False gods and goddesses

These are just some of the dangers!

## **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO CHARISMATICISM**

CCM could be called Charismatic Christian Music. It has always been intimately associated with the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. We need to understand the history of Pentecostalism.

The Pentecostal movement was birthed at Azusa in California in the early 1900s. The Azusa Street mission was founded in 1906 by William Seymour. They thought they were witnessing the restoration of the sign gifts of Pentecost. Pandemonium broke out. There was no order to the services; anyone could speak, man, woman, or child. There was great confusion: dancing, jumping, trances, jerking, shaking, shouting, laughing. Sometimes the police had to be called in to quiet things down. Shaking was a large part of the experience. One man shook so violently that an ambulance was called. The man told the doctor, "Don't touch me; this is the power of God." The doctor replied: "If that is the power of God he is giving you a devil of a shaking." "At times people would fall all over the house, like an army slain on the battle field." People came from many places to obtain the Pentecostal experience and the movement spread across the world. Azusa Street produced many of the early Pentecostal leaders in the Assemblies of God and other denominations.

In the 1960s, Pentecostalism birthed the Charismatic movement. Pentecostalism became ecumenical and leaped into all of the denominations. This began in 1960 with the outbreak of "tongues" at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California. The movement spread to Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and others. It is building the one-world church like nothing else. In 1967, the "spirit" of the charismatic movement swept into the Roman Catholic Church. It is called the Catholic Renewal. In 1975, 20,000 charismatic Catholics traveled to Rome to receive the blessing of Pope Paul VI. The charismatic experience gave Roman

Catholics a new love for heresies such as the Mass and Mary the Queen of Heaven.

The New Orleans '87 conference illustrates the essence of the charismatic movement. It was attended by 35,000-40,000 from 40 denominations. Half were Roman Catholics. Roman Catholic books promoted Mary veneration and Mary visitations. There was a Roman Catholic Mass every morning.

The charismatic movement has permeated evangelicalism today. Prior to the 1970s, the Pentecostal movement was largely rejected. For example, Arno Gaebelein wrote in 1907, "We are convinced that this movement is not of God" (*Our Hope*, July 1907). By the 1970s, this stance had changed dramatically. J. I. Packer, one of the most prominent evangelical scholars, said in 1989 that the charismatic movement "must be adjudged a work of God. ... Sharing charismatic experience unifies Protestants and Roman Catholics at a deeper level than that at which their doctrine divides."

Consider some of the heresies of the charismatic movement.

Gibberish tongues that can be learned. Consider Jack Hayford, who wrote the CCM song "Majesty" He told his daughter not to worry that her "tongues" sounded like gibberish, because "we have to start with baby tongues" (St. Louis 2000).

Spirit Slaying. It is also called carpet time, Holy Spirit glue. It was never practiced by the apostles or apostolic churches.

Holy Laughter and Spirit Drunkenness. Rodney Howard-Browne calls himself the "Holy Ghost Bartender."

Experience Orientation. "In a moment I'm going to call down the Spirit. ... above all, don't try to rationally evaluate the things you will see" (Anaheim Vineyard, 1994).

Word-Faith Heresy. This is also called "name it and claim it." Kenneth Hagin was one of the fathers of it. He said, "Your confession of faith in God's Word will bring healing or

whatever it is you need from God into the present tense and make it a reality in your life”

The vast majority of the influential contemporary worship musicians are charismatic. We have documented this in the free eBook *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the heretical charismatic movement. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THE LATTER RAIN REVIVAL**

Latter Rain is a radical part of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement. It claims that God will raise up prophets and apostles who will do miracles and bring in the Kingdom of God BEFORE Jesus returns. The “healing” movement beginning in the 1950s (e.g., Oral Roberts, William Branham) was supposed to be the forefront of this movement.

The Latter Rain heresy is closely associated with the contemporary worship movement. Many influential contemporary worship leaders believe this heresy (e.g., Kevin Prosch, Paul Baloche, Leonard Jones, David Ruis, Tim Hughes). All of these people move freely within the contemporary praise movement. Their music is published by Integrity and Maranatha. CCM is one big family in “ONE SPIRIT.” They believe their praise music is creating the miracle revival. This is the music used for the Laughing-Drunken revivals in Toronto, Pensacola, Lakeland, etc. The music is very powerful and sensual. It consists of heavy dance syncopation that moves the body, unresolving chord sequences and electronic distortion that creates a mystical atmosphere, sensual vocal techniques, and repetition.

The charismatic movement, including its Latter Rain aspects, is permeating the Southern Baptist Convention today.

Our new course *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements* is illustrated with eight PowerPoint presentations with 1,400 slides. See [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the charismatic movement and all its aspects, including the Latter Rain movement. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THE JESUS PEOPLE MOVEMENT**

Contemporary Praise Music was born in the Jesus People movement of the 1970s. The Jesus People Movement began at Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa, California, led by Chuck Smith. Smith was mesmerized by a charismatic Jesus hippie named Lonnie Frisbee. "With his long brown hair, long scraggily beard, dusty clothing, scent of Mary Jane [marijuana] and glint of his last LSD trip in his eyes, he showed up on Chuck Smith's doorstep" (Matt Coker, *OC Weekly*, March 2005). Chuck Smith's wife, Kay, had a "prophecy" that God was going to use Frisbee in a great revival. Frisbee led a Wednesday night Bible study at Calvary Chapel and the church exploded from 150 to thousands in attendance and eventually became an entire association of churches. Thousands of hippies were baptized.--even in their bikinis. Calvary Chapel birthed the contemporary praise movement, such as Love Song and Children of the Day. By the early 1970s, Calvary Chapel was home to ten or more of these musical groups. Instead of renouncing their old music, they used rock & roll to create "Christian" rock.

"The thought that Christian music could sound like popular music was a radical innovation that would ultimately launch a revolution in liturgies unparalleled by anything since the Reformers introduced congregational singing in the 16th century" (Allan Powell).

They carried the rock & roll rebellion into Christianity. They thumbed their noses at anyone who didn't like what they were doing. Larry Norman led the way with his 1975 hit "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?" "They say rock 'n' roll is wrong ... They say cut my hair/ They're driving me insane. ... Just give me a song that has a beat/ Just give me a song that moves my feet/ I don't like none of those funeral marches!" This has always been the Christian rock philosophy. "I will listen to whatever music I like. I will dress as I please. No one is going to judge me." It is a fulfillment of the prophecy of 2 Timothy 4:3, "... after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers..." (2 Timothy 4:3). They are enemies of every fundamentalist Bible-believing church. Consider Steve Taylor's song, "I Want to Be a Clone." "The church is an assembly line/ I want to be a clone/ I'm glad they shoved it down my throat/ I want to be a clone." Rich Mullins warned about "those Bible-believing, Bible-thumping born-again-ers." DC Talk of Liberty University mocked the "hyper fundi" who opposes rock music.

The Psalmist was a hyper-fundie! "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (Psalm 119:128).

Paul was a hyper-fundie! "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11).

James was a hyper-fundie! "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Peter was a hyper-fundie! "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).



John was a hyper-fundie! “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15-16).

The Jesus People Movement was not only rebellious, it is mystical. This means it leans on experience and emotion more than doctrine, feeling more than thinking. The message is often vague which leaves room for a wide variety of doctrine. Consider the song “For Those Tears I Died.” This was the first hit song by Calvary Chapel’s first CCM group, Children of the Day, which was led by the teenager Marsha Carter. She eventually married Russ Stevens, a fellow member of Children of the Day.

Consider the vagueness of the lyrics: “Jesus, I give You my heart and my soul, I know that without God I’d never be whole; Savior, You opened all the right doors, And I thank You and praise You from earth’s humble shores; Take me I’m Yours. And Jesus said, ‘Come to the water, stand by My side, I know you are thirsty, you won’t be denied; I felt ev’ry teardrop when in darkness you cried, And I strove to remind you that for those tears I died.”

There is no clear gospel message here. Nothing about sin, the cross, repentance, or biblical faith. Jesus didn’t die for our tears; He died for our sins! The song says come to the water, but what water? It says you are thirsty, but thirsty for what? It says I just have to pray, but pray what? Any religious person who believes in some sort of Jesus can be “blessed” by this, a Roman Catholic who prays to Mary, a modernist who doesn’t believe Jesus is God, a Quaker following his inner light, etc. This is one reason the contemporary music has been so successful in creating unity and building the one-world church.

Consider Marsha's salvation testimony from her web site: "She saw herself walking with Jesus near a deep blue river and this experience both changed and saved her life."

We must examine salvation testimonies very carefully! Salvation is the fundamental of fundamentals.

It is not really surprising that Marsha turned out to be a lesbian. In 1979, she divorced her husband of seven years because she "had fallen in love with a woman." In 1984, she joined the homosexual Metropolitan Community Churches and started writing "Born Again Lesbian Music" (BALM). She now speaks of God as a female. Marsha says, "God will answer to whatever." Now Marsha sings, "We Are the Lepers," which says homosexuals are accepted by God even though rejected by many churches. "We are the lepers turned back at the gate. ... We've been told our loving is a sin, but you have a plan for us, just like you said you would. You have a plan for us, it's only for our good. We found you when we looked for you with all our heart and soul. ... You've given us a future and a hope."

Marsha Stevens has always been a mystic, living by her emotions rather than the Word of God. She was living by her emotions when she was "converted" through a vision. She was living by her emotions when she wrote Christian folk rock. She was living by her emotions when she "followed her heart" in leaving her husband for a woman.

Jesus rock goes hand-in-hand with the charismatic movement. The emphasis in both is on emotions and experiences more than solid Bible doctrine. Our emotions must be controlled by TRUTH, or we are in great danger. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5:24). The old nature has affections, which are strong desires, feelings, emotions.

In 1980, Lonnie Frisbee joined John Wimber and the Vineyard movement. Wimber had been seeking “signs” but nothing happened until Frisbee came. The first night, people fell on the floor and shook and spoke in gibberish. Chuck Smith, Jr., called John Wimber and Lonnie Frisbee “the dynamic duo.” Calvary Chapels and Vineyard churches grew to become associations of hundreds of churches. They have been at the forefront of contemporary Christian music. Calvary Chapel started Maranatha Music, the first publisher of contemporary praise music. John Wimber started Vineyard Music, which has been very influential in the contemporary praise movement.

Lonnie Frisbee continued to use drugs and practice homosexuality. He would “party on Saturday night” and preach on Sunday. Frisbee died in 1993 at age 43 of AIDS. Frisbee’s funeral was held in the heretic Robert Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral. He is buried there. Today the Crystal Cathedral is a Roman Catholic church.

The spirit of the Jesus Movement is a deceiving spirit that is building the one-world church.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the Jesus People movement. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO ECUMENISM AND THE ONE-WORLD CHURCH**

Ecumenism is at the heart and soul of Contemporary Christian Music. I don’t know of even one prominent CCM artist who believes in biblical separation. Don Moen of Integrity Music says, “I’ve discovered that contemporary worship music bridges any denomination. Today the walls are coming down.” Darlene Zschech of Hillsong says, “There is a new sound and a new song being proclaimed across the earth. It’s the sound of a unified church.” Pope John Paul II

said, “Music can be an instrument toward Christian unity.” Ecumenical language permeates CCM (e.g., the body, one Spirit, united, John 17, tolerance, judge not, don’t be preachy).

CCM drives ecumenical evangelism (Franklin Graham, Luis Palau, Greg Laurie, etc.). Franklin Graham said the ecumenical alliance with the Catholic Church and other denominations “was one of the smartest things his father ever did” (*Indianapolis Star*, June 3, 1999). In the world of contemporary music, even among “evangelicals,” there is a close and non-critical relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis promoted the ecumenical idea that all denominations are part of one big Christian family. Protestants and Baptists and Roman Catholics are just different rooms in “the church.” Chuck Colson said, “The body of Christ, in all its diversity, is created with Baptist feet, Charismatic hands, and Catholic ears...” (*The Body: Being Light in Darkness*). Max Lucado says, “My faith has been supplemented by people of other groups ... Pentecostal ... Anglican ... Southern Baptist ... Presbyterian ... Catholic” (*In the Grip of Grace*). In 2015, Darlene Zschech and Hillsong joined with Pope Francis for a worship service at the Vatican. On her Facebook page Darlene said, “This is a celebration of unity. ... Amazing days for the Body of Christ.”

Matt Maher is one of several Roman Catholic contemporary worship music bridge builders. He calls himself a “musical missionary” to unite Protestants and Catholics (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 27, 2009). He prays to Mary as the Queen of Heaven and believes that she aids in salvation. He believes that Jesus is the consecrated wafer of the Catholic mass. In spite of his gross heresies, he is very popular among contemporary worship musicians, even the most conservative. In July 2012, the Gettys and Keith Townend joined Maher on NewSongCafe to promote ecumenical unity

through music. They all sing his song “Lord, I Need You.” But what “Lord” is Maher singing about? Maher’s wife is Methodist, and they are raising their son in both churches “so he can experience both traditions” (Religion News Service, May 17, 2013). This is the one-world “church”! The spirit of the one-world church is NOT the Holy Spirit of truth. It is another spirit.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the One-World Church. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THE WORLD OF SECULAR ROCK & ROLL**

Christian rock music is the illegitimate merging of the unholy rock of the world with the holy Rock Jesus Christ. Notice the title to a history of Christian rock: *Raised by Wolves*! That is a true statement, but it is apostasy! True believers aren’t raised by the world. Mylon Lefevre is one of the fathers of Christian rock. He mocked those who criticized his worldly music. One of his early albums was *Sheep in Wolves’ Clothing*. What unscriptural confusion! The Word of God commands, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, IS NOT OF THE FATHER, but is of the world” (1 John 2:15-16),

Contemporary Christian Music is a bridge to the world. It puts people into communication with secular rock and all of its spiritual and moral dangers. We have documented these dangers in *Rock & Roll’s War against God* and *What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music*, both of which are available for free at [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

In *Baptist Music Wars* we give many examples of how that contemporary Christian musicians love secular rock.

Examples are Phil Keaggy, Ashley Cleveland, Caedmon's Call, Steve Camp, DC Talk, Degarmo and Key, Point of Grace, Crystal Lewis, Third Day, and MercyMe. Fourth Watch "listens to a great deal of mainstream music, making no apologies for it." Contemporary worshipers become so addicted to every form of rock and so spiritually stupid that they play secular rock in "worship." Consider Church by the Glades, Miramar, Florida. It used to be First Baptist Church of Lake Worth. They performed "Calling All the Monsters" by A.N.T. Farm. Newspring Church of Anderson, South Carolina, performed a song by OZZY Osbourne and AC/DC's "Highway to Hell" (Easter Sunday, 2009). New Point Church of Springfield, MO, performed Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and the Rolling Stones' "Sympathy for the Devil."

Rock is enticing because it preaches the philosophy of "live as you please." "Fifties rock urged people to do whatever they wanted to do even if it meant breaking the rules." (*Buddy Holly: A Biography*). "It's my life, and I'll do what I want/ It's my mind, and I'll think what I want" (The Animals, 1965). John Lennon said, "The whole Beatles idea was to do what you want." "The only rules you should live by are rules made up by you" (Pennywise, 1991). "So what we get drunk/ So what we smoke weed. ... Living young and wild and free" (Snoop Dog, 2011).

Rock music has captured the heart and soul of multitudes of professing believers, and Contemporary Christian Music is a bridge to this wicked world.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the world. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO HOMOSEXUAL CHRISTIANITY**

"The gospel church has long been a refuge for gays and lesbians" (Anthony Heilbut, *The Gospel Sound*).

“Homosexuality is a problem today in gospel music--A MAJOR CONCERN--and everybody knows it” (Kirk Franklin, *Church Boy*, 1998). We have seen that Lonnie Frisbee, one of the fathers of contemporary worship music, remained a homosexual to the end of his life and died of AIDS. Homosexual CCM artists include James Cleveland, Anthony Williams, Marsha Stevens, Kirk Talley, Clay Aiken, Ray Boltz, Anthony Williams, Jennifer Knapp, Vicky Beeching, Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of Indigo Girls.

Yet God’s Word condemns homosexuality as sin. In Romans 1, Paul calls it “vile affections,” “against nature,” “unseemly,” “a reprobate mind.”

The acceptance of homosexuality is spreading rapidly through “evangelicalism.” Chris Seay says, “We should approach homosexuals without condemnation” (ChurchRelevance.com, June 19, 2007). Mark Lowry, who sings with Bill Gaither, said we shouldn’t judge lesbian Marsha Steven and her female “wife.” He said that fundamentalists who condemn them need to “find Jesus.” Roman McCullough says, “Condemning homosexuality feels natural ... but in a world turned upside down by grace we must distrust whatever feels natural” (*If Grace Is So Amazing, Why Don’t We Like It?* pp. 201, 202). Philip Yancey says, “When it gets to particular matters of policy, like ordaining gay and lesbian ministers, I’m confused, like a lot of people.” (*Whosoever magazine*, 2004). Brian McLaren says, “Frankly, many of us don’t know what we should think about homosexuality” (“McLaren on the Homosexual Question,” Jan. 23, 2006). Carl and Laura Lentz, pastors of Hillsong New York City, were asked about their stand on homosexuality by CNN, June 6, 2014. They said, “It’s not our place to tell anyone how they should live; that’s their journey.” In 2019, Liberty University students demonstrated for homosexual rights. They protested Jerry Falwell, Jr.’s statement that they

were going to raise their granddaughter as a girl, since that is what God made her.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to Homosexual Christianity. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER**

Evangelicals and Southern Baptists are turning to contemplative prayer, which is derived from Roman Catholic mysticism. In a cover story in February 2008, *Christianity Today* documented this movement, saying that evangelicals are “learning the lost secrets of the ancient church.” Contemplative prayer is an attempt to commune with God experientially and to find spiritual understanding beyond Scripture by means of Roman Catholic monastic practices. It is drawing evangelicals closer to Rome, and Rome closer to pagan religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, and all contemplatives closer to New Agers.

Consider three examples of contemplative prayer: *Centering Prayer* involves emptying the mind of conscious thoughts about God with the objective of entering into a non-verbal experiential union with God in the center of one's being. *Visualization Prayer* is trying to imagine oneself in a Biblical scene, such as talking to baby Jesus in the manger. *The Jesus Prayer* consists of repeating the phrase “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me”

Richard Foster is one of the most influential figures in the spread of contemplative mysticism. He taught that the final goal of contemplative prayer is “union with God ... where we see nothing” (Foster, quoting Bonaventure, Catholic mystic). Thomas Merton is another influential teacher of contemplative prayer. He was a Catholic monk and a Buddhist monk. He worshipped before Buddha statues in Sri Lanka. Of this experience he said, “I don't know when in my



life I have ever had such a sense of beauty and spiritual vitality..." Christian bookstores stock a wide variety of books by Catholic mystics. But they were not saved. They believed in baptismal regeneration and a sacramental works gospel.

Evangelical promoters of contemplative mysticism include Rick Warren, Bill Hybels, Chuck Swindoll, David Jeremiah, Beth Moore, Max Lucado, Charles Stanley, Joseph Stowell, John Piper, and Lee Strobel. "Find a silent place ... DO NOTHING but make yourself available to the Lord. ... Simply invite Him to meet with you in the stillness and speak to you... SENSE HIS PRESENCE ... EXPERIENCE IT" (Charles Stanley, "Ask Dr. Stanley," *In Touch*, October 2011). The Southern Baptist Convention is filled with contemplative prayer. Rick Warren promotes it in *The Purpose Driven Church* and *The Purpose Driven Life*.

Contemplative prayer leads to a oneness mindset, unity, ecumenism, even pantheism and universalism.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to Contemplative Prayer. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO MODERN BIBLE VERSIONS**

The modern Bible versions are based on a corrupt Greek text that was created through the modernistic principles of "textual criticism."

Textual criticism removes a significant portion of the New Testament. More than 2,800 words in the Received Greek New Testament are removed by textual criticism--the equivalent of 1 and 2 Peter. (This exposes the myth that only a half page of text is in question.) It omits or questions 45 entire verses — Mt. 12:47; 17:21; 18:11; 21:44; 23:14; Mk. 7:16; 9:44; 9:46; 11:26; 15:28; 16:9-20; Lu. 17:36; 22:43-44; 23:17; Jn. 5:4; Joh. 7:53--8:11; Ac. 8:37; 15:34; 24:7; 28:29; Ro.

16:24; and 1 Jo. 5:7. In addition, it omits significant portions of 147 other verses.

Textual Criticism WEAKENS MANY DOCTRINES such as the Deity of Christ. For example, it removes “God” from 1 Timothy 3:16. “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: GOD was manifest in the flesh...” We have documented this in many books, such as *Why We Hold to the King James Bible*.

Another major problem with most modern versions is that they use the corrupt principle of dynamic equivalency, which gives the translator frightful liberties. This is true for the *New International Version*, the *New Living Bible*, *Today's English Version (Good News for Modern Man)*, and *The Message*.

Consider *The Message*, which is Southern Baptist pastor Rick Warren's favorite version.

KJV - “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

*The Message* - “You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.”

The modern Bible Version position is a slippery slope toward abandonment of any concern about the purity of God's Word. Consider the fact that the frightfully corrupt *The Message* has been recommended by Billy Graham, Warren Wiersbe, J.I. Packer, Joni Earekson Tada, Bill Hybels, Bill Gaither, Chuck Swindoll, Joyce Meyer, John Maxwell, Max Lucado, Focus on the Family, among many others.

The Bible text/version issue is about the Word of God. It is not merely about scholarship, literature. The fundamental question is this: do we have the pure, living, powerful Word of God?

The multiplicity of versions weakens the authority of Scripture in the hearts and lives of individuals and churches.

Consider the testimony of a pastor who left the Southern Baptist Convention in 1996: “The problem with the SBC is that they have no absolute authority. The typical SBC church has no less than four different translations in any given service. So it is impossible for the people to hear a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ Every issue becomes debatable. Every conviction becomes questionable” (Pastor Marty Wynn, Lighthouse Baptist Church, Columbus, Georgia, May 2011).

The King James Bible is based on the preserved Hebrew and Greek. It is accurate. It is dynamic and powerful. It is convicting. It is authoritative.

It is no small matter that the King James Bible is NOT the Bible of the ecumenical movement, the charismatic movement, the contemporary music movement, the contemplative prayer movement, new evangelicalism, and the New Reformed Calvinism.

Consider the testimony of Marybeth Lane:

“In my thirties, I was leading several groups of women and teenagers. The main question that I kept hearing from these women had to do with which version of the Bible was the most accurate. I decided I was going to read a new version of the Bible every six months. I read the majority of the popular Bible versions over the next few years. It was interesting to see how my views on God would change with each version. For instance, when I read *The Message* version I found myself becoming very mystical in my response to God...sound doctrine was slowly replaced with pseudo-spiritual experiences. Due to my exposure to the Message Bible, along with reading *The Pursuit of God* by A.W. Tozer (and other similar books), I found myself studying Roman Catholic contemplative mystics. This ultimately led me into a full-blown contemplative prayer life. Tozer praises the Catholic mystic Teresa of Avila (who levitated and had physically painful visions of demonic entities stabbing her) as a godly example to follow. After

reading some of her writings, I began studying the works of other authors, such as Henri Nouwen, Dallas Willard, and Richard Foster. I continued down this path until I began studying the writings of Thomas Merton (a Buddhist, Catholic monk) and Thomas Keating. These men were clearly both practicing and teaching interfaithism. Finally, after reading through many versions, I was faced with the fact that the only well-known version that I had left to read was the dreaded King James Version!! I thought the KJV was going to be very difficult to read, but after doing some research on the reason behind some of the language that is used, I began to appreciate the 'ye' and the 'thou.' The most shocking verse for me to read was Acts 8:37. I couldn't believe that the other versions that I had been reading did not include this extremely important passage on believer's baptism. Consequently, I started to research what else was missing, and I was flabbergasted to find all of the changes that had taken place. ... Brother Cloud's writings on the subject were especially helpful to me during this season. My husband, Ed, was supportive of my research yet extremely skeptical of my discoveries. ... Ed had been an attorney for over 20 years and was trained in law school to search for evidence, no matter the cost. Ed started digging into the research that I presented him, and within six months he became convinced of the authenticity and reliability of the King James Version of the Bible. The greatest testimony to me regarding the truth of the King James Bible was far more than simply the facts that I uncovered, but it was the unexpected FRUIT that began to manifest in my life, my husband's life, and in our marriage. This word truly was quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Nothing in the KJV was watered down. My husband was led to give up his full time law practice to become a street evangelist, while at the same time God was leading me to keep my place in the home. ... Our Father truly knows what we need, and we have never been without. The fruit in my life was the greatest convincing factor that I was

reading the perfect, infallible word of God. No other version of the Bible yielded the kind of fruit that Ed and I were experiencing.”

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the modern versions. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### CCM IS A BRIDGE TO CULTURAL LIBERALISM

Cultural liberalism is a teaching of the New Reformed Calvinism which is sweeping through evangelicalism and the Southern Baptist Convention and which is attracting many “younger fundamentalists.” It is the heresy that the believer can love Jesus and the filthy pop culture, too.

Mark Driscoll says, “I am theologically conservative and culturally liberal” (*Confessions of a Reformission Rev*). Driscoll’s Mars Hill Church in Seattle hosted champagne dance parties and operated a secular rock & roll theater.

Donald Miller’s popular book *Blue Like Jazz* describes cultural liberalism. He wasn’t happy in a traditional Bible church, because he wanted to drink beer, watch raunchy movies, talk trashy, and hang out with atheists and hippies. He found that “liberty” in the Christian circles that believe in cultural liberalism. David Foster describes cultural liberalism in *A Renegade’s Guide to God: Finding Life Outside Conventional Christianity*. He says, “We won’t be told what to do or commanded how to behave.” Erwin McManus described cultural liberalism in *The Barbarian Way: Unleash the Untamed Faith Within*. He wrote that we “are not required to keep in step” and “there is no forced conformity.”

Consider the growing trend of drinking Christians. Baptist historian Gregory Wills says that since at least the mid-1800s Baptists have held “that a minister who drank alcoholic beverages was disqualified to preach” (*The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary 1859-2009*). That has changed

dramatically due to the teaching of cultural liberalism. The Journey in St. Louis, a Southern Baptist church pastored by Darrin Patrick, hosts Theology at the Bottleworks, advertised as “grab a brew and give your view.” 2007, a Lifeway survey found that 29% of Southern Baptist “laity” drink alcohol. In 2013, Moody Bible Institute dropped its 127-year ban against alcohol and tobacco use by faculty and staff. In 2014, Dallas Theological Seminary dropped its ban against alcohol.

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to cultural liberalism. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THE DOWNGRADE IN BIBLE INSPIRATION**

“Within evangelicalism there are a growing number who are modifying their views on the inerrancy of the Bible so that the full authority of Scripture is completely undercut.” (Francis Schaeffer, 1983).

This has been documented in many other books, such as *The Battle for the Bible*, 1979, by Harold Lindsell.

Consider Bruce Metzger, an editor of the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament, who was known as an “evangelical.” In his notes in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, he said that the Pentateuch is “a matrix of myth, legend, and history,” Noah’s flood was local, Job is an ancient folktale, Isaiah was written by three men, and Jonah is a “popular legend.”

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the downgrade in Biblical Inspiration. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## CCM IS A BRIDGE TO PROCESS SALVATION

“Why is it that we look upon salvation as a moment that began our religious life instead of the daily life we receive from God” (Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*).

“My mother hoped I would have one of those dramatic ‘born-again’ experiences ... but it never worked for me. ... In my case intimacy with Christ was developed gradually over the years” (Tony Campolo, *Letters to a Young Evangelical*, pp. 25, 26).

John Calvin taught process salvation. He was strongly influenced by Augustine, who “describes his so-called ‘garden experience’ and water baptism as initial stages of a lifelong, progressive conversion” (David Beale, “Augustine: His Life and Influence,” in *Historical Theology In-Depth*, 2013).

Jesus described salvation as a “birth” and a “conversion” (John 3:3; Matthew 18:3). The salvations described in the book of Acts were all of the born again/conversion type. Consider the 3,000 on Pentecost, Saul, the Ethiopian eunuch, Lydia, and the Philippian jailer!

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to Process Salvation. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## CCM IS A BRIDGE TO SALVATION APART FROM FAITH IN CHRIST

Billy Graham - “I used to believe that pagans in far-off countries were lost--were going to hell--if they did not have the Gospel preached to them. I no longer believe that” (*McCall's*, January 1978).

Max Lucado was asked, “What about the people who have never heard of God? Will God punish them?” He answered, “No, He will not. Heaven’s population includes throngs of

people who learned the name of their Savior when they awoke in their eternal home.” (*Max on Life*, p 222).

*The Shack* - “Those who love me come from every system that exists ... Buddhists ... Mormons ... Muslims ... I have no desire to make them Christian” (p. 182).

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to salvation without faith in Christ. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

### **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THEISTIC EVOLUTION**

Theistic Evolution has permeated evangelicalism. Answers in Genesis surveyed 200 Christian schools and found that only 50% believe in a six-day creation.

C.S. Lewis - Genesis 1-3 is a “Hebrew folk tale.” Man began as an animal that “may have existed for ages in this state before it became man.” “God caused to descend upon this organism a new kind of consciousness” (*The Problem of Pain*).

Billy Graham - “Either at a certain moment in evolution God breathed into one particular ape-man who was Adam, or God could have taken a handful of dust and created a man just like that” (*United Church Observer*, July 1966).

Karl Giberson, Eastern Nazarene College - “We believe in evolution--and God.”

Nancy Murphy, Fuller Theological Seminary - “[C]osmology, astronomy, geology and evolutionary biology call for rejecting the ancient idea of a Golden Age followed by a historic fall.”

Daniel Harlow, Calvin College - “... the species *Homo sapiens* cannot be traced back to a single pair of individuals.”

William Dembski, Southwestern Baptist Seminary - Adam and Eve were possibly “human-like beings from outside the



Garden” and God transformed “their consciousness” (*The End of Christianity*, 2009).

Whether Genesis 1-3 is literal history is a fundamental doctrine.

Jesus described the Bible’s account of Adam and Eve as literal history (Mat. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:6-7).

Jesus’ genealogy is traced from the man Adam (Luke 3).

Genesis 1-3 forms the historical foundation of the gospel of Christ. If Adam was not a real man and there was no literal fall, the gospel is nonsense.

John Lennox is Oxford professor who debates atheists such as Richard Dawkins. Lennox is the uncle of Kristyn Getty and a speaker at Getty events, such as Sing! 2019 and Sing! 2020. He interprets the creation days as eras of billions of years in which evolution occurred as modern science teaches. But he believes Adam was created directly.

The Bible clearly defines the days of creation as literal days.

The six days of creation are evening and morning days (Genesis 1).

In the Ten Commandments, the six days are likened to the sabbath, a literal day. “For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day...” (Ex. 20:11).

The evolutionary interpretation of the fossil record has been completely debunked. The fossil beds were laid down in the global flood. For an overview of this, see *An Unshakeable Faith: A Christian Apologetics Course*, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to Theistic Evolution. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO THE DOWNGRADE OF HELL**

C.S. Lewis - "Hell is a state of mind" (*The Great Divorce*).

Billy Graham - "I think that hell essentially is separation from God forever. ... I think the fire that is mentioned in the Bible is a burning thirst for God that can never be quenched" (*Orlando Sentinel*, April 10, 1983).

Rob Bell - "God gives us what we want, and if that's hell, we can have it. ... There are individual hells, and communal, society-wide hells" (*Love Wins*).

Jesus' teaching on hell fire is repeated at least 16 times in the Gospels (Mt. 3:12; 5:22; 7:19; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8, 9; 25:41; Mr. 9:43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48; Lu. 3:17). "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched" (Mr. 9:43).

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to the downgrade of hell. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## **CCM IS A BRIDGE TO FALSE GODS AND GODDESSES**

Consider *The Shack* God. *The Shack* is a novel by William Young, which depicts a false god. *The Shack* is popular with CCM artists. Michael W. Smith has endorsed it. Rebecca St. James calls *The Shack* "absolutely extraordinary." *The Shack* was promoted at the National Pastor's Conference, 2009, sponsored by Zondervan and InterVarsity Fellowship. William Young was interviewed by Andy Crouch of *Christianity Today*. This conference represents the heart and soul of contemporary praise music today. In *The Shack*, God the Father is depicted as a WOMAN. God says, "I don't punish sin" (p. 120). "The Bible doesn't teach you to follow rules" (p. 197). Evangelicals are divorcing the God of the Bible. A woman described how that her daughter came to her

after reading *The Shack* and asked, “Is it all right if I divorce the old God and marry the new one?”

Rob Bell’s God - The God who sends people to a burning hell is “terrifying and traumatizing and unbearable.” God is “a force, an energy” (*Love Wins*).

Brennan Manning’s God - “The god who exacts the last drop of blood from his Son so that his just anger, evoked by sin, may be appeased, is not God” (*Above All*, foreword written by CCM artist Michael Card).

Dallas Willard’s God - It is wrong to see God as “a policeman on the prowl.” Willard said God will not destroy the earth in a rage (*The Divine Conspiracy*).

Many of the practitioners of contemplative prayer are led to a pagan concept of God. William Johnson - “God is the core of my being and the core of all things” (*The Mystical Way*, 1993). Wayne Teasdale - “You are God; I am God; they are God; it is God” (*The Mystic Heart: The Supreme Identity*).

Marsha Stevens’ female God - “God will answer to whatever.”

BEWARE! Contemporary Worship is a bridge to false gods and goddesses. I am going to do everything I can NOT to build such bridges in my life, my family, my church.

## **WHAT ABOUT CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALS?**

The “conservative evangelicals” are infected with spiritual diseases such as ecumenism, cultural liberalism, and contemplative mysticism. And they are holding hands with very, very dangerous people. The conservative evangelicals are bridges to all sorts of theological and spiritual dangers. Consider Al Mohler, Jr., head of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is very popular with “young fundamentalists.” Mohler is a supporter of Billy Graham and his radical ecumenical evangelism. Graham preached Mohler’s inauguration service. Mohler was the director of Graham’s

2001 Louisville crusade. Mohler visited Rick Warren and Saddleback in 2013 and had nothing negative to say. Mohler also joined Warren for the Proclaim 2016 conference. Warren believes that the churches should yoke together with unbelievers and pagans to build the kingdom of God. Warren has a close, non-critical relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. In 2014, Warren gave effusive praise to Pope Francis, calling him “our pope” and “a perfect example.” In November 2014, Warren spoke at a Vatican conference and met the pope. Warren has a close working relationship with Catholic bishop Kevin Vann of Orange County, California. Warren also has a non-critical relationship with New Agers. Mehmet Oz, Daniel Amen, and Mark Hyman designed Warren’s “Daniel Health Plan.” These men promote Hindu and Buddhist yoga and the occultic practice of Reiki.

### **Examples of Shipwrecks in the Dangerous Waters**

Fundamental Baptist churches that are playing with CCM are in great danger. One preacher likened it to having “a cobra in a basket.” Contemporary Christian Music is a bridge to the world and to the one-world church, and anything can happen.

In “CCM’s Role in the Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists,” another presentation in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* series, we have already seen examples such as Highland Park Baptist Church.

Consider Robert Weaver. He grew up in a fundamental Baptist home. His father left the liberal American Baptist Convention and was a missionary in Africa and a pastor in Pennsylvania. Robert attended Bob Jones University. There he rejected the doctrine of separation. He did not agree with separating from Billy Graham. He left Bob Jones and entered the dangerous waters of evangelicalism. He encountered the “church fathers,” such as Augustine and Origen, who helped

him become sympathetic to Roman Catholicism. He attended an ecumenical prayer meeting with Benedictine monks and came to believe that they loved Christ, too, in spite of their false gospel. He was following his emotions. He developed a love for the Catholic mass. “I felt a need for visible and tangible symbols that I could touch, feel, and experience with my senses” (*Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail*). He encountered contemplative prayer. He recommended resting the chin on the chest and gazing at the area of the heart and repeating the Jesus Prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner” (p. 83). He said, “I FEEL the presence of Christ through this prayer” (p. 83). But the Bible warns that “Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Consider Marty Sampson. He was one of the worship leaders and song writers for Hillsong. In August 2019, he said his Christian faith “is on incredibly shaky ground.” He is seriously entertaining atheism, and he “is so happy now, so at peace with the world.”

Consider Joshua Harris. He wrote the best-selling *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* and was considered an evangelical expert on marriage and child training. In August 2019, he renounced faith in Christ. He is divorcing his wife. He says he is happy and at peace. He is following his “heart.”

# The Language of Music Styles

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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Over the past 15-20 years many formerly fundamental Baptist churches have converted to New Evangelical rock & roll churches, and the adoption of CCM has been at the very heart and soul of these transformations. God's people must learn to recognize contemporary music and protect themselves against it or they will be swept along by the broad river of end-times apostasy.

Music is a language, and the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics. This is a foundational principle.

In contrast, CCM holds the philosophy that music is "neutral."

Christian Rucker's Creed - "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all music was created equal, that no instrument or style of music is in itself evil—that the diversity of musical expression which flows forth from man is but one evidence of the boundless creativity of our heavenly Father."

Rick Warren - "I reject the idea that music styles can be judged as either 'good' or 'bad.' Churches need to admit that no particular style of music is 'sacred'" (*Purpose Driven Church*).

Harold Best - Music is "morally relative ... [It is] essentially neutral in its ability to express belief, creed, moral and ethic exactitudes, or even world view" (*Music Through the Eyes of Faith*).

Bill Gaither - "God speaks through all different kinds of musical styles."

CCM encompasses every sort of popular music style: rock, blues, jazz, urban, techno, metal, thrash, punk, rap/hip hop.

The concept that music is neutral is fundamental. As soon as this is accepted, the battle for sacred music is lost. It results in the erasure of all boundaries.

That music is neutral is denied by world famous conductors - "Music has powers for evil as well as for good" (Howard Hanson).

That music is neutral is denied by the rock crowd - "Don't listen to the words, it's the music that has its own message" (Timothy Leary, 1960s LSD guru).

That music is neutral is denied by prominent social critics - "Rock can't be made respectable. The music will simply subvert the words" (William Kilpatrick, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong*). "The transformative power of rock lies ... in the music itself--in the SOUND, and above all, in the BEAT" (Robert Palmer, *Illustrated History of Rock & Roll*).

That music is neutral is denied by the movie text painter. Text painting is controlling the mood of an audience with different types of music styles.

The *Christian Rocker's Creed*, that no musical style is evil, denies that man is evil and that he can create evil with his art. The first musical instruments were made by the sons of Cain who were in open rebellion to God's holy laws. It is ridiculous to think that they were using those instruments for anything other than evil.

The *Christian Rocker's Creed*, that no musical style is evil, denies the existence of Satan as "the god of this world." It would deny his role in the human arts. It would deny that men walk "according to the prince of the power of the air, the

spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2).

Music is a language! It is one of the most powerful languages in human society!

We must, therefore, exercise discernment. We must ask, “What kind of message is this music presenting? Does the message of the music fit the message of the lyrics?” We must do exactly what the Bible says: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). “But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14).

### **Outline**

1. Music is a language, and the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics.
2. There are styles of music that speak a wrong message that makes them unsuitable in Christian music.

The Bible requires that our music be spiritual “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and SPIRITUAL songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). See also Colossians 3:16. This is a far-reaching standard of Christian music. The Greek word for song (ode) refers to songs in general, but it is qualified by the word “spiritual.” This is the Greek *pneumatikos*. Spiritual is that which is under the control of the Spirit of God, as explained in the previous verse. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Spiritual is the opposite of carnal, fleshly. “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ” (1 Co. 3:1).

Paul is saying that God’s people are to sing songs that are under the control of the Spirit of God, that are holy, that are



sacred, that are set apart for God, that are not carnal and fleshly, that are different in quality from the songs of the world, morally pure, of a heavenly flavor rather than a worldly.

The Bible requires that our music not be worldly. “And be not conformed to this world...” (Ro. 12:2). “Love not world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (2 Jo. 2:15-16).

The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life is a perfect definition of modern pop music. “The main ingredients in rock are sex and sass” (Deborah Harry of Blondie).

### **Styles of Music That Preach a Wrong Message**

- Syncopated dance styles
- Sensual vocal styles
- Soft styles
- Unresolving chord styles

### **SYNCOPIATION IN POP MUSIC**

“All dance music makes use of syncopation” (Snoman, *Dance Music Manual*, p. 44).

“Syncopation is shifting the accent to a weak beat or to an off beat” (Miller, Taylor, Williams, *Introduction to Music*).

Syncopation involves “rhythms which are in some way unexpected, making part or all of a tune or piece of music off-beat” (*Wikipedia*).

“Syncopation is “a general term for a disturbance or interruption of the regular flow of rhythm.”

“Rock’s danceability is due predominately to its emphasized syncopated rhythms, which invite the listener to supply the missing beats either mentally or through a series of physical gestures” (John Makujina, *Measuring the Music*).

Syncopation itself is not wrong.

“Syncopation has been used for centuries, but it was used SPARINGLY FOR SPECIAL EFFECTS” (Philip Seyer, “*Syncopation in Music and Dance*”).

And “good syncopation” always resolves back into the normal, unsyncopated rhythm.

Syncopation used in moderation can enliven the music, and make it interesting. Proper use of syncopation doesn’t make you want to do worldly dance moves. Consider “Joy to the Lord.” This type of syncopation adds liveliness to the music without making it sensual dance music. That is syncopation used in moderation. It doesn’t make you want to jerk and dance. It is a march, not a dance, and marching fits the message. It is also cheerful and victorious in sound. This is good Christian music. The message of the music matches the message of the words. But you can change the whole feeling and effect of the song by filling it up with syncopation. It is a matter of predominance and resolution. When syncopation becomes predominant, it is sensual and highly addictive and quickly spoils the saints’ taste for non-syncopated music.

In pop music, syncopation is a “fundamental constant presence.” Duke Ellington put it like this: “It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing.” Unrelenting syncopation has been a chief characteristic of worldly dance music since the beginning of the 20th century (ragtime, boogie woogie, blues, jazz, big band swing, honky-tonk, western swing).

## SOME COMMON TYPES OF SYNCOPATED DANCE RHYTHM

### The Back Beat

“I felt that if I could take a ... tune and drop the first and third beats and accentuate the second and fourth, and add a beat the listeners could clap to as well as dance this would be what they were after.” --Bill Haley

“I dig that rock and roll music; it has a back beat; you can’t lose it.” --Chuck Berry

The back beat is in contrast to the straight or march rhythm. A march has the strong emphasis on the first beat.

ONE-two-three-four, ONE-two-three-four

Or the first and third beat, with the heavy beat on the first and the secondary beat on the third (in 4/4 time)

ONE-two-THREE-four, ONE-two-THREE-four

The back beat is called the anapestic beat. This is a poetic term that describes poetry using three syllables with the emphasis on the third. “’Twas the **night** before **Christmas** and **all** through the **house**, not a **creature** was **stirring**, not even a **mouse**.”

In music, this would be

da-da-DA, da-da-DA (3/4 time)

or

one-TWO-three-FOUR (4/4 time)

### The Silent Beat

By simply dropping a beat, a sensual rock effect is created

Da Da Da Da Da Da Da Da

vs.

Da Da --- Da Da Da --- Da

## **The Break Beat**

Playing a note slightly before or after a beat to produce an “unexpected accent.” It creates a jerky dance effect. Playing slightly before the main beat is called pushing the beat.

DAH-da-DAH, DAH-da-DAH

The break beat is a catchall term to describe all sorts of offbeat syncopations.

One EE and uh, Two EE and ah

Break beat is often used in recordings by fundamentalist groups. This sensualizes the music and creates an appetite for sensual music. It spoils the musical taste for truly sacred music.

## **Beat Anticipation**

Graham West identified this form of syncopation. West was a fundamental Baptist pastor in Australia who died in 2014 of a brain tumor. He was trained in classical piano and worked in the secular music industry. He wrote scores for both classical and secular music. His video series *The Rhythm of Rock* is available for free download from [tbbc.org.au](http://tbbc.org.au).

“Beat anticipation is syncopation that moves the natural position of the accent by causing the last note of the musical phrase to fall off the beat immediately before a naturally accented beat.”

Observe that Pastor West is talking about the last note of a musical phrase. Beat anticipation in general can be used anywhere in the music, but beat anticipation as Pastor West defined it falls at the end of a musical phrase. It is sensual, leaving the listener anticipating something that is not there and the body fills in the gap by wanting to move. It is unresolving. There is no closure. “It leaves the mind hanging in a most unsatisfactory state. Philosophically and psychologically the human mind requires closure after

tension. And if this is denied, we have unrest and we have anarchy” (West).

The beat anticipation can create the jerky rock feel even when the other types of syncopation aren’t present. It creates an appetite for sensualized music.

Pop music is made up of many types of syncopation. *The Rhythm Bible* has “over 1,000 examples of rhythmic figures common in jazz, rock, Latin, blues, funk, and other styles -- rhythms that make contemporary sounds so exciting.”

All types of pop syncopation have the same effect on the body. Whether rock is soft or hard, quiet or loud is irrelevant. It moves the body; it makes you want to dance.

The heavy syncopation is why pop music is so physical, why it always moves the body.

“When you take away the accent from where the strong beat should fall, in any given time signature, the human body is instinctively inclined to move into the gap and mark where the missing accent should be” (Graham West).

“The sexuality of music is usually referred to in terms of its rhythm--it is the beat that commands a directly physical response” (Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock & Roll*). “Rock music is sex. The big beat matches the body’s rhythms” (Frank Zappa). “That’s what rock is all about--sex with a 100 megaton bomb, the beat” (Gene Simmons). “Perhaps my music is sexy ... but what music with a BIG BEAT isn’t? (Jimi Hendrix). “The sex is definitely in the music, and sex is in all aspects of the music” (Luke Campbell, 2 Live Crew).

The heavy syncopation is what creates the addiction in pop music.

“I couldn’t believe it, all that rhythm and power. I got stoned just feeling it, LIKE IT WAS THE BEST DOPE IN THE

WORLD. It was so sensual, so vibrant, loud, crazy” (Janis Joplin). “Modern music is as dangerous as cocaine” (Pietro Mascagni, Italian composer). “It all came out of that INFECTIOUS BEAT and those young people wanting to feel good by listening to some records” (Sam Phillips, Sun Records). Sun Records birthed rock and roll in the 1950s (e.g., Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins).

The child of God cannot follow his emotions wherever they lead. Just because something makes me happy or gives me pleasure doesn’t mean it is right. There are the “desires of the flesh” (Eph. 2:3), “vile affections” (Ro. 1:26), “inordinate affection” (Col. 3:5). The “affections and lusts” in Galatians 5:24 refer to passionate feelings and emotions. “Affection” is the Greek *pathos*, meaning to suffer, a strong desire, an aching for something. But it is a wrong desire that is against God. My affections are to be set on things above (Col. 3:2). This is a mindset. It means to control my thinking and feeling by choosing right heavenly things over wrong earthly things. I must control my desires by the truth of God’s Word. I must abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul (1 Pe. 2:11). This describes the warfare within, the choices that must be made by the child of God to deny his fleshly desires in order to please his Saviour.

“Once you begin listening to soft rock, you begin sliding down that slippery slope to the more aggressive forms of rock. Soft rock begins to orient the whole way of perceiving music around rhythm and away from melody. Your musical interest will change. Hymns will seem dull in comparison to your newly acquired tastes. It’s a progression I’ve seen over and over again in the lives of Christians. It’s a downward spiral. It happens in the lives of individuals; it happens in the lives of families; it happens in the lives of churches. There is a gray area of ignorance about the power of pop syncopation. And the devil, taking advantage of this, being not only the master musician but also the master of subtlety, comes along to a strong

fundamental church or a Bible college and he offers his wares of CCM rock ballads. It sounds great. There's no drums, no wild electric guitars, no obvious back beat, just the piano or guitar and the singer. And it's almost the same as the songs that they used to sing, except the rhythm kind of trips a little bit. But that's O.K. because it's exciting, and the young people love it. The problem is that when the rhythm does that little trip it means that the music contains a basic, distinctive rhythmic feature of all rock & roll since its inception in the 1950s. In this way, before you've even known it, you've been deceived by the subtle strategy of Satan. This is the blind spot that Satan is using to his advantage. He knows that once a church accepts rock ballads, complete capitulation is almost inevitable. In the case of vigilant, serious-minded Christians, he has to start them up at the very top of the slope with very gentle rock so that the conscience doesn't scream out, "This music is wrong!" Just as long as he can get you started, he has won, because just like a drug pusher he knows that his users will want more and more of that sensual rhythm" (Graham West).

The previous types of syncopation are illustrated with audio and video clips in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, the video series: <https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

## **SENSUAL VOCAL STYLES**

### **Scooping and sliding**

Vocal sliding is slipping and sliding the voice between notes. It is also called glissando.

Scooping is attacking a note from above or below its true pitch instead of hitting the note cleanly and directly. It is singing "unnecessary pitches below the first note or below the second one." It is also called flipping.

These techniques are often used together.

These techniques add a greater element of sensuality and emotionalism to the music.

The 1940s book *How to Sing for Money* said, “Scooping is a common practice ... as a swing effect” (Charles Henderson, p. 36).

Thus, the scooping technique was created as part of the commercial dance music scene, and it works with the jerky syncopated rhythm to create the sensual atmosphere that modern dancers desire.

Musicologist Walter Everett identifies the sensuality of this technique. He says, “Many rock vocalists reach out to their audience largely through the PHYSICALITY of their singing” (*The Foundations of Rock: From “Blue Suede Shoes” to “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes,”* 2008).

“Sliding gives the word some grit and attitude” (Molly’s Music).

Elvis Presley and countless other pop sex gods and goddesses have used these techniques to great sensual effect, but never to a godly effect.

Regarding scooping and sliding, Dr. Frank Garlock warns:

“The identical methods employed by the world to make the sound sensual are now being used by many popular contemporary Christian music vocalists. Yet many Christians either do not realize or deliberately ignore the fact that this is no longer ministry, but pure, sensual, flesh-gratifying entertainment. ... Scooping is one of the most popular methods of producing a dance hall effect. ... A second characteristic of a worldly sound is flipping below and above the actual written melody line. Listen again to Henderson as he comments on this technique: “The classically trained singer has an ingrained respect for any written melody, and hesitates to tamper with it. The born swinger, on the other hand, looks on written melody as simply a convenient starting point for his



variations' (Charles Henderson, *How to Sing for Money*, 1940, p. 85). Is sacred music meant to swing?" (Frank Garlock and Kurt Woetzel, *Music in the Balance*, 1992, pp. 83, 94).

Dr. Garlock identifies the scooping and sliding techniques as sensual swing effects that have no role in sacred Christian music. As we have seen, the word "sacred" means "spiritual," which is the opposite of worldly.

Walter Everett observes further, "Classical singers traditionally strive for constant beauty of tone, but this is rarely of interest to rock vocalists, who reject the dogma of there being one 'right' way to do anything" (*The Foundations of Rock*).

This is a telling statement by a secular musicologist. Note that rock vocalists don't care about beauty of tone, but God's people should strive for beauty in everything because we serve the God of beauty and order, and we are singing about His lovely character.

Further, rock singers contort their voices and slip and slide around the notes because they have rejected absolute truth. Whether they are conscious of it or not, their singing style reflects the philosophy of moral relativism which permeates modern pop music.

The world's style of singing reflects the licentious rock philosophy, regardless if it is used by Christians or non-Christians, liberals, emergents, evangelicals, charismatics, or fundamentalists.

Dr. Frank Garlock observes,

"The identical methods employed by the world to make the sound sensual are now being used by many popular contemporary Christian vocalists. These techniques include swaying and dancing, scooping, vocal sliding, flipping below and above the actual written melody,

whispery, breathy voice, and delayed vibrato. The style itself reflects and projects a philosophy.”

Vocal scooping and sliding is not only sensual and reflects a relativistic philosophy, it also draws attention to the singer, which is another major element of both secular pop, contemporary Southern Gospel, and contemporary Christian music.

Consider the comments posted at the YouTube rendition of “In Christ Alone” which we linked to earlier. The comments call attention to the singer and her voice rather than to the message.

“Beautiful voice.”

“What a great voice you have.”

“You got a great voice!”

“You are wonderfully gifted!!!”

“Love your voice!!”

By this technique, attention is immediately drawn to the singer, which is what the world is seeking, but it is not a godly practice in the worship of a thrice-holy God who has proclaimed that He will not give His glory to others.

“For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? AND I WILL NOT GIVE MY GLORY UNTO ANOTHER” (Isaiah 48:11).

Christian musicians who in any sense share in God’s glory while supposedly singing for His honor are committing a great sin.

Yet by aping the world, the very presentation style, technique, and environment of contemporary worship lends itself to exactly that. The singers and musicians are prominently displayed before the congregation. The auditorium is often darkened and spotlights are used to draw more attention to the singers and musicians. Typically the lead singers are attractive people; their dress fashions are sensual; their voices

are “shown off”; they move to the music’s rhythm; their images are projected on large screens; there are close-ups of faces, tight shots of instruments, sweeping pans of the worship team.

This is precisely the same technique used in secular forums to glorify rock gods and goddesses. Modern technology produces the most intense glorification of musicians in human history.

Why are contemporary Christian singers and musicians so eager to ape the world?

### **Improvisation**

Closely associated with scooping and sliding and flipping is improvisation. The vocalist uses his or her voice to improvise on the melody to enhance the rhythm and the sensuality of the music.

Again, it is a sensual “swing effect” with its roots in the blues, jazz, and other forms of licentious music that birthed 1950s rock & roll.

“Now, apart from the primitive, driving rhythm that lifts the fur on your spine and starts your feet tapping in spite of yourself, what is the outstanding feature of any hot band? The answer--IMPROVISATION--spur of the moment ‘faking’ on the written melody and rhythm” (Henderson, *How to Sing for Money*, p. 159).

It’s about breaking rules. “In other words, ‘do you own thing’ ... not in any regimented, prescribed, or planned manner. ... [It] is teaching relativism” (Frank Garlock, *Music in the Balance*).

It is individualistic, showing off, entertaining. It is the opposite of the unity of a body. It is the opposite of congregational singing. “It is a sound which is characterized

by polarization and discord rather than oneness and unity” (*Music in the Balance*).

The queen of improvisation is Aretha Franklin. On Thanksgiving Day 2016 she took 4.5 minutes to sing the “Star Spangled Banner” at a Detroit Lions football game because of the extensive improvisation.

### **Breathy**

In this vocal technique, the microphone is held extremely close to the singer’s mouth and there is a breathiness behind the notes and tone. It is also used to start a sound with a breathy onset.

The soft, breathy style gives a feeling of intimacy, sensuality, and sexuality. “It is a vocal effect that is used throughout contemporary music. ... It creates real intimacy. It’s very much like the singer is whispering” (“Using Breathly Tone in Your Singing,” Voice Council).

In *The Art of Rock and Roll*, Charles Brown describes the vocal tricks that Elvis Presley employed. “By softening his voice for certain passages he could create a personal effect, which made the women in the crowd feel that he was singing directly to them” (*The Art of Rock and Roll*, 1983, p. 68).

### **Vocal Fry**

Another popular technique from pop music is vocal fry. It is also called vocal creaking, vocal rasp, popcorning, glottal scrape or rattle.

It is a throaty, rasping, creaking, croaking, distorted vocal sound typically used particularly at the beginning of a musical phrase. It isn’t a clear sound; it is “a wavering inside the lowest range of the voice.”

It is sensual. It has been called “a sexy raspy voice” (Jade Joddle, speaking skills coach).

It “packs a raw, emotional punch in pop music” (“Vocal Fry,” gizmodo.com).

“It is used to give the impression of intimacy and nearness, or to indicate that the singer is about to break down emotionally and cannot go through with the song” (“Description and Sound of Creak,” CVT Research).

“It is used as an effect for heightening emotion. It brings a sense of intimacy” (“Using Creak or Vocal Fry in Your Singing,” Voice Council).

It also reflects the relativistic, “law breaker” character of the world’s music.

Vocal fry is used by popular rock singers such as Britney Spears, Mariah Carey, Enrique Iglesias, Michael Jackson, and Stevie Wonder.

Vocal fry is often found in Contemporary Christian Music and Southern Gospel because the singers are imitating the world of pop music, either wittingly or unwittingly.

Yet as we have seen, vocal sliding, scooping, improvisation, breathy tone, and vocal fry are all techniques that come from the sexualized world of pop music. They are used to create sensual effects in the listeners. Frank Garlock observes that the rock style of singing reflects the licentious rock philosophy. “The identical methods EMPLOYED BY THE WORLD TO MAKE THE SOUND SENSUAL are now being used by many popular contemporary Christian vocalists” (*Pop Goes the Gospel*). “The style itself reflects and projects a philosophy” (*The Language of Music*).

Things associated with the world’s sensuality and sexuality have no place in Christian music.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may

prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness” (Ephesians 4:17-19).

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Peter 1:13-15).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

The music of a holy God should contain no aspect of the world’s sensual ways. To mix the two is unholy confusion. It is sin. It is a reflection of the end-times “after their own lusts” apostasy (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

The previous types of vocal styles are illustrated with audio and video clips in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, the video series <https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

## SOFT STYLES

There has been a distinct move away from a strong, militant sound in Majesty hymns and others associated with BJU to a soft, passive sound. It isn't soldier music. It isn't "Sound the Battle Cry!"

The music is pleasant, attractive, but not spiritually powerful.

"A lot of the music that we independent Baptists have been listening to is of the soft, sedate, non-offensive type sound. The battle theme in present day fundamentalist music compositions is conspicuously absent. The term apostasy is never mentioned. The melodies and arrangements are progressively lacking strength and literally creating the 'soft sound' in church music. The melodies and arrangements are progressively lacking strength and literally creating the 'soft sound' in church music. Such music encourages passivity on the battlefield. We are in desperate need of strong melodies bearing along strong lyrics, feeding strength to the warriors for Christ" (H.T. Spence, *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*).

The "soft sound" is not bad music. It isn't worldly. It isn't contemporary. But the message of the music doesn't fit the message of the lyrics as well. It is weaker, less forthright, less bold, less confident. It is in the direction of less militancy. It represents a subtle move from a fundamentalist stance to an evangelical one.

A major element of the soft sound is unresolving chord cadences. We will see this in the section on the misuse of chords. Tim Kelly calls this bridge music to contemporary worship.

Some good churches are using this type of music unknowingly. They are churches that are trying to hold to sacred music and resist contemporary. They won't use a backbeat. They avoid beat anticipation. They reject worldly singing styles such as scooping and sliding. But by using the

“soft sound,” they are unwittingly following a subtle path away from boldness, separation, militancy, 100% surrender, self-sacrifice, a pilgrim lifestyle.

The soft sound fits the light, entertainment emphasis of a great many fundamental Baptist churches today.

That the Wilds, Majesty Music, and Bob Jones University would be using music that has such a soft atmosphere in recent decades fits perfectly with BJU's direction. They have clearly moved from a fundamentalist, separatist stance to an evangelical one, and the music reflects it. In October 2019, BJU president Steve Pettit participated in the “Greenville Conference on Reformed Theology” at Second Presbyterian Church. In November 2019, Andy Naselli was the speaker at BJU for the Stewart Custer Lectures. Naselli is a professor at John Piper’s Bethlehem College and an elder of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

The soft styles are illustrated with audio and video clips in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, the video series, the section on “The Language of Music Styles.”

See <https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

## **MISUSE OF CHORDS**

Pastor Tim Kelly of Maine has taught music theory for 25 years and was previously deeply involved in the pop, rock, new country rock, rap, R&B music culture. He is a professional piano tuner and understands the sound of music at many levels.

Pastor Kelly has analyzed the role of chords in the creation of a sacred vs. a contemporary sound (language) extensively.

He has published a video series called *Music Fundamentals* in 11 parts. The last three parts deal in a more focused way on chords and their role in CCM. He illustrates everything with the piano.



He demonstrates that there are fundamentals of music written in nature itself by God. He uses the bestselling textbook *Music in Theory and Practice* by Bruce Benward to show that there are fundamental laws to music that are recognized by music experts. It is written by a secular music teacher who has no agenda other than teaching the fundamental laws of music that are universally recognized.

Chords are a group of individual notes (pitches) that make up a harmonic sound.

Movement from one chord to the next is a chord progression or a harmonic progression.

A series of chords presents a musical statement, and the two chords at the end of a phrase act like punctuation in a written sentence. These two chords are called the cadence.

Pastor Kelly shows that chords are misused in multiple ways to produce the contemporary sound. In fact, contemporary song writers break basically every rule, because they are copying from the world's rebel pop music. They turn exceptions into rules and rules into exceptions.

The misuse of chords creates unresolved tension in the music. It produces musical questions without answers. It creates never-ending musical sentences without proper punctuation.

The way that chords are misused preaches the language of the postmodern philosophy of relativism, non-dogmatism, dependence on intuition and feeling rather than reason. "The chording pattern creates music that is weak, nebulous, wandering, abstract, no rules, just feelings. Everything is unresolved, without structure" (Kelly).

The first person who pointed out to me the misuse of chords in CCM has a master's degree in music from Pensacola, and she said, "I think the reason why CCM uses non-resolving chords is that it reflects what they believe and how they live. If you are singing about doctrine, you want your music to

reflect that. If you have strong cadences, it is emphatic. It's saying, 'This is true; God is right; there is a hell; there is a heaven; there is right and wrong, black and white.' And when you mess with that, I think it makes everything vague. The music is then saying, 'Well, this is what I believe, but maybe we're wrong; let's be flexible.' So they use chords that don't resolve, that leave you hanging."

Unresolving chords also create a music that is sensual and overly oriented toward emotion. This fits the contemporary worship goal of "experiencing God in a tangible way." "It is wispy and draws on the emotions, with no intellectual purpose or guide" (Kelly).

Unresolving chords create a charismatic effect. A former charismatic told me, "It builds you up and gets you into an emotional frenzy where you feel that you are really worshipping God. I was part of a charismatic church and youth group, and I've been reflecting on that experience. The music lifts you up, up, up emotionally, then drops you. It is an emotional roller coaster. In high school, music was my drug. It is an opiate that really affects you." And the misuse of chords is a major part of that drug effect.

Pastor Kelly shows that many fundamentalist songwriters are creating bridge music that creates a taste for full-blown contemporary music. Bridge music publishers include Majesty Music, The Wilds, Soundforth, and Bob Jones University.

Getty-Townend Music (GTM) and Sovereign Grace Ministries (SGM) are creating the same type of bridge music.

Every Bible-believing church that is committed to holding fast to sacred music and that is determined not to cross any bridge to the contemporary world needs to take this issue seriously.

Pastor Kelly gives many examples of how that chords are misused in contemporary worship music and in fundamentalist bridge music. He deals with minor chords, the Vth and the IVth, the tonic, descending fifths, the 11th chord, and many other things.

For example, he describes the under-use of the major chord, which is the strongest chord (in contrast to minor chords). In his research into the use of major chords in traditional hymns, in contemporary worship songs, and in The Wilds music today, he made the following discovery:

On average, traditional hymns contain 95% major chords

- CCM songs contain 48% major chords
- Wilds songs contain 48% major chords

Consider one other example, and that is the misuse of chord cadence.

As we have seen, a cadence consists of two chords at the end of a musical phrase. It signals the completion of a section of a composition. In our traditional hymnals, a phrase is one line (usually four lines or stanzas), and each line ends with a cadence of two chords.

The cadence acts as musical punctuation. “Cadences punctuate music in much the same way as periods, commas, colons, and semicolons punctuate our written language. Thus, in music, as in language, thoughts and ideas are separated to avoid confusion” (*Music in Theory and Practice*, Bruce Benward, 3rd edition, Vol. 1, p 71).

Pastor Kelly shows how that different types of cadence either complete or fail to complete a musical phrase. (Types of cadence are half, authentic, deceptive, plagal.)

CCM doesn't use cadences in a resolving way or leaves them out entirely. This acts as tension without resolution. It is like

questions without answers. It produces emotional confusion, uncertainty, irresolution.

It speaks the philosophy of relativism. It is the opposite of the message of doctrinal dogmatism and spiritual vigilance.

“Removing cadences creates a mystical feeling, because the thoughts are not absolute, ordered, distinct. Like a wandering mind” (Kelly).

We have asked Pastor Kelly to produce a summary of the issue in three or four messages, which we hope will be published in early 2020. We plan to post this for free viewing and downloading at [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

Rock music is rebel music, and the rebellion is woven into the music itself. All established rules are broken.

That which should be irregular to add interest to the music (e.g., syncopation) becomes prominent.

That which should be a rare exception (e.g. unresolving chord cadence) becomes the rule.

A little vocal sliding becomes the standard.

Music is a language. The message of the music must match the message of the words. This is our main point. God’s people need to listen to the music and measure it by God’s Word.

## **THE POWER OF SOFT ROCK**

There is no safe way to borrow from the world’s music styles. Every element of the pop style is designed to affect the body, to be sensual, to be addictive.

The following clip from a popular fundamental Baptist college illustrates what is happening widely. Many independent Baptist churches are adapting CCM. But while they think they are removing the “rock” from Christian rock,

they are actually just toning it down to “soft rock.” (West Coast performing “Prayer for a Friend” by Casting Crowns.)

Graham West commented that this piece is “loaded with Beat Anticipation,” which is a major element of rock.

“It appears that the vocalists in this example have successfully suppressed sensual body movements, which may be due either to a keen awareness of their being inappropriate or coaching. In my opinion this is dangerous spiritually because it masks the true spiritual nature of the music. If the body tends to move sensually [to a piece of music], the answer is not to suppress the movement, but to reject the music. If we accept that music is not neutral in its spiritual direction, then we dare not turn our backs on the warnings of so many godly men of the past and the testimony of so many wicked musicians that it is the rhythm above all other features of contemporary music that promotes rebellion and sensuality. The essential spiritual character of fleshly music does not change if we dress nicely, or suppress sensual bodily movements, nor if we play on classical instruments, nor if we do it sincerely as an offering to God, nor if we do it with all our hearts, nor if the words are Biblical and edifying (in this case they are quite shallow). These are outward trimmings and do not change the spiritual character of the music itself and the consequences of that character will inevitably surface! ‘Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?’ (Pr. 6:27-28).”

This clip compares the West Coast rendition of “Stronger” with the “real” Hillsong edition.

The rhythm is the same in both editions. It’s soft rock. It’s a rock ballad. The only difference is that the original Hillsong edition emphasizes the rhythm with drums and guitars. If you listen carefully to the piano in the West Coast version, you will see that it mimics the exact rhythm that the

drummer is keeping in the Hillsong version. The piano, which is a percussion instrument, is taking the place of the drum.

Consider another comparison of West Coast's "adapted" CCM and the "real stuff." This is "Word of God Speak" by MercyMe. This is soft rock. It is sensual and addictive and creates an appetite for worldly music. Another part of the sensuality and addiction is the vocal sliding technique.

"Traditional" sacred music has no association with the world. It is holy, separate. It doesn't remind you of the world. It doesn't create an appetite for the world's music. It is not addictive. It is not a "slippery slope" of any kind. It is perfectly safe. There is zero spiritual danger.

It is essential to remember that we live in the age of the Internet so that building bridges to CCM artists is as simple as tapping an iPhone screen or clicking a mouse. Consider the following comment at a YouTube video of "We Will Remember" by Tommy Walker:

"I fell in love with this song when it was sung in our church today. I then got home to find the lyrics on the internet."

## Training for Song Leading

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video series is packed with graphics, audio and video clips. The video “Training for Song Leading” is scheduled to be added to the series online in 2021.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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Contemporary worship is destroying congregational singing. It is doing this by the performance focus, by the loud music that overwhelms the voices, and by dropping the hymnals, among other things.

At the same time, a great many churches that still sing congregationally do so in a ritualistic, dull manner, no serious training, no proper understanding of what they are doing, unequipped, uneducated song leaders, lack of wisdom in the choice of songs and hymns, lack of spirituality, lack of heart-level enthusiasm.

I am convinced that effectual congregational singing with proper leadership will help a church greatly in the battle against CCM.

The position of song leader is very important. Just as orchestras need good conductors and armies need good officers, churches must have the right song leaders if they are to have effectual song services.

It is a matter of practicality. We are commanded to sing congregationally (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). A handful of people can do this without a leader, but not a larger church. It would be confusion, and confusion does not please God (“For God is not the author of confusion,” 1 Co. 14:33). God is a God of order. “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Co. 14:40).

It is true that the New Testament does not spell out the position of song leader or music director, but the Old Testament sets forth this pattern and there is no need to restate it in the New. The “chief musician” is mentioned 55 times (Ps. 4:1; 5:1; 6:1; 9:1; 11:1; 12:1; 13:1; 14:1). God tells us that the Old Testament is for our example (“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope,” Ro. 15:4). Some British Baptist churches in the 18th century called the song leader the precentor or cantor. Another name is *protopsaltes* (lead singer).

The song services are too important to be given into the hands of just anyone who happens to be available. Like everything else, we pray for God to raise up the right people for this ministry. To look around and find no one qualified for a ministry is an opportunity to pray to God in faith that He will supply the needs of His house. And we must educate people so as to raise them up to ministry positions.

We look for those who have the spiritual qualifications required of all church workers, an understanding of music and, ideally, some ability to play a musical instrument. We also look for leadership ability. The song leader must be a leader. He might not be a pastor, but he is a leader of the song service. See the chapter “Standards for Music Personnel” in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book*. It is available as a free PDF at: <http://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

We spend a lot of time and effort training song leaders in our church planting works. Following are the principles that we teach:

### **Contents**

1. Everything should be done on purpose with a wise, biblical plan.
2. Examination of the two key New Testament passages on congregational singing



### 3. Principles of church song leading

#### **1. Everything should be done on purpose with a biblical plan.**

Everything about the church's congregational music should be done on purpose, with biblical and spiritual wisdom, seeking God's guidance. Nothing should be done merely by tradition and habit.

The written standards and principles of music

The standards for the music people

The song service

The choice of hymnbooks (we recommend *Living Hymns*, first published by Al Smith in 1972, latest edition published by Striving Together Ministries; *Songs and Hymns of Revival*, North Valley Publications, Santa Clara, CA.)

The choice of songs and hymns

Everything about the specials; there should be written standards and someone knowledgeable and spiritually discerning should be in charge of approving all music

#### **2. Examination of the two key passages on congregational singing**

In Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16 we have a divinely-inspired educational course for congregational singing. The lessons from these passages must first be understood by the church leaders and music people, then the whole congregation must be instructed. These passages are addressed to the assembly as a whole, using plural verbs.

Here we see a congregation of spiritual and biblical depth building itself up through the singing. We see the congregational singing as an essential part of the ministry described in Ephesians 4:14, "From whom the whole body

fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16).

This is not a church in which the congregational singing is a mere ritual that is hurried through. It is not a church that sings mindlessly without understanding the purpose of the song service. It is a church of born again people who are filled with God’s Word and who are singing from the heart to God and to one another, singing with understanding, singing with purpose.

### **EPHESIANS 5:18-19**

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

#### ***“filled with the Spirit”***

God begins with the spiritual condition of the church and of the individual singers. Sound congregational singing requires a spiritual house made up of living stones (1 Pe. 2:5).

Spirit filled means not controlled by anything other than the Spirit (not alcohol, not drugs, not the works of darkness) (Eph. 5:11)

Spirit filled is not lukewarm (Eph. 5:14).

Spirit filled is not spiritually careless and foolish (Eph. 5:15-17)

#### ***“speaking to yourselves”***

The two-fold purpose of congregational singing is edifying the saints and worshipping God. Compare Col. 3:16, “teaching and admonishing one another ... singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

The songs must be chosen for the message with the goal of teaching and admonishing and worshipping the Lord.

To “speak to yourselves” and “to teach and admonish one another” refers to a function of the church as a body (Eph. 4:16) and the church as a holy priesthood (1 Pe. 2:5). I have heard it said that the song service is preparation for the preaching. That is the “revivalist” viewpoint (e.g., D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday), but Paul teaches that the congregational singing is to be an important teaching ministry in itself.

Congregational singing is not about me, not about my choices and my pleasure (whether or not I want to participate). It is about God and His will and pleasure. Every member should participate and participate enthusiastically unto the Lord. It is a matter of dying to self and submitting to authority. It is a matter of love for Christ.

To “speak to yourselves” and “to teach and admonish one another” requires an emphasis on the message of the lyrics. **Nothing must detract from the message and from its proper impact in the hearers’ hearts and minds.**

Consider some things that can hinder the ministry of “speaking to yourselves”:

**First, the ministry of “speaking to yourselves” is hindered if the people don’t understand that this is what they should be doing and if they don’t engage in it enthusiastically from the heart.** It is the song leader’s job to educate and exhort and encourage the people for this ministry. The congregational singing should be prophesying in the sense of 1 Co. 14:3, “But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” We see in 1 Ch. 25:3, that God’s people can prophesy through sacred music. This might be referenced in 1 Co. 14:23-25, where we see all of the members prophesying.

**Second, the ministry of “speaking to yourselves” is hindered if the people are nominal and lukewarm and aren’t truly walking with Christ and obeying God’s Word.**

In this situation, the words are sung as a mere religious ritual, because the people aren’t living the reality of the lyrics. If such people sing, “Who is on the Lord’s side?” they are singing empty words, because they themselves aren’t on the Lord’s side! If they sing, “Throw out the lifeline,” they are singing empty words, because they aren’t busy in evangelism and therefore can’t truly exhort one another to throw out the lifeline.

**Third, the ministry of “speaking to yourselves” can be hindered by choosing songs with false theological message.**

If the congregation is singing heresy, that is the opposite of teaching and admonishing one another with truth. We deal more with this under the section on “Truth.”

**Fourth, the ministry of “speaking to yourselves” can be hindered by choosing songs with a shallow theological message.** Many of the songs of the Stamps-Baxter and Southern Gospel tradition are extremely shallow. They are emotional, feel-good songs. They don’t deal with doctrines such as repentance, conversion, confession, holiness, obedience, and separation from the world. Even the gospel is often presented in a vague fashion. In many cases, the songs are not solidly Bible based. They are often man-centered, focusing on man’s needs. Examples are “I’ll Fly Away,” “Just a Little Talk with Jesus,” “My God Is Real,” “Church in the Wildwood,” “Brethren, We Have Met to Worship,” “Step into the Water,” and “There’s a Rainbow.” In “I’ll Fly Away” the words “I’ll fly away” are repeated 24 times in the short song. Many of the revivalist songs from the era of the famous evangelists such as D.L. Moody, R.A. Torrey, and Billy Sunday were theologically shallow on purpose, because they were intended to be used in evangelistic meetings attended by people who were not saved or were otherwise doctrinally

uneducated. The revivalist songs were designed especially to create a lively atmosphere to prepare for the evangelistic message. An example is Homer Rodeheaver's "Brighten the Corner." The theology tended to be very basic in order to facilitate interdenominational ministry. All of the prominent evangelists of that era were interdenominational, and the songs and hymns were designed for that context so that "controversial" doctrines were downplayed.

Consider "What Can Wash Away My Sin" by Robert Lowry.

1 What can wash away my sin?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
What can make me whole again?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Refrain:  
O precious is the flow  
that makes me white as snow;  
no other fount I know;  
nothing but the blood of Jesus.

2 For my pardon this I see:  
nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
For my cleansing this my plea:  
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]  
3 Nothing can for sin atone:

nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
Naught of good that I have done:  
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]

4 This is all my hope and peace:  
nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
This is all my righteousness:  
nothing but the blood of Jesus. [Refrain]

There is nothing doctrinally wrong with this song. The blood of Christ and its power is an important theme, of course, but the song is simplistic, superficial, and repetitive. This is typical of a great many of the revivalist songs. With a steady

diet of this type of hymn, a church tends to remain on a simplistic, shallow level. The congregation tends to stop thinking about the words, because of the lack of depth and the familiarity created by repetition of simplistic songs.

Some hymnals, such as *Hymns* and *Bible Truth Hymns* and the *Sword of the Lord's Soul Stirring Songs*, are heavy on revivalist songs. At the same time, there are many doctrinally solid songs and hymns in these hymnbooks (e.g., "All the Way My Saviour Leads Me," "Take My Life and Let It Be," "Great Is Thy Faithfulness," "Love with Everlasting Love," "How Firm a Foundation," "Day by Day").

**We are not advocating the rejection of Revivalist songs and hymns (except ones that are overly simplistic or unscriptural). Rather, we are urging churches to be educated about the context and purpose of each hymn and to choose each one with wisdom and care.** The church's music people need to choose songs with good theological content and spiritual depth and avoid those that are shallow or merely sentimental. We need more spiritual meat and potatoes hymns and less cotton candy and donuts.

And we are urging churches to expand their repertoire of songs and hymns to include ones of more spiritual and doctrinal depth. Hymnals that can help in this task include *Living Hymns*, the *Trinity Hymnal Baptist edition*, and *Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs* by MelodyPublications.com. We also recommend singing the Psalms with psalteries such as Isaac Watts'.

Fifth, the ministry of "speaking to yourselves" can be hindered if the congregants cannot hear one another sing. The musical instruments must not overwhelm the singing. Sometimes the songs and hymns can be sung a cappella to better facilitate teaching and admonishing one another. If at all possible, the facility should be suitable for the

congregation to hear one another and thus instruct and edify one another.

Sixth, the ministry of “speaking to yourselves” can be hindered if the music is so fast that the congregants cannot readily grasp the message. Some songs should be sung in a lively manner, but none should be sung too fast for the message to be de-emphasized. Teaching and admonishing one another requires slowing down in order to understand and savor the message and speak that message to one another. Even the most lively revival songs in the heyday of the revivalist evangelistic movement were not sung very fast. Consider the following samples from Homer Rodeheaver, Charles Alexander, and Ira Sankey, three of the most prominent evangelistic song leaders of that era:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAgun-X58kE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZamoSNDsiQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbcWklq12nk>

***“singing and making melody in your heart”***

Both mouth and heart are to be engaged. It is not unthinking, not unfeeling, not a religious ritual, not mere duty, not habit or tradition, not just mindless loud singing like a boisterous child.

Melody is the emphasis of Scripture when it comes to the music itself. Melody is the simple tune, the most basic element of music. It is what we sing in our own hearts. We can't sing harmony and chords. God's Word is teaching us to keep the music simple so that the music doesn't distract from the message of the words. There should be a good singable melody and the rest of the music should never overwhelm the melody. When we use instruments, they should be used in such a way that they don't overwhelm or contradict or otherwise interfere with the message of the words.

Isaac Watts' Psalter, with its five meters, is an example of singing hymns to simple melodies. (See the chapter "Biblical Principles of Music," lesson # 3, "The Largest Book of the Bible Is a Hymnbook.")

***"psalms and hymns and spiritual songs"***

***"Psalms"*** are the Psalms in our Bibles. God gave a perfect hymnbook through Israel, His chosen nation. There are 150 psalms that deal with every facet of God's character and every situation in human life. William Law said, "Singing psalms awakes all that is good and holy within you, calling your spirits to their proper duty, setting you in your best posture toward heaven, and tuning all the powers of your soul to worship and adoration." (See the chapter "Biblical Principles of Music," lesson # 3, "The Largest Book of the Bible Is a Hymnbook.")

***"Hymns"*** is a transliteration of the Greek word *humnos* and "denotes a song of praise addressed to God." Hymns refers to worship hymns that are written by men and women other than the Psalmists.

***"Spiritual songs"*** are also songs written by men and women other than the divinely-inspired Psalmists. So we have God's authorization to write all sorts of new hymns and songs. As long as it is spiritual and doctrinally pure, it is acceptable. Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs describes a wide variety of singing material.

The emphasis is on ***"spiritual."*** This is a far-reaching doctrine. The Greek word for song (*ode*) refers to songs in general, but it is qualified by the word "spiritual." This is the Greek *pneumatikós*, which means of the Spirit. It is connected with being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). It is the opposite of carnal, fleshly ("And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal," 1 Co. 3:1). *Pneumatikós* is also translated holy and sanctify. Paul is saying that we are to



sing songs that are of the Spirit of God, songs that are holy and sacred, songs that are set apart for God, songs that are not carnal and fleshly, songs that are different in quality from the songs of the world, songs that are of a heavenly flavor rather than a worldly.

***“to the Lord”***

Congregational singing should be true worship directed to God. “Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery *and* an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song” (Ps. 33:3); “O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth” (Ps. 96:1); “O sing unto the LORD” (Ps. 98:1); “Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm” (Ps. 98:4-5); “Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints” (Ps. 149:1); “Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth” (Isa. 42:10)

“The Lord” is Jesus Christ. He is Lord of lords. He made me; He owns me; He loves me; He redeemed me; He cares for me; I owe Him everything; every blessing I have ever enjoyed came from His hand; my sole purpose is to live for His pleasure and glory. Congregational singing is an opportunity for God’s people to express thanksgiving to their Saviour God.

“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Ro. 11:36)

“he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things” (Ac. 17:25)

“in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Ac. 17:28)

“by him were all things created ... And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17)

**COLOSSIANS 3:16-17**

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”

***“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly”***

This is the foundation of a spiritual song service.

The Word of Christ is to dwell in you (plural) richly. The whole church, and every member of the church, must be indwelt with Scripture. This describes every member being filled with God’s Word, every member becoming an effectual Bible student, the fathers and mothers being effectual Bible students so that the children are being educated in God’s Word in the homes (2 Ti. 3:15).

Each believer must “let it dwell.” It is a choice. I can fill my life with Scripture. I can read it. I can learn how to study it and understand it. I can delight in it and meditate on it day and night (Ps. 1:2). I can test everything by it and thereby exercise my spiritual senses (Heb. 5:14). Or I can neglect it. Even in a church that is preaching and teaching God’s Word effectually, the individual members must “let it dwell.” They must receive the Word and they must receive it into every part of their lives.

***“in all wisdom”***

The Word of God must produce spiritual wisdom in our lives. It is not a matter of rote learning and rote memorizing. It is not reading the Bible as a ritual. It is not a matter of the intellect only. The Word of God must get down into every part of our lives and conform us to God’s perfect will.

***“teaching and admonishing one another”***

The song service is a “one another” ministry; it is the body building itself up. It is not about me; about my pleasure, my feelings, my choices (whether or not I want to sing). When we are singing in the church, we are to be teaching one another and admonishing one another. This requires choosing the type of songs and hymns that facilitate teaching and admonishing.

***“in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”***

We considered this in the study on Ephesians 5:19

***“singing with grace in your hearts”***

The singer must be born again, which is the only way to experience God’s grace. Again we see that a church with a regenerate church membership is the only type of church that can obey these injunctions.

The singer must understand God’s grace. He must be biblically educated, and the better educated he is, the better he can sing with grace in his heart.

The singer must be conscious of God’s grace and be in fellowship with God’s grace.

The singer must sing from the heart, not just with head knowledge.

### **3. Principles of song leading**

***Outline***

Propriety

Leadership

Education

Preparation

Edification

Spirituality

Truth

Cheer and Enthusiasm  
Submission to Authority  
Purity  
Wisdom  
Spiritual Discernment  
Patience and Humility  
Liberty and Diversity

## PROPRIETY

Propriety refers to decorum, respectability, that which is becoming, proper behavior, good form. The song leader should act and dress properly according to the situation. If he is leading in a church service, he is leading in the most important forum on earth. The church is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Ti. 3:15), and if men “dress up” for anything, they should dress up for the formal assembly of God’s people in God’s house. People dress up for visits to the White House and meals at classy restaurants and formal weddings and professional orchestra concerts, but the contemporary philosophy promotes a “dress down, be casual” approach to church. We don’t believe that it honors God.

## LEADERSHIP

Good song leaders lead rather than follow. Many song leaders seem to think that their job is simply to announce the song numbers and sing along with the congregation. But that’s not leading. A robot can do that. A song leader’s job is to *lead*, and that entails many things.

The song leader should lead by explaining what the song service is all about, *not with lengthy expositions but with brief and hearty comments and instructions and reminders*. In this way, the song leader can gradually train the congregation. He can use excerpts from the previous studies on Ephesians 5:18-19 and Colossians 3:16 and the Old Testament passages that we have examined in “Biblical Principles of Music” in

*The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book.* But we would further emphasize that the comments should be short, because the song service is for singing.

Congregational singing is for singing to one another and to the Lord (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

He should lead by teaching the people how to sing properly unto the Lord.

He should lead by very briefly explaining the message of difficult songs.

He should lead out with his voice. We would note that when the song leader stops singing during a hymn, it is distracting to those who are following. He shouldn't stop singing unless absolutely necessary, such as a cough.

He should lead by good cheer and enthusiasm.

He should lead by encouraging the people to sing. A great many church members either barely sing or don't sing at all, and that is wrong. God's people need to be taught that the song service is not for the individual. It is not something that each person decides whether or not to participate. The song service is for the Lord. It is supposed to be an act of worship. To not sing or to half-heartedly sing during congregational singing is dishonoring to the Lord. We are to sing to one another and to the Lord (Col. 3:16). How can you obey that if you don't sing out heartily? It was said of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in Spurgeon's day, "Mr. Spurgeon evidently takes delight in the service of song, and is anxious above all things that every man, woman, and child in the place should sing" (J.S. Curwen, *Studies in Worship Music*, 1880).

He should lead by introducing variety into the services. We give suggestions for this later in these studies on song leading.

It is said that “everything rises and falls on leadership,” and there is great deal of truth to that.

Consider the following examples from the Psalms. Note how the Psalmist exhorts the people to sing and praise God with him. He does not berate or scold. He encourages and instructs and leads, reminding the people why they should praise the Lord.

“Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness” (Psalm 30:4).

“O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together” (Psalm 34:3).

“Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding” (Psalm 47:6-7).

“Praise ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever” (Psalm 106:1).

“Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord” (Psalm 113:1).

‘Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant” (Psalm 135:1-3).

“Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely ... Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God” (Psalm 147:1, 7).

“Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints” (Psalm 149:1).

“Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. ... Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord” (Psalm 150:1-6).

The Psalmists were good song leaders!

## **EDUCATION**

The song leader represents the church and Jesus Christ, and he should therefore be well educated.

He should educate himself by doing all he can to learn how to be a better song leader.

He should educate himself by learning to read music and play the notes of songs. Learning how to read music is not that difficult if a person is willing to make the necessary effort, and it should be a requirement for song leading. He should also learn how to play a musical instrument. There are many simple ones, such as Tonette, Recorder, song flute, Flutophone, the Kalimba Thumb Piano, and the ukulele. By learning to read music and play an instrument, the song leader can pick out the tunes of songs for himself and thus find new songs for the congregation. It is a fairly simple thing to learn how to play notes on an electronic keyboard. The individual who will devote a half hour a day to this task for a few weeks can soon learn enough to be a much more effectual song leader.

The song leader should be educated by understanding what the Bible says about music. A comprehensive study can be found in “Biblical Principles of Music” in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book*, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

The song leader should be educated by understanding how to discern the difference between sacred and contemporary music. Song leaders and church musicians need to be educated about music itself, about rhythm, harmony, progressions of chords, and vocal styles. We deal with these things in the video classes which are a part of the *Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* series. *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book* has other recommended materials with

which song leaders and church musicians can further educate themselves.

He should be prepared by searching for new songs to build up the church's repertoire and to increase the church's edification. The hymnal *Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs* has 1000 songs and is a vast resource.

He should educate himself about meter. In the past, most hymnals contained only lyrics, and the songs were sung to tunes called meter, and the songs could usually be sung by more than one meter. The hymnal *Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs* contains the meter for each selection, thus allowing the songs to be sung by different tunes. For example, "Give Me Jesus" and "Face to Face" are both in 8.7.8.7 meter, so the tunes can be interchanged. The following songs are 8.6.8.6. meter: "My Faith Has Found a Resting Place," "Lead Me to Calvary," "Near to the Heart of God," "The Cleansing Wave," "Sunlight," "Christ Liveth in Me," "I Know Whom I have Believed," "Sunshine in the Soul," "When the Battle's Over" (Am I a soldier of the cross, a foll'wer of the Lamb...), and "Blessed Be the Name" (All Praise to Him who reigns above...) are 8.6.8.6. and can be interchanged.

By the use of meter, known tunes can be used for unknown songs. This is facilitated by complete tune and metrical indexes. For example, Benjamin Keach's largely unknown hymns (died 1704) are mostly in the 8.6.8.6. meter so they can be sung to tunes such as "Lead Me to Calvary" or "My Faith Has Found a Resting Place" or "Near to the Heart of God" even though they also have their own unique tunes. An example is "Should Not Kindness Make Us Sing" (song 117).

John Rippon's song "Sweet Affliction, Hallelujah" (484) is 8.7.8.7.D meter and thus can be sung to the tune of "All the Way My Saviour Leads Me." (Rippon was pastor of New Park Street Baptist Church of London from 1773 to 1836, following John Gill. He published a hymnal in 1787 popularly



called *Rippon's Selection*. He was considered the foremost authority on Isaac Watts' hymns.)

He should be educated by studying the backgrounds to the songs. Pastor Ken Shaver, who has led singing in large churches, observes: "Another thing that I would mention is how important it is to learn the story behind the song. Knowing that H.G. Spafford wrote 'It is Well' after his children drowned in a shipwreck and that 'Amazing Grace' represents the testimony of a former slave trader, I believe adds so much depth to the songs. *101 Hymn Stories* and *101 More Hymn Stories* by Kenneth W. Osbeck (Kregel Publications) are both excellent publications." *Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs* has 450 notes giving background information about the hymn writers and songs and other things.

## PREPARATION

Here we are talking about preparing for the service itself.

He should be prepared by getting instruction and counsel from the elders. They are required by God to oversee everything. The song leader does not have an independent ministry. He must be in good communication with the leaders.

He should be prepared by prayerfully seeking the Lord's will for the service and by preparing his own heart before the Lord.

He should be prepared by choosing the songs prayerfully and wisely. He should give the musicians the list of songs ahead of time so they, too, can be prepared. We require that this be done at least five days before the service.

He should be prepared by making sure that everything is ready for the service. He should arrive in plenty of time to prepare things.

Consider the following testimony of a song leader who is promoting hymns and avoiding CCM and who is doing the necessary preparation to be an effective leader:

"I've really enjoyed leading the music for our church. We use sound hymns. No CCM and no songs by CCM artists. That has caused a little angst as I've pushed back and denied some songs that people wanted to do for specials. (I always ask, unless I already know, who the author is, and if I don't know the name immediately I look them up before approving or disapproving. I usually know the name immediately, having read all of your published materials on the music issue). Pastor has stood on the same position, and we haven't allowed CCM to go forward. I keep track on a spreadsheet of the songs we've sung, how often and what dates so I can vary them a bit. As a congregation, we've learned several songs that are new to the Church. I also plan the songs based on the sermon topics, attempting to tie them to the progressive idea of the message step-by-step by song. (This is harder to do sometimes than it sounds; sometimes there is a lot of overlap between songs and ideas, but they are always tied to the message topic one way or another.) I also try to vary the way we sing (women doing some verses, men others, etc.) as well as providing some brief information from time to time about a hymn, its author or about a passage from Scripture tied to the hymn, or about the words we are singing to get people to think about them. I think it has really improved our song service. I used your message on song leading to do this, and I believe that it has really improved the service and increased the Church's love of hymns. I think the reason many churches don't do music better is because it is seriously time consuming. I spend an hour and a half to two hours a week planning the songs to try and make sure it is as edifying and proper as possible. It's no light task. Each week I prepare a Music Ministry Sheet, and when I take my family to visitation on Saturday morning, we go early and stuff Sunday's bulletins with the Sheet so everyone has it."

## **EDIFICATION**

1 Corinthians 14 is about church services and spiritual gifts, and the theme is edification. Twenty times in that chapter we find the words “edify,” “know,” and “understand.” Paul says, “Let all things be done unto edifying” (1 Co. 14:26).

This means that music used in church services should not be for entertainment. That is not the purpose of church services. The objective is spiritual edification.

According to Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, our music should minister in three directions: toward the Lord (Eph. 5:19), toward ourselves (Eph. 5:19), and toward others (Col. 3:16).

This means that each song should be selected because of its message. If the message is weak, there is little or no edification.

Further, if the message of the song is spiritual but couched in words that are not understood by the congregation, there is still no edification. Many of the old hymns use words that must be explained. Consider the song “Beulah Land.” Consider the line, “Here I raise mine Ebenezer, hither by thy help I’m come,” in the hymn “Come Thou Fount.” Consider the words, “Lord Sabaoth is His name, from age to age the same” in “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” Unless the people know what Beulah or Ebenezer or Sabaoth means, they will not be edified by these songs.

It is the song leader’s job to explain such things in a concise manner. We don’t mean that he takes five minutes to discuss each song. That can become tedious and can discourage the people. The song service is not about the song leader explaining things; it is about actually singing the songs of Zion to one another and to the Lord (Eph. 5:19). The song leader must be careful that he not interpret the service continually with lengthy testimonies and discussions, but it is

important to take a moment to define lyrics that might not be understood and to briefly reinforce the message of the songs. The song service is not a time for the song leader to preach; the songs should do the preaching. His job is help the people to understand what they are singing.

The people need to be taught and reminded to think about the words of the songs. No matter how spiritual the songs are, if the people are not meditating on the message, no edification is accomplished. It is a song leader's job to lead the people in this matter, to help them focus their attention, not to berate them but to encourage and lead them.

Something as simple as this can do the job: "Folks, let's sing unto the Lord today. Let's put aside the cares of life and turn out hearts to Christ. Let's think about the words of these glorious songs and let the message sink down into our hearts."

## **SPIRITUALITY**

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Joh. 4:24).

Our song services should be spiritual. The music should not please the flesh, should not be worldly. In this day when the world's music is creeping into the Lord's house (if not flooding into), song leaders must be on guard continually against this type of thing. If it sounds like the world's dance music or sensual entertainment music, it is not fitting for the house of God!

"And be not conformed to this world..." (Ro. 12:2).

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Ga. 5:17).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1 Jo. 2:15-16).

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas. 4:4).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Pe. 2:11).

Contemporary Christian music is conformed to the world and satisfies the flesh. The rock band, the heavy dance syncopation, the non-resolving chord sequences, the attractive leaders, the secular singing styles, the sensual gyrations, all such things are borrowed directly from the world; and since the world's objective with pop music is to feed the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, such music is entirely unacceptable for the worship of a thrice holy God. It isn't spiritual.

We see again that the song leader must have a lot of good education and possess good spiritual understanding.

## TRUTH

Not only are we to worship God in spirit but also in truth (Joh. 4:24). Thus all of the songs should be doctrinally sound, conforming to the truth of God's Word. The song leader should go through the lyrics of each song, making sure that it is preaching truth. This is true for the older hymns as well as for the newer ones.

For example, the chorus to the song “We've a Story to Tell to the Nations” says, “For the darkness shall turn to dawning, and the dawning to noonday bright, and Christ's great

kingdom shall come to earth, the kingdom of love and light.” The second verse says, “We’ve a song to be sung to the nations that shall lift their hearts to the Lord, a song that shall conquer evil and shatter the spear and sword.” That presents the unscriptural post-millennial doctrine of prophecy, that the return of Christ’s kingdom will be gradually brought in as the gospel overthrows the evils of this world.

Some of the popular hymns promote “entire sanctification,” “second blessing” doctrine. Charles Wesley’s hymn “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” says, “Let us find that second rest; take away our bent to sinning...” Frances Ridley Havergal has been called “Keswick’s hymnist.” She claimed to have experienced the deeper life in 1873. Her beautiful hymn “Like a River Glorious” reflects deeper life theology. It speaks of “perfect peace” and “being hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand, where never foe can follow, never traitor stand” and where “not a surge of worry, not a shade of care, not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.” Phoebe Palmer’s “The Cleansing Wave” teaches entire holiness. “The cleansing stream I see! I see! I plunge, and oh, it cleanseth me! ... I see the new creation rise, I hear the speaking blood; it speaks, POLLUTED NATURE DIED, sinks ‘neath the cleansing flood. I rise to walk in Heavn’s own light, ABOVE THE WORLD AND SIN...” Charle P. Jones’ “Come unto Me” (1908) teaches entire sanctification.” It says, “Have you by temptation often conquered been, has a sense of weakness brought distress within? Christ will sanctify you, if you’ll claim His best; in the Holy Spirit, He will give you rest.” Fanny Crosby was a Methodist who believed in perfectionist theology. She attended John Street Methodist Church in New York City, where Phoebe Knapp also attended. Phoebe was the daughter of the perfectionist teacher Phoebe Palmer. Fanny and Phoebe Knapp were best friends and they wrote “Blessed Assurance” together. One day in her room at the Savoy Hotel, Phoebe played a tune for Fanny on her personal

pipe organ and asked, “What does this tune say?” Fanny replied, “Why, that says blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,” and she wrote the words to the hymn right then and there (“Phoebe Palmer Knapp: Rich, Beautiful, Charitable,” June 2007, Christianity.com). “Blessed Assurance” teaches perfect holiness. “Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight ... Perfect submission, all is at rest, I in my Savior am happy and blest, watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love.”

In a Nepali hymnal that we published a few years ago, we changed the pronouns pertaining to Christ to the highest level. This language has three levels of second person pronouns that correspond to a level of respect, and we are convinced that it is wrong to speak of Christ in anything less than the highest level. Previously, many of the songs and hymns referred to Him by the middle or even lowest level. This required a significant rewriting of the lyrics and music in some cases, and sometimes produced results that were a bit less pleasing to the ear from a musical perspective, but truth is more important than perfect word-tune coordination.

The song leader must ever be on his guard against error, so that God’s people are worshipping God in absolute “truth.”

## **CHEER AND ENTHUSIASM**

“Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing” (Ps. 100:1-2).

“And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Col. 3:23).

Lifeless song services do not glorify the Lord, and the song leader has a lot of responsibility in this regard. If he has no enthusiasm, the congregation will probably reflect that.

Again, the church should appoint the best people available for every particular ministry, and should provide training for

each position of ministry so there is improvement and advancement, and if the right people are lacking, the church should ask the Lord to raise up them up.

This requires a man who understands the people and understands how to motivate them. Such a man will not merely repeat rote sayings and clichés. He must be thinking, praying for wisdom, seeking help for his own growth in these matters.

Pastor David Earnhart, who has been in the ministry for many years, observes: "I ALWAYS avoid scolding the crowd for not singing! That only makes them resent me! You must give them a positive reason (surely there are many!) for singing heartily. And repeating old clichés ('Folks, let's just raise the roof on this verse') SOON becomes old, and does not work. The song leader must help interpret the meaning of the song and why it should be sung with enthusiasm. That always brings better results."

Pastor Doug Hammett says, "Keep the service alive! A song leader who is anticipating meeting with the Lord in the service will display that in his countenance, tone of voice and attitude. It will catch fire with the people as well. Encourage the people to participate. Don't berate them; encourage them. Keep the service warm! Speak to the people as friends. Don't be afraid to encourage one person by name, all the others will pay close attention to what you are saying to him."

Again, it is important to choose the right man for this job. Not everyone is gifted to lead the church in a glad, hearty service. Too, there is no "perfect" song leader who is perfectly equipped. No matter how gifted he might be, every man must continue to seek to improve himself, must pursue perfection in all areas of his ministry throughout his life. Cheerfulness and enthusiasm can be developed like everything else in the Christian life



## **SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY**

The song leader is under the authority of the pastors and should never try to act independently.

“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17).

He must remain in close communication with them to make sure that he is operating in proper submission to God-ordained authority. This is one of the song leader’s responsibilities. He cannot ignore the leaders and act on his own.

He must make sure that he understands their principles and guidelines.

He must follow their principles and guidelines.

He must not try to undermine their authority. This has often happened in churches when the song leader has disagreed with the pastors and has tried to turn people’s hearts away from them and divisions have resulted.

If he disagrees with decisions made by the pastors, he should talk with them personally and openly. If he finds that he cannot operate with good conscience by their rules, he should step down and not cause trouble.

He should pray for the leaders daily.

## **PURITY**

The song leader must be morally pure. He must walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh. He must be spiritual rather than carnal.

Song leaders, church musicians, and choir members are notorious for being carnal and “falling into” immorality. Choirs are notorious for being the church “battleground,”

meaning they are so often characterized by such things as pride, petty jealousy, stubbornness, the pursuit of personal preeminence, pushing the boundaries of dress standards, dressing to draw attention to oneself. This is because churches typically are so careless in appointing people to such ministries. A lukewarm, worldly, carnal, self-centered person *has no business whatsoever* being involved in the church music program! God absolutely requires faithfulness of all His stewards, and faithfulness covers all aspects of a good Christian life. “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Co. 4:2).

## **WISDOM**

The song leader needs to have a lot of good spiritual and practical wisdom.

He needs wisdom in choosing the songs. This requires that he understand the different categories and purposes of the songs. Ephesians 5:19 gives two basic purposes for Christian singing: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” One purpose is to exhort and encourage and instruct one another in Christ, and the other purpose is to praise the Lord. There are songs directed toward man and others directed toward God. The songs and hymns in a standard hymnbook in Baptist churches can be grouped into one of these general categories.

The following are a few examples of the various types of songs and hymns in a standard hymnbook.

## **SONGS DIRECTED TOWARD MAN**

### ***Songs of Exhortation***

Take the Name of Jesus with You  
There Is Power in the Blood  
We'll Work Till Jesus Comes  
We're Marching to Zion

Will Jesus Find Us Watching?  
God Will Take Care of You  
God Leads Us Along  
Jesus Never Fails  
In Times Like These  
His Way with Thee (Would you live for Jesus)  
Is Your All on the Altar?  
Yield Not to Temptation  
Trust and Obey  
Take Time to Be Holy  
Tell It to Jesus  
Make Me a Channel of Blessing  
Our Best  
Count Your Blessings

***Songs of Encouragement***

Sweet By and By  
Face to Face  
There'll Be No Dark Valley  
My Savior First of All  
Where We'll Never Grow Old  
Beulah Land  
When We All Get to Heaven  
He the Pearly Gates Will Open  
Saved by Grace  
When He Cometh  
Is It the Crowning Day?  
Some Golden Daybreak  
Just When I Need Him Most  
Does Jesus Care?  
Day by Day  
Near to the Heart of God  
All the Way My Savior Leads Me  
'Til the Storm Passes By  
Each Step I Take  
Anywhere With Jesus

Never Alone  
Trusting Jesus  
Burdens Are Lifted at Calvary

### ***Songs of Commitment***

Where He Leads I'll Follow  
Wherever He Leads I'll Go  
If Jesus Goes With Me  
Living for Jesus  
Higher Ground  
Give Me Jesus

### ***Songs of Evangelism***

Room at the Cross for You  
Kneel at the Cross  
Are You Washed in the Blood?  
There Is Power in the Blood  
There Is a Fountain  
Look to the Lamb of God  
Ye Must Be Born Again  
Whosoever Will  
Look and Live  
Christ Receiveth Sinful Men  
Jesus Saves  
He Is Able to Deliver Thee  
Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus  
The Light of the World Is Jesus  
Verily, Verily  
Once for All  
Honey in the Rock  
Jesus Is Calling  
Have You Any Room for Jesus?  
Throw Out the Lifeline

### ***SONGS DIRECTED TOWARD GOD***

The second broad category is that of “singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” There are four basic types of worship songs and hymns that come under this category: (1) those with lyrics that are directed to God or in direct praise about God; (2) those that are meditative and that reflect upon God; (3) those that are testimonies about God, and (4) those that are prayers to God.

***Worship Directed to God or in Direct Praise about God***

Glory to His Name  
I Need Thee Every Hour  
Lead Me to Calvary  
Jesus, Lover of My Soul  
Rock of Ages  
Come, Thou Almighty King  
To God Be the Glory  
Our Great Savior  
All Hail the Power  
My Jesus, I Love Thee  
Jesus! the Very Thought of Thee  
Jesus, I Am Resting  
Great Is Thy Faithfulness  
O Worship the King  
To God Be the Glory

***Meditative Worship about God***

What a Wonderful Savior  
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross  
Jesus Paid It All  
Near the Cross  
Blessed Redeemer  
One Day  
The Old Rugged Cross  
At the Cross  
And Can It Be That I Should Gain?  
Nothing but the Blood

Wounded for Me  
In the Garden  
Alas and Did My Savior Bleed?  
Hallelujah for the Cross  
He Lives  
I Know That My Redeemer Liveth  
Like a River Glorious  
He Hideth My Soul  
All That Thrills My Soul  
No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus  
Blessed Be the Name  
I Am His, and He Is Mine  
Jesus Is the Sweetest Name I Know  
It's Just Like His Great Love  
The Love of God  
He Is So Precious to Me  
No, Not One!  
The Lily of the Valley  
If I Gained the World

Some hymns are a combination of encouragement to the believer and worship directed to God. "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" is an example of this. The lyrics are all directed to Christ, and sometimes they remind us of his tender care and sometimes they are pure worship: "Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are..."

### ***Worshipful Testimony***

These are in the category of worship to God because the believer's testimony is all of God and because of His love and grace.

My Faith Has Found a Resting Place  
My Anchor Holds  
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms  
A Shelter in the Time of Storm  
The Heaven of Rest

I Know Whom I Have Believed  
Blessed Assurance  
We Have an Anchor  
It Is Well With My Soul  
The Solid Rock  
Love Lifted Me  
My Savior's Love  
Such Love  
Wonderful, Wonderful Jesus  
He Keeps Me Singing  
I Will Sing the Wondrous Story  
Since Jesus Came into My Heart  
My Redeemer  
Only a Sinner  
Grace Greater Than Our Sin  
Wonderful Grace of Jesus  
He Included Me  
Builted on the Rock  
Surely Goodness and Mercy  
Jesus Is All the World to Me  
A Child of the King  
Moment by Moment  
Christ Liveth in Me  
Nor Silver Nor Gold  
Hallelujah, 'Tis Done  
A New Name in Glory  
The Cleansing Wave  
I Love to Tell the Story  
Since I Have Been Redeemed  
The Old Account Settled  
Amazing Grace  
Saved, Saved!  
Redeemed  
Saved by the Blood!  
Now I Belong to Jesus

***Prayers to God***

Come, Thou Fount  
Whiter Than Snow  
Open My Eyes, That I May See  
My Faith Looks Up to thee  
Take My Life, and Let It Be  
More Love to Thee  
Just a Closer Walk with Thee  
O to Be Like Thee!  
Make Me a Blessing  
Draw Me Nearer  
Revive Thy Work  
Lead Me Gently Home, Father  
Cleanse Me

If we are going to worship God in song we have to use songs that are truly worshipful.

A proper selection of songs and hymns is therefore basic. The song leader must understand the purpose of the various songs and hymns and make a wise, Spirit-led choice for each service.

**SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT**

Those who are in charge of the church's music must have good spiritual discernment so they can select godly songs and reject those that are worldly and that appeal to the flesh.

One of the chief ways that contemporary music enters churches is through the specials. I witnessed this some years ago on a preaching trip to 12 churches in three countries. About half of the churches allowed special music that was at least mildly contemporary. In each of these cases, the congregational music was traditional, while the special music was contemporary. I saw that the men in charge of the music did not know how to discern contemporary music.



A friend wrote recently, “In Christ Alone’ is a song that has been sung several times at our church. This song was popularized by Michael English (CCM) and was written by Shawn Craig of the CCM group Philips, Craig and Dean. It takes a strong pastor and a strong song leader to help guard from the wrong music coming in.” (The song “In Christ Alone” by Shawn Craig should not be confused with the song by the same name written by Getty/Townend.)

### **PATIENCE AND HUMILITY**

The following suggestions were given to me by a song leader in Canada:

“In my 10-years as a song leader, and at times a choir director and ensemble leader, I found that ‘working with people’ was an important skill. With regard to leadership, instead of being demanding or simply expecting, patiently work with the pianist. Plan ahead and give the numbers to your pianist well in advance. Encourage your pianist. If there’s credit to dole out or blame to assign, take the blame for yourself and dole out the credit to the musicians. Too often I’ve seen a song leader stop, stare, or comment when the pianist made a mistake which subsequently embarrassed the leader. Don’t take your embarrassment out on the musician. Be flexible and don’t draw attention to others’ mistakes (as if to make sure that everyone knows the mistake wasn’t yours). Better yet, learn not to be embarrassed. Kill your pride, and let accidents and mistakes roll off of you graciously. A gracious attitude toward mistakes encourages the musicians to keep trying, knowing that a mistake or two isn’t the end of the world. When I first started song leading, the pianist at my home church was very unskilled (having just taken up the piano) and very uncertain about what skills she had. She would often get the timing wrong. For a time, I picked only songs she felt comfortable playing, and at times my arms waved in submission to her timing. We learned to sing it her way, without any public comment or criticism from me. I just

tried to work graciously with whatever happened. As her skill improved, I could point out the timing issues, which she could now properly address. Because her heart was dedicated to serving the Lord, she practiced and practiced until she became a good church pianist. But, in the beginning I submitted myself to her and worked with her within her abilities, to help her get up to speed. It was an important lesson for me, as a young man, to submit to others rather than lord over them.”

This is an excellent testimony about the importance of spiritual wisdom, love, humility, and patience. This song leader was always aiming for excellence and skill and was not content with perpetual mediocrity, but he started where he was and used what he had.

## **LIBERTY AND DIVERSITY**

Too many churches are stuck in a rut with their song services. “Victory in Jesus” is a good song, but when it is sung every week for fifty years, even a good song can grow tiresome! There are hundreds of songs in the traditional sacred hymnbooks, but many churches sing only a few of them. Variety is the spice of life. The largest book in the Bible is Psalms, and God has provided 150 different psalms in this inspired hymnal.

### ***Suggestions for Introducing Variety into a Song Service***

New songs should be introduced regularly and then sung frequently until they become an integral part of the church family’s ever-enlarging song repertoire.

A good hymnal with a wide selection of songs and hymns is a wise investment. A few years ago, I examined *Living Hymns* (second edition) and found a lot to like. It was first published by Al Smith in 1972 and is still copyrighted by Al Smith Ministries. The latest edition is published by Paul Chappell’s Striving Together Ministries. It has a large selection, with 887 songs and hymns, which is a great benefit. There is no author

index, but I tried to look at the author of every song. There are two by the Gaithers but none by any of the other contemporary worship artists, as far as I could see. It has hymns that are rarely seen, such as Charles Weigle's lovely "No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus." There are little-known hymns by old-time fundamentalists such as R.A. Torrey, James Gray, and Lewis Sperry Chafer. Thousands upon thousands of sacred songs and hymns have been written just in the last couple of centuries, so any hymnal is just a sampling and no one hymnal will meet every church's needs, but *Living Hymns* seems to be a good all-around English hymnal. Another hymnal we like is *Songs and Hymns of Revival*. It is published by North Valley Publications, Santa Clara, CA (We don't recommend the music published by Golden State Baptist College.) Majesty Music's *Majesty Hymns* contains many beautiful songs which were written in the last few decades. (We don't recommend Majesty Music's latest hymnal *Rejoice Hymns*, as it contains many contemporary worship songs by Getty/Townend and others. It is very sad to see Majesty Music moving in this direction.)

Pastor David Earnhart says: "For many years we have used the Chorus of the Month. And don't forget the 'old songs.' I have often used songs like 'Thank You Lord for Saving My Soul.' Last year many raised their hands to indicate they did not know that song (even if it was 'old hat' to us old-timers!). This brings new Christians into the 'common fold' of music shared by Christians over many miles, and even generations."

Pastor Don Williams, Believers Baptist Church in Winona Lake, Indiana, says: "As for learning new songs, my family regularly picks out a new song from our hymnal and works on learning it for a couple weeks. Then we introduce it to the congregation as a special and begin to sing it in the song services. Our church has learned a lot of new songs that way."

Singing Scripture is a wonderful way to praise the Lord and edify the saints. During the Sunday evening services, for example, some churches sing Scripture songs. Not only do these introduce variety within the music program, but nothing surpasses the actual words and verses of Scripture for doctrinal purity. We used to know of a couple of sources for selections of Scripture songs, but they are no longer active. If anyone knows of a good source, please let us know.

Even the most familiar songs can be made more interesting by an imaginative change in the manner of presentation. There are endless means of singing old songs in new ways (without going contemporary). (1) Musicians can drop out while the congregation sings *a capello*. (2) One verse can be sung by the women, the next by the men. (3) One verse can be sung by the young people, another by the old people. (4) The choir, singing group, or soloist can be accompanied by the congregation in places. (5) An instrument can play the first stanza and chorus and then the congregation can come in and sing. (6) The timing of the song can be altered. (7) The chorus can be sung with a little more enthusiasm and volume as the song progresses. (8) Some songs can be sung as a round (e.g., Mat. 6:33). (9) Some stanzas or the chorus can be slowed down in tempo to allow the people to better think about the words. (9) By using meter well-known hymns can be sung to different tunes. "Give Me Jesus" and "Face to Face" are both in 8.7.8.7 meter, so the tunes can be interchanged. (The first number is the number of syllables in the first line of the song, and the second number is the number of syllables in the second line, etc.) "Amazing Grace," "My Faith Has Found a Resting Place," and "Lead Me to Calvary" are 8.6.8.6. and can be interchanged.

The people can choose the songs. One song leader made the following suggestion: "I would say to let the people be involved. Periodic singspirations, where the congregation gets to choose songs, is a huge boost. People love it because they

get to pick their favorites.” Once a month our church has a song service in which the people take turns quoting or reading a favorite verse and then choosing a hymn. We sing the first two stanzas of the hymns to allow more people to participate.

The song service can be blessed with the multiplication of musical instruments. Some of the most enjoyable song services I have participated in have been those accompanied by small orchestras. The *Majesty Hymnal* offers complete orchestrations for each song in the volume.

Homer Rodeheaver, Billy Sunday’s song leader, used antiphonal singing, which is singing responsively. The choir would sing one line of a hymn, while the last ten rows of people in the rear of the tabernacle would sing the answering line.

There can be a focus on worship songs in some services, and the song leader can work toward getting the people to really worship the Lord by singing the songs to the Lord from the heart. Hymns directed to the Lord include the following:

Come, Thou Almighty King  
Come, Thou Fount  
I Need Thee Every Hour  
Draw Me Nearer  
Great Is Thy Faithfulness  
Jesus, I Am Resting  
Jesus, Lover of My Soul  
Jesus! the Very Thought of Thee  
Lead Me to Calvary  
More Love to Thee  
My Jesus, I Love Thee  
O to Be Like Thee!  
Our Great Savior  
Rock of Ages  
Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

Take My Life and Let It Be  
To God Be the Glory

Some hymns are a combination of singing to the brethren and singing directly to the Lord. Examples are “Day by Day,” “Living for Jesus,” and “I’m Pressing on the Upward Way.”

# Plea to Southern Gospel Music Fans

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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This is a plea for Southern Gospel music fans to wake up and tear down the bridges that are being built from conservative Southern Gospel-loving homes and churches to the world itself and to the one-world church represented by contemporary Southern Gospel and CCM.

We are publishing this warning for those who are true disciples of Jesus Christ and who therefore “continue in” His Word (John 8:31-32). They love Christ and His Word above the closest friendships and relationships (Luke 14:26), certainly above music! True disciples of Christ esteem all of God’s precepts concerning all things to be right, and they hate EVERY false way (Psalm 119:128). They “prove ALL things” by God’s infallible Word. They have a testing mindset.

Those who do not live like this are not true disciples of Jesus Christ, and we can say this on the authority of the clear teaching of God’s Word.

God’s Word plainly states that the professing Christian who is not skillful in using the Bible and does not live his Christian life by constantly discerning both good and evil is a baby at best.

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk *is* unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. **But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age,**

***even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:12-14).***

We are seeing very conservative Southern Gospel groups that used a simple bluegrass-tinged style just a few years ago move beyond that to ever-increasing adaptation of the world’s musical styles. A drift like this has no bottom, as we have witnessed time and time again.

**We are seeing this progression everywhere among Southern Gospel fans. Important lines are being erased.**

One reason is that even a little “country style” Southern Gospel creates an addiction to and an appetite for jazzed-up rhythms and sensual vocal styles (e.g., scooping, sliding, improvisation, breathiness, vocal rasping).

Another reason is that the vast majority of Southern Gospel singers have moved into the “progressive/contemporary” sphere, probably because that is where the real money and prestige is, and even the most conservative people are being gradually influenced by the contemporary Southern Gospel crowd because they are letting the guard down and aren’t being careful enough about biblical separation.

As we will see, this bridge building has borne carnal fruit since it first began in the 1920s. It is already bearing carnal fruit in this generation, and it will bear apostate fruit in the coming generations.

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

## **We Are Living in a Time of Great Change**

We are living in a time of great change in fundamentalist and Bible-believing Baptist churches. There is a widespread collapse of biblical separatism.



When I was saved in 1973, the major thing that distinguished fundamental Baptists from Southern Baptists was biblical separation, but that distinction is disappearing and there is a merging of philosophy. We live in a day of blending.

A large number of the fundamental Baptist churches that existed in the 1970s and 1980s have either ceased to exist or have capitulated to the contemporary philosophy. This happened to Highland Park Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee, home of Tennessee Temple where I was trained for the ministry. These institutions became contemporary, renounced separatism, and died.

By the late 1980s Highland Park and Tennessee Temple were experiencing dramatic changes. There was a large influence from Liberty University and Word of Life, both of which had long been in the New Evangelical orb. By 1989, Tennessee Temple music groups used “soft rock” at the Southwide Baptist Fellowship (*Calvary Contender*, Oct. 15, 1989). In 2005, Highland Park hosted a Christian rock concert in its main auditorium featuring Bebo Norman, Fernando Ortega, and Sara Groves. In April 2006, the school’s College Days featured Toddiefunk and the Electric Church.

### **The Lines Are Being Erased**

In this time of great change, lines are being erased that should not be erased. We are witnessing a great blending effect. We are witnessing incremental changes, but always in the direction of the world.

We see this in the world of Southern Gospel. There is little separation remaining today between old-style Southern Gospel and contemporary Southern Gospel.

At the same time, the lines between contemporary Southern Gospel and Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) are being erased.

Bridges are being built from old-style Southern Gospel to contemporary Southern Gospel and to CCM. There is a great blending and merging.

Bridges from old-style Southern Gospel are bridges to a most dangerous world. **There isn't much difference between the world of contemporary worship music represented by the Newsboys and Chris Tomlin and Hillsong, and the world of contemporary Southern Gospel represented by the Talleys, the Hoppers, Greater Vision, the Martins, and Brian Free and Assurance.**

Contemporary Southern Gospel hits are charted together with Country music hits under the label "Country Gospel Music Chart." Country is "secular," while Country Southern Gospel is "Christian," but there is no difference in the music itself.

It is all fleshly music that gets people emotionally addicted to the world's music. And like all addictions, it is never satisfied so there is a progression into more and more of the world's sensuality.

Most old-style Southern Gospel musicians have moved into the contemporary sphere over the past 20 years. They have been influenced by the commercialization of the music. They have accepted the "music is neutral" heresy and use any kind of worldly music on occasion. They have accepted the "judge not," broad tent ecumenical philosophy, and while a few still give lip service to believing in separation, they are much more fervent in calling for unity and tolerance than for separation.

This was evident at the Burlington Tent Revival which ran from May to July 2016.

The fundamental Baptist leaders of the revival and their friends and associates would profess to believe in separation, but this is less evident with each passing year in any practical

way. On the last night of the conference, they invited the Vice President of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association to lead in prayer from the platform, and lead evangelist C.T. Townsend posted a photo of himself with the Graham people with the caption, “What an honor to have the Vice President and other members of the Billy Graham Association under the tent with us last night as they came to see & be a part of the Burlington Revival.”

For a fundamental Baptist evangelist to honor an organization that has done much to promote ecumenical unity with Rome is clear evidence of a breakdown in biblical separation. (For extensive documentation of the Graham organization’s unity with Rome see *Billy Graham’s Sad Disobedience*, a free eBook available from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

The Speer Family illustrates the great changes in Southern Gospel. They began singing in 1921 and were associated with the Vaughan Music Company. In 1941, they joined Stamps-Baxter. In the early years they were a simple harmonizing singing group accompanied by a piano. George and Lena Speer died in the 1960s, and the group was led by their sons Ben and Brock. By the 1980s, the Speers were jazzed up. Ben Speer is the director of the Gaither Homecoming Series which promotes ecumenism and the use of any kind of worldly music for “the glory of God.”

Consider the popular Southern Gospel song writers today. Their music bridges every realm of Southern Gospel and Contemporary Christian Music.

For example, Michael Farren and Joseph Habedank are co-authors of “Big Enough,” a song that is covered by the Clark Family on their “My Mind Is Made Up” album. Farren is the contemporary worship leader at Gateway Church in Franklin, Tennessee, and former member of the CCM band Pocket Full of Rocks. Farren says, “I LOVE WRITING ACROSS ALL GENRES ... CCM, country, Southern Gospel,

etc.” ([weareworship.com/us/worship-leaders-2/michael-farren/](http://weareworship.com/us/worship-leaders-2/michael-farren/)). Habedank is a progressive contemporary Southern Gospel musician who traveled with the Perrys.

Here we see the growing association between the most conservative Southern Gospel people and the worlds of contemporary Southern Gospel and CCM, because instead of separating from the Michael Farrens and Joseph Habedanks, the Clark Family borrows their music with no warning to their listeners.

In the Internet age, this is inexcusable because anyone who listens to the Clark Family albums and wants to know more about their musical sources is only a Google search away from being influenced by CCM.

So bridges are being built from the most conservative elements of Southern Gospel to contemporary Southern Gospel. And any bridge to contemporary Southern Gospel is also a bridge to Contemporary Christian Music in all of its aspects, from rock to rap.

There is also zero separation between CCM and contemporary Southern Gospel today.

In 2015, National Quartet Convention president Les Beasley was a board member of the Gospel Music Trust Fund that sponsored a “United We Stand” concert. One theme was ecumenical unity, and many of the biggest names in CCM participated, including Michael W. Smith, the Newsboys, 4Him, and Amy Grant. CCM unity encompasses Roman Catholic musicians such as Kathy Troccoli, John Michael Talbot, and Matt Maher. The conference was a showcase for the CCM philosophy that “music is neutral” and that any music can be used to glorify God. The concert began with a piano and orchestra piece, but subsequently every type of hard rock music was performed.

All of the popular commercial Southern Gospel groups are yoked together with CCM and Christian rock in the Gospel Music Association (GMA). In fact, famous Southern Gospel people helped establish the GMA in 1964. The founding took place at the National Quartet Convention that year. Members of the original GMA Board of Directors included Urias and Meurice LeFevre of the famous LeFevre singing family, James Blackwood of the Blackwood Brothers, Hovie Lister and James Wetherington of the Statesmen, and J.D. Sumner of the Stamps.

In was the GMA, in turn, which in 1969 began issuing the worldly Dove Awards for outstanding achievement in the Christian music industry. The vice president of the GMA that year was Hovie Lister, one of the biggest names in Southern Gospel. The Dove Awards, in turn, have honored Contemporary Christian Music artists of every stripe, including hard rock groups such as Bride, the Newsboys, Petra, and dc Talk. Roman Catholic singer Kathy Troccoli was nominated Gospel Music Association's female vocalist of the year five times. The GMA even awarded a Dove Award to Amy Grant's *Behind the Eyes* album, which was not Christian in any sense.

The well-known Southern Gospel groups are yoked together with and are supportive of the rock and roll, ecumenical-charismatic CCM crowd. There is no separation from and no reproof of the error of CCM by the commercially-successful Southern Gospel people. They are peas in one worldly pod.

The great changes that are happening in Southern Gospel can be seen in the late Vestal Goodman (1929-2003), who has been called the "Queen of Southern Gospel Music." She and her husband Howard formed the Happy Goodman Family, one of the most popular Southern Gospel groups. At the dawn of Contemporary Christian Music or Christian rock, the Goodmans took out a full-page ad in the September 1971

edition of *Singing News* to criticize the direction of the Gospel Music Association. "It seems that you have decided to promote and condone the more hippie oriented crowd, and night club acts, other than the gospel music." The Goodmans said that "many other groups" held their views about the direction of Southern Gospel in the 1970s.

Though the Happy Goodmans criticized the hippie oriented crowd and night club acts, they themselves contemporized Southern Gospel incrementally throughout their career. They "popularized a hard-singing style, which subverts blend in favor of accentuating the downbeat of lyrical phrases." They put on a worldly show, really. "The ending brought crowds roaring to their feet in delight at the way the sound managed to teeter precariously between chaos and control, buffoonery and beauty, this world and the next" (Douglas Harrison, *Then Sings My Soul*, p. 92).

By 1997, Vestal Goodman joined Roman Catholic Kathy Troccoli and 40 CCM rockers and contemporary Southern Gospel singers (e.g., Mark Lowry) to record *Love One Another*, a song with an ecumenical theme: "Christians from all denominations demonstrating their common love for Christ and each other." The song talks about tearing down the walls of denominational division. The broad range of participants who joined Kathy Troccoli in recording "Love One Another" demonstrates the ecumenical agenda of Contemporary Christian Music and contemporary Southern Gospel. The song witnessed Catholics, Pentecostals, Baptists, Nazarenes, etc., yoked together to call for Christian unity. A prominent representative of the Southern Gospel world was right in the midst of this unscriptural alliance.

We could multiply these examples almost endlessly.

The blending really exploded in the 1990s when the Gaither's *Homecoming* concert and video series dramatically increased the popularity of Southern Gospel music in this generation. It

brought new economic opportunities for those who were willing to relax their musical standards and cease being careful about their ministry relationships.

Bill Gaither believes the lie that music is neutral. During a concert tour in New England in 1986, Gaither admitted that he had changed his musical style due to the influence of the “world’s culture.” It is a clear example of the Bible’s warning that “evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Co. 15:33). Gaither said he believes there is a place for Christian rock, expressing his philosophy of music in these words:

“God speaks through all different kinds of art forms and musical styles and musical forms” and the “format itself is not necessarily spiritual or non-spiritual” (*FBF News Bulletin*, March-April 1986, p. 3).

The following is an eyewitness description of the Gaither’s appearance at the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis in 1980:

“The Bill Gaither Trio entertained 15,000 Southern Baptists on Sunday evening with a musical program worldly enough to make any true believer weep. The music was so loud that some people left and others put their hands to their ears to block the intense amplification of the music” (Robert S. Reynolds, “Southern Baptists on the Downgrade: Report on the 1980 SBC Convention in St. Louis,” *Foundation*, Volume VI, Issue 1, 1985, p. 9).

Gaither has used every type of worldly music. During the disco craze in the late 1980s, the Gaither Trio even recorded a disco album (*Calvary Contender*, August 15, 1989).

Most Southern Gospel people today have accepted the idea that music is just a matter of style, and they move from one type of music to another with ease.

Consider The Isaacs. They are on the conservative side of Southern Gospel and largely use acoustic string instruments and a folksy, blue-grassy style, but they can slip into rock & roll with ease.

### **Shallow Lyrics**

The lyrics to many of the popular Southern Gospel songs are very weak, doctrinally.

They are emotional, feel-good songs that are easy to “showboat,” meaning they are designed to show off vocal techniques and jazzy rhythms, but the message is extremely shallow. They don’t deal with essential doctrines such as repentance, conversion, confession, holiness, obedience, and separation from the world. Even the gospel is presented in a vague fashion. The songs are not solidly Bible based. They are often man-centered, focusing on man’s needs.

Many of the popular Southern Gospel songs fall into this category, such as “I’ll Fly Away,” “Just a Little Talk with Jesus,” and “There’s a Rainbow.”

In “I’ll Fly Away” the words “I’ll fly away” are repeated 24 times in the short song.

The lyrics to popular newer songs like “He Knows My Name” and “The Broken Ones” could be sung by unconverted church members with “blessing” but no conviction.

**“He Knows My Name”** by the McRaes

He counts the stars one and all

He knows how much sand is on the shore

He sees every sparrow that falls

He made the mountain and the seas

He’s in control of everything

Of all creatures great and small

CHORUS



He knows my name  
Every step that I take  
Every move that I make  
Every tear that I cry  
And He knows my name  
When I'm overwhelmed by the pain  
And can't see the light of day  
I know I'll be just fine  
Cause He knows my name  
I don't know what tomorrow will bring  
I can't tell you what's in store  
I don't know a lot of things  
I don't have all the answers to the questions of life  
But I know in whom I believe

#### CHORUS

He knew who I was when he carried the cross  
He knew that I would fail him but he took the loss

#### CHORUS

Every step that I take  
Every move that I make  
Every tear that I cry  
And he knows my name

When the shallow lyrics to this song are sung to sensual music with sensual voice techniques, it is a recipe for emotional “blessing,” but it is seriously lacking in biblical substance. In fact, “He knew I would fail him but he took the loss” is not a sound gospel message. Christ didn’t take a loss; He took my sin.

Southern Gospel doesn’t encourage a careful examination of lyrics, but the Bible does.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Th. 5:21).

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14).

“Let all things be done unto edifying” (1 Co. 14:26).

“The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going” (Pr. 14:15).

It is the message of the song that edifies and sanctifies, not jazzy music and sensual chord sequences and sensual vocal techniques, so the lyrics must be examined carefully to make sure that we are not singing heresy and that we are not singing vapid, emotional, sweet nothings.

Consider “**The Broken Ones**” by Jerry Salley, J.B. Rudd, and Vip Vipperman:

Maggie came home one day with a raggedy, Raggedy Ann.

She said “Mama, look what I found in the neighbors garbage can.”

It had a missing left arm, and a right button eye hanging by a thread

She carried it gently up to her room and laid it on her bed with her other dolls.

Chorus:

She loves the broken ones, the ones that need a little patchin' up

She see's the diamond in the rough and makes it shine like new

It really doesn't take that much, a willing heart and a tender touch

If everybody loved like she does, there'd be a lot less broken ones.

Twenty years later in a shelter on Eighteenth Avenue

A seventeen year old girl shows up all black and blue with needle tracks in her left arm, almost too weak to stand,

She says, "I'm lost and I need help", as Maggie takes her hand And says, "Come on in!"

Bridge:

If you call her an angel, she'd be quick to say to you  
She's just doing what the one who died for her would do  
Love the broken ones, the ones that need a little patchin' up  
See the diamond in the rough and make it shine like new  
It really doesn't take that much, a willing heart and a tender touch  
If everybody loved like He does, there'd be a lot less broken ones  
If everybody loved like He does, there's be a lot less broke ones.

Again, this has no biblical substance. One can read any theology into the song. It is so weak that it fits liberal social gospel theology, faith-works theology, even Catholic or Mormon or Jehovah's Witness theology.

Even some of the popular Southern Gospel songs that have a fairly biblical message are made shallow by the distracting music which overwhelms the message with an entertainment emphasis or is confused by an unscriptural element being thrown into the lyrics.

Consider the song "**My God is Real**," sung by countless Southern Gospel groups.

The lyrics include a repetition of these words: "He's real, I can feel him deep within. ... My Lord He's real, I can feel him in my soul."

This is the Pentecostal, Holiness, Stamps Baxter heresy that says I can and should feel God. Where does the Bible support this? Where does it teach that the believer can feel God? Where does the Bible tell us how this is done? In light of the Bible's frequent warnings about the danger of spiritual delusion, how would you know that it is God you are feeling and not a spirit of deception? This song encourages the great error of living the Christian life by one's emotions, which is extremely unstable and spiritually and emotionally dangerous.

A comment left on the YouTube rendition illustrates the emotional approach to Christian music: “Love the Florida Boys singing this beautiful song. This song has got some power in it. That it makes the hair rise on my arms.”

We are to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good,” and only that which is good, and this song does not pass the standard of God’s infallible Word.

Another example of the shallowness of popular Southern Gospel songs is “**Just a Little Talk**” by Cleavant Derricks and sung by countless Southern Gospel groups. Here are some of the lyrics:

I once was lost in sin, but Jesus took me in  
And then a little light from heaven filled my soul.  
He bathed my heart in love, and He wrote my name above  
And just a little talk with Jesus makes me whole.  
(Now let us) have a little talk with Jesus  
(Let us) tell Him all about our troubles  
(He will) hear our faintest cry  
(He will) answer by and by  
(When you) feel a little prayer wheel turning  
(And you) will know a little fire is burnin’  
(You will) find a little talk with Jesus makes it right.

There is no clear gospel or salvation message here. “I once was lost in sin, but Jesus took me in” is so vague that any false gospel can fit there. And what does “feel a little prayer wheel turning” mean? Buddhists have prayer wheels, and I’ve seen them used all over Asia. Did Derricks visit the Far East before writing this strange song? This aside, the emphasis of the song is on feeling.

The reason it is popular is its jazzy tune and the fact that it lends itself to vocal “showboating.”

Another example is “**Step into the Water**” by Kirk Talley, who was singing with the Cathedrals when he wrote the song in about 1979.

It's time we, the people, stand up for what is right.

It's time we squared our shoulders back and raised our  
swords to fight.

For the Bible is my weapon and the Spirit is my shield.

The Church needs more of its members to be workers in the  
field.

There is victory for the Christian who walks the  
narrow way.

There has been a prize appointed for the soul who does  
not stray.

Though I want to live for Jesus, and be all that I can  
be. So, that I can rest with Him forever, live eternally.

CHORUS

Step into the water

Wade out a little bit deeper

Wet your feet in the water of His love

Step into the water

Wade out a little bit deeper

Come join angels singing praise to the Lamb of God

“Step into the Water” has some biblical lyrics, but the heart of the song is the jazzy chorus, which is the reason for its popularity. It is almost impossible to sing it without dancing and “showboating,” which is the essence of a Southern Gospel hit. The concept of stepping into the water and wading out a little bit deeper has no biblical support. The only New Testament image of stepping into the water is that of baptism, and baptism is a picture of salvation. Deep water is nowhere used as a picture of the Christian life in Scripture. The problem is worse than that, though. “Step into the Water” preaches a false gospel, which might come from the influence of Talley’s early years in Free Will Baptist churches that teach the doctrine of “conditional security” or “holding out

faithful.” The song teaches that by living for Jesus one can rest with Him forever. That is salvation by faith plus works.

The vagueness and lack of doctrinal clarity that permeates so many of the popular Southern Gospel songs is why many worldly people love Southern Gospel. It “speaks to them,” but it does not convict, save, sanctify, and separate them. You can see this in the mixed multitudes at Southern Gospel concerts and conventions. You can see it in comments left on the YouTube editions of songs such as “He Knows My Name” and “The Broken Ones,” which are left mostly by women who are being emotionally impacted, but not necessarily spiritually changed.

Consider the song “**Send the Rain**” that was used at the Burlington Tent Revival.

“Regarding the Burlington Revival: This video clip is of the July 22 revival meeting which has been touted as the most successful meeting of the entire revival. There were a supposed 100 people saved that day. It is one of Burlington Revival’s most viewed clips on YouTube. And I can’t tell you how many times I’ve heard pastors reference this specific meeting where all these people got saved in one night. ... the link I gave above has a timestamp that starts at 39:30. As this time they begin singing a song which they sing until the 1 hour mark. They sing this song over and over again for 20 minutes until everyone is worked up and in their emotions. People ‘get saved’ during this time, but this song gives no mention of the Gospel whatsoever. The song they sing is called ‘Send the Rain’ which is written by Aaron Butler of the Christian Rock band Ol’ Skool. You can visit their biography here - [www.unsigned.com/olskool](http://www.unsigned.com/olskool). I’d like to point out a quote they made from this biography regarding their own music: ‘*Our music has a lot of roots in southern gospel, but with a touch of rock. **We like to call it Southern Rock Gospel.***’” (from a reader, Aug. 26, 2016).

Amazingly, “Send the Rain” promotes Pentecostal Latter Rain heresy. Note the following lyrics:

“Send the rain/ Send the fire/ Send the wind/ Send the Holy Ghost in power/ Send the rain.”

The Independent Baptist leaders of the Burlington meeting either did not recognize this heresy or didn’t care that they were singing false teaching, so long as it “stirs people up” and gets them to the altar. (See *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements*, available from Way of Life Literature, for a study on Latter Rain theology.)

CCM and contemporary Southern Gospel singers like doctrinally weak lyrics because they want a big tent ministry.

## **History of Southern Gospel**

The history of Southern Gospel illustrates the danger of an incremental slide toward the world.

At the turn of the 20th century, gospel music was music that was sung in churches.

It was influenced by the shape-note singing movement, which began at the turn of the 19th century at the dawn of the Second Great Awakening and had spread rapidly. It got a new impetus after the American Civil War, which ended in 1865.

In shape-note music, musical notes are given different shapes, and by this method congregations could more quickly learn how to read music. (An experiment conducted in the 1950s by George Kyme found that “students taught with shape notes learned to sight read significantly better than those taught without them,” “Shape Note Effectiveness,” [liquisearch.com](http://liquisearch.com).)

There was a four-note system (*fasola*) and a seven-note system. The four-note system predominated until the

establishment of a seven-note publishing company Ruebush & Kieffer in 1866, founded by two Civil War veterans, one Confederate and one Union. Their most popular songbook, *The Temple Star*, sold more than half a million copies. The seven-shape notation “anticipated the melodic and harmonic developments that would come to define twentieth-century white gospel.” Many other hymnbooks were published using shaped notes.

Shape-note singing schools were held in churches and camp meetings, led by a traveling singing master who would stay in one location for days or weeks. The focus was on sight singing, music theory, harmony, and song leading. “A singing school would be a large social event for a town; sometimes nearly everyone in the town would attend and people would come for miles. ... In this way, singing schools resembled tent revivals” (“Singing School,” Wikipedia). In *These Happy Golden Years*, the famous American writer Laura Ingalls Wilder described attending a singing school as a young woman and being courted there by her future husband. It was a tradition that a photo would be taken of the participants of the singing school at the end of the program.

The singing of the shape-note movement emphasized simple harmony and rhythm that were not adapted from the world of licentious dancing and drinking. The rhythms were straight. The vocalizing was also straight, meaning the notes were hit in a simple, clean manner.

We give audio and video clips of these in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* video series found at:

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

This was gospel music in the South until the 1920s. (It wasn’t called Southern Gospel until about mid-way through the 20th century.) It was spiritual and not conformed to the world (Romans 12:2).



Between the 1920s and the 1950s, Southern Gospel music underwent four significant changes.

- (1) It was commercialized.
- (2) It was taken out of the churches and put it into hands of publishers and promoters.
- (3) It was jazzed up with worldly musical styles.
- (4) It became a form of entertainment.

The Stamps Quartet of the 1930s “not only sang the most popular gospel songs of the day, but gave an all-around entertainment program” (Bob Terrell, *The Music Men*, p. 39).

Gospel music publisher Harper and Associates advertised their Southern Gospel music as “Family ENTERTAINMENT with a message, entertainment that a Fair or civic organization can sponsor and NOT FEEL LIKE THEY’RE GETTING TOO CHURCHY.”

Harper and Associates founder Herman Harper was instrumental in getting live coverage of Southern gospel music on the Grand Ole Opry, a major country-rock forum. The fact that the same crowd that loved Hank Williams and Roy Orbison also loved commercial Southern Gospel is clear evidence of the latter’s worldly character.

Professional Southern Gospel quartets were born in the early part of the 20th century as business enterprises. Prior to that, quartets were mixed (men and women) and “sang in their churches simply for the spiritual edification of the congregation” (*The Music Men*, p. 54).

The inventor of the professional male gospel quartet was James Vaughan (1864-1941), a Nazarene who hired a quartet in 1910 to represent his music publishing company (which he had founded in 1902). Vaughan is often called “the father of Southern Gospel music.” The Vaughan Quartet performances at churches, revivals, and conventions were a means whereby

Vaughan sold music. "In this way the groups promoted their sponsor and created a market for the songbooks" (David L. Taylor, *Happy Rhythm*, p. 7). By the late 1920s Vaughan had 16 full-time quartets on the road. In 1921, the pioneering Vaughan cut the first record for his new recording company, and in 1922 he built the first radio station in Tennessee, all with the goal of promoting his music.

In 1924, the V.O. Stamps Music Company was founded by Virgil Stamps (1892-1940), a Baptist. With business ideas he had learned while working at the Vaughan Publishing Company, Stamps founded a music school, published music, and put his own quartets to work. After Stamps was joined by J.R. Baxter, Jr., the company became Stamps-Baxter and would become hugely influential. Stamps-Baxter hymnals promoted biblically shallow, jazzed up, emotional-impact songs such as "I'll Fly Away," "Just a Little Talk with Jesus," "Precious Memories," "I Won't Have to Cross Jordan Alone," "Angel Band," "Keep on the Firing Line," "I Am Bound for the Promised Land," "Give the World a Smile," and "Farther Along."

Both Vaughan and Stamps encouraged a **popularity cult** around the members of the quartets.

Stamps sold songbooks "as mementos of professional singers' popularity and fame" (Douglas Harrison, *Then Sings My Soul: The Culture of Southern Gospel Music*, p. 85).

"Vaughan's rise and influence initiated a shift in white gospel culture from amateurs singing together at singing schools and conventions to professional quartets increasingly defined by their roles as performers and celebrities."

These companies eventually created the popular all-day and all-night gospel music singing conventions.

Vaughan's early quartets sang in a simple and straightforward harmonizing manner.

By the late 1920s, the professional Southern Gospel quartets were adapting rhythms and vocal styles from the world. In the following clip of the Vaughan Quartet in 1928, you can hear the beginning of vocal sliding and a ragtime piano.

The new "Southern Gospel" style featured "tag lines in accompanying voices, chromatic lower-neighbor note and passing notes, and in the refrain a walking bass lead with several interjections. The harmony was simple and very rhythmic. A ragtime style was added later to the piano accompaniment (commonly called the 'stomp beat'), which made the sacred and the secular indistinguishable" (H.T. Spence, *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*, p. 120).

As we have seen in the chapter "Southern Gospel Dance Rhythms," a major pioneer of the ragtime gospel piano style was Dwight Brock, who played for one of the Stamps quartets.

"Brock played a rhythm piano style; some thought it sounded a little like Dixieland [jazz] or razzamatazz. ... Thousands of pianists would copy his style in the years to come. ... IT WAS REVOLUTIONARY BECAUSE IT JAZZED UP GOSPEL MUSIC JUST ENOUGH FOR THE SECULAR PUBLIC TO CATCH ON. Dwight's nephew, Brock Speer, who sings bass for the Speer Family today, said when his uncle was a boy in the early teens--he was born in 1905--he heard a circus drummer playing syncopated rhythms on snare drums, and said to himself, 'I wonder if I could do that on the piano?'" (*The Music Men*, pp. 38, 39).

The ragtime piano style was created in the brothels and bars and gambling dens of Memphis and New Orleans. Ragtime and boogie-woogie were major elements in the development of the blues, jazz, and eventually rock & roll.

We give same video and audio clips in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* video series found at:

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

The pulsing rhythms of ragtime, boogie-woogie, blues, and jazz were used in their original settings because they were sensual, even sexual. They didn't want "straight" music; they wanted "sexually syncopated sounds."

"Like the whorehouses in New Orleans and St. Louis, the Gayoso houses provided employment for Memphis's early ragtime pianists ... The Gayoso brothels gave many white Memphians their first dose of SYNCOPATION and the blues. Compared to the pallid ballads and sentimental 'heart songs' that the Victorian era offered, that 'WHOREHOUSE MUSIC' would have been EXCITING in any situation. Given the extra tang of forbidden fruit, of social and moral taboos being broken all around, those SEXUALLY SYNCOPATED SOUNDS proved irresistible" (emphasis added) (Larry Nager, *Memphis Beat*, p. 26).

The type of rhythm that is at home in a brothel and drinking den or other sin hole has no place in Christian music, yet it was adapted by Southern Gospel pianists when they wanted to liven up the music and make it more widely acceptable as a form of entertainment.

This principle was wrong then, and it is wrong today.

"AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

Though the seeds were present in the 1920s and '30s, it was not until the late 1940s that Southern Gospel began to promote a full-out, entertainment-oriented, jazzed-up approach to Christian music on a large scale.

Before that the quartets were not very flashy. W.B. Walbert, the manager of the Vaughan Quartet during the 1920s, “was a spiritual man who did not believe that a quartet should do anything showy to detract from the gospel messages in the songs” (*The Music Men*, p. 33).

At the same time, these early professional quartets were gradually pushing the boundaries. Incrementalism was at work, and the fruit was evident in succeeding generations.

Walbert’s son, James (1918-2009), the grandson of James Vaughan by his daughter Grace, began playing the piano backwards, playing with his elbows, and otherwise putting on a show to entertain the crowds. “His father frowned on such routines, thinking that they detracted from the experience of hearing the songs performed as they were written, but audiences loved Walbert’s piano excursions” (“SG History 101: Accompanists,” [absolutelygospel.com](http://absolutelygospel.com)). James performed with worldly entertainers such as Judy Garland and Liberace and wrote worldly hits such as “When I Saw You Walking Down the Street” and “Enchantment” ([barglow.com/adam/biography.htm](http://barglow.com/adam/biography.htm)). Though trained classically, he applied the “music is neutral” philosophy to Christian music. He was known for “his skill at blending the styles of American pop, jazz, and standard church music” ([averyfineline.com/2009/08/06](http://averyfineline.com/2009/08/06)). James was inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame in 2004.

This illustrates the negative power of incrementalism (incremental steps toward the world) on the succeeding generations. The much more cautious adaption of the world’s music by James Vaughan and his son-in-law W.B. Walbert set the stage for the more abandoned approach of James Walbert and others of his generation. It has been said that what parents do in moderation, the children will do in excess.

The 1940s and 1950s witnessed an explosion in the popularity of Southern Gospel, driven by entertainment groups such as the Blackwood Brothers and The Statesmen.

This is called the “Golden Age” of Southern Gospel, and concerts attracted up to two million people per year (Scott Matthews, “A Review of Douglas Harrison’s *Then Sings My Soul*,” *Hollins University Review*, Nov. 13, 2012).

The Statesmen featured Hovie Lister’s ragtime, honky-tonk piano, and this style has dominated popular Southern Gospel ever since. (This does not mean that the Statesmen sang only jazzy music. Some of their numbers were sacred renditions of good Christian music. An example was “What a Savior,” featuring tenor Rosie Rozell.)

The following brief history of Southern Gospel is by a man who researches rock music. He has correctly observed the close connection between jived up Southern Gospel of the 1940s and 1950s and early rock & roll (though he himself is not opposed to the jiving).

“The white gospel quartets of the 1950s, when [Elvis] Presley started to study them, were every bit as exciting as their black counterparts, USING SHOW-BIZ HYPE, WHIPPING UP CROWDS AND CREATING STARS. Reporting on an all-night sing in Atlanta, Georgia, for *The Saturday Evening Post* (June 1956), Furman Bisher compared the audience response to the Oak Ridge Quartet to bobby soxers’ swooning for Frank Sinatra. ‘Women out there shrieked, and a couple of young girls rushed to the stage edge to snap pictures of the tenor who was holding that high note the way a trumpet player prolongs a “ride,”’ wrote Bisher. ...

“Presley idolized such gospel stars for the rest of his life. His particular favorites were J.D. Sumner, the tall, stringy bass vocalist with the Blackwood Brothers, who also went to the First Assembly of God Church in Memphis, and Jake Hess and Hovie Lister of the Statesmen Quartet (which

actually had five members). An ordained minister, LISTER IS OFTEN CREDITED WITH BRINGING SHOW BUSINESS TO QUARTET SINGING. At the time he said, 'If it takes shaking my hair down, beating a piano like Liberace or Piano Red to keep these young people out of beer joints and the rear seats of cars, I'll do it. The Devil's got his kind of entertainment. We've got ours. They criticize me, say I'm too lively for religion, but I get results. That's what counts'" (emphasis added) (Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, pp. 29-31).

Lister's philosophy was pragmatism; whatever works is right. The same philosophy permeates the Contemporary Christian Music field today. Hovie Lister and the Statesmen were forerunners of CCM. God has *not* instructed us to do whatever "gets results," but to obey His Word regardless of the results. The sole authority for faith and practice is the Bible, and we are to test everything by God's Word. If it is Scriptural, it is right; if it is not Scriptural, it is wrong, regardless of how well it appears *to work*. God's Word plainly forbids His people to love the world. It is therefore impossible to please God by adapting the things of the world to the service of Christ. Liberace was a talented homosexual entertainer who helped corrupt the morals of America. It is a serious error to adapt his sensual, worldly ways to Gospel music. Where does God's Word encourage us to copy the world? To the contrary, we are instructed not to be conformed to the world (Romans 12:2).

Nowhere do we see the Lord Jesus Christ or the apostles entertaining people in the name of the ministry. We do not see them putting on a worldly show to draw a crowd. We do not see them adapting themselves to the spirit of the age. We do not see them attempting to manipulate people by worldly means. In Scripture, we do not see God's people going for this type of thing. It would have been undreamed of in the early

churches, except by the church at lukewarm Laodicea and by worldly Demas (2 Timothy 4:10).

There was not a hint of Hollywood worldliness and pragmatic philosophy in the Lord's apostles. The apostle Paul stated that he depended *solely* upon the power of the Holy Spirit and not upon any human gimmick. "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Corinthians 2:2-5).

We return to Steve Turner's overview of the history of Southern Gospel:

"White quartet singing had developed in the 1920s ... they began to develop showmanship and gimmicks during the 1940s. ... Hovie Lister, a dashing young man with long, dark wavy hair and an Errol Flynn mustache, LOVED TO SHAKE IT ALL UP FOR THE LORD. He joined with Crumpler and Jake Hess to form the Statesmen Quartet, which was to become one of the first supergroups of white gospel, catapulting the music to commercial acceptability and SETTING THE STYLE FOR EMERGENT ROCK 'N' ROLLERS BRED ON HOLY MUSIC.

"Although much was made of the evils of dancing, show business, jukeboxes and television, THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL QUARTETS WAS LARGELY DUE TO THEIR PRESENTING MUCH OF THE SAME GLOSS AND EXCITEMENT in an acceptable context. The songs were about loving your neighbor, being holy and not giving in to 'modern religion,' but THE PERFORMANCES DREW FROM POP, BLUES, COUNTRY, RAGTIME AND JAZZ. ...



“Don Butler, now director of archives for the Nashville-based Gospel Music Association, was the Statesmen Quartet’s manager during the 1950s. ‘They were sensational,’ he remembers. ‘Hovie Lister had no peer in showmanship. He created a tremendous rapport with the audience. HE COULD TURN THEIR EMOTIONS ON AND OFF JUST LIKE THAT. ... HOVIE WOULD JUMP ONTO A PIANO AND SHAKE HIS LONG BLACK HAIR INTO HIS FACE WHILE THE REST OF THE GROUP DANCED ON STAGE. They were the first quartet to use four individual microphones. Before that everyone had gathered around one mike’” (emphasis added) (Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, pp. 29-31).

Hovie Lister’s “approach was loud, fast, swingy, and pop” and that “he would do whatever it took to get the loudest applause, the biggest laugh” (Gaither, *Homecoming*, p. 133).

Lister was characterized by ‘flashy dress, oversized rings, and upbeat entertainment style’ (*The Music Men*, p. 146).

The Statesmen made large sums of money from their appearances, selling Gospel music to the world. In the 1950s, the Blackwood Brothers and the Statesmen would receive \$1,000 to \$1,500 per night for their music shows, which was a huge amount of money for the time.

Not content with this, the Statesmen sold their services to the Nabisco Company in the 1950s. Lister became their spokesman, emceeding for Nabisco commercials. At their peak they were making a half million dollars per year. That would be more than five million dollars or more per year in today’s dollars, and that was only one branch of their commercial singing empire. The group performed on the Nabisco television show. “In their personal appearances, the Statesmen participated in a complete merchandising campaign on behalf of their sponsor...” (Taylor, *Happy Rhythms*, p. 53). One photo in David Taylor’s history of the Statesmen shows the group performing in front of a large

wall mural of a woman dressed in a short skirt as “the Sweetheart of the South” for Nabisco Vanilla Wafers. This very risqué fashion (for the time) was part of Nabisco’s advertising campaign surrounding the Statesmen. For their work with Nabisco the group recorded music with Wade Creager’s dance orchestra at the Biltmore Hotel in Atlanta.

Lister and the Statesmen (and their many cohorts and imitators) went so far beyond that which was traditionally acceptable in Christian music in the middle of the 20th century that some Christian radio stations would not play their music. In fact, some stations broke their records in protest! This occurred in 1955 when they recorded some gospel songs with a “New Orleans jazz flavor.” The instrumental group that backed the Statesmen on the album included country guitarist Chet Atkins, Ernie Newton on the stand-up bass guitar, and Farris Coursey on drums. For the recording, the Statesmen had formed what was essentially a country-rock band. They pioneered the CCM practice of using unsaved musicians on their recordings.

One preacher protested Hovie Lister’s boogie-woogie piano style by calling it “stripping music” (David Taylor, *Happy Rhythms*, p. 55). That old preacher is mocked by the contemporary crowd, but he was right. That music was born in brothels and filthy strip clubs.

The Statesmen’s bass singer, Jim “Big Chief” Wetherington, moved his legs in ways strangely reminiscent of how Elvis moved to rock & roll.

Rock historian Peter Guralnick, in *Last Train for Memphis*, observes that “preachers frequently objected to the lewd movements.”

Jake Hess, another member of the original Statesmen, noted,

“He [Wetherington] went about as far as you could go in gospel music. The women would jump up, just like they do

for pop shows” (Peter Guralnick, *Last Train for Memphis*, p. 48).

In one of their early hits, *Happy Rhythm* (1950), the Statesmen actually used the phrase rock and roll to describe what they were doing! “There’s a happy rhythm keeps a-rockin’ and a-rollin’.” This was set to a “rollicking, boogie setting” (Taylor, p. 34).

Yet the term “rock & roll” originated in the sleazy side of the black culture as a euphemism for fornication.

Describing the popular Southern Gospel quartets of the 1950s, Wally Varner of the Melody Masters testified:

“I guess the Melody Masters were one of the wildest organizations, for the lack of a better word, that I’ve ever worked with. I used to turn flips and things like that. ... In those days **GOSPEL MUSIC WASN’T AS SPIRITUAL, IT WAS MORE ENTERTAINING.** We had a rambunctious type of program, but we also had some beautiful singing that we would settle down to” (Taylor, *Happy Rhythms*, p. 22).

The Bible says it is impossible to serve the flesh and the Spirit at the same time.

“*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Galatians 5:16-17).

If Christian music isn’t spiritual, then it is of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

### **Southern Gospel Dance Rhythms**

The world’s pop music has danceable rhythms. It is composed of a wide variety of danceable syncopations.

Dance music uses heavy syncopation to create a jerky, dancy feel. Syncopation is “shifting the accent to a weak beat or to an off beat” (Miller, Taylor, and Williams, *Introduction to Music*). It is “a general term for a disturbance or interruption of the regular flow of rhythm.” It comes in hundreds of forms.

“All dance music makes use of syncopation” (Rick Snoman, *Dance Music Manual*, p. 44).

“Rock’s danceability is due predominately to its emphasized syncopated rhythms, which invite the listener to supply the missing beats either mentally or through a series of physical gestures” (John Makújina, *Measuring the Music*).

Dance syncopation affects the body. The late Graham West said, “When you take away the accent from where the strong beat should fall the human body is instinctively inclined to move into the gap and mark where the missing accent should be.”

Syncopation itself is not wrong. It should be used “sparingly for special effects” (Philip Seyer, “Syncopation in Music and Dance”).

And “good syncopation” always *resolves* back into the normal, unsyncopated rhythm.

Syncopation used in moderation can enliven the music without sensualizing it. It doesn’t make your body want to move in a pop music way. Consider *Joy to the Lord*.

It is a matter of emphasis and predominance. A little bit of syncopation is not wrong, but when it becomes predominant it is highly addictive and quickly spoils the saint’s taste for sacred music.

In pop music, syncopation is a “fundamental constant presence.” When jazz musician Duke Ellington said, “It don’t mean a thing if it ain’t got that swing,” he was referring to the

heavy, constant, unresolving syncopation that creates a dancy feel.

Unrelenting syncopated rhythm has been the chief characteristic of worldly dance music since the beginning of the 20th century. It characterized all of the streams of music that fed into rock. It was the rhythm that drove ragtime, the blues, boogie-woogie, jazz, big band swing, and honky-tonk or western swing.

Southern Gospel has borrowed from the world's dance music since the 1930s.

We give audio and video clips of the following styles of music in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* video series found at: <https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

First, it borrowed from ragtime and boogie-woogie, which originated in the houses of prostitution and the gambling dens of Memphis and New Orleans.

Once the trend began, there was no end of borrowing from the world. As the world's pop music has become more sensual through the decades, Southern Gospel has grown ever more worldly.

There are many types of dance syncopation that are prominent in pop music and that create the physical feel and sexuality of the music.

Consider seven of these: the back beat, the silent beat, the staccato beat, the swing eight, the break beat, and the anticipated beat.

### **The back beat**

The backbeat, which rockers and social commentators have often identified as “sexy,” is a prominent characteristic of the world's dance music.

Fifties rocker Bill Haley said: “I felt that if I could take a ... tune and drop the first and third beats and accentuate the second and fourth, and add a beat the listeners could clap to as well as dance to this would be what they were after.”

Indeed, it was! The backbeat powered a global social revolution.

The backbeat is the opposite of the straight or march beat, which has the emphasis on the first beat or on every beat equally:

one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four

or

ONE-two-three-four, ONE-two-three-four

\* “The Stars and Stripes Forever” U.S. Army Field Band

The backbeat emphasizes an offbeat, such as

one-TWO-three-FOUR

or

one-two-THREE-four

When you try to march to backbeat rhythm you have something like the brass jazz bands in New Orleans. In this clip they are marching at jazz saxophonist “Doc Watson’s” funeral.

### **Beat anticipation**

The late Graham West, a skilled, highly trained musician who wrote pop music jingles before he was a pastor, explains beat anticipation in his video presentation *The Rhythm of Rock*.

Beat anticipation is a type of syncopation that falls at the end of a phrase and is unresolved. It is as much a major element of rock music as the backbeat. It can create the jerky, dancy rock feel even when other types of syncopation aren’t present. It leaves the listener anticipating something that is not there and the body wants to fill in the gap.

Beat anticipation changes the feel and message of a song. Consider the example of “Jesus Loves Me” played traditionally with a straight beat, played with beat anticipation, then played with even more syncopation.

Beat anticipation is a major part of contemporary worship music, and fundamentalist churches that are “adapting” contemporary worship songs are typically buying into the beat anticipation, liking the feel of it and often not understanding that they are actually performing soft rock ballads. They think that since they don’t have drums and a bass guitar thumping out a heavy backbeat that they have removed the rock from Christian rock, but nothing could be farther from the truth.

The backbeat, the silent beat, the staccato beat, and beat anticipation are just some of the many kinds of dance syncopation that go into the creation of rock and pop music in general. *The Rhythm Bible* has “over 1,000 examples of rhythmic figures common in jazz, rock, Latin, blues, funk, and other styles -- rhythms that make contemporary sounds so exciting.”

The point is that rock is made up of many types of syncopation, but they all have the same type of effect on the body. Whether rock is soft or hard, quiet or loud is irrelevant. It matters not if it is played in an electric bass guitar, a violin, a saxophone, or a piano. It affects the body and makes you want to dance.

And the heavy syncopation is why pop music is so physical and why many rock musicians have identified it as sexual.

“Perhaps it is sexy ... but what music with a BIG BEAT isn’t?” (Jimi Hendrix, cited from David Henderson, *Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky: The Life of Jimi Hendrix*. p. 117).

“That’s what rock is all about—sex with a 100 megaton bomb, THE BEAT!” (Gene Simmons of Kiss, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

Wise Christians who want to glorify Jesus Christ and obey His Word do not want any element of sexuality in their music!

Just a small amount of off-beat syncopation can change the entire feel or message of a song and orient it from the spiritual to the sensual.

### **The World’s Singing Techniques**

God instructs His people to sing spiritual songs (Colossians 3:16). Spiritual means holy. It refers to that which is separated *unto* a holy God *from* the unholiness of this world.

There are clear biblical principles that are to be applied to every aspect of the Christian life, including music, and by examining these biblical principles we can discern spiritual from worldly music.

We listed principles of biblical separation in the chapter on rhythm, and the same principles apply to vocal styles, so we will repeat them here.

Spiritual music is music that is not conformed to the world (Romans 12:2).

Spiritual music is music that is not according to the realm of spiritual death (Ephesians 2:1).

Spiritual music is music that is not according to the course of this world (Ephesians 2:2).

Spiritual music is music that is not according to the desires of the flesh and of the old mind (Ephesians 2:3).

Spiritual music is music that is not according to the vanity and the darkened understanding of the old mind (Ephesians 4:17-19).



Spiritual music is music that is unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

Spiritual music is music that is not in friendship with the world (James 4:4).

Spiritual music is music that does not pertain to the “former lusts” (1 Peter 1:13-15).

Spiritual music is music that does not pertain to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16).

The world’s pop music has long employed singing techniques that add a strong sensual or fleshly element. It is physical, appealing to the body. It appeals to and stirs up sensual emotions. It is sexual. The world readily acknowledges this, and the world loves these styles because of the sensual, sexual effect.

Christian artists who borrow from the world’s music also borrow the world’s singing techniques. This is true both in the realm of Contemporary Christian Music and Southern Gospel, but it is not wise or godly.

In the past, there were Southern Gospel groups that didn’t use the world’s vocal techniques. They hit the notes cleanly and did not try to distort their voices. An example is the old Chuck Wagon Gang.

We could also give examples from the shape-note singing movement. It emphasized simple harmony and rhythm that were not adapted from the world of licentious dancing and drinking. The rhythms were straight. The vocalizing was also straight, meaning the notes were hit in a simple, clean manner. There was no sensual element. It was spiritual and not conformed to the world (Romans 12:2).

### **Vocal Sliding and Scooping**

We give audio and video clips of these vocal styles in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* video series found at:

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

**Vocal sliding** is slipping and sliding the voice between notes. It is also called *glissando*.

**Scooping** is attacking a note from above or below its true pitch instead of hitting the note cleanly and directly. It is singing “unnecessary pitches below the first note or below the second one.” It is also called flipping.

These techniques are often used together.

These techniques add a greater element of sensuality and emotionalism to the music.

The 1940s book *How to Sing for Money* said, “Scooping is a common practice ... as a swing effect” (Charles Henderson, p. 36).

Thus, the scooping technique was created as part of the commercial dance music scene, and it works with the jerky syncopated rhythm to create the sensual atmosphere that modern dancers desire.

Musicologist Walter Everett identifies the sensuality of this technique. He says, “Many rock vocalists reach out to their audience largely through the PHYSICALITY of their singing” (*The Foundations of Rock: From “Blue Suede Shoes” to “Suite: Judy Blue Eyes,”* 2008).

“Sliding gives the word some grit and attitude” (Molly’s Music).

Scooping has even been described as “sexual utterances” (Charles Brown, *The Art of Rock & Roll*, 1983, p. 68).

One would think that Christian vocalists would want to get as far from “sexual utterances” as possible!

Elvis Presley and countless other pop sex gods and goddesses have used these techniques to great sensual effect, but never to a godly effect.

Regarding scooping and sliding, Dr. Frank Garlock warns:

“The identical methods employed by the world to make the sound sensual are now being used by many popular contemporary Christian music vocalists. Yet many Christians either do not realize or deliberately ignore the fact that **this is no longer ministry, but pure, sensual, flesh-gratifying entertainment.** ... Scooping is one of the most popular methods of producing a dance hall effect. ... A second characteristic of a worldly sound is flipping below and above the actual written melody line. Listen again to Henderson as he comments on this technique: ‘The classically trained singer has an ingrained respect for any written melody, and hesitates to tamper with it. The born swinger, on the other hand, looks on written melody as simply a convenient starting point for his variations’ (Charles Henderson, *How to Sing for Money*, 1940, p. 85). Is sacred music meant to swing?” (Frank Garlock and Kurt Woetzel, *Music in the Balance*, 1992, pp. 83, 94).

Dr. Garlock identifies the scooping and sliding techniques as sensual swing effects that have no role in sacred Christian music. As we have seen, the word “sacred” means “spiritual,” which is the opposite of worldly.

Walter Everett observes further, “Classical singers traditionally strive for constant beauty of tone, but this is rarely of interest to rock vocalists, who reject the dogma of there being one ‘right’ way to do anything” (*The Foundations of Rock*).

This is a telling statement by a secular musicologist. Note that rock vocalists don’t care about beauty of tone, but God’s people should strive for beauty in everything because we

serve the God of beauty and order, and we are singing about His lovely character.

Further, rock singers contort their voices and slip and slide around the notes because they have rejected absolute truth. Their singing style reflects the philosophy of moral relativism which permeates modern pop music.

The world's style of singing reflects the licentious rock philosophy, regardless if it is used by Christians or non-Christians, liberals, emergents, evangelicals, charismatics, or fundamentalists.

Dr. Frank Garlock observes,

“The identical methods employed by the world to make the sound sensual are now being used by many popular contemporary Christian vocalists. These techniques include swaying and dancing, scooping, vocal sliding, flipping below and above the actual written melody, whispery, breathy voice, and delayed vibrato. The style itself reflects and projects a philosophy.”

Vocal scooping and sliding is not only sensual and reflects a relativistic philosophy, it also draws attention to the singer, which is another major element of both secular pop, contemporary Southern Gospel, and contemporary Christian music.

Consider the comments posted at the YouTube rendition of “In Christ Alone” which we linked to earlier. The comments call attention to the singer and her voice rather than to the message.

“Beautiful voice.”

“What a great voice you have.”

“You got a great voice!”

“You are wonderfully gifted!!!”

“Love your voice!!”

By this technique, attention is immediately drawn to the singer, which is what the world is seeking, but it is not a godly practice in the worship of a thrice-holy God who has proclaimed that He will not give His glory to others.

“For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? AND I WILL NOT GIVE MY GLORY UNTO ANOTHER” (Isaiah 48:11).

Christian musicians who in any sense share in God’s glory while supposedly singing for His honor are committing a great sin.

Yet by aping the world, the very presentation style, technique, and environment of contemporary worship lends itself to exactly that. The singers and musicians are prominently displayed before the congregation. The auditorium is often darkened and spotlights are used to draw more attention to the singers and musicians. Typically the lead singers are attractive people; their dress fashions are sensual; their voices are “shown off”; they move to the music’s rhythm; their images are projected on large screens; there are close-ups of faces, tight shots of instruments, sweeping pans of the worship team.

This is precisely the same technique used in secular forums to glorify rock gods. Secular rock gods don’t say to themselves, “I’m going to go out there and bless my fans.” It’s not about blessing the fans; it’s about showing off the “artists.”

Modern technology produces the most intense glorification of musicians in human history.

Why are contemporary Christian singers and musicians so eager to ape the world?

## **Improvisation**

Closely associated with scooping and sliding and flipping is improvisation. The vocalist uses his or her voice to improvise

on the melody to enhance the rhythm and the sensuality of the music.

Again, it is a “swing effect” with its roots in the blues, jazz, and other forms of licentious music that birthed 1950s rock & roll. It’s about breaking rules.

Dr. Frank Garlock says,

“The word in contemporary music is improvisation. When an instrumentalist or vocalist improvises, he composes and performs simultaneously on the spur of the moment without any specific preparation. New Age music is also constructed on this idea. Charles Henderson writes: ‘Now, apart from the primitive, driving rhythm that lifts the fur on your spine and starts your feet tapping in spite of yourself, what is the outstanding feature of any hot band? The answer--IMPROVISATION--spur of the moment ‘faking’ on the written melody and rhythm’ (Henderson, *How to Sing for Money*, p. 159). In other words, ‘do you own thing,’ blend in, but not in any regimented, prescribed, or planned manner. Again, this same philosophy, which is teaching relativism and promoting music which exemplifies it, is the basis for the New Age Movement. This is the opposite of unity, the opposite of ‘one sound.’ ... It is a sound which is characterized by polarization and discord rather than oneness and unity. The sound of sacred music needs to be the opposite of the sound which was just described” (*Music in the Balance*, pp. 155, 156).

The queen of improvisation is Aretha Franklin. On Thanksgiving Day 2016 she took 4.5 minutes to sing the “Star Spangled Banner” at a Detroit Lions football game because of the extensive improvisation.

An example of vocal sliding and flipping and improvisation can be seen in the following video clip from the 2013 Christmas program of Lancaster Baptist Church, Lancaster, California:

Yet as we have seen, vocal sliding, scooping, improvisation, breathy tone, and vocal fry are all techniques that come from the sexualized world of pop music. They are used to create sensual effects in the listeners.

Things associated with sensuality and sexuality have *no place* in Christian music.

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19).

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Ephesians 2:2-3).

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness” (Ephesians 4:17-19).

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever

therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Peter 1:13-15).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” (1 Peter 4:1-2).

“Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1 John 2:15-17).

The music of a holy God should contain no aspect of the world’s sensual ways. It is unholy confusion. It is sin. It is a reflection of the end-times “after their own lusts” apostasy (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

### **The Emotional Power of Music**

The world’s pop music appeals to the emotions. It reaches “the heart” more than “the head.” It is music to be felt.

And Southern Gospel has had this emphasis for a very long time.



Emotional music is a type of mysticism, which is an experience-oriented approach to life rather than an intellectual.

God gave man emotions. Emotions have an important place in man's life, but we are fallen people in a fallen world and we must keep the emotions in the right place. They must be kept under control of the Spirit of God and in conformity to the Word of God and not allowed to lead one's life.

Music is the perfect vehicle for emotional mysticism. It has been called "the language of the emotions." Dr. Richard Pellegrino, a brain specialist, says,

"[Music has the uncanny power] to trigger a flood of human emotions and images that have **the ability to instantaneously produce very powerful changes in emotional states**. Take it from a brain guy, in 25 years of working with the brain, I still cannot affect a person's state of mind the way that one simple song can" (*Billboard*, Jan. 23, 1999).

Robert Jourdain says,

"Music seems to be the most immediate of all the arts. ... Music possesses us. ... It really is as if some 'other' has entered not just our bodies, but our intentions, taking us over" (*Music, the Brain and Ecstasy*, 1997, p. 328).

Rock/pop music has always been mystical. It is all about being "hooked on a feeling." The lyrics have never been the most important element. Rock is not so much about thinking as it is about emoting. It is enjoyed more with the body and soul than the heart and mind.

Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones expressed it this way: "The minute *rock'n'roll* reaches the head, forget it. Rock'n'roll starts from the neck down" (Victor Bokris, *Keith Richards: The Biography*).

Rock videos are pure mysticism. Bob Pitman, founder of MTV, said: "The strongest appeal you can make is emotionally. If you can get their emotions going, make them forget their logic, you've got 'em" ("MV Is Rock Around the Clock," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Nov. 3, 1982).

Rock god Jimi Hendrix explained the transformative power of music as follows,

"I can explain everything better through music. You hypnotize people and when you get people at their weakest point, you can preach into their subconscious what we want to say.... ATMOSPHERES ARE GOING TO COME THROUGH MUSIC, because the music is a spiritual thing of its own ... The music flows from the air; that's why I CONNECT WITH A SPIRIT, and when they come down off THIS NATURAL HIGH, they see clearer, feel different things" ("An Infinity of Jimis," Hendrix interview with Robin Richman, *Life* magazine, Oct. 3, 1969).

The most emotional, mystical element of rock is not the lyrics; it is the music itself.

"Heavy rock is body music designed to bypass your brain ..." (Dave Roberts, *Buzz* columnist, a Christian rock magazine in Britain, April 1982).

"Don't listen to the words, it's the music that has its own message. ... I've been stoned on the music many times" (Timothy Leary, New Age guru and promoter of LSD, *Politics of Ecstasy*).

"[Rock music] is THE STRONGEST DRUG IN THE WORLD" (Steven Tyler of Aerosmith, *Rock Beat*, Spring 1987, p. 23)

Southern Gospel is also emotion oriented. A typical Southern Gospel service or concert is all about a feeling! It's about getting excited and whooping and hollering, maybe even running around and jumping over the pews if we're really in the Spirit.

\* Southern Gospel shouting service

Hovie Lister of the Statesmen could “turn the listeners’ emotions on and off just like that” (Steve Taylor, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 31).

Laverne Tripp had “the ability to sway a crowd of people with his crying and country-sound singing” (H.T. Spence, *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*, p. x).

This is typical Southern Gospel singing. It aims directly for the emotions.

As we observed in the chapter “The World’s Singing Styles,” emotions aren’t wrong in themselves but when emotions lead in the Christian life and music, it is unscriptural and dangerous.

Commenting on the 2016 Burlington Revival in Burlington, North Carolina, which was driven by Southern Gospel music, one discerning brother observed:

“When your Christian life is built upon and maintained by a fleshly, emotional, subjective experience, that is how you operate when anyone challenges it with objective Biblical truth. These ... folks have been led astray and failed by their spiritual leaders, who will be held accountable for not truly watching for their souls. True salvation should naturally bring with it a loyalty to God’s Word above all else. **I’m telling you, most Independent Baptists, especially in the south, are charismatic-like in their theology. The Bible is only something to validate their experience, instead of their experience being tested by the Word of God. THEY ARE IN MANY WAYS SLAVES TO THEIR FEELINGS INSTEAD OF BOUND TO THE SCRIPTURES.**”

That is one of the great errors of and dangers of Southern Gospel today.

Many of the most popular Southern Gospel songs are oriented toward emotion.

Consider Bill Gaither's hugely popular song "**He Touched Me**," which is considered one of the "top 100 greatest songs in Christian music."

Shackled by a heavy burden  
    'Neath a load of guilt and shame  
Then the hand of Jesus touched me  
    And now I am no longer the same.  
He touched me, Oh, He touched me  
    And Oh the joy that floods my soul  
Something happened and now I know  
    He touched me and made me whole.  
Since I met this blessed Savior  
    And since he cleansed and made me whole  
I will never cease to praise Him  
    I'll shout it while eternity rolls  
Oh He touched me, oh He touched me  
    And oh the joy that floods my soul  
Something happened and now I know  
    He touched me and made me whole.

The true gospel *can be read into* this song, but the lyrics themselves present no clear gospel message. There is only a vague reference to being shackled by a heavy burden and being cleansed and made whole. There is no mention of sin, the sacrificial death of Christ, or His resurrection, which is the only saving gospel message (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

The reference to "a load of guilt and shame" can be interpreted as being laden with sin and under God's judgment, but it can also be interpreted in any number of other ways in today's heresy-filled Christian world. It can even be interpreted psychologically as a loss of self-esteem.

Any false gospel will fit into this song, so it is entirely ecumenical, and Gaither has publicly stated that this is one of his major goals with music. (See the chapter "The Gaithers.") A Roman Catholic who trusts Jesus *and* Mary, a Pentecostal

who is “holding out faithful,” a Mormon who has experienced a “burning bosom,” even a “gay Christian” such as Marsha Stevens who “feels” confident of God’s acceptance can be “blessed” by this song.

The emphasis of the song is not on a sound doctrinal content, but on being touched, joy flooding the soul, shouting. The emphasis is on emotion.

This is pure Southern Gospel.

The music’s emotional emphasis and lack of strong biblical substance tend to encourage a mindset wherein the hearers don’t carefully test everything by Scripture. They are led by their emotions rather than by God’s Word. Typically, they don’t go to church to grow through doctrinal teaching with serious biblical and spiritual depth; they go to church to feel something, and that carries over into their daily lives.

The vapid music tends to create a weak Christian life and practice, and it is one that grows weaker with each passing generation. There are exceptions, but lovers of Southern Gospel tend not to be serious students of God’s Word. They are content with bits and pieces. They like their preaching to be as emotional and fleshly exciting and as biblically shallow as their music.

When they hear biblical instruction and reproof about music, they react emotionally rather than as mature Christians as described in Hebrews 5:14.

I have seen this throughout the Southern Gospel world, and it has been true for decades.

**The Bible warns against the emotional, mystical approach.**

***The emotional, mystical approach is contrary to the Bible’s warning to be soberminded.***

“Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober” (1 Th. 5:6).

“But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation” (1 Th. 5:8).

“That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience” (Titus 2:2).

“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children” (Titus 2:4).

“Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded” (Titus 2:6).

“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer” (1 Peter 4:7).

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

To be sober is to be spiritually vigilant, constantly alert, on guard, cautious, on the lookout for enemies and deception. It is the mindset of a Christian who knows that he has powerful, relentless, unseen enemies, and he must be on guard.

To be sober means to be in control of your mind. It means to prove ALL things (1 Thess. 5:21). It means to “try the spirits” (1 John 4:1). The Bible warns that the simple man is gullible and “believeth all things,” whereas the prudent man “looketh well unto his going” (Prov. 14:15). The gullible individual attends a CCM or Southern Gospel concert or “Camp Meeting” or church service and lets his emotions go wild and is not in a testing mindset. He doesn’t believe in “judging.” He doesn’t like “negativity” and “criticism.” He is not on the lookout for spiritual danger. He just goes with the flow of the meeting and the music. The prudent man, on the other hand, knows that this world is filled with spiritual danger, that the devil appears as an angel of light and his ministers as ministers of righteousness (2 Co. 11:14-15), so

he tests *everything* by God's Word, both in church and out of church.

***The emotional, mystical approach is contrary to the Bible's warning about the deception of the human heart.***

"The heart is deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).

As a consequence of the deception of the fallen human heart, the Bible warns, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered" (Proverbs 28:26). The Bible says, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5-6).

Again, this is the careful, alert, sober, testing mindset that the wise child of God will have at all times in this fallen world.

Any Christian music that tries to stir up my emotions and carry me into an emotional experience is deeply suspect.

I don't want to be *emotionally or physically controlled* by Christian music. I want to *think about* Christian music. Good Christian music does not aim to stir the emotions or move the feet. It aims to impart truth to the heart and mind, and that truth then edifies and sanctifies the life.

Observe that it was in the context of Christian music that Paul warned about being drunk.

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:18-19).

Spiritual Christian music is not to be associated with drunkenness in any form, which is to be controlled by a foreign substance. I can be drunk with wine, liquor, drugs, the pop culture, fashion, music, and any other thing that

takes control of my mind and heart so that I am no longer sober and rational and spiritually alert.

***The emotional, mystical approach is contrary to the Bible's emphasis on living by faith.***

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17).

“But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1).

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed” (John 20:29).

“For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Co. 5:7).

“So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

The true Christian life is a life of faith lived according to God's Word. Faith is not sight or feeling. It is believing God's Word. It does not come by emotions; it comes by God's Word.

When this important truth is applied to Christian music, we learn that our music must be oriented exclusively to teaching God's Word. Only by that means are God's people strengthened in their faith and enabled to please God.

If music is oriented toward emotionalism rather than the clear teaching of God's Word, that is not the ministry of true faith, it is a sensual counterfeit.

Southern Gospel's emphasis on emotionalism is unscriptural and very dangerous.



We give audio and video clips of the music and vocal styles mentioned in the previous study in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* video series found at:

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

# **The Music Issue in a Nutshell**

This is the text to the video presentation by this title which is part of the series *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*. The video is packed with graphics, audio and video clips.  
<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

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This is a summary of *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*.

This is what I would like to say to every preacher about the music issue.

## **We Are Living in the Midst of End-time Apostasy.**

Understanding Bible prophecy is one of the fundamentals to understanding the music issue.

Prophecy enables us to understand our times.

Prophecy teaches us that we live in a time of terrible apostasy.

The apostasy is described in the great prophecy of 2 Timothy 3-4.

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy...” (2 Ti. 3:1-4).

The essence of apostasy is that men shall be lovers of their own selves (2 Ti. 3:2). We live in the selfie age: my life, my music, my fashion, my tattoos, my shoes, my Facebook page, my chosen sex, my church!

Apostasy describes the course of the church age. “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Ti. 3:13).

Apostasy is described in a nutshell in 2 Timothy 4:3-4, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound

doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Here apostasy is defined: “turn away their ears from the truth.” It is willful; it is a heart problem.

Apostasy does not endure sound doctrine. “Endure” is the Greek *anecho*, “to suffer” (Mt. 17:17), “bear with” (Ac. 18:14).

Apostasy is to have ears that itch for something new. This is a perfect description of modern Christianity, including “evangelicalism.”

Apostasy turns to fables (e.g., Mary Queen of Heaven, Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon, theistic evolution).

Apostasy lives according to its own lusts. This is a perfect description of Contemporary Christian Music.

Apostasy is led by heaps of teachers. Never in the history of the church age have there been so many teachers, and the vast majority of them are not teaching the truth.

The doctrine of apostasy teaches us to expect apostasy in church music. It is insane to believe that the devil does not have his hand in church music. Music is the heart and soul of the global pop culture and the ecumenical movement.

Biblical separation is more important than ever before. Biblical separation is not Phariseism. It is a matter of obedience to God. It is spiritual protection. It is the path of wisdom. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: FROM SUCH TURN AWAY” (2 Timothy 3:5).

Bible separation is a fundamental of the music issue. It is *impossible* to mess around with contemporary music and NOT build bridges to wrong and evil things, and the Bible plainly warns against this. “Be not deceived: evil

communications corrupt good manner” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Apostasy has exploded in the past 100 years, and music is at its very heart and soul. Music is at the heart of the ecumenical movement. Music is at the heart of the global pop culture with its rebellion against God’s laws and against human nature itself. It is impossible that music could be entirely an innocent, neutral thing.

We must study the issue of music and be very vigilant. The hour is very late. We must be serving and watching for the imminent return of Christ!

### **Men of God Have Warned about the Danger of Contemporary Christian Music.**

Victor Sears, editor, *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981 - “It is THE NEW TROJAN HORSE MOVE OF MODERNISM TO DEADEN OUR CHURCHES TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH” (*Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981).

John Ashbrook, 1991 - “As the message declines, so does the music” (*New Neutralism II: Exposing the Gray of Compromise*).

Ernest Pickering, 1994 - “Perhaps nothing precipitates a slide toward New Evangelicalism more than the introduction of Contemporary Christian Music. This inevitably leads toward a gradual slide in other areas as well until the entire church is infiltrated by ideas and programs alien to the original position of the church” (*The Tragedy of Compromise: The Origin and Impact of the New Evangelicalism*).”

Gordon Sears, evangelist, 2001 - Sears preached with the famous pianist Rudy Atwood and travelled with the Sears Family. He was very saddened before his death by the dramatic change that was occurring in many fundamental Baptist churches. When the standard of music is LOWERED,

then the standard of dress is also lowered. When the standard of dress is lowered, then the standard of conduct is also lowered. When the standard of conduct is lowered, then the sense of value in God's truth is lowered" (*Songfest Newsletter*, April 2001).

Frank Garlock, BJU chapel, March 12, 2001 - "If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards. You need to draw a line concerning your music."

David Sorenson, 2014 - Third generation fundamental Baptist pastor. "When a church begins to move to the left, one of the first changes is its music. It is symptomatic of a church moving from a fundamentalist to an evangelical stance. The basic issue of CCM is a conformity to the world and the world's music. It is a musical rejection of the biblical principle of separation. When the music shifts, a repudiation of separation in general is often not far behind. Dress standards are lowered or eliminated. Preaching against the world and its pursuits evaporates. Fellowship and association with groups and preachers toward the liberal side of the theological spectrum develop" (*Broad Is the Way: Fundamentalists Merging into the Evangelical Mainstream*, 2014).

### **Contemporary Music Brings a Different Philosophy.**

Contemporary worship music is not just music. Even when its lyrics are biblical and its rock rhythm is toned down, it represents a philosophy of Christianity that is opposed to what fundamentalist churches stand for. Contemporary worship music represents a philosophy of

- Judge not
- Be positive
- Don't criticize, be tolerant

- Be openminded
- Lighten up, don't be so strict
- Pursue liberty rather than narrowness
- Don't draw sharp lines of separation
- Have a big tent of associations

The old hymn writers were not all Baptists, but they never turned a separated Baptist church into something completely different.

But this is precisely what contemporary Christian music is doing.

Any church that messes around with contemporary music will be transformed into a rock & roll, judge-not, hate-separatism, ecumenical church. It is inevitable. We have been witnessing this transformation for 30 years.

We have documented this in "Music's Role in the Great Changes among Fundamental Baptists," one of the presentations in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*.

## **Contemporary Music Is a Bridge to the One-world Church.**

Ecumenism is at the heart and soul of Contemporary Christian Music. I don't know of even one prominent CCM artist who believes in biblical separation.

"I've discovered that contemporary worship music bridges any denomination. Today the walls are coming down" (Don Moen, Integrity Music).

CCM drives ecumenical evangelism -- Franklin Graham, Luis Palau, Greg Laurie, etc.

Franklin Graham said that the ecumenical alliance with the Catholic Church and other denominations "was one of the smartest things his father ever did" (*Indianapolis Star*, June 3, 1999).

In 2015, Darlene Zschech and Hillsong joined with Pope Francis for a worship service at the Vatican. On her Facebook page Darlene said, “This is a celebration of unity. ... Amazing days for the Body of Christ.”

Matt Maher calls himself a “musical missionary” to unite Protestants and Catholics (*Christianity Today*, Oct. 27, 2009). He prays to Mary as the Queen of Heaven and believes that she aids in salvation. In July 2012, the Gettys and Stewart Townend joined Matt Maher on NewSongCafe to promote ecumenical unity through music.

### **Changes Happen Incrementally**

The changes don’t happen overnight or all of a sudden. They happen gradually: a little soft rock in the specials, a little change in the standards of dress, a little lightening up in standards for workers.

Little is big!

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” (1 Co. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

“And have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...” Eph. 5:11).

“Prove ALL things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Th. 5:21).

The individual Christian, the Christian home, and the church that is not careful about a little leaven will become apostate. It is inevitable.

### **Unregeneracy, Carnality and Worldliness Is a Fundamental Issue**

Contemporary music is not the only force operating in these transformations. It is unregeneracy, spiritual lukewarmness, worldliness, and carnality that allows contemporary music to

enter. But the music acts within that atmosphere as a transformational agent to carry the church far from its original principles and vision.

If we don't seriously strengthen the spiritual level of our churches and homes, we are doomed. It is life or death.

Consider some biblical tests of the church:

- regenerate membership?
- serious Bible study?
- love for prayer?
- spiritual fellowship?
- serious discipleship?
- discipline?
- zeal for evangelism and world missions?

Consider some biblical tests of the home:

- good husband/wife relationship?
- fathers the spiritual leaders?
- mothers keepers at home?
- godly, separated, pilgrim Christian atmosphere?
- biblical discipline?
- family altars?
- serious Bible study?

Consider some biblical tests of the youth:

- their relationship with God's Word?
- their friends?
- their music?
- their social media pages?
- their smartphones?
- their goals?
- their meditations?



## Soft Rock Is Where the Battle Is Won or Lost

It is essential to learn to discern soft rock, because contemporary music almost always comes softly, at first.

The Gettys are using soft rock to draw “old fashioned” churches into contemporary worship.

Lancaster Baptist Church is using soft rock.

We must understand such things as “**beat anticipation**.” Graham West identified this form of syncopation as a major element of soft rock. He was a fundamental Baptist pastor in Australia who died in 2014 of a brain tumor. He was trained in classical piano and worked in the secular music industry. He wrote scores for both classical and secular music. His video series *The Rhythm of Rock* is available for free download from [tbcc.org.au](http://tbcc.org.au).

“Beat anticipation is syncopation that moves the natural position of the accent by causing **the last note of the musical phrase** to fall off the beat immediately before a naturally accented beat.”

In “The Language of Music Styles,” one of the video presentations of *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, we illustrate beat anticipation with audio clips.

<http://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

Soft rock is as sensual and addicting as hard rock. God’s people can and must learn how to discern soft rock. Many Independent Baptist churches are adapting CCM, but while they think they are removing the “rock” from Christian rock, they are actually just toning it down to “soft rock.”

In “The Language of Music Styles,” we use the example of West Coast Baptist College performing “Prayer for a Friend” by Casting Crowns and “Stronger” by Hillsong. Graham West commented that these pieces are “loaded with Beat Anticipation,” which is a major element of rock.

## **The Southern Baptist Convention Is More Dangerous Than Ever**

Many fundamental Baptists are joining the Southern Baptist Convention.

- Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga
- Thomas Road Baptist, Lynchburg, Virginia
- First Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas
- High Street Baptist, Springfield, Missouri
- Northland Baptist College
- Cedarville Baptist College
- Southwide Baptist Fellowship (by 2007, the number of SBC preachers equaled the number of independent Baptists)

Pastor Eddie Lyons of High Street Baptist, Springfield, who led the church to join the Southern Baptist Convention in 2017, said, “We have the same heart, the same calling. There is no difference between us” (Baptist Press, Feb. 15, 2017).

Consider the Southern Baptist Convention today.

Church discipline is almost unknown.

The churches are incredibly worldly. Pointed preaching against worldliness is extremely rare.

Christian rock is almost 100% accepted.

Deacons exercise unscriptural authority.

Every strange Bible version is accepted.

There is modernism in the liberal arts colleges.

Charismatic heresies are rampant.

New Reformed Calvinism is spreading like wildfire.

Women preachers are accepted (e.g. Beth Moore and Anne Graham Lotz).

Ecumenical evangelism with Rome is 100% accepted (the SBC is Billy Graham's denomination).

More than one million SBC members are yoked with the Masonic Lodge and Eastern Star.

The churches are filled with heresies such as *The Shack* and contemplative prayer.

Southern Baptist President J.D. Greear said in a sermon about homosexuality, Jan. 27, 2019, that "the Bible appears to whisper when it comes to sexual sin compared to it shouts about materialism and religious pride." We wouldn't call God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah a whisper!

At the 2019 Southern Baptist Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, top denominational leaders donned long-haired wigs and performed Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Sweet Home Alabama" for the pleasure of the SBC pastors in attendance. SBC President J.D. Greear danced onstage with two other men to Whitney Houston's filthy "I Wanna Dance with Somebody" during a youth event. The crowd "laughed and cheered" to this ungodly performance. They sang, "When the night falls loneliness calls; oh! I wanna dance with somebody. I want to feel the heat with somebody."

In 2019, Southern Baptist preacher Beth Moore said that she has come to the conclusion that men who oppose women preachers are jealous and carnal and have "the stench of hypocrisy."

The root problem in SBC congregations is unregeneracy. In 2005, SBC evangelist Jim Elliff said, "Our denomination, as much as we love it, is on the main, **unregenerate**" ([www.ccwonline.org/sbc.html](http://www.ccwonline.org/sbc.html)). He presented the fact that only 10% or less of the members of the typical SBC church show up for anything other than Sunday morning service.

The Southern Baptist Convention today is a fulfillment of 2 Timothy 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they

shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

## **Emotions Are Not a Dependable Test of Music**

There is danger in human emotions because of man's fallen condition. The child of God cannot follow his emotions wherever they lead. Just because something makes me happy or gives me pleasure doesn't mean it is right. That is the way of the world. There are the “desires of the flesh” (Eph. 2:3), “vile affections” (Ro. 1:26), “inordinate affection” (Col. 3:5), “affections and lusts” (Ga. 5:24). “Affection” is pathos, meaning to suffer, a strong desire, an aching for something. The life of the Spirit is warfare with the flesh (Ga. 5:16-17); these cannot be reconciled; you are either living after the Spirit or after the flesh at any moment, any day; hard choices must be made; the flesh must be denied. I am to set my affections on things above, not on things on the earth (Col. 3:2). This is a mindset. It means to control my thinking by choosing right heavenly things over wrong earthly things. I must control my desires by using the truth of God's Word.

## **We Live in the Age of the Internet**

Today, church members are only a Google search away from communing with these people *and with all of their associates*.

“I fell in love with this song when it was sung in our church today. I then got home to find the lyrics on the internet” (a comment at a YouTube clip of “We Will Remember” by Tommy Walker).

Pastors who allow CCM to be used in their churches, even in modified form, are encouraging their people to find CCM musicians online and to be influenced by them.

## **Winning This Battle Requires Leadership and Education**

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6).

What is necessary?

- Having a plan to educate the whole church and to keep it educated.
- Setting standards for music.
- Having a policy to maintain the standards.
- Setting standards for the music people.
- Training the people to love good music.
- Providing sources for good music.
- Drawing clear lines.
- It is better to err on the side of being too careful and too “strict” than too tolerant; avoid that which is questionable!
- This is safe, and safe is wise.

Everything about the music must be done on purpose, with spiritual wisdom

- The choice of hymnbook
- The choice of hymns
- Everything about the specials
- The choice of music people
- The types of instruments

# Standards for Music Personnel

1. The singers and musicians must be members of the church in good standing and must meet the church's standards for workers. Following is an example:

- *Good Christian testimony* (2 Co. 8:18). Church workers must have a good testimony so that the name of Christ and the reputation of the church are not injured. There must be a good testimony in the home, in the church, in the school, and on the job.
- *Faithfulness* (1 Co. 4:2; Pr. 25:19). Church workers must be faithful--faithful to the church services and required activities (Heb. 10:25), faithful to their assigned church duties, etc. If a church worker must miss a service or other required activity because of his job or some emergency, he should inform the leaders.
- *Honest reputation* (2 Co. 8:21). Church workers must be honest in their dealings with all men and must have a reputation of honesty. The church worker must not steal, must not lie, and must pay his debts.
- *Diligence* (2 Co. 8:22). Church workers must show diligence in their Christian lives and in their work for the Lord. A person who is lazy and half-hearted should not be involved in Christian ministry. See also Ro. 12:11; Eph. 4:28; 1 Th. 4:11; 2 Th. 3:10.
- *Sound in doctrine* (1 Co. 1:10; 1 Ti. 1:3). Church workers must agree 100% with the doctrines of the Bible as taught by the church.
- *Godly submission to the pastor-elders* (1 Th. 5:12-13; 1 Ti. 5:17; Heb. 13:17). Pastors are not lords over the church (1 Pe. 5:1-3), but they are overseers. God has given them authority to teach the Word of God, to exhort in the way of righteousness, to lead in the fulfillment of the Great

Commission, and to discipline those who err. Thus, as long as the pastors are following the Bible, the church members should submit and be a blessing to and seek for unity in the congregation. (See *Pastors, Deacons, and Church Members*, a free eBook available from [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

- *Separation from the evil things of the world* (Ro. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:15-17; Jas. 4:4). Church workers must avoid such things as unwholesome movies and television programs and YouTube, worldly things on social media, video games, using or selling liquor, and worldly partying. They should also not work in places where such things are conducted. Church workers should avoid worldly music such as cinema music, pop music, and contemporary Christian music.

- *Modest dress*. The following are six Bible principles that teach God's people how to dress properly in this fallen world. Our church requires that the female workers dress in a modest fashion all of the time and not just when they are at church. *First, the Christian's clothing must cover the body properly and not expose the parts of the body which have particular sexual appeal.* Isaiah 47:2 says that for a woman to bare her leg and thigh is nakedness. Thus immodest clothing would include skirts or dresses that show the leg, shorts, slit skirts that tease, low blouses, short blouses that bare the midriff, deep V-necked dresses, backless dresses, halter tops, and any modern swimsuit. Immodest clothing would also include any style that uses flimsy material that can be seen through. *Second, the Christian's clothing does not sensually accent the body.* Tight, clinging attire is as immodest as skimpy attire because the woman's figure is emphasized and accented. *Third, the Christian's clothing is not extravagant.* When the apostle deals with modest attire in 1 Timothy 2:9, he mentions "broided hair, gold, pearls, and costly array." The goal of this world's godless fashion industry is to create a haughty, ostentatious, worldly-wise look, as well as a sexual look. The godly woman will reject such fashions. This means

that a godly woman would not wear excessive jewelry and makeup that would draw undue attention to herself. We must remember to “let our moderation be known unto all men” (Php. 4:5). We must dress for the Lord’s glory and not our own (1 Co. 10:31). *Fourth, the Christian’s clothing is to be sexually distinctive* (Ge. 1:27; De. 22:5; 1 Co. 11:14-15). The woman’s attire and appearance is to be distinctively feminine and the man’s distinctively masculine. The modern unisex movement is in open rebellion against Almighty God and His Word, and the Christian should have nothing to do with any fashion associated with it. We believe that this means the woman should not wear pants, because these have historically been man’s apparel and it was the feminist unisex movement in the 1960s that popularized pants on women. Revolutionary fashion designers such as Mary Quant, inventor of the mini-skirt, wore pants as a sign of “woman’s liberation.” This also means that men should not wear long hair or earrings or anything that is feminine in appearance. *Fifth, the Christian’s clothing is to be identified with holiness and godliness and not to be identified with anything that is evil* (1 Th. 5:22; Eph. 5:11). If a clothing style is clearly identified with rebellion against God’s laws, with anarchy, with sexual license, with blasphemy, with idolatry, with moral decadence, or with any other evil it should not be worn by a Christian. This would prohibit fashions, for example, that have come out of the world of punk and rap, such as long hair on men, tattoos, tight jeans on women, torn jeans, low pants, and such. This would also prohibit tattoos with their historic identification with rebellion and paganism. *Sixth, the Christian’s clothing is to mark him or her as peculiar unto the Lord, as one who has been redeemed from all iniquity and who is zealous for good works* (Titus 2:14). God’s people are to be separate, peculiar, different, set apart, pilgrims, heavenly citizens in a foreign world. We must bear His stamp. We must stand out from the crowd because we are walking by heaven’s light. We must not fly the world’s flag. When God’s people are



no longer peculiar before the world they have compromised the Word of God. We must fear God more than man. We must be more concerned about pleasing God than man. We must not draw back from bearing Christ's reproach in this wicked world. He said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mk. 8:38). Paul said that if we deny Christ, he also will deny us (2 Ti. 2:12).

2. Singers and musicians must be faithful to and on time for everything pertaining to the music ministry, including practices. Being on time means being early enough to be in your place and fully prepared to start. If an individual is sick or otherwise predisposed, he or she must contact the leader as soon as possible.

3. Singers and musicians must maintain a humble, servant spirit, not promoting themselves, not pushing themselves forward, not pressing themselves into a ministry, not requiring that they sing/play frequently.

4. Singers and musicians must be ministers and not performers or self-seekers. "If someone compliments you on a song you played or sang, it is proper to say thank you and then to direct one's attention to the glory of God."

5. Singers and musicians must be well prepared for their part in every musical ministry in the church. Everything must be well practiced. Instruments must be tuned. Hearts must be engaged with the Lord and with the Lord's people. Last minute preparation is not acceptable. Consider the Junior/Teen instrumentalist policy for Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Brogue, Pennsylvania: "Have the hymn/arrangement approved at least one month before you are on the schedule to play, then play it for Mrs. ----- at least two weeks before you are scheduled. Please let Mrs. ----- know the source of

your hymn/arrangement. We want to stay away from last minute preparation. Failure to have your music approved by and played for Mrs. ----- will result in the forfeiture of the hymn/arrangement being played and will result in not being on the special music schedule the next quarter. Mrs. ----- may take time to explain why the hymn you chose may not be the best choice. She may ask you to select a different hymn, practice more and follow up with her, and she may give you pointers on dynamics, tempo, timing, posture, etc.”

6. When ministering in the services, singers and musicians must be dressed properly, clean and neat and well groomed, and must present themselves in a good manner. “Realize you are always on display when you are on the platform. Do a mirror check in between services before you come on the platform. Avoid platform distractions (talking, whispering, chewing gum, yawning, open eyes during prayer, looking angry or bored, etc.). Facial expressions and body language communicate a lot! Minimize movement to and from the platform so as to not distract from what is taking place in the service” (Chris Starr).

## Standards of Church Music

The following standards are summarized and abbreviated from “Biblical Principles of Music,” one of the chapters in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book*. There we find the full teaching on these points, plus references to further explanation and training. *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* is also a video series. The book and the videos are available for free viewing and downloading -

<https://www.wayoflife.org/satanic-attack/>

The churches need to train the people in music so well that they can test it by biblical standards. They must be able to discern such things as soft rock, honky-tonk, dance rhythms, chords as used in CCM, and worldly vocal styles.

It is not enough to publish a list of unacceptable music. Such lists are helpful, but any list will be obsolete in a short time. Further, no list is exhaustive.

### **The music must be sound in doctrine (Col. 3:16).**

The words of the songs must be theologically sound according to the teaching of the Bible. A great deal of Contemporary Christian Music is unacceptable because it represents ecumenical charismatic doctrine or it presents a vague message that lacks doctrinal clarity and strength. God's people must weigh every song and hymn by the absolute standard of God's Word. Just because a song is in a good hymnbook doesn't mean that it is sound theologically. Just because it has a pleasant tune and people like it doesn't mean that it is acceptable.

We want more than just theological soundness, we want theological depth. We want richness of truth that will edify deeply and broadly. This is why we don't want only a diet of revivalist songs. These were written for a mixed-multitude evangelistic forum, such as those by Ira Sankey for D.L.

Moody crusades and Homer Rodeheaver for Billy Sunday crusades, and often lack depth. Examples are “Tell Me the Old Old Story,” “There’ll Be No Dark Valley,” “Wonderful Words of Life” (the title words are repeated 10 times), and “Trusting Jesus.”

There is also a need for hymns of greater spiritual and doctrinal substance to challenge the people and better educate them and to build them up to a higher level. The church’s music people must choose songs with good theological content and spiritual depth rather than those that are shallow or merely sentimental. We need more spiritual meat and potatoes hymns and less Rice Krispies and donuts.

“Godly music is word-enriched and loaded with sound doctrine. Godly music packages Bible doctrines in memorable format” (Chris Starr).

**The music must emphasize “melody” (Eph. 5:19).**

Melody is the simplest part of music. It is the basic tune. It is the part that can be sung and hummed and whistled.

A good melody reinforces the words and helps God’s people remember the words and edify themselves with the words all during their days.

By emphasizing melody, God’s Word is teaching us to keep the music simple so that it doesn’t distract from the message of the words. There should be a good singable melody and the rest of the music should never overwhelm the melody. The music must never become so complicated or harmonic or loud that it drowns out the simple melody. In sacred music, a simple musical arrangement is superior to an overly complicated one.

**The music must be spiritual and non-worldly in sound (Ro. 12:2; Eph. 4:17-19; 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 4:4; 1 Pe. 2:11; 1 Jo. 2:15-16).**

“Spiritual” means set apart for God, different from the world. Spiritual is that which is under the control of the Spirit of God, as explained in the verse previous to Ephesians 5:19. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” Spiritual is the opposite of carnal, fleshly. “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.” Spiritual is the opposite of the unfruitful works of darkness that are mentioned in Ephesians 5:11. Spiritual is the opposite of worldliness.

Paul is saying that God’s people are to sing songs that are holy, that are sacred, that are set apart for God, that are not carnal and fleshly, that are different in quality from the songs of the world, that are morally pure, that are of a heavenly flavor rather than a worldly.

The church’s music will not sound like the world’s pop music and the music that the world uses for dancing and drinking and partying. The music of a holy God should contain no aspect of the world’s sensual ways.

Some styles of music that we purposefully avoid are dance syncopation (e.g., the backbeat, beat anticipation), honky-tonk styles (ragtime, boogie woogie, etc., that are popular in Southern Gospel), sensual vocal styles (e.g., scooping, sliding, breathiness, vocal fry), soft, overly emotional styles that are created by the wrong use of chords (e.g., unresolving chord cadences). The “soft sound” that weakens the power, dynamism, majesty, spiritual conviction, and militarism of sacred music.

We avoid the use of drums and electric guitars, because they are so totally identified with rock music and so easily used in a pop music fashion. (An exception is the use of drums in a timpani section of an orchestra.) (We must realize, of course, that rock can be played easily on a piano or an acoustic guitar.)

See “The Language of Music Styles” for a basic education on how to judge styles of music. This is one segment of The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music, a video series available at [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).

**The music must edify (1 Co. 14:26).**

“Edify” means to build up in the faith by means of hearing and understanding the truth of God’s Word.

*All things being done unto edification means that sacred music must emphasize the message.* The message must be clear so that it speaks to the people’s minds and hearts and thus edifies. Nothing must be allowed to detract from this. The musical instruments can be too loud and drown out the message. The music can also be so complex that it hinders the message. If the harmonies, for example, are so complex that the message is not clear, that is not good sacred music.

*All things being done unto edification means there is no place for entertainment in sacred music.* We want to purposefully and emphatically avoid anything that speaks of entertainment. This is why we do not applaud special music. This is why we don’t use sensual vocal techniques that draw attention to the singer (scooping, sliding, breathiness, vocal fry). This is why we don’t use video cameras to spotlight the singers and musicians and highlight them on video screens. These things are the way of performance and entertainment, not the way of true worship. It is carnally distracting.

*All things being done unto edification means that each song should be selected because of its message.* If the message is theologically wrong (e.g., “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”) or weak (e.g., “Church in the Wildwood”), there is no edification.

**The music must not produce a charismatic style mystical experience (“be sober,” 1 Peter 1:13; 5:8).**

ntemporary worship music is designed to create an emotional experience, a sensual experience, as opposed to a sacred music style that edifies through the understanding. Toward this end, contemporary musicians use music with sensual dance rhythms, non-resolving chord cadences, repetition, electronic modulation, and other elements so that people will get carried away emotionally.

We reject any church music that is designed to create a highly emotional state or that produces any sort of hypnotic effect.

**The music must not borrow from and thus build bridges to the world of contemporary Christian music (Ro. 16:17-18; 1 Co. 10:21; 15:33; 2 Co. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11; 2 Ti. 3:5; Re. 18:4).**

Contemporary Christian Music is a major element of building the apostate one-world church and represents this world with all of its doctrinal, spiritual, and moral dangers.

In former times, God's people were not in much danger of being influenced by the authors of songs and hymns. But the Internet has changed that dramatically. Now if a song is sung in a church, the people can go online and find the author and communicate quite intimately with him or her and his associates and his "world."

We reject any music that is written by contemporary musicians in order to avoid building bridges to these people and to their associates and to the dangerous ecumenical world that they represent.

**The music must aim for excellence (Php. 1:10; 1 Co. 10:31).**

Everything about the church's music must be done on purpose, with biblical and spiritual wisdom, always aiming for the very best, the very highest, never satisfied with mediocrity, progressing in excellence. This is not for the glory of man, but for the glory of God.

We will aim for excellence in the standards for singers and musicians, in the selection of every song and hymn, in the conducting of every aspect of the song service, and in the quality of the singing and playing.

**The music must be unquestionably right and safe (1 Th. 5:21-22).**

To hold fast only that which is good, avoiding even the very appearance of evil is the highest possible standard for music. The standard is not just the bare minimum, not mediocrity, not borderline, not questionable in any way.

This is one reason why we avoid the use of drums and electric guitars. Even if they are used to play the right kind of sound, they are too intimately identified with rock music, and we want to avoid all such identity.

This is our fundamental music standard. If a song or hymn is questionable, we want to avoid it. If we aren't sure if it is right, sound, and healthy, we want to avoid it. There is a wealth of unquestionably sound, doctrinally correct, spiritual, non-worldly, non-charismatic music. To avoid a piece of questionable music never harms a church, but using questionable music can definitely bring harm.

This requires constant testing of the church music.

This is the standard of wisdom and safety.

**The music must avoid incrementalism (1 Co. 5:6; Ga. 5:9).**

When it comes to church music, little can be big. The wrong music usually enters a church gradually, not overnight. One way it enters is through specials, choruses, and youth ministries. When this happens, the church is doomed to continue moving away from spiritual and toward contemporary unless there is a dramatic move to stop the progression, which rarely happens.



The music must be overseen by the pastors (Ac. 20:28; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pe. 5:2).

The pastors will oversee the music themselves and/or they will appoint the *right people* to be in charge of the church's music. They will approve all special music.

# Resources on Sacred/Contemporary Music

Cloud, David

Way of Life Literature, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org)

*A Baptist Church on the Slippery Slope* (free eBook)

*Baptist Music Wars* (free eBook)

*Biblical Principles of Music* (free report)

*Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians* (free eBook)

*Rock Music vs. the God of the Bible* (free eBook)

*The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music* (free video series)

*The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music - The Book* (free eBook)

*Suggested Music Recordings* (free report)

*Training for Song Leaders* (free report)

*What Every Christian Should Know about Rock Music* (free eBook)

*The Cyber Hymnal* - nearly 15,000 hymns and songs; lyrics, music, biographies, history, audio, photos, drawings  
[hymntime.com](http://hymntime.com)

Fisher, Tim - *The Battle for Christian Music and Harmony at Home: Straight Answers to Help You Build Healthy Music Standards*

Garlock, Frank

*The Language of Music*

*Music in the Balance*

*The Language of Music*

*Pop Goes the Music*

(We must warn that Majesty Music and Frank Garlock are embracing Townend-Getty Music, which is a major change in philosophy, is a first step in the acceptance of contemporary music, and will probably reverse all of the much good they have done over the decades. See “Bob Jones, Majesty Music,

New Reformed Calvinism, and the Gettys,” one of the presentations in *The Satanic Attack on Sacred Music*, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

Hymnary.org - A vast archive containing backgrounds of hymns, lyrics, music, meter, biographies of hymnodists, photos, drawings, audio, links to PDFs of old hymnals, etc. The site features hundreds of old hymnals and some newer ones, such as *Favorite Hymns of Praise*.

Hymnologyarchive.com - A vast archive containing backgrounds of hymns, biographies of hymnodists, photos, drawings, audio, links to PDFs of old hymnals, etc.

Lucarini, Dan - *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement*

Kelly, Tim - Music Fundamentals

<http://cbcstratton.com/media/2016-music-conference-with-pastor-tim-kelly/>

Lynch, Ken - *Biblical Music in a Contemporary World*

Makulina, John- *Measuring the Music: Another Look at the Contemporary Christian Music Debate* Majesty Music and

Music Education Ministries, [tbcc.org.au](http://tbcc.org.au)

*Essential Theory of Rhythm*

*The History of Western Music*

*Music and Your Church*

*The Rhythm of Rock*

*Sanctification and Your Music*

Osbeck, Kenneth - *Singing with Understanding*

Sears, Gordon - *Apostasy and Deception in Christian Music* (out of print)

Southern Cross Baptist Church, Engadine, NSW, Australia

*Music Conference 2017*

<http://www.scbc.org.au/music-conference.aspx>

*Music Philosophy*

<http://www.scbc.org.au/music.aspx>

Spence, H.T. - *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*

Woychuk, N.A. - *Singing Psalms with Isaac Watts and a Biography* (a good study of and presentation of Watts Psalter)

## **HYMNALS**

### ***Living Hymns***

It was first published by Al Smith in 1972. The latest edition is published by Paul Chappell's Striving Together Ministries. It has 887 songs and hymns. There is no author index, but I tried to look at the author of every song. There are two by the Gaithers but none by any of the other contemporary worship artists, as far as I could see. It has hymns that are rarely seen, such as Charles Weigle's lovely "No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus." There are little-known hymns by old-time fundamentalists such as R.A. Torrey, James Gray, and Lewis Sperry Chafer. Editions of this hymnal are available for orchestral instruments.

<https://strivingtogether.com/collections/living-hymns>

### ***Majesty Hymns***

We don't recommend this as a church's main hymnal, but it is a good supplement, because editions of the hymnal are available for orchestral instruments. (We don't recommend Majesty Music's latest hymnal *Rejoice Hymns*, as it contains many contemporary worship songs by Getty/Townend and others. It is very sad to see Majesty Music moving in this direction.)

<https://www.majestymusic.com/church-hymnals/majesty-hymns.html>

***Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs*** (new hymnal published in 2018, over 980 songs)

[www.melodypublications.com](http://www.melodypublications.com)

### ***Singing Psalms with Isaac Watts***

A good study of and presentation of Watts Psalter. The tunes are included for singing by meter.

### ***Songs and Hymns of Revival***

A large selection. The selection tends more toward the Revivalist tradition. Some of the Gaither songs are included, but otherwise most of the entries are sound. Editions of this hymnal are available for orchestral instruments. (We don't recommend the Southern Gospel music published by Golden State Baptist College.) North Valley Publications, Santa Clara, CA

[www.nvpublications.org](http://www.nvpublications.org)

A list of songs can be found at the following link -  
<http://hymnal.calvarybcsv.org>

### ***Trinity Hymnal (Baptist edition)***

It has 774 songs and hymns. The following comments are by Thomas Ross: "The hymns almost all have the same sort of richness and content as the psalms God has given us both to sing and to model uninspired hymns after. There is very little that is vapid and trivial. Furthermore, they actually have hymns on things like believer's immersion. If a hymn has a doctrinal problem they will fix it so we don't sing lies to the Lord. (They are not perfect in this but caring and trying is very good.) It is much better than *Living Hymns*, in my view, and significantly better than *Great Hymns of the Faith*, although that hymnal is decent. I would love it if more churches would sing God's glorious praise from a hymnal like that one.

### ***Trinity Hymnal piano accompaniments***

The tunes to 741 songs and hymns in the Trinity Hymnal  
<https://www.neusong.com/accompaniments>