

Baptist

**MUSIC
WARPS**



DAVID W. CLOUD

DVD INCLUDED

Independent Baptist Music Wars

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This edition July 14, 2016

ISBN 978-1-58318-179-9



Published by Way of Life Literature
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www.wayoflife.org

Canada: Bethel Baptist Church
4212 Campbell St. N., London Ont. N6P 1A6
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Printed in Canada by
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

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Independent Baptist
Music Wars

The Spirit in Which This Book Is Written

This book is not written in the spirit of defending old music. We don't believe that good Christian music stopped being written when Fanny Crosby died or that rhythm is wrong or that Christian music should be played only on pianos or organs.

This book is written in the spirit of deep concern for the truth.

When I was converted in 1973 from a “hippy” background, I fell in love with God's Word. It was thrilling to know that Jesus Christ is Almighty God and the Bible is His compassionate revelation to needy mankind. From almost the very day I was saved in a motel room in Daytona Beach, Florida, I shared the attitude and philosophy described by the Psalmist.

“Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way” (Psalm 119:128).

The Bible is the divinely-inspired Word of God. Everything it says is right, and everything that is contrary to it is wrong. The Psalmist not only loved the truth; he hated error.

This is the spirit in which I approach the subject of Christian music. It is not a “legalistic” spirit, as has been slanderously reported in this age of apostasy; it is a godly, scriptural spirit.

This book is written in the spirit of judging doctrine and practice and fruit, not hearts.

The Lord alone can judge the hearts of men, and it is before Him alone that the child of God will stand to give account for his earthly life.

On the other hand, He has given His people the task in this present life of proving all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21), of being Berean Christians (Acts 17:11), of watching out for false teachers (Matthew 7:15; 24:11, 24), of guarding against unsound doctrine (1 Timothy 1:3), of marking and separating from error (Romans 16:17), and of earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

We cannot judge men's hearts, but we can and must judge doctrine and practice.

This book is written in the spirit of marking and avoiding end-time apostasy.

One of the fundamental principles of my Christian worldview, derived from the Bible, is that apostasy will increase throughout the church age and will explode in its last hours.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1).

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come” (2 Timothy 3:1).

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

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

“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 Timothy 4:3-4).

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (2 Peter 2:1).

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18).

My responsibility as a child of God living in this age is to mark and avoid this apostasy, which means that I must live in great caution. I must not be gullible when it comes to Bible teaching and practice. I must understand that Satan has infiltrated the Christian faith with his ministers and fables in an attempt to undermine the truth and lead people astray. I must understand that the enemy is very subtle and clever and that error will be disguised. I am warned by Christ Himself that some end-time error can deceive the very elect, if possible (Mat. 24:24).

I must test every preacher, every singer, every theology, every movement with God’s Word in dependence upon the Holy Spirit’s enlightenment.

This is the spirit in which I have approached the Christian music issue ever since I was saved. This is not Pharisaism. It is biblical Christianity. It is not carnality; it is wisdom.

According to the apostle Paul, the one who judges all things by God’s Word is spiritual.

“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things...” (1 Corinthians 2:15).

This book is written in the spirit of humility.

I don't think of myself as being better than the CCM musicians I mention in this report. I am just a sinner saved by Christ's amazing grace. I am under no delusions of spiritual grandeur. I know exactly what I am spiritually apart from the grace of Jesus Christ: a zero with the rim rubbed out!

The Lord being my witness, I don't want to exalt myself; I want to exalt Christ and His Word.

Contrary to what many think, I would not be pleased to see only "fundamentalists" in heaven. I will not be shocked to find people there that I have warned about in this life. In fact, I believe there are many saved people involved in the Contemporary Christian Music movement.

In heaven, believers will have unity, because God will straighten us out! But in this present life we *must* judge one another's teaching and practice by God's Word and let the chips fall where they may, even to the point of separation.

If we don't do this we are disobedient to God's clear commands.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

This book is written in the spirit of caution.

The Lord being my witness, I don't want to take away anyone's liberty in Christ. Romans 14 teaches that if Scripture doesn't forbid something, there is personal liberty before God.

If I were not convinced that Contemporary Christian Music is unscriptural and spiritually dangerous, I would not oppose it.

Repeatedly through the decades I have begged the Lord to give me wisdom so that I don't preach my own opinions and exalt them to the place of absolute truth, and I trust that God has helped me.

This book is written in the spirit of serious research.

My warnings against Contemporary Christian Music are not half-cocked “cheap shots” and are not something that I have merely borrowed from other people.

I have done a massive amount of research into secular rock and “Christian rock.” As a foundation in music, 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.

As a foundation for understanding the essence of rock music, I lived the rock & roll lifestyle for many years before I was saved. Rock is not merely music; it is a philosophy and a lifestyle, and I understand that at the most intimate level.

This is the sixth book I have written on music, totaling 2,100 pages.

- 1974, *Mom and Dad Sleep while the Children Rock in Satan's Cradle* (60 pages)
- 2000, *Rock Music vs. the God of the Bible* (420 pages)
- 1998, *Contemporary Christian Music under the Spotlight* (650 pages)
- 2006, *Contemporary Christian Music: Some Questions Answered and Some Warnings Given* (190 pages)
- 2011, *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Music* (525 pages)

- 2014, *Independent Baptist Music Wars* (285 pages)
- 2014, *Southern Gospel Music* (30 pages)

I have also published many DVD presentations on music, including the eight-part series *Music for Good or Evil*, currently available from Way of Life Literature.

I have spent countless hours researching contemporary Christian music. I have read most of the books supporting CCM. I have listened to hundreds of contemporary songs and studied the lyrics. I have analyzed the most popular artists and bands. 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. And I have communicated with large numbers of supporters of Contemporary Christian Music.

Further, I am an ordained preacher and church planter with 40+ years experience.

Those are my credentials for writing this book.

Why We Are Opposed to CCM in Brief

Contemporary Christian Music is a jungle of end-time apostasy.

Consider the following facts:

✓ that CCM has an illicit relationship with the world, which the apostle John plainly stated is “not of God” (1 John 5:15-17)

✓ that CCM represents the charismatic movement in all of its dangerous heretical weirdness (e.g., gibberish speaking, spirit slaying, holy shaking, holy laughter, holy drunkenness, word-faith name-it-and-claim-it, latter rain miracle revival, fourth dimension prayer, end-time prophets and apostles)

✓ that CCM is thoroughly ecumenical and closely affiliated with Rome

✓ that most CCM artists love Dietrich Bonhoeffer and C.S. Lewis and a galaxy of other rank heretics

✓ that CCM is permeated with Roman Catholic contemplative prayer mysticism

✓ that CCM artists love wretchedly corrupt “Bibles” such as *The Message*

✓ that large numbers of CCM artists love *The Shack* and its idolatrous god

✓ that CCM is widely infiltrated with homosexuality

It should be obvious to any born again, Bible-believing Christian that we are dealing with “another spirit” rather than the Spirit of God who is the holy Spirit of Truth and Righteousness (John 4:23; 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:6).

We have provided extensive documentation of these serious charges in this book as well as in the larger *Directory*

of Contemporary Worship Musicians, which we have made available as a free eBook at www.wayoflife.org.

“For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Ephesians 5:9).

Contemporary Worship Music Permeating Fundamental Baptists

We are witnessing a wholesale collapse among fundamental Baptists in regard to the conviction that contemporary worship music is wrong and dangerous.

Whereas this was the overwhelming consensus just a few years ago, the consensus now has formed around the position that CCM can be used in moderation, that it is OK to “adapt” it to a more traditional sacred sound and presentation technique.

The more “conservative” contemporary worship artists such as the Gettys are considered safe, and their music is sung in churches and included in new hymnals published by independent Baptists.

As usual, the driving force behind this change is the example set by prominent leaders, churches, and schools, including the following:

Lancaster Baptist Church

Lancaster Baptist Church, Lancaster, California, is the home of West Coast Baptist College, one of the largest independent Baptist schools. It is led by Paul Chappell.

A couple of years ago, Southern Baptist Ed Stetzer rightly commented in his blog that “Pastor Chappell is arguably the most influential IFB pastor in America.”

This is why we have focused many of our warnings toward Lancaster, though we have not hesitated to mention many others, such as Pensacola, Bob Jones, Northland, Majesty Music, Bible Baptist Fellowship, and Southwide Baptist Fellowship.

The adaptation of contemporary music at Lancaster/West Coast is far reaching and extends back many years.

Following are some examples of contemporary worship songs that have been used there, and to my knowledge this practice has never been publicly renounced. This list could be greatly enlarged if one had the time and inclination to do the research.

By this practice, churches such as Lancaster are building bridges to the dangerous world of the one-world “church” that these people represent. Most of these contemporary rockers are affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, as we have documented in *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, and to our knowledge, not one would condemn such affiliation. These unscriptural bridges will definitely be crossed by many of the people in these compromising churches, particularly the young people, and the results will be devastating to a sound Bible-believing stance.

“Hallelujah to the Lamb” by **Don Moen** has been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Moen is a one-world church builder who thinks that God is the author of the weird charismatic “laughing revival.”

“In Christ Alone” by **Getty/Townend** has been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. The Gettys are one-world church builders. In July 2012, they joined Roman Catholic Matt Maher on NewsongCafe to promote ecumenical unity.

“Stronger” by **Darlene Zschech/Hillsong** was performed by Lancaster high school’s mixed ensemble in 2011, and Hillsong’s “Mighty to Save” was performed in February 2012. Zschech/Hillsong are one-world church builders who have performed for Catholic Youth Day and Pope Benedict.

“Majesty, Worship His Majesty” by **Jack Hayford** has been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. “Majesty” is a Pentecostal “kingdom now” anthem, and Hayford is a one-world church builder who says that God personally told him not to preach against the Roman Catholic Church.

“Great Is the Lord” and “How Majestic Is Your Name” by **Michael W. Smith** have been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Smith is a one-world church builder who has

performed for the pope and a charismatic who has been “slain in the Spirit” and “laughed uncontrollably, rolling on the floor ... hyperventilating.”

“Faithful Men” by **Twila Paris** has been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Paris works with Kathy Troccoli, a Roman Catholic musician, and with ecumenist Robert Webber, who promoted unity between evangelicals and Catholics.

“In Christ Alone” by **Michael English** was performed at Lancaster/West Coast. English is an ecumenist who spent the 1990s and early 2000s committing adultery with another man’s wife, bar hopping, dating a stripper, and undergoing “rehab” for drug addiction.

Songs by **Steven Curtis Chapman** have been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Chapman is the most honored “high energy Christian rocker” of the 1990s who says he doesn’t preach “fire and brimstone” and describes God as “Lord of the Dance.”

Songs by **Geron Davis** have been performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Davis is an ecumenist and “Jesus Only” Pentecostal who denies the Trinity.

“I Will Rise” and “Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)” by **Chris Tomlin** were performed at Lancaster/West Coast. Tomlin is an ecumenist and member of an emerging church that seeks to build the kingdom in this present world. Tomlin, a one-world church builder, says “Music unites.” He has a close ministry relationship with Roman Catholics Audrey Assad and Matt Maher.

Maher’s goal is to unite “evangelicalism” with Roman Catholicism, while Assad says that ecumenism is her passion.

“Word of God Speak” by **MercyMe** was performed at Lancaster in 2011. MercyMe is a hard-rocking contemporary band that is both ecumenical and charismatic. In early 2011 MercyMe included Roman Catholic Matt Maher on its Rock & Worship Roadshow.

Songs by **Graham Kendrick** have been sung at Lancaster/West Coast. Kendrick is a charismatic who says he was baptized with the Holy Spirit while brushing his teeth. A one-world church builder, Kendrick is co-founder of the radically ecumenical March for Jesus that unites everyone from Roman Catholics to Mormons.

Casting Crowns' "Prayer for a Friend" was performed at Lancaster in 2011 and "Always Enough" in 2012. Casting Crowns is a one-world church building contemporary band that preaches against biblical separatism and mocks fundamentalists. In July 2012, Casting Crowns joined LifeFest in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where participants could choose from three worship services, including a Catholic mass led by Bishop David Ricken who officially approves of "Marian Apparitions."

"Not Guilty" by the jazz CCM artist **Mandisa** was performed at Lancaster's 2011 Leadership Conference. She says her musical influences "run the gamut from Whitney Houston to Def Leppard."

"Above All Things" by **Rebecca St. James** was covered on West Coast Baptist College's *For the Faith of the Gospel* CD. St. James is a hard-rocking ecumenist who performed for Pope John Paul II in 1999 and recommends books by the New Ager M. Scott Peck.

"Glorify You Alone" by **Gateway Worship** was performed at Lancaster in March 2012. Gateway Worship is a radically charismatic outfit whose objective is to bring people into a "sense and experience of God's presence." William Young, author of *The Shack*, which depicts God as a non-judgmental female entity, spoke at Gateway's Father's Heart Seminar in 2012.

"Step by Step" by **Rich Mullins** was performed at Lancaster's Youth Conference 2012. Mullins was a one-world church builder and was reported to have been near to converting to Catholicism when he was killed in an automobile crash.

“How Can I Keep from Singing” by Chris Tomlin was used at Lancaster in August 2012.

“Never Once” by Matt Redman was published on YouTube by West Coast student Mark Rasmussen, Jr., in 2013. Rasmussen is the son of the vice president of West Coast Baptist College and was a prominent member of the music program in 2013. Matt Redman says the Beatles are his greatest musical influence; his radical associations include Roman Catholics, New Ager Leonard Sweet, and emerging hell denier Rob Bell.

“Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)” by Hillsong United was published on YouTube by Mark Rasmussen in 2014.

“10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)” by Matt Redman was published on YouTube by Mark Rasmussen in 2014.

“I Will Rise” by Chris Tomlin was sung by the Lancaster Baptist choir in February 2014.

“Nothing Ever Can” by Ross King was sung by the Lancaster Baptist choir in March 2014.

It is obvious that Lancaster Baptist Church is committed to Contemporary Worship Music.

(There are reports on all of these contemporary music artists in the 550-page *Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.)

Majesty Music

Majesty Music’s newest hymnal, *Rejoice Hymns*, features about 10 songs by Getty/Townend, as well as ones by David Clydesdale, Scott Wesley Brown, Steve Amerson, Bob Kilpatrick, and Chris Christensen, all of who are out-and-out Christian rockers and radical ecumenists who are using music to build the end-time, one-world “church.”

The inclusion of a contemporary song or two in a hymnbook and the use of a contemporary song or two in a church is not in itself evidence of capitulation to the contemporary path. Exceptions aren’t rules, but the

commitment to building bridges to contemporary worship on the part of many prominent music people among fundamental Baptists is quickly becoming the rule.

Ignorance is one thing, but when people are informed of how dangerous contemporary worship music is and how that even the most “conservative” contemporary “hymn writers” are using their music as an ecumenical bridge to connect “traditional” churches with “the broader church,” as Getty/Townend are doing, and instead of repenting of using it, they become defensive and justify their actions, **THAT IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF DEEP SPIRITUAL COMPROMISE.**

Justifying the use of contemporary worship is a loud warning that a ministry is heading in the wrong direction, yea, a most dangerous direction.

If you justify contemporary worship music, you are justifying the end-time apostasy that ALL of the mainstream contemporary worship musicians represent. You are justifying the breakdown in biblical separatism.

If you justify it, you will use more and more of it, and you will give your family and church an appetite for it, and you will build bridges to that extremely dangerous world: bridges over which your family and church will eventually walk.

Those who are justifying the use of contemporary worship music are playing with fire.

Pensacola Christian College

Pensacola Christian College has been playing around with Southern Gospel for a long time, but now the school is moving into CCM. Following is a testimony of a recent graduate:

“I am a 2014 PCC graduate, and there is an enormous pull toward CCM, although the administration still goes against it. The new president, Dr. Troy Shoemaker, is allowing students to sing/play CCM music in college chapel. We are rapidly following

West Coast's music. Just this year, we have sung several CCM songs, adapted, of course, including 'Our God is an Awesome God' and 'In Christ Alone.'"

To this we add the following testimony, dated August 2014:

"I am currently on staff at Pensacola Christian College. ... This past Wednesday evening service troubled me, contrary to the purpose of church services. I endured through songs from the following artists: Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant, Twila Paris, Michael Card, and Randy Scruggs. This is not the first time the music from these artists (among others) have been used, but it is the first time they were used in such abundance. Pensacola Christian College uses music from CCM artists with toned down rhythm and with piano rather than guitars and drums."

Bob Jones University

Long a bastion for sacred music, Bob Jones University and her associates are quickly capitulating to the siren song of contemporary worship music.

Hymns Modern and Ancient contains 16 songs by Keith Getty, nine by Stuart Townend, and 13 co-written by both men. The compiler and copyright holder of this hymnal, Fred Coleman, heads up Bob Jones University's Department of Church Music. The hymnal is published by Heart Publications, a ministry of Steve Pettit Evangelistic Association. Pettit became BJU'S president in May 2014.

Getty/Townend, as we have seen, are unapologetic one-world church builders who have ministry associations with Roman Catholics. Townend was with the Gettys in July 2012 when they appeared on *WorshipTogether.com's NewsongCafe* with Roman Catholic Matt Maher to promote ecumenical unity.

Maher ministers at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Tempe, which is devoted to Mary as the Queen of Heaven. A

sign at the front of the church says, “Mary, Mother of Life, pray for us.” Maher calls himself a “musical missionary,” a missionary for Rome, that is. *Christianity Today* says “Maher is bringing his music--and a dream of unity into the Protestant church” (“Common Bonds,” CT, Oct. 27, 2009). He says, “I’ve had co-writing sessions with Protestants where we had that common denominator, and I’ve seen in a very radical way the real possibility of unity.” He says, “I look at it like the Catholic church is my immediate family, and all my friends from different denominations are extended family.”

Maher’s wife is Methodist, but they are raising their son “in the Catholic Church,” while also taking him to Methodist services “so he can experience both traditions” (Religion News Service, May 17, 2013).

This is the perfect recipe for the building of the end-time, one-world “church,” and Getty/Townend are right in the middle of it.

Townend supports the Alpha program which bridges charismatic, Protestant, and Roman Catholic churches. He is a member of Church of Christ the King in Brighton, U.K. and supports the “extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit,” referring to the demonic/fleshly charismatic mysticism such as meaningless gibberish wrongfully labeled “tongues,” spirit slaying, holy laughter, and holy shaking Townend believes that contemporary worshipers can hear a “full blown ‘thus saith the Lord’ prophecy” during worship times (Townend, “Preparing to Worship,” Oct. 1, 2012, stewarttownend.co.uk).

Townend is at the forefront of producing TRANSITION SONGS and BRIDGE SONGS designed to move traditional churches along a contemporary path. From the perspective of the CCM artists involved in this, they aren’t doing anything sinister. They are simply and sincerely trying to “feed” the “broader church.” But from a fundamentalist, Bible-believing position, the effect is to draw “old-fashioned” Bible churches into the contemporary orb, and that is most sinister.

Bridge songs include Townend's "How Deep the Father's Love for Us" and "In Christ Alone" by Townend/Getty.

The lyrics are doctrinally sound and the music is a soft rock ballad style as opposed to out-and-out rock & roll, so the songs are considered "safe" by many traditional churches. But by using this music, a fundamentalist-type church is brought into association with the contemporary world that Townsend represents, and the contemporary hymns become a bridge to influences that are contrary to and very dangerous to the church's original stance.

Steve Pettit's *For You Now* album features "Shout to the North" by the very worldly, one-world church building band Delirious (Martin Smith).

Southforth's 2013 Spring Selections preview CD contains four Getty/Townend numbers out of 19 songs.

In 2012, Brian Fuller, Senior Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Concord, New Hampshire, defended the use of contemporary worship hymns in his blog. This church has been called "the flagship of BJU-FBF (Bob Jones University-Fundamental Baptist Fellowship) in New England." The church's Christian Leadership Conference on March 31 featured Jim Berg of BJU and Matt and Christy Taylor of the Wilds.

Pastor Fuller writes:

"If I recall correctly, it was at our 2003 New England Leadership Conference that Dr. David Parker sang 'How Deep the Father's Love for Us' to a capacity crowd of New England fundamentalists. A chorus of hearty 'amens' followed this theologically robust text and appropriate tune by Stuart Townend. That was 2003. This is 2012. You see, 2003 was a somewhat blissful time when the 'association' or 'source' question of the original style of modern hymns wasn't being necessarily fingerprinted. That benevolent spirit of heartily affirming the truths of these modern hymns has all but evaporated, unfortunately. Frankly,

as a believer I feel a little ‘robbed’ that the spiritual gift I received in hearing that hymn back in 2003 has now been flagged as a potential stumbling block to other believers. Beyond the ‘offense’ objection, I have discovered that there seems to be a political element to this issue. In attending conferences and fellowships, I have noticed the ‘source and association’ issue of modern hymnody is raised with rapidity and frequency. If not stated explicitly, the attitudinal implications of some of the discussions are that there is little room at the table for a difference of opinion. A pastor’s ‘true-blue’ separatism might be questioned if he discerningly embraces these modern hymns. There is a definitive suspicion that is detected from others about your teetering on the ‘slippery slope’ if you view the source and association elements as mostly irrelevant, illogical or extra-biblical” (“Of Modern Hymnody at Trinity,” Feb. 13, 2012).

Pastor Fuller went on to defend the Getty/Townend “contemporary hymn movement” as being (allegedly) different in character than the Contemporary Christian Music field.

In this he is dead wrong. As we have documented in *The Directory of Christian Worship Musicians*, Stuart Townend is an out-and-out Christian rocker, a radical charismatic, and a rabid ecumenist who associates with Rome and promotes the Alpha program and is therefore building the one-world “church.” By their intimate and non-critical association with Townend and with Roman Catholics such as Matt Maher, the Gettys have demonstrated that they are one in spirit.

The people who are writing the “contemporary hymns” are not separated from the wider field of CCM. They are ALL holding hands. They are ALL the same spirit. NONE of them are friends of a Biblicist position. ALL of them are avowed enemies of biblical separation. ALL of them have an ecumenical, charismatic, mystical agenda.

This is not mere opinion. We have studied these things “from the horse’s mouth” for 40 years and have carefully documented our warnings.

To not consider “the source” of contemporary music is unscriptural foolishness. God’s Word forbids us to associate with end-time apostasy. We are not to touch the unclean thing. To be careful about associations is the very heart and soul of biblical separatism.

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

The use of CCM is definitely a “slippery slope” toward compromise and error, and those who are playing with it are playing with fire.

This warning has nothing to do with “politics.” I can’t speak for others, but I know that my motive in warning against the slippery slope of CCM is a passion for the truth that I have found in Jesus Christ.

CCM is the sound-track of end-time apostasy. It is a bridge to the “broader church” with all of its ancient and end-time heresies.

The aforementioned thinking by Bob Jones University associate Brian Fuller is dangerous and ill-informed, but it is quickly becoming the majority position today.

It is obvious that a corner has been turned in regard to fundamental Baptists and Contemporary Christian Music.

Why the Adaptation of Contemporary Worship Music Is Wrong and Dangerous

Most independent Baptist preachers today seem to consider the adaptation of contemporary worship songs a fairly minor issue, a tempest in a teapot. They think we are making a mountain out of a molehill.

They are of the opinion that if the music is not out-and-out rock & roll and the lyrics are biblical and the people are

blessed and the churches are still “fundamental,” all is well. They think, “Let’s just keep the focus on winning souls and world missions.”

This view could not be more wrong for the following two reasons:

The adaption of Contemporary Worship Music is wrong and dangerous because it is a capitulation to soft rock and to its addictive nature.

Bible-believing churches that are adapting Contemporary Worship Music are modifying the rhythm and presentation style to conform it to their current “traditional” and “sacred music” position. They are trying to take the rock out of Christian rock.

But what they are doing, more typically, is turning hard rock into soft rock. And by so doing, they are addicting their people to the soft rock sound, which is not a sacred sound.

Sacred music is not sensual or addictive in character, but soft rock is.

Sacred music will never give you an appetite for the world’s music, but soft rock will.

Consider the example of “Prayer For a Friend” by Casting Crowns, “Word of God Speak” by MercyMe, and “Stronger” by Hillsong United. These were sung as specials in Lancaster Baptist Church in 2011.

The pieces, as performed by Lancaster Baptist, are not hard rock but they retain the seductive soft rock rhythm, the sensual scooping and sliding voice technique, and the non-resolving chord cadence.

It’s soft rock and it’s addictive. The people will want more and more of it and will be increasingly dissatisfied with the sacred sound that is void of any type of rock rhythm.

ACCESS THE FOLLOWING WEB LINK FOR VIDEO CLIPS OF LANCASTER’S MUSIC

<http://www.wayoflife.org/adaptingccm/>

I asked Pastor Graham West of Tamworth Bible Baptist Church in Australia and director of Music Education Ministries to comment on Lancaster's rendition of "Prayer for a Friend." He has a background in writing and recording pop music, and he understands the rhythm of pop music as well as anyone I know.

He replied:

"This piece is loaded with Beat Anticipation. Eight of the 10 phrases of the piece end in Beat Anticipation.

[As he explains 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 as the backbeat.]

"Taken together with the other forms of syncopation we have a very common contemporary style in which the basis of the rock feel is achieved by the Beat Anticipation, and the other forms of syncopation simply take on board that rock feel because it is used within a context of the more dominating forms.

"Music exhibiting this kind of highly syncopated rhythmic pattern will always promote sensual body movements. Too many studies by people on both sides of the issue have been done to deny this. The compulsion to move the body when this kind of music is played is very great.

"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?’ (Prov. 6:27-28).

“In my opinion, West Coast is heading in the wrong direction musically and has been for some time and if it continues in this direction it will pay a high price for not listening to the musicians, the prophets, the men of God who have been warning God’s people about these things for 20 and 30 years” (Graham West, e-mail to D. Cloud dated March 5, 2011).

Churches that adapt contemporary worship songs by toning down the rhythm are enticing their people to look into the “real stuff.” With the Internet today, it is only a matter of a simple Google search and a few clicks of the mouse to find MercyMe or Hillsong or Casting Crowns or the Gettys or whoever performing their music in the “real” rock & roll contemporary style.

And once the people, especially the young people, taste the real contemporary music in all of its rock & roll glory, they will eventually get a full-blown addiction and the repercussions will be far-reaching.

And it will be the fault of unwise pastors, youth leaders, and song leaders who are dabbling in this and who are

refusing to heed warnings. They think they can tame the contemporary cobra and keep it safe in its basket, but they are deceived, and by the time they wake up, assuming they ever do, it will be too late to do anything about it.

The adaption of Contemporary Worship Music is wrong and dangerous because it is a bridge to the one-world church.

Contemporary Worship Music is a bridge to the one-world “church.” This cannot be refuted.

Even the most “conservative” of the contemporary worship musicians, such as the Gettys, represent the one-world church in philosophy and action, as we have seen.

In October 2012, the Gettys yoked together at the National Worship Leader Conference with emerging heretics, such as Leonard Sweet, who is a universalist and a New Age promoter. And in July 2012, the Gettys joined Roman Catholic Matt Maher on NewsongCafe in promoting ecumenical unity. If that is not one-world “church” building, I don’t know what is.

Yet at least eight of the Getty’s songs are included in Majesty Music’s *Rejoice Hymns*, and 29 of their songs are featured in *Hymns Modern and Ancient*, published by Heart Publications, a ministry of Steve Pettit Evangelistic Association and compiled by Fred Coleman who heads up Bob Jones University’s Department of Church Music. Both Crown Baptist College and West Coast Baptist College, the two largest independent Baptist Bible schools, perform Getty material in their services.

This is why we have called the Getty’s “The Pied Pipers of Contemporary Worship Music.” (See the report by this title at www.wayoflife.org.)

ALL of the contemporary worship musicians become pied pipers when their music is “adapted” by Bible-believing churches and schools.

Those who borrow from the field of Contemporary Worship Music are building bridges to these people and beyond to the people with whom they are associated.

This is a clear rejection of God's command of biblical separation, and the fruit will be exactly what the Bible says it will be.

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:17).

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (1 Corinthians 5:6).

Conclusion

Those who think that they can adapt the music created by today's contemporary worship crowd and keep the people from listening to the “real stuff” are deceived.

Full-blown contemporary music is just too powerful, too enticing, too exciting. And it's just a mouse-click away today.

Church leaders who are “adapting” CCM are creating a bridge to the ecumenical-charismatic world that many people will cross and the influence will be dramatic. And the influence will gradually permeate the churches and change their fundamental character.

This has been happening for 20 years, and those who have spiritual eyes can see the fruit of it.

It is popularly argued that if we are to be “picky” about musical associations then we would have to discard Luther's or Wesley's hymns, but that holds no water.

The old Protestant hymns were different in character from contemporary worship music. The old Protestants weren't building the end-time, one-world church, but the CCM crowd most definitely is. The old Protestants condemned Rome boldly and were separated from her, even calling her the harlot of Revelation 17, but the CCM crowd is rushing to embrace her, or at the very least flirting with her from a distance.

The world represented by Townend/Getty is the world of rock & roll, charismatic mysticism, C.S. Lewis, *The Shack*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the emerging church, *The Message*, Brennan Manning, "Christian homosexuality," Leonard Sweet, Rick Warren, contemplative prayer, unity with Rome.

We live in a different world today because of technology, and the technology allows people to easily communicate with and associate with musicians.

Even when Luther or Wesley or Fanny Crosby were alive, if you sang their music in a church the members had no way to develop an intimate association with the hymn writers so that they could sit at their feet and be influenced by everything they believed and represented.

That is not true today. We can read their blogs, browse their Facebook pages, follow their Twitter accounts, listen to their music on YouTube. We can surf the links from these musicians to their friends and associates and be influenced by the entire dangerous world of contemporary music.

There is no doubt that this is happening in churches everywhere because of the carelessness and ignorance and lack of wisdom on the part of so many leaders.

Contemporary worship music is a bridge to many dangerous things. It has transformational power.

If the influence doesn't come overnight, it will come eventually.

If the influence doesn't change the older people, it will change the younger ones.

If the contemporary philosophy doesn't permeate the church in this generation, it will in the next.

For those of us who still believe in biblical separation and therefore agree that lines must be drawn, why can't we agree that the lines should be drawn at the safest place? Why not "approve things that are excellent" as opposed to borderline and questionable (Phil. 1:10)?

Why try to find something good within the dangerous world of contemporary worship music?

What is the motive for that? Is that the wise and godly position?

For the sake of the next generation, we need to keep *all* contemporary influences out of our churches and homes to every possible extent, and we need to do the work of serious education that will protect the Lord's people.

Instead of mocking and sidelining and blacklisting those who are warning about these things and who are providing documentation to back up the warnings, we need to listen to them and treat them as friends of the truth rather than fools and enemies.

Every independent Baptist church that doesn't take this matter seriously and doesn't educate itself seriously and doesn't take a strict stand will be well down the emerging road within a decade.

Contemporary music is *that* powerful and it is *that* much at the heart of end-times apostasy.

Pastors must face this issue and make the effort to educate both themselves and the people. To leave it up to a music director is to abdicate responsibility. Materials are available. One doesn't need a master's degree in sacred music to understand this issue at a practical, fundamental level.

We suggest as a starting point our video series *Music for Good or Evil* which is the product of many decades of experience and research into this subject.

We must establish godly standards of music and be CONSISTENT! To condemn "CCM" and use contemporary

Southern Gospel is *not* consistent. To say you are opposed to Contemporary Christian Music while you use soft rock and “adapted” CCM is *not* consistent.

It is better to err on the side of being too careful and too “strict” than too tolerant. No one will be hurt by a music standard that is too “strict,” but there is plenty of spiritual danger in being too loose.

For more on this subject see the following free materials from www.wayoflife.org --

➤ *The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music* (free eVideo)

➤ *The Transformational Power of Contemporary Worship Music* (free eVideo)

➤ *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians* (free eBook)

➤ *The Independent Baptist Music Wars* (free eBook)

Next Generation Rocking at Lancaster

Lancaster Baptist Church of Lancaster, California, has been playing with Contemporary Christian Music for a long time, and the fruit is evident.

(We document dozens of examples of Lancaster's use of contemporary worship songs in the report "Analyzing Adapted CCM Songs," and those are only a few examples.)

We have warned that nothing can change the transformational power of this sensual, "one-world church" music, and nothing can keep it from transforming every ministry that does not heed the warning to separate from it.

In a recent article, we said:

"The transformation will be most evident in Paul Chappell's children's generation, but by the time the transformation becomes evident enough for the average independent Baptist preacher to recognize it, it will be far too late to do anything about it" ("Preacher Says the Brethren Are Galled at Brother Cloud," *Fundamental Baptist Information Service*, Oct. 28, 2014).

In my first warning about Lancaster's music, we said:

"I strongly suspect that there are people in the music department that love CCM and listen to it regularly. This is why they frequently come up with toned-down CCM specials. They remove the heavy back beat (though the dance syncopation can still be present in the piano style); there is no drum kit, no bass guitar; but it is still CCM" ("Lancaster Baptist Shouting to the Lord," *Friday Church News Notes*, Feb. 18, 2011).

Travis Chappell and Mark Rasmussen, Jr. are evidence that my warning is on target. Travis is the nephew of Paul Chappell, senior pastor of Lancaster Baptist Church and president of West Coast Baptist College, and Mark is the son

of Mark Rasmussen, Sr., vice president of West Coast and the most conservative face at the institution.

Mark is a recent graduate of West Coast and has been a prominent singer in the Lancaster Baptist Church choirs. The young men are publishing soft rock renditions of popular contemporary charismatic praise songs on YouTube under the names of Mark Rasmussen, 5FriendsFilms, and OneCauseProductions, and they have been doing this for at least two years.

An acoustic cover of Hillsong United's "Oceans" is sung by Rasmussen and three other young people associated with Lancaster and West Coast at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfhsSdz01DM>. Though it is played in a soft rock style, Mark's rendition would be accepted enthusiastically in any charismatic environment.

"Oceans (Where My Feet May Fail)" is a popular contemporary song that features endless repetition in the original. The words say, "Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders." This is standard charismatic mysticism. It is the philosophy of "take me out of the box; take me beyond the words of Scripture; take me to any strange experience; I won't judge; I won't test." It is the philosophy behind such things as spirit slaying, holy laughter, holy shaking, continuing prophecy, gibberish tongues, female pastors, love for the pope, and uncertainty about the sin of homosexuality.

Those who are using this music are placing themselves in fellowship with this strange charismatic spirit.

The "real" Hillsong United rendition can be found at this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rK-MBCZ5K5Q>. If you go to about 5:50 minutes into the nearly ten minutes of this contemporary worship song, you will see what "real" contemporary worship looks like. It's all about a powerful sensual experience. It's about "feeling God."

You can be sure that countless young people at Lancaster Baptist Church are listening to the "real thing" because of the unwise example that has been placed before them at their

own church. Few young people are going to be satisfied for long with the watered down version of this music when the super exciting “real thing” is only a “mouse click” or a “screen tap” away.

You can see Mark and Travis’s rocking a *cappella* version of “Well on My Way” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLsKsS8s3vQ>. Travis and Mark and Dave and their buddies recorded this at West Coast in May 2013. They are all West Coast students then and at least most of them were part of the music program at Lancaster.

In “The Unworldly Song” they seem to be mocking biblical separation from the world, though the video is enigmatic enough for them to deny it -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCAAdJfXmI0>.

Here is a contemporary rendition of “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me” by Mark and his sisters -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZHlZTj9CUA>.

Mark and his sister and Dave, who sings with him in “Oceans” and other contemporary clips on YouTube, were in prominent members of the choir at Lancaster in the Christmas program in December 2013. They are on the front row -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYZ94UejGH4>. Go to about 10:19 and you can see how contemporary Lancaster has become in the just the last year.

Here is a contemporary rendition of “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me” in 2012 by Mark Rasmussen, Jr., and his sisters -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZHlZTj9CUA>.

Here is another contemporary song by Mark when he was a student at West Coast in 2013 -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=77w11bG8gkI>. This one is by the contemporary Canadian band Downhere.

(If these videos are taken down from YouTube, I have copies of them on file.)

Frank Garlock's Warning against Vocal Sliding

A battle is raging for the heart and soul of Bible-believing churches, and music is playing a central role. Of the preachers who have been willing to stand on the front lines of this battle (and their numbers are small), few if any have had a greater influence than Dr. Frank Garlock.

Dr. Garlock is a man of God who knows music. He has a doctorate from BJU and has taken every graduate course in music offered by the celebrated Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. He sat under the famous Howard Hanson, who headed up Eastman for 40 years.

Dr. Garlock began teaching on the dangers of worldly music in about 1970. His first book was *The Big Beat* in 1971 in which he warned about the sensual, seductive power of the rock rhythm. Since then he has published *The Symphony of Life* seminar, *Music in the Balance*, *The Language of Music*, and *Pop Goes the Music*, among others.

In 2001, Dr. Garlock issued the following warning:

“If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards” (Bob Jones University, chapel, March 12, 2001).

Since then, BJU has begun adapting CCM, as we have documented in *The Independent Baptist Music Wars*, so if Dr. Garlock is correct, the handwriting is on the wall.

One of the marks of CCM that Dr. Garlock has identified through the years is the vocal sliding singing technique which is a prominent part of the world's music. It has been called “scooping and sliding.”

In this technique, instead of hitting the note cleanly and directly, there is a slide from above or below its true pitch. It adds a great element of sensuality 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).

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, male and female, have used this technique to great effect, but never a godly effect.

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 singing style because we are serving the God of beauty and order, and we are singing about His lovely character and truth.

Rock singers contort their voices and slip and slide around the notes because they have rejected absolute truth. Their singing style reflects their philosophy of moral relativism which permeates modern pop music.

Scooping and sliding is a technique that well fits the night club, the bar, the rock concert, and it has been foolishly

adapted by contemporary Christian musicians and Southern Gospel performers

This style is not only sensual, it draws attention to the singer, which is another major element of both secular pop, Southern Gospel, and contemporary Christian music.

Consider the comments posted at a rendition of “In Christ Alone” performed by a young woman on YouTube:

“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 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 worship singers and musicians are prominently displayed before the congregation; the auditorium is often darkened to draw more attention to the worship team; 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.

The modern technology produces the most intense glorification of musicians in human history.

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 identified the scooping and flipping techniques as sensual swing effects that have no role in sacred Christian music. The word “sacred” means “spiritual,” which is the opposite of worldly!

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. Again, it is a “swing effect” with its roots in the blues, jazz, and other forms of licentious music that birthed 1950s rock & roll.

Again we quote Dr. Garlock:

“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” (Garlock, *Music in the Balance*, pp. 155, 156).

A good example of vocal scooping, sliding, and improvisation can be seen in the following video clip from the 2013 Christmas program of Lancaster Baptist Church, Lancaster, California: www.wayoflife.org/scooping/

We Use Protestant Hymns, Don't We?

It has been argued that since Baptist churches use Protestant hymns, it is acceptable to use contemporary worship songs that have a biblically-sound message.

A fundamental Baptist pastor asked the following question:

“What is the difference in using songs that every denomination uses across the board from the past (‘Just as I Am,’ ‘Amazing Grace,’ etc.) to using songs that everyone uses across the board in the present (‘How Deep the Father’s Love for Us,’ ‘Holy Ground,’ ‘Majesty,’ etc.) if they follow Biblical principles and if we do not promote a particular artist whose lifestyle we don’t support?”

Another pastor said that if my position against CCM is true I should stop using the King James Bible because it was written by Anglicans.

If we buy into this argument, we will not be able to resist the onslaught of CCM in any effective manner except perhaps to stand against hard rock, and that stand won’t last very long. Those who accept soft rock will eventually accept “hard” rock. Both have the same sensual character.

The following is my reply to this popular challenge:

The old Protestant denominations were fundamentally different from their modern counterparts.

The old Lutherans and Methodists were militant for the Christian faith and were not infiltrated by theological modernism, Darwinian evolution, and other new thinking.

Unlike modern Protestants and “evangelicals” and the Contemporary Christian Music crowd, the old Protestants

separated from the Roman Catholic Church. They hated Popery. They were spiritual warriors, militant for what they believed.

Consider, for example, the translators of the King James Bible.

One of Francis Dillingham's books was *A Dissuasive against Popery*.

Lawrence Chaderton gave up his inheritance in order to convert to Protestantism against the will of his wealthy Catholic father.

Thomas Ravis, president of the Oxford company responsible for translating Isaiah to Malachi, "was very severe in his denunciation of anything which savoured of popery."

John Rainolds was one of England's greatest champions for Protestantism. He publicly refuted Catholic giants such as Cardinal Bellarmine of Rome.

Whenever Thomas Holland went on a journey he would gather together the fellows of Exeter College, Oxford, and exhort them as follows, "I commend you to the love of God, and to the hatred of popery and superstition."

(For documentation of these facts see *The Glorious History of the English Bible*, available from Way of Life Literature.)

In fact, the old Protestants were closer, spiritually and doctrinally, to the position of today's old-fashioned Baptist church than to that of the contemporary movement.

CCM represents an end-time movement that is diametrically opposed to and is an avowed enemy of every "old-fashioned" Bible-believing church and family.

Contemporary worship music has transformational power that no Protestant hymn has.

There is a transformational power in contemporary worship that can and eventually always will change the character of a Bible-believing separatist church.

The use of a doctrinally-sound hymn by Luther or Wesley does not put people in danger of becoming Lutherans or Methodists. I have never heard of an independent Baptist becoming a Lutheran by singing “A Mighty Fortress.”

I’ve never heard of a youth group becoming Anglican by using the King James Bible, but show me a youth group that is messing with contemporary music, and I will show you a youth group that is on a fast track to worldliness and to a full-blown contemporary stance.

The use of CCM is turning IFB churches into contemporary churches everywhere (as it did with Highland Park Baptist Church, home of my alma mater, Tennessee Temple). Contemporary worship is ALWAYS in the midst of those great changes, as we have documented in the free eBook *The Collapse of Biblical Separatism*.

That is because CCM is not just music written by people who hold some questionable doctrines; it represents an end-time movement that is diametrically opposed to an “old-fashioned” Bible stance, a movement that is an enemy of what an “old-fashioned” Baptist church stands for.

The CCM crowd hates biblical separatism, and this is true for even the most conservative among them.

Consider the very popular contemporary hymn writers, Keith and Kristyn Getty. As we have seen, their songs are used widely among “traditional, non-contemporary” churches, because they are considered relatively safe.

Yet the Getty’s one-world church goal is to “bring everyone together musically” (www.keithgetty.com). In July 2012 the Gettys and their close friend Stuart Townend joined Roman Catholic Matt Maher on NewsongCafe on WorshipTogether.com. They played and discussed “The Power of the Cross,” which was co-written by Getty/Townend. The program promoted ecumenical unity, with

Maher/Townend/Getty entirely one in spirit through the music.

Dan Lucarini, author of *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement: Confessions of a Former Worship Leader*, says:

“No one should deny the power of music to proselytize! Pastors in particular must defend their flocks from false teaching, heresies and ‘ear ticklers’ who bring worldly sensuality into the congregation; you are right to point out how easily this comes into a church through worship music. It seems wiser to decline the use of what seems to be a perfectly good song, rather than to give any honor and hint of endorsement to the composer and his/her mission” (e-mail, May 24, 2009).

The old Protestants believed in the same God and the same Christ as fundamental Baptists, but the Contemporary Christian Music world is filled with false christs and false gods.

Whatever doctrinal differences a Baptist would have with Martin Luther or John Wesley or Fanny Crosby or KJV translators such as John Rainolds, we share the same Christ and the same God, but that is often not true for Contemporary Christian Worship.

The world of contemporary worship is a terribly dangerous world filled with gross heresies and false christs, and those who play with this music build bridges to this world.

There is the non-Trinitarian god of Jesus-Only Pentecostals such as Geron Davis, Joel Hemphill, Mark Carouthers, Phillips, Craig and Dean, and Lanny Wolfe. There is the non-judgmental male/female god of *The Shack*. There is the rock & roll party-dude christ and the rebel christ of Christian rockers such as P.O.D. There is the Rob Bell god

who would not send people to hell. All of these and more are popular among Contemporary Christian artists.

We have documented this amazing and frightful truth in the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to CCM” as well as in the video presentation *The Foreign Spirit of Contemporary Worship Music*, which is available as a free eVideo download from www.wayoflife.org.

In this age we must be doubly cautious about using hymns of dubious doctrine and association.

In the Internet age, people are only a Google search and a mouse-click away from associating with authors and song writers.

By promoting the contemporary hymns of the Getty’s, for example, West Coast Baptist College and Majesty Music and Bob Jones University and Northland University and others are encouraging people to join hands with the Gettys. Many of those who learn about the Getty’s music from these sources will doubtless find them on the Web and be influenced by their rock & roll “music is neutral” philosophy and their ecumenical stance and dangerous associations.

Preachers who claim to believe in biblical separation and end-time apostasy and who claim that they want to keep their churches in the “fundamentalist” philosophy and orb, but who are playing with CCM, are playing with fire; and their people, especially the next generation, are going to be burned.

These preachers can huff and puff at me all they want, and they can try to make *me* the issue in this battle, but it doesn’t change the fact that they are playing with fire. It doesn’t change the dangerous character of contemporary worship music.

Time will tell, but it will be too late for those who don’t wake up and draw clear lines of separation from contemporary worship today.

**We have never said that if a hymn is old it is good
or if it is new it is bad.**

We must examine every hymn as to its musical character and doctrinal purity.

There are hymns in the standard hymnals used by independent Baptist churches that shouldn't be used because they are not theologically sound (e.g., "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and parts of "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations") or ridiculously shallow and lacking in doctrinal substance (e.g., "The Church in the Wildwood").

My Experience with Rock Music

When I was converted in 1973 from a hippie lifestyle, one of the first things the Lord dealt with me about was my music.

Growing up, I loved all sorts of music. I played first section clarinet in a large, award-winning band during my junior and senior high school years. I took private music lessons, won first place ribbons at music competitions, both for solos and as a participant in ensembles, was selected to attend an advanced summer music program at the University of South Florida between 10th and 11th grade, and had an invitation to join a symphony orchestra.

I am not saying I am a music expert, but I do have a background in music and I love music.

I immersed myself in rock music for many years before I was saved. In fact, I grew up with rock music. Born in 1949, I was alive when Elvis, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis and others cooked up rock & roll in the '50s out of the ingredients of rhythm & blues, country-western, and black spirituals.

I wasn't old enough to know a lot about what was going on with music in the 50s, but I do remember listening to rockabilly music at the home of an elementary school friend who loved the Grand Old Opry. We were fascinated by the new beat. Fifties rock was still popular at dances when I was in junior and senior high school.

I began my teen years in 1962. By the time I obtained my learner's driving permit in 1963, the Beatles were roaring into popularity, and when I got my regular driver's license in 1965 the Rolling Stones mega-hit "Satisfaction" was blasting from radios, enflaming the passions of young people everywhere.

The year I graduated from high school, Jimi Hendrix was asking "Are You Experienced?" referring to psychedelic drug usage, and The Doors were singing "Light My Fire."

When I was drafted into the Army two years after high school, the Woodstock movie was sweeping the land, promoting a Bohemian philosophy and lifestyle.

During the year and a half I spent in Vietnam, I was stationed at Tan Son Nhut Airbase outside of Saigon. I was in a military police unit attached to MACV headquarters, the control center for U.S. military operations in South Vietnam. Our barracks was located in the R&R center, and the unit's primary job was to keep drugs from leaving the country on soldiers bound for R&R and in personnel containers being shipped to the States. We had access to every conceivable luxury: an Olympic-sized swimming pool, tennis and racquetball courts, fully-equipped gym, movie theater, night clubs, photo processing labs, you name it. I even had use of a jeep for trips to Saigon.

One of the facilities I used extensively was the reel-to-reel recording studio. The Army had a massive library of music, and soldiers who lived at or visited MACV could record as much as they wanted. I spent countless hours there recording rock music. I also utilized the PX system to purchase a sophisticated stereo system at military discount.

When I was discharged from the Army, I made two vows. I was never going to wear green, and I was never going to cut my hair! I was all set to stock my first "hippie" apartment in Hollywood, Florida, with wall-to-wall stereo equipment. My hippie heaven didn't last long, though. My buddies and I were buying and selling drugs, and two of us were arrested for illegal possession of controlled substances and public drunkenness.

Though I got off lightly because it was my first offense, I lived in constant fear of being caught again and going to jail for a longer time. I began to drift around.

On one trip I hitchhiked to northern California and back to Florida. On that trip I met some young people from India who introduced me to reincarnation and the Self-Realization Fellowship Society. I joined that Hindu society and began to

practice meditation and study eastern religion, and I excitedly made another trip to California to visit the headquarters of the Self-Realization Fellowship Society in Los Angeles. On the way, I won roughly \$70 in a slot machine in Las Vegas and thought it was an answer to my prayers!

Everything I was doing and thinking was supported by rock music—drugs, eastern religion, restlessness, dissatisfaction with life, rebellion against parents and government, a spiteful attitude, rejection of the Bible’s authority, licentious living, long hair, communism (I obtained Mao’s *Red Book* and other communist propaganda during my stay in Vietnam).

Rock music never encouraged me to be an obedient, submissive, God-honoring person. It taught me, rather, that I was “born to be wild,” born to follow my natural impulses, born to live without rules. It taught me that if it feels good, it can’t be wrong, that I should just follow my heart.

After I was saved, I understood that rock music is intimately connected to everything that is evil and rebellious and antichrist, that rock music fits the biblical definition of the worldliness which the Christian is not to love: *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* (1 John 2:15-17).

The first book I wrote, several months after I was saved, was *Mom and Dad Sleep While the Children Rock in Satan’s Cradle*. It was a warning about the dangers of rock music (long out of print).

Forty plus years later I am more convinced than ever that secular rock music is spiritually destructive and that “Christian rock” is a misnomer. Sensual rock music is not a proper medium for singing the praises of a thrice-holy God.

End-Time Apostasy

The Bible prophesies that the end of the church age will be characterized by widespread apostasy and rebellion.

Apostasy means to turn from the apostolic New Testament faith to follow man-made traditions and demonic fables. It is defined in the following passage:

“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 Timothy 4:3-4).

The Bible does not describe worldwide revival at the end of the church age. It prophesies widespread error and spiritual confusion among those who profess Christ. Note the following warnings:

“And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ... And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:3-5, 11, 24).

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Timothy 4:1).

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own

selves ... Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ... But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:1-2, 5, 13).

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of” (2 Pet. 2:1-2).

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time” (1 John 2:18).

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3-4).

We see the fulfillment of these prophecies in the doctrinal and spiritual confusion that abounds in modern-day Christianity.

For the most part, contemporary Christian musicians ignore these warnings and refuse to mark and separate from false teaching and apostasy.

In fact, Contemporary Christian Music is one of the most effective tools in the devil’s workshop for building the apostate end-time “church.” CCM is drawing together Christians of every stripe, regardless of whether their doctrine is sound. CCM promotes the ecumenical non-judgmental philosophy.

I am convinced that Contemporary Christian Music is a fulfillment of 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Those who follow it turn their ears away from sound Bible doctrine and from New Testament Christianity to ecumenical charismatic fables.

Further, the prophecies that expose end-time apostasy often mention **the sensuality that characterizes apostasy**.

“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” (2 Timothy 4:3).

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. ... But chiefly them that WALK AFTER THE FLESH IN THE LUST OF UNCLEANNES, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. ... HAVING EYES FULL OF ADULTERY, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children. ... For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, THEY ALLURE THROUGH THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. WHILE THEY PROMISE THEM LIBERTY, THEY THEMSELVES ARE THE SERVANTS OF CORRUPTION: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage” (2 Peter 2:1, 2, 10, 14, 18, 19).

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men

crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, TURNING THE GRACE OF OUR GOD INTO LASCIVIOUSNESS, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. ... These be they who separate themselves, SENSUAL, having not the Spirit” (Jude 3, 4, 19).

Notice that these false teachers follow their own lusts and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. As we shall see, this is precisely what many CCM musicians do. Typically, they claim that the grace of God is freedom to listen to any kind of music they please, regardless of how licentious it is, to dress in any fashion they please, regardless of how immodest or worldly it is. They argue that grace gives them liberty to go to wicked rock concerts and to play music to entertain the bar or night club crowd, to have a shallow or nonexistent relationship with the church, for women to preach, etc.

They confuse grace with license, which is precisely the earmark of the false teachers described in Jude. Peter adds that false teachers will “allure through the lusts of the flesh.” Again, this is precisely what many Christian rockers and CCM supporters do. They say, “Come on over here; we won’t tell you how to live; we won’t put any guilt trips on you; you can dress as you please and listen to whatever music you want; you can come to church or not come to church; you can cuss a little or drink a little; you can watch R-rated movies and ogle at MTV; we don’t have rules. God gives you liberty; He wants you to have fun.”

This is why the non-judgmental male/female “god” of *The Shack* resonates so widely among lovers of Contemporary Christian Music. (See the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to CCM,” #6, “Contemporary Christian Music is permeated with false christs.)

Beware, friends; this worldly philosophy, which lies at the heart of Contemporary Christian Music, is exposed in the Word of God as a mark of apostasy.

Music is one of the most important influences in the Christian life and church.

Music can feed the flesh or the Spirit. It can promote carnality or spirituality. The idea that music is a neutral force and that any music can be used to glorify God and serve His purposes is one of the key philosophies of the end-time apostasy. It is unscriptural and foolish in the extreme. It is absolutely essential that a church's music be genuinely spiritual (sacred) and that the music match the message that is being communicated.

I am convinced that CCM is one of the most dangerous things facing independent Baptists and other fundamentalist Bible-believing churches.

CCM is one of the most effective Trojan horses of the ecumenical movement. Consider the following statement which was made almost 20 years ago by a discerning preacher:

“Now there is a new form that modernism and apostasy has taken to creep surreptitiously into our churches and destroy their Scriptural testimony. THIS TIME IT DOES NOT COME IN THE FORM OF PREACHING OR TEACHING, BUT RATHER IN THE CARNAL PRODUCTION OF THE MUSICAL PROGRAM FROM MANY CHURCH PLATFORMS. Much of the singing heard today by choirs and specials on the average church platform is what is known as contemporary or as soft rock and is often backed with the sound of canned music that could be produced by the average dance or disco band at the corner honky-tonk. The sad truth is that most of this new contemporary, soft rock, offbeat style of music was conceived in hell, hatched among the charismatic crowd, and printed in their publishing houses. Good fundamental Baptists and others that refuse the teachings of the charismatic crowd concerning tongues, signs, miracles, and so forth are now singing their music in our churches and preparing our people

for the world, the flesh and the devil. It is THE NEW TROJAN HORSE MOVE OF MODERNISM TO DEADEN OUR CHURCHES TO SPIRITUAL TRUTH” (Victor Sears, *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981).

Consider a similar warning from another Baptist leader:

“PERHAPS NOTHING PRECIPITATES A SLIDE TOWARD NEW EVANGELICALISM MORE THAN THE INTRODUCTION OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC. Pastors of large churches inform us that we cannot hope to attract the masses with the old, outdated church music. We must change our style so as to catch the attention of the godless. Services are often created to minimize discomfort for the unbeliever so that he or she begins to accept Christianity as an affirming influence. People ought to leave church feeling good about themselves, it is said, instead of being called to self-examination, sincere repentance, and faith toward God. One of the chief ways of making a church more ‘contemporary’ is to introduce contemporary music, of which there is a great abundance available. 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” (Ernest Pickering, *The Tragedy of Compromise: The Origin and Impact of the New Evangelicalism*, Bob Jones University Press, 1994).

Churches that neglect the subject of music and consider it a “non-essential” issue do so to their spiritual detriment.

The History of Contemporary Christian Music

Founded in 1971, Maranatha Music was one of the first contemporary Christian music publishing companies. It was founded by Chuck Smith, Sr., of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California, to publish the music of the early Jesus hippies.

Calvary Chapel played a major role in the birth of the Jesus People movement. Mesmerized by a charismatic Jesus hippie named Lonnie Frisbee, Chuck Smith baptized massive numbers of hippies who had professed Christ, many of them “led to the Lord” by Frisbee. By accepting the young people pretty much as they were even for Christian service--long hair, immodest clothing, rock & roll, culturally liberal thinking--Calvary Chapel exploded in growth from one small church to a mega-church and beyond to a large association of churches.

“With his long brown hair, long scraggly beard, dusty clothing, scent of Mary Jane [marijuana] and glint of his last LSD trip in his eyes, Frisbee showed up out of nowhere ... literally on Chuck Smith’s doorstep” (Matt Coker, *Orange County Weekly*, March 2005).

Chuck Smith was a licensed minister in the Foursquare Pentecostal Church, the denomination founded by female Pentecostal preacher Aimee Semple McPherson. Smith held to the heresy of gibberish “tongues speaking.”

Frisbee was “commissioned” by Smith after his wife, Kay, received a “prophecy.”

“The Spirit of God came through a prophecy with Kay Smith and said, ‘Because of your praise and adoration before My throne tonight, I’m gonna bless the whole coast of California.’ And when we started to receive the word as from God, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon us and we began to weep and the Lord began to give

people visions of that prophecy and then the Lord continued on to say that it was going to move across the United States and then go to different parts of the world” (David DiSabatino, *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Maranatha Music was built upon this unscriptural foundation. In those days, at least, Calvary Chapel was quick to accept the flimsiest “profession” and wasn’t careful to try to ascertain whether the hippies were truly born again. They encouraged the newest babes in Christ (assuming they were even saved) to perform music.

Take the members of Love Song, one of the first and most influential of the Calvary Chapel Christian rock groups. Band member Chuck Girard said in 1997:

“It was early 1970 when three of my buddies and I walked into a church called Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa to play some songs for the pastor at the suggestion of a young hippie preacher named Lonnie Frisbee. We were hippies who had turned our lives over to the Lord only days before, yet we had a few songs that we had written before we met the Lord that were about God and Jesus. The pastor thought the songs were of God, invited us to play at one of the weekly Bible studies and we accepted the invitation. ... We didn’t know much about what people called ‘gospel music,’ we were just writing the same kind of songs we would write if we weren’t Christians but now we had Jesus to sing about” (Girard, foreword to *History of the Jesus Movement* by David DiSabatino, One-way.org/jesusmusic).

Note that the members of Love Song started out by playing songs they had written before they were converted, when they were walking after the god of this world (Ephesians 2:1-2). And when they started writing “Christian” songs, all they did was add “Jesus” to their old music. And they were encouraged to do so by the leadership of Calvary Chapel even

though the Love Song hippies were the merest babes in Christ (at best). That was unwise and unscriptural and was a sin both against the new professors and the churches. Even a deacon is to be proven (1 Timothy 3:10).

The hippies should have been discipled and biblically trained before they were allowed to minister to the churches through music. They should have been grounded in sound doctrine and taught Bible principles of Christian living, spiritual music, and separation from the world.

I am thankful that this is what happened to me when I joined a church soon after I was converted as a hippie in 1973. The church members loved me and were patient with me, but they didn't quickly foist me into the limelight and put me into the ministry.

Marsha Stevens

The shallow nature of many of the Jesus People conversions that formed the foundation for Maranatha Music and the Vineyard Music is evident in the life of Marsha Stevens. She founded Children of the Day, the first group that was published by Maranatha. Her song "For Those Tears I Died" represents the mysticism that permeated the Jesus People movement.

You said You'd come and share all my sorrows,
You said You'd be there for all my tomorrows;
I came so close to sending You away,
But just like You promised You came there to stay;
I just had to pray!

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."

This is pure mysticism. It creates an emotional experience associated with a vague spirituality which is not solidly Bible based. There is no clear gospel message. There is 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 how and for what? It mentions a door, but what door?

A Roman Catholic Mary venerator, a liberal Protestant who doesn't believe Jesus is God, a Muslim, or a New Age goddess like former Southern Baptist Sunday School teacher Sue Monk Kidd could sing this song with passion.

Stevens' testimony of salvation is that during a Bible study she had a vision of herself walking with Jesus near a deep blue river. The vision changed her life and soon thereafter she composed "For Those Tears I Died."

Lonnie Frisbee

Lonnie Frisbee (1949-1993) further illustrates the frightfully shallow nature of many of the Jesus People "conversions" that formed the foundation of the contemporary praise music movement.

Frisbee turned to "Jesus" through LSD trips and began to receive "prophecies" while high on drugs. On his own authority, the teenage Frisbee baptized a group of drugged up hippies at Tahquitz Falls after reading the Gospel of John to them and painting a picture of "Jesus" on the rocks. Later, in the same place, while on an acid trip, he had a "vision" that God had called him to preach the gospel to multitudes.

In a video documentary on Frisbee, David DiSabatino observed that many of the Jesus People conversions involved

drugs. “One of the ironic twists of the 60s was that many openly stated that drugs, LSD in particular, played a large part of their experience in Christian salvation” (*Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Sandy Heefner, for example, describes her salvation like this:

“I took my LSD, laid down on the floor a couple of hours and when I could get together to get up, I got up as a Christian. It’s just that simple.”

This is most definitely *not* biblical salvation. There is no gospel, no repentance, no saving faith. This is a deluding spirit masquerading as Christian conversion.

Frisbee was not only using hallucinogenic drugs but was still living a homosexual lifestyle, practicing hypnotism, and dabbling in various occultic and mystical practices (“The Son Worshipers,” video documentary edited by Bob Cording and Weldon Hardenbrook). In this condition, Frisbee joined a Jesus People commune in 1967. He never had a clear new birth conversion that involved a definite understanding of the gospel and clear repentance and faith. He never gave up homosexuality and partying. Even after he joined Calvary Chapel he would “party on Saturday night” and “preach on Sunday.” He would “go out and boogie down.” It was alleged that Frisbee’s ministry was accompanied by “signs and wonders,” but the devil can do miracles, and when measured by the standard of Scripture, Frisbee’s ministry was dangerously heretical.

Even so, Chuck Smith put Frisbee in charge of a Wednesday night Bible study, which soon attracted thousands (Randall Balmer, *The Encyclopedia of Evangelism*).

That Frisbee had no spiritual discernment is evident in that he appeared with the false prophetess Kathryn Kuhlman on her *I Believe in Miracles* show. Further, he lied on that program by claiming that his sin had been totally washed from his heart by the “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” when he

knew full well that he was still sinning secretly in the most outrageous manner. (Frisbee's appearance on Kuhlman's show can be found on YouTube.)

By 1971, Chuck Smith parted company with Frisbee because of their different perspectives on Pentecostal signs and Smith's desire to focus more on the teaching of Scripture. Smith was right to reject such things as "spirit slaying," but the wild "spirit" represented by Frisbee and his charismatic mysticism had already had a massive influence in the Jesus Music, including Calvary Chapel's Maranatha music, and that influence has continued to this day.

What Smith failed to renounce was Christian rock itself with its sensual mysticism and its illegitimate merging of the unholy rock of this world with the holy Rock Christ.

Frisbee was divorced in 1973. His wife says,

"At the end of the marriage he told me that he had been staying late in some gay bars" (Connie Bremer-Murray, Lonnie's ex-wife, Special Features section of *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

John Wimber

In 1980, Lonnie Frisbee became associated with John Wimber, who was seeking to establish a "signs and wonders" ministry at the Yorba Linda branch of the Calvary Chapels. Wimber called miracles "doing the stuff," but he was unsuccessful in "doing the stuff" until Frisbee spoke at his church. After Frisbee asked all the young people under 25 to come forward and invited the Holy Spirit to manifest His power, the roughly 300 people fell on the floor, "as if on a battlefield," and shook and spoke in unintelligible gibberish (David Roozen, *Church, Identity, and Change*). Wimber asked God if this was of Him, and that night a Calvary Chapel preacher named Tom Stipe called him on the phone and said, "I have a word for you; the Lord says, 'This is

me” (“Lonnie Frisbee and the Jesus People Revival,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0OgfmU13sPI>).

Wimber should have tested the “Frisbee anointing” by Scripture, but instead he depended on signs and extra-scriptural prophecies.

Some of the elders of Wimber’s church called for a meeting to discuss the Frisbee phenomena, but the same confusion broke out to silence the protestors.

“All of a sudden, I’m seeing this guy next to me, this Ph.D. in Microbiology, begin to shake and he’s begun to shake under the presence of God. The presence of God’s coming. So I begin to stand up. The power of God knocks this guy down and he began to roll under my feet on the ground, screaming hysterically. The power of God came down on everybody in the room. And it was just absolutely mind-boggling” (John Ruttkay, quoted in *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

Frisbee had a leather jacket with a picture of “Jesus” on the back that he used to “impart the spirit.” The transference of the spirit is a pagan practice, but it has been a major element of Pentecostalism from its inception. Usually hands are used as the transference agent, but Benny Hinn often uses his jacket or his breath to transfer the spirit, and Rodney Howard-Browne has used a towel and other things.

Wimber interpreted the phenomena as the power of the Holy Spirit, but it was a deceiving spirit. The apostles and early church leaders didn’t fall down and shake and speak in meaningless gibberish, but the practitioners of pagan religions do those very things under the power of the devil.

Wimber’s church experienced massive growth and young people “started baptizing friends in hot tubs and swimming pools around town.”

It was at this point that John Wimber left the Calvary Chapels and joined Kenn Gulliksen and the Vineyard

Christian Fellowship. Wimber soon became the leader of the Fellowship.

Wimber had accepted the “latter rain” end-time miracle revival heresy and the new prophecy movement, and he and Frisbee traveled together to spread their “signs and wonders power evangelism” to South Africa and Europe.

“John would speak and Lonnie would minister. They were the dynamic duo. Lonnie got up there and he’d wave his leather coat and the power of God would come and people would be falling all over these old pews in these Baptist churches. And Lonnie would start climbing over the pews and start laying hands on people saying, ‘Speak in tongues! Speak in tongues!’ And he’d hit them in the forehead and they’d instantly begin to speak in tongues. So I was blown away by that...” (Steve Zarit, Vineyard church member, quoted in *Frisbee: The Life and Death of a Hippy Preacher*).

In one service in South Africa, Frisbee asked the children from 12 years old and under to come forward, and they all fell down “slain” (“Lonnie Frisbee in South Africa,” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYGXSa1TwM>).

Wimber played a huge role in the spread of charismatic heresy throughout evangelicalism. He yoked up with C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Theological Seminary and taught a course called “Signs and Wonders and Church Growth.” Wagner traveled deeper and deeper into charismatic deception, eventually believing that he was a latter day apostle.

Under Wimber’s direction, the Vineyard churches took contemporary praise music to an edgier, more sensually-intense level. Lusting for “signs and wonders” and a tangible worship experience, they used powerful rock & roll music to feed that lust.

Eventually Wimber parted ways with Frisbee over his homosexuality after learning that he had a six-month affair with a young man in his church.

(For more see “John Wimber and the Vineyard” in the *Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*.)

When Frisbee died of AIDS in 1993 at age 43, a memorial service was held at self-esteem heretic Robert Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral, where the hippie preacher is buried. At the service, Chuck Smith likened Frisbee to “Samson,” but Samson operated by the Spirit of God, whereby Frisbee operated by one who transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13-14).

It was not only the Calvary Chapel’s Jesus People that were built upon a flimsy spiritual foundation. The field of Christian rock in general has been *rife* since its inception with spiritual shipwreck, heresy, and such things as divorce, adultery, and homosexuality, as any honest history of the movement will demonstrate.

Larry Norman

Consider Larry Norman, who has been called the father of Christian rock. Both of his marriages ended in divorce. Norman had an improper relationship with Randy Stonehill’s first wife, Sarah, and he fathered a child out of wedlock with one of his backup singers, Jennifer Wallace (Mike Rimmer, “Larry Norman: The David Di Sabatino’s Fallen Angel Documentary,” *Cross Rhythms*, March 28, 2010).

Two other musicians in Norman’s Solid Rock Records fold had divorces (Randy Stonehill and Tom Howard).

Just a few of the other divorced and/or adulterous CCM musicians are Steve Archer, Steve Camp, Bob Carlisle, Ralph Carmichael, Ja’Marc Davis of Raze, Eddie Degarmo, Michael English, Ryan Gingerich, Amy Grant, Stacy Jones of the rap group Grits, Ray Boltz, Marsha Stevens, Dana Key, Mylon LeFevre, Nikki Leonti, Sandi Patty (who admitted to committing adultery with at least two men and who left her husband for one of her backup singers), Kevin Prosch, John

Michael Talbot, Randy Thomas, Greg Volz of Petra, Sheila Walsh, Jaci Velasquez, Wayne Watson, Deniece Williams, Derek Webb and Sandra McCracken, and members of the now disbanded Barnabas. Melody Green, the widow of Keith Green, divorced her second husband, Andrew Sievright.

Homosexuality has also played a significant role in the CCM movement. In *The Gospel Sound*, which first appeared in 1971, Anthony Heilbut said, “The gospel church has long been a refuge for gays and lesbians, some of whom grew up to be among the greatest singers and musicians.”

Douglas Harrison, a homosexual who grew up Southern Baptist, said, “... you can’t swing a Dove Award without hitting upon evidence of the longstanding, deep-set presence of queer experience in, and its influence on, Christian music culture at all levels” (“Come Out from among Them,” *Religion Dispatches*, April 30, 2010).

In 1998, CCM star Kirk Franklin said that “homosexuality ... is a problem today in gospel music--a MAJOR CONCERN--and everybody knows it” (*Church Boy*, pp. 49, 50).

Homosexual CCM artists include James Cleveland, Ray Boltz, Anthony Williams, Marsha Stevens, Kirk Talley, Clay Aiken, Jennifer Knapp, Doug Pinnock of King’s X, Vicky Beeching, Trey Pearson of Everyday Sunday, plus Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of Indigo Girls.

The reason for all of this is not difficult to discern. Typically, CCM musicians have been accepted as saved upon the flimsiest testimony of faith and have not been properly taught and disciplined. They have fed their spiritual lives with a constant diet of sensual music and have sought after emotional highs and “signs and wonders” instead of walking by faith. They have played with the world, which is more dangerous than any poisonous snake, instead of walking separated lives.

Larry Norman, the father of Christian rock, was not disciplined properly and in fact cares little to nothing about

church. When asked by *Buzz* magazine what church he attended, he refused to answer except to say, “I think it’s unimportant,” and, “I don’t like the question.” He said that he believes it is an “obsessive compulsion” to meet at regular times for church services, which flies in the face of Hebrews 10:25 and the example of the early Christians (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

Consider the All Saved Freak Band, one of the earliest Christian rock groups, which was influential then and continues to exist today in a reincarnated edition. Joe Markko, co-founder, had only been a professor of Christ out of the drug culture for three months when he formed the band in 1968. His mentor and fellow band member Larry Hill was an Assemblies of God pastor who left the denomination to start a work among hippies on the authority of “some visions.” Hill’s ministry fell apart when he fled Ohio to avoid prosecution for sexual abuse (John Thompson, *Raised by Wolves: The Story of Christian Rock & Roll*, Kindle location 441).

We could multiply these examples almost endlessly. The spiritual foundation of Contemporary Christian Music is frightfully unscriptural. With few exceptions, it wasn’t created by mature spiritual people with a solid testimony of salvation who were grounded in Scripture and committed to sound doctrine.

Transformation Agents

Maranatha Music acted as a change agent to broaden support for Christian rock in that the early “praise” music was softer rock & roll. It was folk rock and rock ballads. Further, Calvary Chapel held to a more conservative theology, avoiding the extreme elements of Pentecostalism which were still unacceptable to most churches at the time.

In spite of Maranatha’s more “conservative” image, Christian rock was riding a wild and untamable spirit. Its

radicalness is seen in its association with the Roman Catholic Church and the fact that it has become permeated with dark heresies and the most outlandish charismatic nonsense. (See “False Christs and False Gods” in the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to Contemporary Christian Music.”) In order to gain a broader following, early Contemporary Christian Music needed the more conservative image that Calvary Chapel and Maranatha Music provided. The cutting-edge hard Christian rockers of the 60s and 70s--such as Larry Norman, Petra, and Resurrection Band--were too radical for most churches at the time. Norman’s debut album *Upon This Rock* was banned by Christian bookstores. Barriers had to be broken down.

It is important to understand that the Calvary Chapel Jesus hippies loved every sort of “Christian” rock even from the earliest days. Chuck Girard of Love Song says, “We were amazed to see and hear the album ‘Upon This Rock’ by Larry Norman.” They loved any type of “Christian” rock, but Maranatha published the “softer” stuff and thereby increased the contemporary music’s popularity and broke down the barrier that existed widely in those days against using rock in Christian music. Even the softer rock was commonly rejected by churches in the 1970s, but **the resistance was gradually broken down through the process of incrementalism.**

Through the influence of the softer rock CCM, the leaven of Contemporary Christian Music spread, and the vast majority of churches are now addicted to rock of all types. They have bought into the shallow arguments that are used to justify the merger of the holy Rock Jesus Christ with the unholy rock of this world.

The leaven did its job. The CCM songs published by Maranatha in the 1970s, which were considered “edgy” at the time, are the “old conservative hymns” of the contemporary praise movement today. This is how the devil works. He uses the tools of confrontation, compromise, and incrementalism. He was the inventor of Hegelian Dialectics, which has been

employed to great effect by communists, humanists, liberal educators, theological modernists, Christian rockers, and others to tear down the old and replace it with the new. This is done by bringing incremental change through a process of confronting the existing paradigm (be it philosophy, doctrine, culture, position, etc.) with an alternative. At first the alternative seems shocking and wrong, but with persistence on the part of the change agents, over time the new alternative is syncretized with the old paradigm to produce a compromise. This becomes the new accepted paradigm and the new base line for another round of change. In this way, the targeted group (e.g., classroom, church, political party, nation) is carried along slowly but surely toward the objective.

The role played by Calvary Chapel and Maranatha Music in the 1970s (whether by design or not) was similar to what Dick Clark's *American Bandstand* did in the 1950s in broadening the popularity of rock & roll by cleaning up its "bad boy" rebel stigma in the minds of parents. Clark required the teenage rockers to dress conservatively in skirts and dresses, suits and ties, and toned down the dance moves. Clark didn't change the licentious rebel character of rock; he merely cleaned up its image so it could leaven every sphere of society. Dick Clark was simply having a good time and making money, but the god of this world was pulling the strings.

Through the decades, Maranatha Music has itself become ever more radical in its use of rock & roll, ever more charismatic, ever more ecumenical. Today its workshops have a large influence in cross-denominational education. Church leaders from "ALL DENOMINATIONS" are welcome (maranathamusic.com).

By 2008, 120,000 "church gate-keepers" who attended workshops "looked to Maranatha Music as the leading source of worship products and services."

Maranatha not only spreads contemporary music, it also spreads the CCM heresies of non-judgmentalism, ecumenism, and “cultural liberalism.”

Why We Are Opposed to Contemporary Christian Music

Great numbers of professing Christians today do not understand why anyone could be opposed to Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). Is it not the music that is used in churches across the denominational divide? Does it not glorify Jesus Christ and His saving grace?

People have many misconceptions as to why someone would oppose CCM.

They are convinced that the individual who opposes CCM believes that good Christian music stopped being written when Fanny Crosby died, that he doesn't like new things, that he believes that musical instruments other than a piano or organ are wrong, that he is a mean-spirited legalist, a judgmental Pharisee, perhaps even a latent racist, that he doesn't like to have fun and doesn't want anyone else to have fun, and that he has never read in the Bible that David danced or that the Psalmist called for praise with "loud sounding cymbals."

Personally, I tend to like new things better than old things. I stay at the cutting edge of technology, for example. I am glad that I was born in the 20th century and not the 17th.

But when it comes to my "religion," I like it old for the simple fact that the newest part of my Christian faith is 2,000 years old!

Solid Bible truth is not contemporary and will never be considered cool by the world unless it is distorted.

I am committed to the old Bible and its old paths, and it is by this standard that I must test every new thing.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

“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).

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thess. 5:21).

In this spirit, I have examined contemporary music and the movement that it represents extensively and repeatedly over the past 40 years and have prayerfully tested it with Scripture.

Each time I have re-examined Contemporary Christian Music, I have become even more convinced that it is unscriptural, and as a God-called preacher I have become ever more deeply convinced that I must sound a warning against it.

Following are some of the reasons why we are opposed to *Contemporary Christian Music*:

1. CCM is built on the lie that “music is neutral.”
2. CCM is worldly.
3. CCM is ecumenical.
4. CCM is charismatic.
5. CCM is experience-oriented.
6. CCM is permeated with false christis.
7. CCM is infiltrated with homosexuality.
8. CCM weakens the Biblicist stance of a church.

CCM Is Built on the Lie that Music Is Neutral

The foundational philosophy for both Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) and Contemporary Christian Worship (CCW) is the idea that music is neutral or amoral and that any style of music can be used in the service of a holy God.

Consider the following statements of this philosophy:

A representative of Contemporary Christian Praise music: "... we need to stop advocating one music style over against another. Our tradition, our style, our renderings have to do with ourselves, not with God" (Anthony Gentes, *The Worship Thought*, July 2003).

A representative of Contemporary Christian Music: "There is no such thing as 'gospel music.' Every style and form of music can become gospel, whether it's jazz, pop, rock 'n' roll, or rap" (Don Butler, *Gospel Music Association*).

A representative of the Mega-Church Movement: "There's no such thing as Christian music. There are just Christian lyrics" (Rick Warren, SuperConference 2003, Liberty University).

A representative of contemporary Southern Gospel: "God speaks through all different kinds of art forms and musical styles and musical forms ... the format itself is not necessarily spiritual or non-spiritual" (Bill Gaither, *F.B.F. News Bulletin*, Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, March-April 1986, p. 3).

I have some simple questions to ask about this philosophy.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY IS IT THAT THE MOVIE "TEXT PAINTER" CAN USE DIFFERENT STYLES OF MUSIC TO CREATE DIFFERENT EMOTIONS?

This can be illustrated by the old silent movies. There were no words except the text shown on the screen, but the musicians (a pianist or organist or orchestra) could create feelings of fear, happiness, sorrow, romance, anger, indignation, tension, uncertainty, merely by changing the style of music. If there was a scene with the bad guy sneaking up on the unsuspecting, sleeping heroine, the music would be tense and gloomy. If upbeat classical or peppy march music were scored for that type of scene, the movie would be like a comedy, because the acting would be saying one thing and the music would be saying something different.

The movie text painter can create different emotions with different styles of music for the simple reason that music is

NOT neutral. Music is a language. John Debney, one of the top composers of movie films, says:

“The best directors I’ve worked with--like Mel [Gibson], Steven Spielberg, Tom Shadyac--have told me that music is fifty percent of the experience of the film. I think music is the voice of the soul of the emotional fabric of the film. I talk to many college classes, and I love to show them a couple of scenes first without music and then with music. When there’s no music, people are always struck by how incredibly two-dimensional it is. And when you add music, it invariably evokes an emotional response” (“The Passion of the Musicians,” *Christianity Today* web site, Aug. 31, 2004).

Debney is talking about the power of music as a language. Each style of music played by an orchestra creates different feelings and thoughts in the listeners.

Put in a different way, if all musical styles are neutral, why does a military march never sound like a romance ballad? Why does a baby lullaby never sound like a punk rock concert?

The reason is that music is *not* neutral; music is a language.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DO TAVERNS AND NIGHT CLUBS ALWAYS PLAY A CERTAIN KIND OF MUSIC?

They never play sacred Christian music, and the reason is because music is not neutral. Taverns and bars play a kind of music that fits the lifestyle and purpose of that setting.

Music is a language.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID THE OLD BLUESMEN BELIEVE THAT CERTAIN KINDS OF RHYTHMS CAUSED WOMEN TO BE MORALLY LOOSE?

Professor Longhair’s boogie-woogie piano music is said to have caused women to “jump and wriggle.”

Robert Johnson, one of the pioneering bluesmen who died young because of his womanizing, said of his blues rhythms,

“This sound affected most women in a way that I could never understand” (Robert Johnson, quoted from *The Bluesmen*).

B.B. King, one of the biggest names in the blues, said in his autobiography, “The women reacted with their bodies flowing to a rhythm coming out of my guitar...” (B.B. King, *Blues All Around Me*).

Those are powerful statements about the effect of a specific kind of musical rhythm. Were the bluesmen confused about their music? No, they are testifying to the fact that music is not neutral; it is a language; and since they wanted to create a lascivious atmosphere, they used suitable rhythms.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DO ROCK MUSICIANS AND SOCIAL COMMENTATORS CLAIM THAT HEAVILY SYNCOPATED RHYTHM IS SEXY?

Following are just a few of the many quotes we could give along this line:

“Rock music is *sex*. THE BIG BEAT matches the body’s rhythms” (Frank Zappa of the Mothers of Invention, *Life*, June 28, 1968).

“That’s what rock is all about--*sex with a 100 megaton bomb, THE BEAT!*” (Gene Simmons of the rock group KISS, interview, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is 99% *sex*” (John Oates of the rock duo Hall & Oates, *Circus*, Jan. 31, 1976).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is pagan and primitive, and very jungle, and that’s how it should be! ... the true meaning of rock ... is *sex, subversion and style*” (Malcolm McLaren, punk rock manager, *Rock*, August 1983, p. 60).

“Perhaps [my music] 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).

“The THROBBING BEAT of rock provides a vital sexual release for adolescent audiences” (Jan Berry of Jan and Dean, cited by Ken Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*).

“The great strength of rock ‘n’ roll lies in ITS BEAT ... it is a music which is basically *sexual, un-Puritan* ... and a threat to established patterns and values” (Irwin Silber, Marxist, *Sing Out*, May 1965).

“Everyone takes it for granted that rock and roll is synonymous with sex” (Chris Stein, lead guitarist for Blondie, *People*, May 21, 1979).

“Because it is primitive enough and has no bull, really, the best stuff, and it gets through to you ITS BEAT. Go to the jungle and THEY HAVE THE RHYTHM and it goes throughout the world and it’s as simple as that” (John Lennon, *Rolling Stone*, Feb. 12, 1976, p 100).

“Rock and roll aims for liberation and transcendence, eroticizing the spiritual and spiritualizing the erotic, because that is its ecumenical birthright” (Robert Palmer, *Rock and Roll an Unruly History*).

“Rock and roll is fun, it’s full of energy ... It’s *naughty*” (Tina Turner, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum).

“Pop music revolves around sexuality. I believe that if there is anarchy, let’s make it sexual anarchy rather than political” (Adam Ant, *From Rock to Rock*, p. 93).

“Rock ‘n’ roll is sex. Real rock ‘n’ roll isn’t based on cerebral thoughts. It’s based on one’s lower nature” (Paul Stanley, cited by John Muncy, *The Role of Rock*, p. 44).

“Rock ... expresses the body, hence sexuality, with a directly physical beat and an intense emotional sound ... it is THE BEAT that commands a directly physical response. ... We respond to THE

MATERIALITY OF ROCK'S SOUNDS, and the rock experience is essentially erotic" (Simon Frith, *Sound Effects*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

"... rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal to sexual desire" (Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, p. 73).

"There is a great deal of powerful, albeit subliminal, sexual stimulation implicit in both THE RHYTHM and [the] lyrics of rock music" (David Elkind, *The Hurried Child*, 1981, p. 89; Dr. Elkind was chairman of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study at Tufts University in Massachusetts).

"Rock and roll was something that's *hardcore, rough and wild and sweaty and wet and just loose*" (Patti Labelle, cited in *Rock Facts*, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum).

"The sex is definitely in the music, and sex is in ALL ASPECTS in the music" (Luke Campbell of 2 Live Crew).

"Rock is visceral. It does disturbing things to your body. In spite of yourself, you find your body tingling, moving with THE MUSIC" (Rocker Tom McSloy, "Music to Jangle Your Insides," *National Review*, June 30, 1970, p. 681).

Rapper Missy Elliot's third album, "Miss E ... So Addictive," was described as "a SEDUCTIVE cocktail of quirky RHYTHMS and hypnotic BEATS."

The blues music (predecessor to rock and roll) that was played in Gayoso brothels in Memphis in the early part of the 20th century is described as "SEXUALLY SYNCOPATED SOUNDS" (Larry Nager, *Memphis Beat: The lives and Times of America's Musical Crossroads*).

Observe that many of these quotes refer to rock's rhythms rather than the lyrics. These people are saying that the sexuality is in the rock rhythm.

Why do these secular rock lovers and social historians describe the heavily syncopated rock rhythms as sexy, primitive, seductive, rough, loose, hardcore, naughty, loose, wild, and hypnotic?

What do they know, or what are they admitting, that the Contemporary Christian Music crowd denies?

They are admitting that music is not neutral and that the heavy backbeat of rock & roll is sensual.

This fact alone instructs me that rock & roll is entirely unsuitable for the service of a holy God.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DOES ONE OF THE FOREMOST EXPERTS IN DRUMMING CLAIM THAT CERTAIN RHYTHMS CAN ALTER THE STATE OF ONE'S CONSCIOUSNESS?

Mickey Hart, drummer for the Grateful Dead, has traveled the world researching the power of drums. In his book *Drumming at the Edge of Magic* he observes:

“Everywhere you look on the planet people are USING DRUMS TO ALTER CONSCIOUSNESS. . . . I’ve discovered, along with many others, the extraordinary power of music, particularly percussion, to influence the human mind and body. . . . There have been many times when I’ve felt as if the drum has carried me to an open door into another world.”

Hart says this because he knows that music is not neutral and that certain music produces certain results. Those who want to use music to enter a trance and to alter their state of consciousness *never* use traditional sacred Christian music, because it simply isn’t suitable.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY WOULD A VOODOO PRIESTESS SAY THAT HER GODS RESPOND TO CERTAIN RHYTHMS?

Consider this quote carefully:

“The rhythm is more important than the meaning of the words. Our gods respond to rhythm above all

else” (a Macumba priestess in Brazil, quoted from *African Rhythm and Sensibility*).

The voodoo priestess says this because she knows that music is not neutral and that certain rhythms interact with the spirit world. What a loud warning to those who have ears to hear!

*If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID THE 1960s LSD NEW AGE GURU TIMOTHY LEARY SAY, “DON’T LISTEN TO THE WORDS, IT’S THE MUSIC THAT HAS ITS OWN MESSAGE” (Leary, *Politics of Ecstasy*).*

Timothy Leary said this because he knew that music is a language.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID JIMI HENDRIX, ONE OF THE FOREMOST EXPERTS IN ROCK RHYTHMS, CLAIM THAT CERTAIN TYPES OF MUSIC CREATE A CERTAIN ATMOSPHERE?

“Atmospheres are going to come through music, because the music is a spiritual thing of its own” (Jimi Hendrix, *Life* magazine, Oct. 3, 1969).

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID ROCK AND ROLL HISTORIAN ROBERT PALMER SAY THAT THE SENSUAL INFLUENCE OF ROCK AND ROLL INHERES IN THE RHYTHM?

“I believe in the transformative power of rock and roll ... this transformative power inheres not so much in the words of songs or the stances of the stars, but in the music itself--in the SOUND, and above all, in the BEAT” (Robert Palmer, *Rock & Roll an Unruly History*).

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID HOWARD HANSON, WHO DIRECTED THE PRESTIGIOUS EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC FOR 40 YEARS, SAY: “MUSIC CAN BE PHILOSOPHICAL OR ORGIASTIC. IT HAS POWERS FOR EVIL AS WELL AS FOR GOOD”? (cited

from Frank Garlock's *The Language of Music*; Dr. Garlock is a graduate of Eastman and sat under Hanson).

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID THE WORLD-FAMOUS CONDUCTOR LEONARD BERNSTEIN SAY THAT MUSIC IS A LANGUAGE THAT REACHES THE HEART?

“Music doesn't have to pass through the censor of the brain before it can reach the heart. An f sharp doesn't have to be considered in the mind; it is a direct hit, and therefore all the more powerful” (Bernstein, *The Joy of Music*).

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DOES THE BIBLE SPECIFY THAT BELIEVERS SHOULD SING A CERTAIN KIND OF MUSIC?

“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).

The word “spiritual” means *set apart* for God, *different* in character from the evil things of the world. A tavern or nightclub owner would never play sacred psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs over the music system, even if the words were not included. It would create the wrong atmosphere.

Why, then, should believers borrow the music that tavern owners use to entertain and stir the drinking crowd in their lascivious pleasures?

If all musical styles are neutral, THAT MEANS THAT THE DEVIL HASN'T CORRUPTED MUSIC, but such an idea is nonsensical.

The devil hates God and has attempted to corrupt everything that God has created. He is called “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 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 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.

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DID JOSHUA DISCERN THAT THE MUSIC SOUND COMING FROM THE CAMP OF ISRAEL WAS "A NOISE OF WAR"? (Exodus 32:17).

If music is neutral, how could Joshua make any judgment at all about the nature of what he was hearing?

If all musical styles are neutral, WHY DO CHILDREN REACT DIFFERENTLY TO VARIOUS KINDS OF MUSIC?

After visiting a church while on vacation, one of my readers submitted the following,

"Why did my children behave properly during the traditional morning service, but jump around like they had 'ants in their pants' for 45 minutes during the loud rockish night service at a church we were visiting?"

We conclude that music is not "neutral" or "amoral." Music is a language, and in the Christian realm the message of the music must match the message of the lyrics and both must be spiritual in character.

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

In conclusion, the first reason that we reject Contemporary Christian Music is that it is built on the lie that music is neutral.

Contemporary Christian Music Is Worldly

Another reason why we oppose Contemporary Christian Music is because it is worldly, meaning it is not separated from the world as the Bible demands.

“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).

“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).

“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” (Rom. 12:2).

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

When Israel broke down the walls of separation and failed to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, the holy and the unholy, God judged them.

“Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them” (Ezekiel 22:26).

This is an apt description of the CCM philosophy. It puts no difference between the holy and the profane. “All music is

holy,” it boasts, “nothing is profane; God is the God of everything.”

The worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is seen in that it borrows from the world’s sensual rhythms.

Contemporary Christian Music openly and proudly uses any type of music in the service of the Lord and refuses to disavow music that is used in the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

What is worldly music? Worldly music is music that sounds like the music that is used by the world for sinful activities. John defined the world as “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16). Music that is characterized by these things is worldly music, and that is certainly true for blues, jazz, rock, rap, reggae, and other forms of modern dance music.

This type of music has an intimate association with every form of licentiousness--immorality, drunkenness, drug abuse, gambling, prostitution, and other evils--and it is impossible to disassociate the music from this association. “Sex, drugs, and rock & roll” is not just a popular saying; it is a true saying because “sex, drugs, and rock & roll” go together like peas in a pod.

The chief component of the aforementioned types of music is the heavy dance backbeat. It is called the anapestic beat. This is a lyrical term that describes poetry using three syllables with the emphasis on the third -- da-da-DA, da-da-DA. In music, the anapestic beat is to put the emphasize on the off beat. The anapestic dance beat goes one-TWO-three-FOUR or one-two-THREE, one-two-THREE.

This is in contrast with a “straight” beat, which has the emphasis on the first beat or on each beat equally -- one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four, or ONE-two-three-four, ONE-two-three-four.

The heavy backbeat is the chief characteristic of pop music. Consider these quotes:

“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, cited by Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll*, p. 14).

“I dig that rock and roll music/ it has a backbeat; you can't lose it” (Chuck Berry).

“When they play their music, ooh that modern music, they like it with a lot of style; but it's still that same old backbeat rhythm that really, really drives 'em wild” (“The Heart of Rock & Roll” by Huey Lewis and the News).

“It's the beat that gets to you. If you like it and you feel it, you can't help but move to it. That's what happens to me. I can't help it” (Elvis Presley, cited by Steve Turner, *Hungry for Heaven*, p. 35).

“Oh, give me the beat, boys, and free my soul/ I wanna get lost in your rock n roll/ And drift away” (“Drift Away,” Dobie Gray).

As we have seen, rock musicians and social scientists describe rock music as “sexy,” and they claim that the sex lies not just in the lyrics but also in the heavy backbeat rhythm. Let's consider a few of those quotes again:

“Rock music is *sex*. THE BIG BEAT matches the body's rhythms” (Frank Zappa of the Mothers of Invention, *Life*, June 28, 1968).

“That's what rock is all about--*sex with a 100 megaton bomb, THE BEAT!*” (Gene Simmons of the rock group KISS, interview, *Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

“Perhaps [my music] 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).

“The THROBBING BEAT of rock provides a vital sexual release for adolescent audiences” (Jan Berry of Jan and Dean, cited by Ken Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*).

“The great strength of rock ‘n’ roll lies in ITS BEAT ... it is a music which is basically *sexual, un-Puritan* ... and a threat to established patterns and values” (Irwin Silber, Marxist, *Sing Out*, May 1965).

“Because it is primitive enough and has no bull, really, the best stuff, and it gets through to you ITS BEAT. Go to the jungle and THEY HAVE THE RHYTHM and it goes throughout the world and it’s as simple as that” (John Lennon, *Rolling Stone*, Feb. 12, 1976, p 100).

“Rock ... expresses the body, hence sexuality, with a directly physical beat and an intense emotional sound ... it is THE BEAT that commands a directly physical response. ... We respond to THE MATERIALITY OF ROCK’S SOUNDS, and the rock experience is essentially erotic” (Simon Frith, *Sound Effects*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

“There is a great deal of powerful, albeit subliminal, sexual stimulation implicit in both THE RHYTHM and [the] lyrics of rock music” (David Elkind, *The Hurried Child*, 1981, p. 89; Dr. Elkind Dr. David Elkind was chairman of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study at Tufts University in Massachusetts).

“The sex is definitely in the music, and sex is in ALL ASPECTS in the music” (Luke Campbell of 2 Live Crew).

“Rock is visceral. It does disturbing things to your body. In spite of yourself, you find your body tingling, moving with THE MUSIC” (Rocker Tom McSloy, “Music to Jangle Your Insides,” *National Review*, June 30, 1970, p. 681).

Observe that these statements about the sexuality of rock

refer to the backbeat rhythm rather than to the lyrics.

The sensual and sexy backbeat 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, including ragtime, boogie woogie, jazz, honky-tonk, and Caribbean.

We agree with Dan Lucarini, former contemporary praise leader, when he says:

“I am now convinced that God will not accept our worship when it is offered with music styles that are also used by pagans for their immoral practices. ... He is a jealous God. If you grasp this principle alone, it will change for ever the way you lead a worship service” (Lucarini, *Confessions of a Former Worship Leader*, p. 57).

We agree with Alan Ives, a former rock & roller, when he says:

“How do you understand what good Christian music is? It ought to sound different from the rock station, the easy listening station, the entertainment music. When we sing gospel songs in the good old-fashioned way, they don’t sound like anything that the world sings. That’s the way we need to keep it. We can never portray the peace of the Lord with wild, discordant, violent sounds. We can never speak of the love of God with hateful music, the goodness of the Lord with bad music, the majesty of God with low class music, the power of God with puny music, the wisdom of God with stupid music, the holiness of God with unholy music. We can never speak of godliness with ungodly music, of heavenly things with earthly, sensual and devilish music. And we can never speak of being a soldier if we use dance music” (Alan Ives, “How to Tell the Difference between Good and Bad Music”).

A key biblical principle is that Christian music is to be spiritual.

“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” (Eph. 5:18-19).

The term “spiritual” has the same meaning as holy or “sacred.” It refers to something that is set apart to a holy God, different in character from the unholy things of this world.

Spiritual or sacred music will be different in character from the world’s sensual party music.

Contemporary Christian Music does not merely borrow unhesitatingly and gleefully from the world’s music; it actually boasts of doing so. There is no sense of separation, no sense of sacredness and holiness.

There is much more that needs to be said about the worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music rhythms, but we cannot deal effectually with the sound of contemporary music in a book. This requires a multi-media presentation like *Music for Good or Evil*. In this 11-part video series we give biblical principles that apply to music, and we illustrate these principles with many clips of music. This package is available from Way of Life Literature. See the online catalog at <http://www.wayoflife.org>.

The worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is seen in that CCM musicians listen to every kind of secular rock music.

Contemporary Christian musicians make no attempt to hide this and they have no shame for it. When asked in interviews about their musical influences and favorite music, invariably they list raunchy secular rock musicians.

The following examples could be multiplied endlessly:

FOURTH WATCH cites groups like U2, the Police, Genesis, Pete Townshend, and the Alarm as major influences. “MEMBERS LISTEN TO A GREAT DEAL OF MAINSTREAM MUSIC, MAKING NO APOLOGIES FOR

IT, and they express a desire to play clubs and other non-church settings” (*CCM Magazine*, April 1987, p. 19).

PHIL KEAGGY performs an unholy combination of secular rock and Christian rock, and those who listen to his music are drawn toward secular rock & roll. On his 1993 *Crimson and Blue* album, for example, he pays “homage to the Beatles” with several of the songs.

When ASHLEY CLEVELAND was asked what music was on her stereo, she replied, “*Living With Ghosts*, Patty Griffin; *What’s The Story Morning Glory*, Oasis; *Exile On Main Street*, the Rolling Stones” (<http://www.ashleycleveland.com/acfacts.htm>). In her concerts, Ashley performs a very gritty rendition of the Rolling Stones hit “Gimme Shelter.”

CAEDMON’S CALL said their greatest love in music is secular rock. They mentioned Indigo Girls, Shawn Colvin, David Wilcox, The Police, Fishbone, and 10,000 Maniacs (*Lighthouse Electronic Magazine*). The group often performs Beatles music. Cliff Young said one of his favorites is the foul-mouthed Alanis Morissette. He mocked a preacher who warns that Christian musicians should not listen to secular rock.

AUDIO ADRENALINE’S *Bloom* album includes the song “Free Ride” from the Edgar Winter Group’s *They Only Come out at Night* album. Winter was featured on the cover of this wicked album dressed as a homosexual “drag queen.” The lyrics to “Free Ride” claim that “all of the answers come from within.” This is rank heresy, because we know that the answers do not come from within man’s fallen heart but from God’s revelation in the Bible.

STEVE CAMP says, “I’ll have a Foreigner 4 album going in my car.” He also says: “I am dedicated to good music whether it’s pop, Christian, gospel, R&B, blues, jazz, classical, rock or whatever. I just love good music” (Steve Camp, *MusicLine* magazine, Feb. 1986, p. 22).

Some of DC TALK’S musical role models are the Beatles, David Bowie, and The Police, all of which are wicked secular

rock groups. dc Talk's album "Free at Last" contains a song titled "Jesus Is Just Alright," which was first sung by the Byrds (later covered by the Doobie Brothers). dc Talk's Kevin Smith admits that he listens to mostly secular rock music (*Flint Michigan Journal*, March 15, 1996, B19). dc Talk opened its "Jesus Freak" concerts with the Beatles' song "Help." They also perform Jimi Hendrix's *Purple Haze*. Hendrix was a drug-crazed New Age occultist. Toward the end of their concerts dc Talk played the rock song "All Apologies" by the wicked secular rock group Nirvana, formerly led by Kurt Cobain. Terry Watkins notes: "Kurt Cobain is one of the worst Antichrist blasphemers since John Lennon. Kurt Cobain decorated his home with blood-splattered baby dolls hanging by their necks! The inside of Nirvana's album *In Utero*, which is the album dc Talk got 'All Apologies' from, has pictures of chopped up babies! Cobain ran around his neighborhood spray-painting, 'ABORT CHRIST' and 'GOD IS GAY.' Cobain's first band was called 'Fecal Matter' (*Christian Rock: Blessing or Blasphemy?*). Cobain eventually killed himself.

JARS OF CLAY names Jimi Hendrix and the Beatles as their inspiration (Dann Denny, "Christian Rock," *Sunday Herald Times*, Bloomington, Ind., Feb. 8, 1998). The lead guitarist for Jars of Clay is said to be a "Beatles fanatic" (*Christian News*, Dec. 8, 1997). When asked by *Christianity Today* to list their musical influences, members of Jars of Clay "listed no Christian artists" (*Christianity Today*, Nov. 15, 1999). Jars of Clay performs Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" during their concerts. Osbourne is the filthy-mouthed former lead singer of the occultic rock group Black Sabbath.

Dana Key (of DEGARMO & KEY) says that he has been influenced most by B.B. King, Jimi Hendrix, and Billy Gibbons (of ZZ Top) (*CCM Magazine*, January 1989, p. 30).

POINT OF GRACE's *Life, Love and Other Mysteries* album featured "Sing a Song" by the occultic, antichrist rock group

Earth, Wind and Fire. Point of Grace's 2011 *Turn up the Music* hits album featured a cover of "Hole in the World" by the Eagles. Perhaps in the future they will cover other Eagles' songs, such as "Good Day in Hell," "Take the Devil," "Chug All Night," and "Witchy Women."

The "musical heroes" of DELIRIOUS include "Radiohead, Blur and other big British modern rockers" (CCM magazine, July 1999, p. 39).

When asked what is currently in her CD player, CRYSTAL LEWIS replied: "Michael Jackson, *Thriller*; Billy Holliday; Led Zeppelin; Radiohead, *Ok Computer*; Radiohead, *Kid A*; and Sting, *Nothing Like the Sun* ("Ten Questions with Chrystal Lewis," *CCM Magazine*, March 2002).

Michael Herman of *Christianity Today* asked the members of THIRD DAY to "name a musician you'd pay to see in concert." All five members of the band named secular rockers. Tai named U2; Brad, the Cars; David, Phil Collins; Mac, Tom Petty; and Mark, George Harrison ("Guy Talk" interview posted at *Christianity Today* web site, Feb. 26, 2002). Anyone familiar with the music and atmosphere at secular rock concerts should know that a Bible believer has no business there. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

MERCYME, whose worship music is used by many independent Baptist churches, loves secular rock and performs rock songs, including "Jump" by Van Halen, "Thriller" by Michael Jackson (complete with choreographed Jackson-style dancing), "Crazy" by Outkast, "Ice Ice Baby" by rapper Vanilla Ice, "It's the End of the World" by R.E.M., "Dead or Alive" by Bon Jovi, "Hard to Say Goodbye" by Motown, "More Than Words" by Extreme, "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees, "Footloose," "Hold Me Now" by Thompson Twins, "Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da" and "I Feel Fine" by the Beatles, "More Than Words" by Extreme, and "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" by Cyndi Lauper.

MANDISA, whose music is sung by some independent Baptist churches, says that her musical influences “run the gamut from Whitney Houston to Def Leppard” (“Mandisa,” *Wikipedia*). Two of her favorite musical artists are Beyonce and Steve Wonder, and her personal goals are “to meet and be on Oprah” (“Mandisa,” *AmericanIdol.com*).

PHIL KEAGGY’S 2011 CD “Live from Kegwood Studio” features “homage to George Harrison with a spot-on rendition of the Beatles’ hit ‘Here Comes the Sun.’”

MATT MAHER says, “Honestly, musically, growing up, I was huge a fan of the Beatles. A huge fan of Billy Joel, Tom Petty, Bruce Springsteen, Foo Fighters, Nirvana” (“Matt Maher: On Being Christian,” interview with John van der Veen, Apr. 1, 2013, *familychristian.com*).

I have never heard any of these people renounce secular rock and warn young people to stay away from it.

We give many more examples of this in *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.

If parents allow their young people to be influenced by Contemporary Christian Music or if they stay in a church that accepts Contemporary Christian Music, this is the type of worldly example they will have.

To build bridges to the filthy world of secular rock & roll is spiritually dangerous and foolish in the extreme. Bridges were built to that world from the church that I attended in my youth, and I crossed that bridge to my near spiritual destruction.

Further, the CCM crowd not only listens to and performs secular rock, they even use secular rock in worship to God.

We have seen that contemporary Christian musicians love secular rock; they listen to it in their private lives; they perform it in their concerts and record it for their albums. They even use secular rock in the worship of God.

At the 1994 National Promise Keepers Conference in Boulder, Colorado, Charles Swindoll entered the stadium on a motorcycle while the worship band played the 1960s rebel rock anthem “Born to Be Wild.”

The 1997 “Heart of David Conference on Worship & Warfare,” sponsored by Rick Joyner’s Morning Star ministries, concluded with the praise team singing the Beatles song “I Want to Hold Your Hand” as if God were singing it to believers. The worship leaders were Leonard Jones, Kevin Prosch, and Suzy Wills.

In 2002, I received the following note from a professor at Southern Baptist Seminary: “A couple of my students recently attended Rod Parsley’s World Harvest Church in Columbus, Ohio. They said that the call to worship was a tape playing Van Halen’s ‘Jump!’ Every time David Lee Roth sang, ‘Jump’ the people all jumped.” Van Halen was one of the most popular heavy metal groups of the 1980s and early 1990s. In a concert in Detroit, Michigan, lead singer David Lee Roth yelled out, “We are gathered in celebration of drugs, sex and rock and roll!!!” (*Shofar* magazine, Fall 1983, p. 10). Many of Van Halen’s songs are vile and immoral. A rock critic said a Van Halen concert is “a musical circus of sex, drugs, and rock ‘n’ roll cliches” and noted that “sex is celebrated in a way that makes bike gangs look like morality squads” (*Calgary Herald*, April 28, 1984).

During the February 18, 2002, premier show for the Michael W. Smith/Third Day *Come Together Tour*, the CCM group Third Day took the stage to the strains of the New Age Beatles song “Come Together” (press release, Nashville, April 24, 2002).

Granger Community Church in Granger, Indiana, featured Beatles music as their 2007 Christmas theme. Pastor Tim Stevens said: “With *Across the Universe* currently in the theaters and the new Beatles-themed Cirque du Soleil show in Vegas called *Love*, the Beatles are as hot as ever. Using the music of the Beatles we will be telling the Christmas story all

December. And we've been getting great feedback from music lovers of all generations" (<http://www.leadingsmart.com/leadingsmart/2007/11/let-it-bechrist.html/>). They advertised it as "Let it Be...Christmas -- A Story Told by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, George and Ringo."

In 2014, Hillsong United proclaimed their undying love for the Beatles by titling a remix of their most popular songs *The White Album* in honor of the 1968 Beatles album popularly known by that name. Hillsong United's press release stated, "... stealing its title as a respectful ode to arguably one of the greatest albums by perhaps the greatest band of all time (and no, we certainly aren't comparing our little remix project to The Beatles), but we are however inspired by the way they, like many other artists over the years have pioneered the sound of music for generations, defining culture along the way."

The Beatles have wielded one of the most godless, wicked influences on modern society.

The *White Album* that is so effusively praised by Hillsong United was produced after the Beatles visited the Hindu guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in India and while the band members were heavily involved with hallucinogenic drugs. It should be called "The Beatles' Demon Possessed Album." The Beatles' involvement with drugs and Hinduism paved the way for large numbers of young people to pursue the same soul-destroying paths. I was one of those thus influenced when I dropped out of society, became a drug user and seller, hitchhiked across America, and joined a Hindu meditation society in the early 1970s. When I won \$70 from a slot machine in Las Vegas in 1972 I thought it was an answer to prayer, because I wanted to play Beatles songs like George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord," an ode to the Hindu god Ram.

In his 1965 book, *A Spaniard in the Works*, John Lennon called Jesus Christ many wicked things that we cannot repeat. He blasphemed the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the song

“God” (1970), Lennon sang: “I don’t believe in Bible. I don’t believe in Jesus. I just believe in me, Yoko and me, that’s reality.” Lennon’s extremely popular song “Imagine” (1971) promotes atheism. The lyrics say: “Imagine there’s no heaven ... No hell below us, above us only sky ... no religion too/ You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one/ I hope some day you’ll join us, and the world will live as one.”

NewSpring Church in Florence, South Carolina, performed “Highway to Hell” by the wicked rock band AC/DC for Easter service 2009. NewSpring performed Ozzy Osbourne’s “Crazy Train” in November 2011.

Northpoint Church of Springfield, Missouri, performed “Sympathy for the Devil” by the Rolling Stones for Easter service 2011, and Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” in November 2011.

The Church by the Glades in Miramar, Florida, performed “Calling All the Monsters” in 2011. The theme of the song is “magic and fantasy,” and the immoral dance moves were inspired by Michael Jackson’s “Thriller.”

On November 13, 2011, Proclaimers Church in Norwich, England, performed Lady Gaga’s “Telephone,” and Pastor John Rawls defended the filthy, blasphemous rock star, saying, “I am so sick and incredibly sad that some sections of the church need to be negative, critical and judgmental towards the diva and everything else they don’t like” (“Norwich Religious Group Discusses,” *Norwich Evening News*, Nov. 15, 2011).

The most recent example of this worldly insanity is the popularity of the “Harlem Shake” at “evangelical” churches and schools, including Liberty University, Cedarville University, and Rick Warren’s Saddleback Church high school. These and many others uploaded video clips online “of their youth breaking out dancing--sometimes with sensual and suggestive moves, and little clothing” (“Controversy Erupts over Explosion of Church, College Groups Gyration,” *ChristianNews.net*, Mar. 7, 2013).

The youth ministry of Bethel Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida, used their rendition of the Harlem Shake as an “evangelism” tool with Pastor Rudolph McKissick’s blessing (“Florida Megachurch’s Youth Group Draws Peers with Music, Harlem Shake,” *Christian Post*, Mar. 23, 2013).

If these things are not indicative of the worldliness that is condemned in 1 John 2:15-17 and James 4:4 and many other passages of Scripture, there is no longer any such thing as worldliness!

The worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is further seen in that the music itself is owned by the world.

Contemporary Christian Music is a half billion dollar a year industry. The CCM industry sold nearly 50 million albums in 2001, raking in more money than the jazz and classical segments of the music business. Revenues from sales of CCM have tripled since the mid-80s. One-quarter of the income in the average Christian bookstore is from music.

The dollar signs eventually caught the attention of the world, and most of the major CCM producers and distributors are now owned by secular corporations.

World magazine reported that “secular media companies ... swallowed up more than 90 percent of Christian recording labels in the 1990s.”

WORD ENTERTAINMENT, a secular corporation, is the home of such CCM heavyweights as 4Him, Phil Keaggy, Amy Grant, Mary Mary, Cindy Morgan, Erin O’Donnell, Point of Grace, Sandi Patty, Mark Schulz, Jaci Velasquez, Wes King, Nicole Mullen, and Anointed. A few years ago Word changed hands from one secular corporation to another. Warner Music Group paid Gaylord Hotels and the Grand Ole Opry \$84.1 million for Word. Warner, a division of AOL Time Warner, also owns Atlantic, Elektra, London-Sire, Reprise, and Warner Bros. Records and has on its roster such vile secular rock artists as Green Day, Madonna, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

In 1992, SPARROW RECORDS (Avalon, Ce Ce Winons, Carman, Delirious, Margaret Becker, Newsboys, Phillips Craig and Dean, Steve Green, Steven Curtis Chapman, Twila Paris, Zoe Girl) sold out to EMI Christian Music Group, which in turn is owned by the secular corporation EMI Group. EMI owns 70 music companies (Virgin, Capitol, Mosaic, Narada, Astralwerks, etc.) representing some 1,500 artists, including a wide variety of very immoral secular music acts, such as Janet Jackson, Smashing Pumpkin, Mariah Carey, Geto Boys, Spice Girls, Blind Melon, and the Beastie Boys. EMI also owns the music of older groups such as Pink Floyd, Grand Funk Railroad, Radiohead, Iggy Pop, Sex Pistols, Badfinger, the Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Billy Idol, Blondie, and Poison.

Chevrolet sponsored the Michael W. Smith worship tour in 2002.

These are only a very few examples of a practice that is in direct disobedience to the Word of God.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

The worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music is further seen in the lifestyles of the musicians.

Speaking generally, CCM musicians not only love the world’s music, but they also imitate the world’s lifestyle.

Roaring Lambs: A Gentle Plan to Radically Change Your World by the late Bob Briner (introduction by Michael W.

Smith) has been promoted widely by contemporary Christian musicians, including Jars of Clay, Steven Curtis Chapman, Sixpence None the Richer, Steve Taylor, Michael Tait of dc Talk, NewSong, and Delirious.

It promotes the CCM philosophy of being like the world to win the world. Briner suggests, for example, that Christians should have the goal of seeing their sons and daughters become the principle dancers in ballet companies instead of looking upon such things as wrong and avoiding them.

Briner says, "...instead of just hanging around the fringes of our culture, we need to be right smack dab in the middle of it..."

It is obvious that contemporary Christian musicians are "right smack dab in the middle" of modern culture.

The World's Dress

This is apparent in the way they dress. Typically, the women wear the same form-fitting, indecent, unisex styles that unbelievers wear. The men strut the same long hair or punked hair or tattoos or earrings or whatever the unsaved are promoting.

Whatever fashion the world is currently pushing, that is the fashion that CCM follows.

I have never heard an influential contemporary Christian musician warn about immodest or worldly dress in any sort of plain manner. If there is such a person, he or she is in the most extreme minority.

Consider Michael W. Smith, one of the most influential contemporary Christian musicians. To promote his first crossover hit, "Place in This world," Smith produced a video that was sensual enough to reach the top 5 on the filthy secular rock cable television station VH-1. The video was produced by the same company that created immoral videos for Prince. It showed "a dreamy Mr. Smith singing and playing the piano in the middle of the desert while a young, pouting, gorgeous woman wanders around in the sand;

eventually the two find each other, hold hands, hug, and sort of nuzzle.” Smith admitted that his wife was opposed to him hugging another woman and that his own children said their mother should have been in the video instead of another woman.

Dan Lucarini, a former contemporary worship leader, describes the sexual element in *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement: Confessions of a Former Worship Leader*. In fact, this was one of the reasons why he turned away from the movement.

“... to preserve my marriage and to be faithful to God in all things, I needed to separate from the temptations that were ever-present in the CCM setting: the ego gratification and attraction to the female members of the worship team” (*Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement*, 2002, p. 34).

“When we brought rock music (and all its musical cousins) into the church service, we invited along with it a spirit of immorality with which that music is unavoidably associated. It wasn’t obvious at first. We didn’t use hard rock; instead we used more acceptable, watered-down forms of it: soft rock, pop/rock, country rock and easy listening jazz styles. These styles supported the warm and fuzzy, falling-in-love-with-God feelings we wanted to have in worship. They were less edgy but still contained the underlying rock beat that undeniably appeals to our flesh and reminds us of the world’s favourite music. Despite all our efforts to restrain this musical beast, the saints of God are being seduced by CCM styles. These styles are capable of corrupting the morals of any Christian, no matter how strong they think they are” (Lucarini, p. 42).

“Like other Contemporaries, I was blind to the subtle sexual influences creeping into my worship teams and unwilling to admit that my worship music could possibly be tainted by sex” (Lucarini, p. 69).

“When you combine the sensual dancing with the immodest dress of the women on the platform [in the praise teams], you place a very large stumbling block in front of the men of the congregation” (Lucarini, p. 71).

“Does your worship team mix single or divorced men and women together with those who are married? That is an open door for sexual immorality. If you put hot-blooded males and females into a passionate rock music group, there will be strong temptation for sexual sins. CCM styles facilitate an atmosphere where a female’s innate desire to have emotional intimacy with a man can easily be achieved. The problem is, most of the time that man is not her husband. This leads to something called emotional adultery, a problem that can later lead to physical adultery” (Lucarini, p. 71)

“... we use CCM to create this atmosphere. We dim the lights, we design the music to move people where we want to take them and we create the special mood, the right atmosphere. What is wrong with this? It is exactly what the world does to create sexual intimacy. Secular musicians use the same music styles and environmental methods to draw people into sexual intimacy with them. It is all about bringing sensuality into the public forum and breaking down all of our sexual inhibitions” (Lucarini, p. 72).

“CCM is stuck with this stigma of immorality, because the music styles carry with them the baggage of the world’s immorality. It does not matter if you change the lyrics. It does not matter if you change the musicians. It does not matter if you change the record labels. It does not matter if you ask God to sanctify it. Rock music and all its children, and by association CCM, can and will corrupt the morals of everyone who practises it” (Lucarini, p. 73).

“The CCM artists became role models for different kinds of immorality: indecent dress, rebellious images, improper crushes on married men by young girls, lustful interest in sexy females by adolescent males” (Lucarini, p. 117).

This is a very loud warning to saints who want to remain morally pure, and it is an aspect of CCM that very few have been willing to admit.

The World’s Language

Cursing and profanity are not uncommon in the CCM world.

Keith Wells of the rock group Roxalt says that cursing is becoming increasingly common even on “Christian” rock albums: “It seems that some of the new ‘Christian’ metal bands that are putting out demos now think that they must cuss in order to get their message through” (*Heaven’s Metal Magazine*, Vol. III, No. 3, p. 16).

Amy Grant said that she uses four-letter words:

“I have a healthy sense of right and wrong, but sometimes, for example, using foul, exclamation-point words among friends can be good for a laugh” (Amy Grant, *Ladies Home Journal*, December 1985, p. 100).

Steve Camp used profanity in a 1986 interview with *CCM Magazine*.

Cliff Young of Caedmon’s Call told an interviewer that one of his favorite singers is the foul-mouthed, anti-christ Alanis Morissette. Young mocked a preacher who warned that Christian musicians should not listen to vile secular rock like this. *Rolling Stone* magazine describes Morissette’s music as “uncensored documentation of her psychosexual former Catholic-girl torments” (*Rolling Stone*, No. 720). Morissette admits that she has been sexually active since her childhood and that she is open to sleeping with women. But contemporary Christian musician Cliff Young says: “I’d

rather listen to someone who's being honest and open, cussing in their songs, than someone who's putting up a front and writing a song to get a hit" (Rob Berman, a conversation with Cliff Young and Todd Bragg, http://tlem.netcentral.net/indie/960701/caedmons_call.html).

Who said we have to make such a silly choice! God's Word says everything is to be done to edification (Ephesians 4:29), and cursing certainly does not edify. Everything is to be done to the glory of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 10:31), and He is *not* glorified by blasphemy and fornication and lesbianism.

After Charlie Daniels, a country rock CCM performer, used profanity in an interview with the *Huntsville Times* in July 31, 1994, *Moody Monthly* argued that Christians should not "dismiss musicians because they use four-letter words or sexual references" (*Moody Monthly*, July-August 1994, p. 57).

This is the advice coming out of the CCM world, but it is wrong. The Bible admonishes the Christian to be "wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" (Romans 16:19). The Christian is to have "sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:8). No corrupt or filthy communication is to proceed out of the Christian's mouth (Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:8).

The World's Movies

It is commonplace for contemporary Christian musicians to watch ungodly R-rated movies. Many of their interviews mention this.

For example, Dove Award winner Ashley Cleveland told an interviewer that two movies she has enjoyed are *Good Will Hunting* and *The Full Monty*. According to movie reviews, both are rated R and contain nudity, vulgarity, and profanity. *The Full Monty* is a bawdy British film about a group of unemployed men who decide to become male strippers. Cleveland said that when she was watching this vile film she got a laugh out of wondering how it would be if her husband

and his friends would do such a thing. It was a “hilarious thought,” she said.

Obviously, there is no holiness of life or separation from the world reflected here.

The World’s Corruption of Marriage

Immorality and divorce are *rampant* in CCM circles.

Just a few of the divorced or adulterous or adulterous CCM musicians are Steve Archer, Steve Camp, Bob Carlisle, Ralph Carmichael, Ja’Marc Davis of Raze, Eddie Degarmo, Michael English, Ryan Gingerich, Amy Grant, Tom Howard, Stacy Jones of the rap group Grits, Dana Key, Mylon LeFevre, Nikki Leonti, Sandi Patty (committed adultery twice prior to her divorce), Larry Norman (twice), Kevin Prosch, Michael W. Smith, Randy Stonehill, Larry Norman, John Michael Talbot, Randy Thomas, Greg Volz of Petra, Sheila Walsh, Wayne Watson, Deniece Williams, and members of the now disbanded Barnabas. Melody Green, widow of Keith Green, divorced her second husband. In 2016, Israel Houghton divorced his wife Maleasa and developed a relationship with Cheetah Girl Adrienne Bailon. They made a trip together to Tulum, Mexico (“Singer Israel Houghton Suspended from Joel Osteen’s Lakewood Church after Divorce,” ChristianHeadlines.com, Mar. 24, 2016).

Homosexuality is also a growing trend within the CCM movement, as we document under a separate point, and this is a clear reflection of its worldly environment.

Homosexual CCM artists include Anthony Williams, Marsha Stevens (who wrote the popular song “For Those Tears I Died” and who has been called “the mother of Contemporary Christian Music”), Kirk Talley, Clay Aiken, Ray Boltz, Anthony Williams (known as Tonex or Ton3x), and Jennifer Knapp.

There is much more we could say about the worldliness of Contemporary Christian Music, but this should suffice.

The worldliness of CCM is a very serious matter and sufficient reason in itself to avoid it.

The Bible says that those who love the world are the enemies of God (James 4:4).

Contemporary Christian Music Is Ecumenical

Another major reason why we are opposed to Contemporary Praise Music is because it is ecumenical in philosophy and practice.

Contemporary Christian Music is one of the most powerful elements in building the one-world “church.”

Speaking before the International Congress of Sacred Music in Rome in February 2001, Pope John Paul II said music can be an instrument toward Christian unity.

John Styll, the publisher of *Worship Leader* magazine, made the following telling observation:

“You can have a pretty straight-laced but theologically liberal Presbyterian church using the same songs that are being sung at a wild and crazy charismatic church, but they use different arrangements and adapt the songs to their unique settings” (Styll, quoted by Steve Rabey, “The Profits of Praise,” *Christianity Today*, July 12, 1999).

Why would a “theologically liberal” Presbyterian church, which perhaps hates the old hymns about the blood and the Trinity and adds hymns about mother god and the social gospel to its songbook and which allows preachers to deny the Bible’s divine inspiration and thinks that unrepentant homosexuals make fine church members, be attracted to contemporary praise music?

Why would a Roman Catholic who prays to Mary and praises God for purgatory (such as the popular charismatic priest Tom Forrest does) be attracted to contemporary praise music?

Don't you see something wrong with this picture, my Bible-believing friends?

Yet now we have gullible, ill-informed "fundamentalists" and Bible-believing Baptists adopting contemporary music!

Hillsong's Darlene Zschech, who performs in Roman Catholic contexts, says, "There is a new sound and a new song being proclaimed across the earth. It's THE SOUND OF A UNIFIED CHURCH..." (album cover of *You Shine*).

Contemporary Christian Music's ecumenical influence is described as follows:

"Have you ever seen a bunch of young people (be they Lutheran, Presbyterian, or Baptist, charismatic or evangelical) setting aside their religious idiosyncrasies to jump and shout when Petra walks on stage?... The shared experience will send them back to their own churches LESS THEOLOGICALLY EXCLUSIVE. From that moment on, they are 'not of this world' with all of its PETTY ECCLESIASTICAL DIVISIONS" (Bob Larson, *Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, December 1985).

Larson foolishly calls the differences between Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists, and charismatics "petty ecclesiastical divisions." The difference between infant baptism and believer's baptism alone is enough to prove that these are not petty matters.

There was a time when Bob Larson preached against Christian rock, yet he refused to separate from charismatics and others who were walking a path of disobedience and error. Now we see the fruit of his reckless disregard for biblical separation. God has warned that evil communications corrupt good manners, and men disregard divine commands to their own spiritual detriment. Once Larson preached against Christian rock; now he is ensnared by it and promotes the devil's ecumenical schemes. He also divorced the wife of his youth and married another woman.

In an interview with *Christianity Today*, Don Moen of Integrity Music said:

“I’ve discovered that worship [music] is transdenominational, transcultural. IT BRIDGES ANY DENOMINATION. Twenty years ago there were many huge divisions between denominations. Today I think the walls are coming down. In any concert that I do, I will have 30-50 different churches represented.”

CCM artist Kari Jobe understands the ecumenical power of CCM. In an interview in March 2014, she said:

“I think that we’re just in a really exciting season of seeing some denominational barriers come down. I COULD LITERALLY WALK INTO A CHURCH AND LEAD WORSHIP AND NOT KNOW WHAT DENOMINATION I WAS IN THAT NIGHT. We’re doing a lot of different churches FROM ASSEMBLY OF GOD TO METHODIST TO BAPTIST” (Kari Jobe: *Pioneering New Roads in Worship*, FamilyChristian.com, March 20, 2014).

In his book *Making Musical Choices*, Richard Peck makes the following important observation about contemporary church music:

“Ecumenical terms that permeate the CCM scene include ‘anointed,’ ‘the body,’ ‘united,’ ‘John 17,’ ‘tolerance,’ ‘non-critical love,’ ‘judge not,’ ‘no finger pointing,’ etc.”

These are terms that identify the philosophy of the end-time ecumenical movement described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 and other passages.

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 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 Timothy 4:2-4).

The end-time apostasy is characterized by a rejection of strong biblical absolutes and reproof. It is characterized by teachers who pamper instead of preach, who generalize instead of being specific, who are positive rather than “negative,” who build self-esteem rather than call for repentance, who refuse to delineate truth from heresy in a clear manner, and who ignore the Bible’s warnings about apostasy.

Contemporary Praise Music is perfectly at home in the most ecumenical of contexts. It is the music of ecumenical evangelism, as epitomized by the Franklin Graham and Luis Palau crusades.

Billy Graham led the way in this. Consider this description of Graham’s 1997 crusade in San Antonio, Texas:

“More than 700 San Antonio churches representing over 50 denominations have joined together for the Graham crusade, which hopes to attract South Texas youth with big-name Christian rock acts [Amy Grant, dc Talk, Charlie Daniels Band, Michael W. Smith, Steve Green, and Jaci Velasquez] and a Saturday service just for kids” (*Houston Chronicle*, April 2, 1997).

Consider Luis and Andrew Palau’s evangelistic “festivals,” in which CCM is a major component. The 2010 Yakima Valley CityFest in Washington state is an example. The festival brought together more than 100 churches, including Roman Catholic, to entertain and “evangelize” the masses. John Ecker, bishop of St. Paul Cathedral of Yakima (Roman Catholic), enthusiastically urged his parishioners to participate, saying: “Don’t forget our ‘City Fest’ coming the weekend of July 16-17 at the Fair Grounds, a chance to join our voices and prayers with many other churches from our valley and city and to better our city as a place to live for all of our people. I encourage your participation there this

month” (St. Paul Cathedral newsletter, June 24, 2010). This is a “church” that “reverences” Mary, believing her to be the immaculate Queen of Heaven; a “church” that preaches a sacramental gospel of faith plus works; a “church” that defines the new birth as being baptized.

Like Billy Graham before him, Luis Palau is perfectly at home with Catholic bishops, and the evangelical world at large is silent in the face of this horrible disobedience which demonstrates evangelicalism’s unashamed apostasy.

This is the type of environment in which Contemporary Christian Music is most comfortable.

Contemporary Christian Music is the music of ecumenical charismatic conferences.

One of the largest was New Orleans ‘87, held in July 1987, which I attended with press credentials. Approximately 40 different denominations and groups came together under one roof, including Episcopalian, Church of Christ, United Methodist, American Baptist, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA. Fifty percent of those in attendance were Roman Catholics.

Priest Tom Forrest delivered the closing message and brought the mixed multitude to their feet when he called for unity. “We must reach the world,” he cried, “and we must reach it the only way we can reach it; we must reach it TOGETHER!” At those words the people became ecstatic, leaping to their feet, shouting, stomping, speaking in “tongues,” dancing, hugging one another.

This same priest, speaking at a conference I attended in Indianapolis in 1990, said he is thankful for purgatory because he knows that he will not go to heaven except by that means. Obviously he does not believe in the once-for-all sufficiency of Christ’s atonement at Calvary.

At the book sales area in New Orleans, one could purchase rosary beads and Madonnas to assist in praying to Mary. A Catholic mass was held every morning.

The music that held all of this confusion together and carried it along was Contemporary Worship Music.

Youth Explosion '87 was held at the same time, and 5,000 young people were bombarded with a steady diet of unscriptural teaching, ecumenism, testimonies by sports stars and entertainment figures, and ROCK music. One testimony was by a former Miss America. She left out the part about how to be modest while parading before the world in a skimpy bathing suit.

CCM is perfectly at home in the midst of such ecumenical confusion. It is the sound track of the end-time, one-world “church.”

The intimate charismatic connection within Contemporary Christian Music guarantees that it will be ecumenical.

The Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International, in its earlier days, popularized a song that proclaimed, “I don’t care what church you belong to.” That was replaced with a Catholic song that proclaims, “We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord and we pray that all unity may one day be restored...” (Michael Harper, *Three Sisters: A Provocative Look at Evangelicals, Charismatics, & Catholic Charismatics and Their Relationship to One Another*, pp. 28, 29).

When the Roman Catholic Church sings about Christian unity, of course, it is singing about non-Catholics being united with Rome. This was made clear by the declarations of the Second Vatican Council and has been confirmed by recent popes, including Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis. Consider the following statement by the Second Vatican Council which was convened by Pope John XXIII who was declared a saint in April 2014:

“This is the sole Church of Christ which in the Creed we profess to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic, which our Saviour, after his resurrection, entrusted to Peter’s pastoral care. ... This Church, constituted and

organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him” (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 1, 8, p. 329).

(For further documentation see *Is the Roman Catholic Church Changing*, available as a free eBook from www.wayoflife.org.)

The 1996 CCM hit “Gather at the River” promotes the ecumenical theme that permeates this music:

“Sometimes we don’t see eye to eye/
WE DON’T AGREE; WE DON’T KNOW WHY/
BUT JESUS PRAYED THAT WE’D BE ONE/
For the sake of God’s own Son/
CAN WE PUT AWAY OUR DIFFERENCES/
LAY DOWN OUR PRIDE/
It’s time we start turning the tide” (Joel Lindsey and Regie Hamm, “Gather at the River,” *20 Contemporary Christian Hits*, Vol. 2, Benson Music Group, 1996).

This song is built upon the false ecumenical interpretation of John 17:21. It claims that the unity for which Christ prayed is a unity of professing Christians that disregards doctrine, but the context of John 17 destroys this myth.

The unity of John 17 is a unity in truth.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world .. THEY HAVE KEPT THY WORD. ... I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEM ... I HAVE GIVEN THEM THY WORD ... SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH; THY WORD IS TRUTH ... SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE TRUTH ...” (John 17:6, 8, 14, 17, 19).

Christ emphasized that He was praying for those that love and obey the Word of God. This is certainly not a prayer that envisions the modern ecumenical crowd that downplays and ignores the Word of God for the sake of a broad, lowest-

common-denominator unity. It is not a prayer for a judge-not philosophy and a wrong-headed principle of reducing “essential” doctrine to a short list of “fundamentals,” while downplaying the so-called “non-essentials” of God’s Word for the sake of peace and unity.

For more about John 17, see the chapter “Questions Answered on Contemporary Christian Music,” # 25, “Aren’t Christians supposed to seek unity rather than division?”

Note, too, that the ecumenical CCM song “Gather at the River” pretends that the doctrinal divisions between Christians are the result of pride (“lay down our pride”) and ignorance (“we don’t agree; we don’t know why”).

This conveniently overlooks the Bible’s commands to defend the faith once delivered to the saints and to separate from error (Romans 16:17; Jude 3).

Christians who take these commands seriously refuse to be ecumenical, not because they are proud or ignorant or hateful, but because they desire to please the Lord. This ecumenical song libels Bible-believing Christians who practice biblical separation.

Bob Larson described the ecumenical power of Contemporary Christian Music as follows:

“Have you ever seen a bunch of young people (be they Lutheran, Presbyterian, or Baptist, charismatic or evangelical) setting aside their religious idiosyncrasies to jump and shout when Petra walks on stage?... The shared experience will send them back to their own churches LESS THEOLOGICALLY EXCLUSIVE. From that moment on, they are ‘not of this world’ with all of its petty ecclesiastical divisions” (Larson, *Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, December 1985).

This statement is very telling. There was a time when Larson preached against Christian rock, yet he refused to separate from charismatics and others who were walking in disobedience and error. He held meetings under charismatic

and ecumenical sponsorship. We see the fruit of this disobedience and the reckless disregard for biblical separation. Has God not warned that “evil communications corrupt good manners”?

To characterize doctrinal issues that separate Lutherans and Presbyterians and Baptists and charismatics as “RELIGIOUS IDIOSYNCRASIES,” as Bob Larson does, is ridiculous. It is not mere idiosyncrasies that divide these denominations but serious doctrinal issues. Some of these are the eternal security of the believer vs. the doctrine that a born again Christian can lose his salvation; believer’s baptism vs. infant baptism; Spirit baptism as a part of salvation vs. Spirit baptism as an experience subsequent to salvation; premillennialism vs. amillennialism; a special priesthood vs. the priesthood of the believers, to mention a few.

Bill Gaither exemplifies the ecumenical philosophy of Contemporary Christian Music. In recent decades Gaither has bridged the gap between Christian rock and Southern Gospel, and he has stirred a heaping portion of ecumenical philosophy into the mix.

Gaither provided the music one evening at Indianapolis ‘90, a large ecumenical charismatic gathering I attended with press credentials. One-half of the 25,000 participants were Roman Catholics and the other half represented roughly 40 different denominations--Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Pentecostal, you name it. A Catholic mass was held each morning during the conference, and a Catholic priest delivered the closing message. The Gaithers were comfortable in this unscriptural gathering and entertained the mixed multitude with their jazzy music.

The Gaithers frequently perform and record songs that present the ecumenical philosophy. An example is “Jesus Built This Church on Love” from their *Back Home in Indiana* album. The lead on the song is performed by Candy “Hemphill” Christmas, who travels with the Gaithers. The song is sung at many Gaither concerts. It is done in the style

of a jazzy, black spiritual, with drums and bass guitar emphasizing the backbeat. Here are some of the lyrics:

“Do you ever just get to wonderin’/ ‘bout the way things are today?/ So many on board this gospel ship/ Trying to row in a different way/ If we’d all pull together/ Like a family me and you/ We’d come a lot closer to doin’/ what the Lord called us to do.

Chorus: “Jesus built this church on love/ and that’s what it’s all about/ Trying to get everybody saved/ NOT TO KEEP ANYBODY OUT...”

The song implies that the divisions within Christianity are largely, if not entirely, man-made and unnecessary, that if professing Christians would merely “pull together” and exercise love, the divisions would be healed.

It is a feel-good sentiment, a nice fairy tale that has wide appeal, but it is unreasonable and unscriptural. The Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles warned repeatedly that false teachers would lead many astray, that there would be false christs, false spirits, false gospels, false churches, doctrines of devils.

See Matthew 7:15-23; 24:3-5, 11, 24; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Corinthians 1:1-4; Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:13; 4:3-4; 2 Peter 2; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 7-11; Jude 3-4; etc..

The book of Revelation describes a one-world, end-time, harlot Christian religion that will exist in the world before Jesus returns (Rev. 17).

Those who preach ecumenical unity rarely even mention these Bible warnings and never focus on them. They do not tell us plainly where these false christs, false gospels, false spirits, false teachers, and false churches are in today’s Christianity. They imply, rather, that denominational division is largely an unnecessary thing that could be overcome by a little ecumenical love.

There are many problems among Christians that could be healed through love, but it is not true that love will heal the

major divisions within Christianity. The differences between denominations involve serious doctrinal issues that cannot be ignored and cannot be resolved through sentimental songs.

The Gaither song “Jesus Built This Church on Love” also says the churches are “not to keep anybody out.” That is contrary to the Bible’s command to separate from error and to exercise church discipline.

See Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:16-21; 3:5; 2 John 8-11; Revelation 18:4.

Another ecumenical Gaither song is “Loving God, Loving Each Other” from the album by that name.

“They pushed back from the table/
To listen to his words/
His secret plan before he had to go/
It’s not complicated/
DON’T NEED A LOT OF RULES/
This is all you need to know/
We tend to make it harder/
Build steeples out of stone/
FILL BOOKS WITH EXPLANATIONS OF THE WAY/
But if we’d stop and listen/
And break a little bread/
We would hear the Master say/
It’s Loving God, loving each other/
Making music with my friends/
Loving God, loving each other/
And the story never ends.”

This song contains many dangerous half-truths and subtle errors. Love is a very important part of the Christian life, but true Christian love is to obey God’s Word (John 14:23; 1 John 5:3).

To say that we “don’t need a lot of rules” ignores the fact that the New Testament is literally filled with commandments!

To say that we don’t need to “fill books with explanations of the way” ignores the Bible’s command to “... study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). It ignores the fact that the Bible is given for “doctrine” (2 Tim. 3:16), that preachers are instructed to teach others (2

Tim. 2:2), that older women are instructed to teach younger women (Titus 2:3-5), etc.

Bible teaching most definitely involves “filling books with explanations of the way.” That is precisely what the apostles did in the New Testament Epistles. The Bible itself contains 66 books with “explanations of the way”!

This Gaither song presents a sentimental, simplistic, ecumenical approach to the Christian life and ministry that is appealing to a modern crowd but that is patently contrary to the Scriptures.

The Roman Catholic Element

Not surprisingly, there is a strong Roman Catholic element within Contemporary Christian Music.

The very popular **JOHN MICHAEL TALBOT** is a Roman Catholic who prays to Mary and accepts Catholic tradition. He became a lay “brother” in the order of Secular Franciscans in 1979 and lives in Little Portion Hermitage in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. This is the home of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity, “an integrated monastic community of families, celibates and singles” founded by Talbot and formally recognized by the Catholic Church.

In 1984, Talbot said: “I am also feeling the presence of Mary becoming important in my life. ... I feel that she really does love me and intercedes to God on my behalf” (*Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, November 1984, p. 47).

Talbot’s albums were the first by a Catholic artist to be accepted broadly by both Protestant and Catholic listeners. “In 1988, *Billboard Magazine* reported that Talbot out-ranked all other male Christian artists in total career albums sold, after more than three million sales with Sparrow Records, making him Sparrow’s all-time best-selling recording artist” (Talbot’s web site).

In an article entitled “Our Fathers, and Our Divided Family,” in the Catholic Charismatic magazine *New*

Covenant, Talbot called for Christian unity on the basis of the Roman Catholic papacy:

“A Roman Catholic, I respect other Christians. We are especially close to those who value apostolic tradition as well as Scripture. But even in this we face further debates that are obstacles to complete Christian unity. THIS IS WHY THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH INSISTS THAT SCRIPTURE, TRADITION AND MAGISTERIUM ARE NECESSARY FOR A FULLY UNIFIED PEOPLE. WE ROMAN CATHOLICS FIND THIS IN THE POPE AS BISHOP OF ROME, TOGETHER WITH THE BISHOPS OF THE CHURCHES IN FULL COMMUNION WITH ROME. ... May we all hear these ancient truths and experience real conversion of heart” (emphasis added) (John Talbot, “Our Fathers, and Our Divided Family,” *New Covenant*, September 1997, p. 21).

Talbot says Catholic tradition and the papacy are equal in authority with the Scripture. He says the fullest expression of true Christian unity can be found only in fellowship with the Pope of Rome. He prays that his readers will hear this message and experience conversion to Rome.

What could be more unscriptural? The apostle Paul said that anyone, even an angel from heaven, that preaches a false gospel is cursed of God (Gal. 1:6-9). The Roman Catholic popes, with their sacramental gospel and blasphemous claims and titles, have been under this curse from their inception.

Nowhere does the New Testament establish a pope over all of the churches, and nowhere do we see Peter acting as or living as a pope.

We don't need the so-called “church fathers” to explain to us the rule of faith and practice. God has given an infallible and sufficient rule of authority in the Scripture and the Canon was completed in the days of the apostles. Jude called it “the faith ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.” The

completed Canon of Scripture was sealed with a solemn seal in Revelation 22:18-19 which forbids adding to or subtracting from it.

The Scripture is able to make the man of God “perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17). If the Scripture is able to make the man of God perfect, there is no need for anything else. And Roman Catholic tradition is NOT Scripture.

There is plenty of room for John Talbot’s apostate theology in the doctrinally-confused, heresy-tolerant world of Contemporary Christian Music. Talbot is considered a brother in Christ and is welcomed with open arms, even in the face of God’s commands that we mark and avoid those who promote doctrine contrary to that taught by the apostles (Rom. 16:17-18).

The devil is using the ecumenical thrust of Contemporary Christian Music to break down the walls between truth and error toward the building of the one-world apostate “church.”

Surveys show that 60 percent of Talbot’s listeners are non-Catholic. Talbot said that HE DELIGHTS TO SEE PROTESTANTS WHO NEVER WOULD HAVE DARKENED THE DOORSTEP OF A CATHOLIC CHURCH COME TO ONE OF HIS CONCERTS. “All of a sudden they say: ‘Hey, I feel very much at home here. That doesn’t mean necessarily I want to be a Roman Catholic, but I feel very much at home worshipping God with other people who are not that different from me’” (John Talbot, quoted in “Interfaith Album Strikes Sour Note,” Peter Smith, Religious News Service, Dec. 8, 1996).

In 1996, Talbot produced an album jointly with CCM performer MICHAEL CARD, a Protestant. They embarked on a concert tour and the audience was “estimated at 50 percent Catholic and 50 percent Protestant” (*Charisma*, December 1996, p. 29). In March 1996 they performed together for the largest gathering of Catholics in America at

the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress. Roughly 20,000 “clergy and laity” attended this congress.

Of this ecumenical venture with Talbot, the “Protestant” Michael Card testified: “Doing this project has enabled us to become real friends. And along the way, THE DENOMINATIONAL LINES HAVE BECOME REALLY MEANINGLESS TO ME, AND TO JOHN, TOO” (*CCM Magazine*, July 1996).

It is painfully obvious that doctrinal truth means nothing to these CCM artists. If Card really took his “evangelical” doctrine seriously he would not yoke together with a man who denies that doctrine and who has the goal of drawing his listeners to the Catholic Church.

If the Pope is truly the Vicar of Christ and the head of all Christians, it would be wicked to deny it, but if the Catholic papacy is nothing but a man-made tradition, it is wicked to believe it. If Mary is the immaculate, ever-virgin Queen of Heaven, it would be wicked to deny it; but if the Catholic Mary is a demonic idol, it is wicked to believe it. If the Catholic priesthood is ordained by God, it would be wicked to deny it; but if it has no authority from God and is merely a tradition of man, it is wicked to accept it.

There is no middle ground here. There can be no spiritual fellowship between those who hold doctrines this diverse. The Bible says those who teach doctrine contrary to that which the apostles taught are to be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17).

The Bible wisely asks: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

Other Catholic musicians that move easily within Contemporary Christian Music circles are AUDREY ASSAD, KATHY TROCCOLI, TOM BOOTH, SARAH HART, DANNY LANGDON, SHERYL CROW, and MATT MAHER.

The *National Catholic Register* mentioned some of these in an article in March 8-14, 1998, stating that THEY ARE

USING THEIR MUSIC TO “EVANGELIZE” EVANGELICAL YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

KATHY TROCCOLI has been nominated five times as the Gospel Music Association female vocalist of the year. She is a national spokesperson for Chuck Colson’s Prison Fellowship.

In an interview with *CCM Magazine* in 1997 she said: “But I’d been very judgmental toward the Catholic church for years, and I’ve recently been able to go back to it without having a chip on my shoulder. I now have a much greater capacity for--as the album says--*Love and Mercy*.”

Troccoli has accepted the ecumenical lie that love is tolerant toward doctrinal differences. She holds an ecumenical, non-judgmental, anti-fundamentalist philosophy:

“Our dogma and legalism strangle the love of Christ right out of us” (Troccoli, *CCM Magazine*, June 1997).

This sounds good to many ears today, and there is no doubt that Christian love is important, but godly love is not contrary to holding a strong position on New Testament doctrine. In fact it is impossible to obey the Bible without being deeply concerned about doctrine (“dogma”) and without caring about the details of God’s Word (which is commonly mischaracterized by the CCM crowd as “legalism”).

Jude 3 explains that God has given one faith to His people, and that faith, as recorded in the New Testament Scriptures, is to be preserved and fought for until Jesus returns. It is absolutely impossible to obey Jude 3 and be ecumenical and non-judgmental at the same time, since the chief thing that divides denominations is doctrine.

Troccoli’s 1997 album, *Love One Another*, had an ecumenical, one-world church theme: “Christians from all denominations demonstrating their common love for Christ

and each other” (Dave Urbanski, “Chatty Kathy,” *CCM Magazine*, June 1997).

The ecumenism permeating CCM is evident in that the recording of the title song involved 40 CCM artists: Amy Grant, Gary Chapman, Clay Crosse, Sandi Patty, Michael W. Smith, Carman, Tony Vincent, Jonathan Pierce, Mark Lowry, Phillips, Craig and Dean, Aaron and Jeoffrey, Jaci Velasquez, Lisa Bevill, Scott Krippayne, Sarah Masen, Babbie Mason, Sara Jahn, Carolyn Arends, Vestal Goodman, Paul Vann, Billy and Sarah Gaines, Tim Taber, Sarah Hart, Peter Penrose, Janet Paschal, Beverly Crawford, Phil Joel of the Newsboys, Kevin Smith of dc Talk, Tai Anderson of Third Day, plus the members of Out of the Grey, Beyond the Blue, 4 HIM, Christafari, and Audio Adrenaline.

The song talks about tearing down the walls of denominational division.

“Look around the world today/ There is anger there is hate/ And I know that it grieves His heart/ When His people stand apart/ Cause we’re the only Jesus they will see/ Love one another, and live as one in His name/ Love one another we can tear down walls by His grace” (“Love One Another”).

The broad range of participants that joined Kathy Troccoli in recording “Love One Another” demonstrates the ecumenical agenda of Contemporary Christian Music. The song witnessed Catholics, Pentecostals, Baptists, etc., yoked together and calling for Christian unity.

The New Testament warns repeatedly of widespread apostasy in the end times among those who claim to be Christians, yet the ecumenical movement generally ignores apostasy and heresy and calls for almost unqualified unity among professing Christians.

While there is no doubt that God is grieved by man-made divisions among Bible-believing Christians, it is not true that the heart of God is grieved by all divisions, because there are

divisions He Himself requires. He has commanded that His people separate from those who follow doctrinal error.

The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians is filled with other examples of the ecumenical, one-world church fervor that permeates CCM.

Ecumenism is not a minor part of Contemporary Christian Music. It is a major emphasis. Nothing is more effective at building the end-time one-world “church,” and if for no other reason, the Bible believer knows that he should avoid CCM like a cobra or a rattlesnake because of its ecumenical principle.

Contemporary Christian Music Is Charismatic

Another reason why we are opposed to Contemporary Christian Music is its intimate relationship with the Charismatic movement.

Jerry Huffman, editor of the *Calvary Contender*, observed that CCM could stand for Contemporary Charismatic Music.

Charisma magazine, February 1994, made this observation:

“Today, praise music has entered the mainstream. Songs that were only sung in charismatic churches a few years ago are now heard throughout mainline and non-charismatic churches.”

Though jazzy music began permeating non-charismatic churches only in recent decades, it was a part of the Pentecostal movement from its inception. Consider the following overview:

“Shortly after it began to emerge in 1901, Pentecostalism sensed through some strange form of intuition that success would come through EMOTIONALLY-CHARGED MUSIC. The first pattern was jazz. Speaking of the years 1901 to 1914, Howard Goss said, ‘WITHOUT IT (JAZZ) THE

PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT COULD NEVER HAVE MADE THE RAPID INROADS INTO THE HEARTS OF MEN AND WOMEN AS IT DID. Neither could we have experienced a constant victorious revival over the fifty years' (*The Winds of Change*, p. 212). He also noted: 'It was generally not the conventional church-hymn singing of that era. Entirely unpretentious, there appeared to be neither poetry nor musicianship in the composition. But, there was something far more effective than either. ... WE WERE THE FIRST, SO FAR AS I KNOW, TO INTRODUCE THIS ACCELERATED TEMPO INTO GOSPEL SINGING' (Ibid. pp. 207, 208). This Pentecostal leader should know for he was the most prominent among the early founders of the Movement" (Wilson Ewin, *The Pied Piper of the Pentecostal Movement*, 1986, pp. 49-51).

Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944), founder of the Foursquare Pentecostal Churches, incorporated jazzy music into her elaborate, sensuous church programs. A contemporary made the following analysis of her success:

"She threw out the dirges and threats of hell, REPLACING THEM WITH JAZZ HYMNS and promises of Glory" (Morrow Mayo of *The New Republic*, quoted in Robert Bahr, *Least of All Saints: The Story of Aimee Semple McPherson*, 1979, p. 267).

Many of the early rock & roll musicians observed the connection between the music they heard in Pentecostal churches and secular rock music. Ronnie Dawson, a 1950s rockabilly star, started playing electric guitar at an Assemblies of God church. Of rockabilly he said: "It's very similar to the Assembly of God kind of church music, and things that I had taken part in in church" (*Unknown Legends of Rock 'n' Roll*, p. 15).

With the onset of the charismatic movement since the 1960s, which is basically the ecumenical branch of

Pentecostalism, “JAZZED-UP HYMNS” HAVE GONE MAINSTREAM and have swept throughout much of the professing Christian world.

The vast majority of the influential Christian rock musicians are associated with the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, **and practically none of them are separated from it or renounce it.**

The following are just a few of the prominent Pentecostal and charismatic personalities behind the “jazzed-up hymns” which are being used in non-charismatic churches.

JACK HAYFORD, author of the song “Majesty” and many other popular worship songs, is pastor of Church-on-the-Way Foursquare Church, a Pentecostal denominational founded by the female pastor Aimee Semple McPherson. Paul and Jan Crouch, of Trinity Broadcasting Network, are members of Hayford’s church. Speaking at the St. Louis 2000 conference, Hayford told how his daughter approached him one day concerned that her “tongues speaking” was mere gibberish. He encouraged her that the believer must first learn to speak in baby tongues before he speaks in adult tongues. (I attended this conference with press credentials and was sitting only a few feet from Hayford when he said this.) To the contrary, biblical tongues-speaking is not something that can be learned; it is a supernatural gift and there is not one example in the New Testament of someone learning how to speak in tongues.

Hayford claims that in 1969, as he was driving near a large Catholic church in Southern California, God spoke to him and instructed him not to judge Roman Catholicism. He says he heard a message from God saying, “Why would I not be happy with a place where every morning the testimony of the blood of my Son is raised from the altar?” (“The Pentecostal Gold Standard,” *Christianity Today*, July 2005). Based upon this “personal revelation,” Hayford adopted a neutral approach to Catholicism, yet the atonement of Jesus Christ is NOT glorified on Roman Catholic altars. The Catholic mass

is an open denial of the doctrine of the once-for-all atonement that we find in the book of Hebrews. Note what the Second Vatican Council said about the mass:

“For in it Christ perpetuates in an unbloody manner the sacrifice offered on the cross, offering himself to the Father for the world’s salvation through the ministry of priests” (The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, “Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery,” Intro., C 1, 2, p. 108).

This is only a small part of Rome’s wicked heresies, and it is impossible that God would encourage Jack Hayford to look upon the Roman Catholic Church in any sort of positive, non-judgmental manner. Hayford has acted on this “personal revelation” by yoking up with Roman Catholic leaders in conferences throughout the world. For example, he joined hands with thousands of Roman Catholics, including hundreds of Catholic priests and nuns, at the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit & World Evangelization in St. Louis in 2000.

MICHAEL W. SMITH is a charismatic who has been “slain in the Spirit” and “laughed uncontrollably, rolling on the floor ... hyperventilating.” Smith’s 2001 *Worship* album, which sold more than one million copies in its first nine months, was recorded at Carpenter’s Home Church in Lakeland, Florida, a church made “famous” for Rodney Howard-Browne’s 1993 “revival,” in which people laughed hysterically during the preaching and staggered around like drunks. Howard-Browne calls himself “the Holy Ghost bartender.”

This is the spirit of Contemporary worship music.

GRAHAM KENDRICK, one of the most popular contemporary praise music writers, joined the charismatic movement in 1971. He says he was filled with the Holy Spirit while brushing his teeth after attending a charismatic meeting. He accepts unscriptural phenomena such as

gibberish “tongues,” “spirit slaying,” “spirit shaking,” and “holy laughter.” He promotes “kingdom now” theology and supports the Word faith movement.

THE VINEYARD churches, formerly led by **JOHN WIMBER**, have had a vast influence through their contemporary praise music. Wimber himself, who was the manager of The Righteous Brothers before his conversion, wrote many popular contemporary songs, and many of the Vineyard churches are noted for their influential music groups. The Vintage Vineyard Music series is advertised as “Vineyard’s all-time worship classics THAT CONTINUE TO BE SUNG CROSS-DENOMINATIONALLY IN CHURCHES AROUND THE WORLD.”

Wimber conducted “signs and wonders” conferences, teaching the heresy that effective evangelism requires the working of miracles. Wimber spread great confusion by allowing for extra-biblical revelation.

The very popular and influential **INTEGRITY MUSIC** (Integrity owns **HOSANNA MUSIC**) rose out of the charismatic movement, and the music it spreads to 117 countries is charismatic in nature. Integrity recorded an album at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where a strange charismatic “revival” broke out in 1995. Don Moen, the “creative director” for Integrity, described the power of the music recorded at Brownsville:

“... something is imparted when you listen to this tape. I don’t want it to sound spooky or mysterious, but there’s something powerful about embracing the music of the revival. The fire of the revival can stir in you even as you listen to the songs that took place at the Brownsville revival” (“Don Moen Discusses Music at Brownsville Assembly,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 10, 1996).

The “revival” to which he refers is not a biblical revival; it is a “revival” in which people become drunk and stagger

around and fall down and are unable to perform the most basic functions of life. John Kilpatrick, pastor at Brownsville Assembly of God during the alleged revival, testified that it took him a half hour just to put on his socks when he was drunk with the Brownsville revival spirit. He lay on the church platform for as long as four hours, unable to get up and unable to exercise his responsibilities as a pastor. He had to be carted out of the church auditorium in a wheelbarrow. He ran into things with trying to drive his automobile. His wife was unable to cook their food or clean the house.

Whatever this “revival” is, it is not something that is Scriptural, yet Moen claimed that this spirit can be imparted through the music. This is a loud warning to Bible-believing Christians of the importance of marking and avoiding such music.

Integrity’s Hosanna! Music worship albums include songs by **ROBERT GAY**, who records music of alleged prophecies of charismatic “prophets.” Gay has written hundreds of choruses, and many of them have been professionally recorded. Integrity has produced a dozen or more of Gay’s prophetic songs. He claims that the Holy Spirit gives him visions for his songs. Gay is associated with Bill Hamon’s Christian International Network of supposed prophetic ministries which promotes the deception that God is continuing to give revelation through prophets and apostles. Hamon claims that God will soon raise up new apostles that will operate in the miracle-working power of the first-century apostles and that will unite churches and denominations. He claimed that charismatic “laughing” revivals are part of this restoration process (Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God: God’s End-Time Plans for His Church and Planet Earth*, 1997).

MARTY NYSTROM, author of the popular song “As the Deer,” is a graduate of Oral Roberts University and was part

of Christ for the Nations, a charismatic organization founded by Word-Faith Pentecostals Gordon and Freda Lindsay.

CARMAN, one of the highest paid CCM musicians, is a member of the Pentecostal Higher Dimensions Evangelistic Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma, pastored by Carlton Pearson. Carman's unscriptural and dangerous charismatic theology comes across in his music. In the song "Satan, Bite the Dust," Carman claims that he has "been sent with a warrant from the body of Christ" to arrest the devil and to run every unclean spirit out of town. He claims to have the authority to cast out "depression, strife, disease and fear."

PAUL BALOCHE, whose songs are often found at the top of the contemporary charts, is worship leader at the charismatic Community Christian Fellowship of Lindale, Texas. Their 2002 Leadership Summit featured Ricky Paris of Vision Ministries International, who calls himself an apostle and is said to give "apostolic covering" to Vision Church of Austin, Texas. Baloché's *Offering of Worship* album was recorded at Regent University in Virginia Beach, which was founded by the charismatic ecumenist Pat Robertson. As far back as 1985, Robertson said that he "worked for harmony and reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics" (*Christian News*, July 22, 1985). Some of the Regent professors are Roman Catholic and Regent's Center for Law and Justice has a Roman Catholic executive director. According to *Frontline* magazine, May-June 2000, a Catholic mass is held on Regent's campus every week.

CHRIST FOR THE NATIONS (CFN), which has been called "a catalyst for the worship movement in the last 30 years," is Pentecostal and promotes the heretical Latter Rain doctrine. CFN began as part of The Voice of Healing ministry of Pentecostal "healing" evangelist Gordon Lindsay. Christ For the Nations Music was established to produce and distribute charismatic/ecumenical worship music. In 2011,

CFN Music entered into a partnership with Integrity Music. All of these people are one in spirit.

The influential contemporary worship band **DELIRIOUS** started in 1992 as a youth worship band at Arun Community Church, a charismatic congregation in England that was associated with the “Toronto Blessing,” a Pentecostal “revival” in which people barked like dogs, brayed like donkeys, and rolled on the floor.

HILLSONG is Pentecostal in theology. **DARLENE ZSCHECH** promotes visions and dreams, gibberish “tongues,” etc. Her song “I Believe the Presence” from the *Shout to the Lord* album preaches false Pentecostal latter-rain theology. The lyrics say:

“I believe the promise about the visions and the dreams/
That the Holy Spirit will be poured out/
And His power will be seen/
Well the time is now/
The place is here/
And His people have come in faith/
There’s a mighty sound/
And a touch of fire/
When we’ve gathered in one place” (“I Believe the Presence” from *Shout to the Lord*).

In *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, we give many other examples of how that charismatic doctrine and philosophy permeates Contemporary Christian Music.

Since the charismatic movement is very, very dangerous, this is another of the major reasons why we are opposed to CCM. I would avoid CCM for this reason alone.

Tim Fisher makes the following wise statement:

“There are many CCM performers who do not believe the Bible, yet we allow them to sing in the homes of our people on a daily basis without warning. If you would not allow a charismatic preacher in your pulpit, why let one sing to your people? I am not trying to portray all charismatics as unsaved, but we certainly do not want them as our teachers. To keep doctrine pure, we must separate from those who teach false

doctrine and never give them an audience in our churches” (*The Battle for Christian Music*, p. 122).

Contemporary Christian Music Is Experience-Oriented

Another reason why we are opposed to Contemporary worship music is its experience orientation.

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 mind and heart.

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).

Michael W. Smith says that contemporary worship music “helps you enter into the presence of God” (*Charisma*, 2003, cited from Dan Lucarini, *It’s Not about the Music*, p. 18).

Secret Place Ministries exemplifies the contemporary worship philosophy in that they “long for an encounter with the presence of God” (SecretPlaceMinistries.org).

The objective of the extremely influential Worship Central school of contemporary worship operated by Alpha International is “to ENCOUNTER GOD.”

We see that contemporary worship music is designed to produce an experience; it’s all about a feeling, which is why it incorporates the backbeat, beat anticipation, and other forms of dance syncopation that have a sensual effect.

Rock music, whether hard or soft, is highly stimulating and experience-feeling oriented.

Consider the following testimonies about the sensual power of this music, and these testimonies are talking about the music itself rather than the lyrics.

Steven Tyler of Aerosmith said that rock music “is the strongest drug in the world” (*Rock Beat*, Spring 1987, p. 23).

Describing her first experience performing at a rock show at the Avalon in San Francisco, Janis Joplin said: “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” (Joel Dreyfuss, “Janis Joplin Followed the Script,” *Wichita Eagle*, Oct. 6, 1970, p. 7A).

Timothy Leary, the '60s LSD guru, who was an expert both in drugs and in rock music, testified: “Don’t listen to the words, it’s the music that has its own message. ... I’ve been STONED ON THE MUSIC many times” (*Politics of Ecstasy*, 1968).

Leary was right, of course, about the hypnotic, addictive, incredibly sensual power of rock and roll. And notice that he WAS NOT TALKING ABOUT THE WORDS, but of the music itself, of the rhythm, the backbeat, the heavy relentless syncopation.

Neil Young said, “Rock ‘n’ roll is like a drug” (cited by Mickey Hart, *Spirit into Sound*).

Italian composer Pietro Mascagni said, “Modern music is as dangerous as cocaine” (*Slonimsky’s Book of Musical Anecdotes*). He was referring to jazz and the blues and the music that birthed rock & roll.

John Fuller, in his powerful book *Are the Kids All Right?*, warned: “Rock music in particular has been demonstrated to be both powerful and ADDICTIVE...” (1981).

Sam Phillips, founder of Sun Records where Elvis’ first hit was recorded in 1954, described the sensually addictive power of rock like this: “It all came out of that INFECTIOUS BEAT and those young people wanting to FEEL GOOD by listening to some records” (“Sam Phillips, 80, Producer who

Discovered Elvis Presley, Dies,” Associated Press, July 31, 2003).

Rock music itself has the power to create the experience that CCM worshipers are seeking.

Other elements of the CCM “experience” are unresolving chords which create a tense atmosphere, repetitious lyrics which create a hypnotic effect, the sensuality of the vocal technique, and the rise and fall of the level of the music.

(We have described and demonstrated the elements of the contemporary worship sound in the free eVideo “The Transformational Power of Contemporary Praise Music” -- www.wayoflife.org/free_evideo/. This video presentation is included with the book *Independent Baptist Music Wars* and is also available as part of the *Music for Good or Evil* DVD series.)

Contemporary worshipers are taught to release themselves to the music.

MercyMe’s popular “Word of God Speak” worship song is an example of the charismatic mysticism that characterizes CCM. Following is an excerpt from the lyrics:

“Word of God speak, would you pour down like rain,
washing my eyes to see your majesty. To be still and
know that you’re in this place, please let me stay and
rest in your holiness. ... Finding myself in the midst of
you, beyond the music, beyond the noise. All that I
need is to be with you and in the quiet I hear your
voice.”

The “Word of God” here is not the Bible; it is a mystical feeling, a direct revelation. It is found in the “quiet,” “beyond the noise.” It is an experience of the “presence” of God.

This “open yourself to the flow of the Spirit” has led to all sorts of unscriptural doctrines and practices. It is this type of mysticism that led CCM songwriter Jack Hayford, author of the popular worship song “Majesty,” to say that while he was

driving past a Catholic church God told him not to criticize it.

True biblical worship is not based on feeling. It is not an emotional experience. It is giving thanks to God and serving Him obediently **NO MATTER HOW I FEEL AND NO MATTER WHAT THE EXPERIENCE OR CIRCUMSTANCE.**

Note the attributes of true worship from Hebrews 13:15-16:

- offering thanksgiving to God in all circumstances
- obedience to God's commands
- communicating to those who have needs

Consider the example of Abraham going up Mt. Moriah to sacrifice Isaac. That was one of the purest acts of worship recorded in Scripture, but there was no music, no dancing, no emotional high and tingly sensation.

Consider the example of Job sitting in the ash heap scraping his boils and glorifying the Lord. This is another one of the purest acts of worship ever offered by man to God, yet it was an experience with no musical soundtrack and no emotional high.

“Worship is not looking up and feeling good, it is bowing down and feeling lowly. ... It is certainly biblical to feel happy in Jesus but I now realize that a good personal feeling is not part of biblical worship. When we try to feel an experience of affirmation from worship, we are not worshipping God. We are worshipping our own egos.” (Dan Lucarini).

True Christian living and worship is faith-oriented rather than feeling-oriented.

“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For **WE WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT:**)” (2 Cor. 5:6-7).

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but HOPE THAT IS SEEN IS NOT HOPE: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. 8:22-25).

Thus another reason why we reject Contemporary Christian Music is it's experience orientation.

Contemporary Christian Music Is Permeated with False Christs

A pastor who wrote to criticize me for my warning about West Coast Baptist College's adaptation of contemporary worship music said that if my position is right and that if we should stop using CCM because of the heresies of the writers, we should also stop using the old Protestant hymns, such as those by Martin Luther, Charles Wesley, and Fanny Crosby, and we should also stop using the King James Bible, because it was written by Anglicans.

Whatever doctrinal differences a Baptist would have with Martin Luther or John Wesley or Fanny Crosby or KJV translators such as John Rainolds, we share the same Christ and the same God, but that is often not true for Contemporary Christian Worship.

Contemporary worship music has transformational power that no older Protestant hymn has.

I've never heard of a fundamental Baptist church that was transformed into a Lutheran church through singing Luther's hymns, but I know of many fundamental Baptist churches that have been transformed into rock & roll emerging churches through the power of contemporary worship.

I've never heard of a fundamental Baptist youth group converting to Methodism by singing Fanny Crosby's hymns, but I've heard of many youth groups that have become worldly through the influence of Contemporary Christian Music.

One reason for this transformational power is that the world of contemporary worship is a terribly dangerous world filled with gross heresies and false christs, and those who play with this music build bridges to this world.

Many of the influential Contemporary Christian Worship (CCW) artists worship **A NON-TRINITARIAN GOD**. Geron Davis, Joel Hemphill, Mark Carothers, Phillips, Craig and Dean, Lanny Wolfe, and others are "Jesus-Only" Pentecostals who deny the Trinity. To deny the Trinity is to worship a false god.

A great many of the CCM artists worship **A NON-JUDGMENTAL GOD**. Consider the popularity of *The Shack*. It has been directly endorsed by Michael W. Smith, Gloria Gaither, Mark Lowry, and many other CCM artists and has been well received in prominent CCM circles such as Calvary Chapels, Vineyard churches, and Hillsong.

The Shack was promoted at the 2009 National Pastor's Convention in San Diego, which was sponsored by Zondervan and InterVarsity Fellowship. William Young was one of the speakers and a survey found that 57% had read his novel. Young was enthusiastically received, and in an interview with Andy Crouch, a senior editor of *Christianity Today*, there was not a hint of condemnation for his false god. Crouch is a CCM musician in his own right and led one of the praise and worship sessions in San Diego.

The Shack is all about redefining God. It is about a man who becomes bitter at God after his daughter is murdered and has a life-changing experience in the very shack where the murder occurred; but the God he encounters is most definitely *not* the God of the Bible.

Young says the book is for those with “a longing that God is as kind and loving as we wish he was” (interview with Sherman Hu, Dec. 4, 2007). What he is referring to is the desire on the part of the natural man for a God who loves “unconditionally” and does not require repentance, does not demand obedience, does not judge sin, and does not make men feel guilty for what they do.

In that same interview, Young said that a woman wrote to him and said that her 22-year-old daughter came to her after reading *The Shack* and asked, “IS IT ALRIGHT IF I DIVORCE THE OLD GOD AND MARRY THE NEW ONE?”

This is precisely what a very large portion of the Contemporary Christian Music crowd is doing.

Young admits that the God of *The Shack* is different from the traditional God of Bible-believing Christianity and blasphemously says that the God who “watches from a distance and judges sin” is “a Christianized version of Zeus.”

Young depicts the triune God as a young Asian woman named “Sarayu” * (supposedly the Holy Spirit), an oriental carpenter who loves to have a good time (supposedly Jesus), and an older black woman named “Elousia” (supposedly God the Father). (* The name “Sarayu” is from the Hindu scriptures and represents a mythical river in India on the shores of which the Hindu god Rama was born.)

Young’s god is the god of the emerging church. He is cool, loves rock & roll, is non-judgmental, does not exercise wrath toward sin, does not send unbelievers to an eternal fiery hell, does not require repentance and the new birth, and puts no obligations on people. (See “The Shack’s Cool God” at the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.)

The non-judgmental, universalistic god is also represented by emerging church leaders such as Brian McLaren and Rob Bell, both of whom are very popular with CCM artists. One Christian rocker told us that these writings “resonate” with him.

McLaren blasphemously says that the God who would punish Jesus on the cross for man's sin is "a God who is incapable of forgiving, unless he kicks somebody else" (McLaren, <http://www.understandthetimes.org/mclarentrans.shtml> and http://str.typepad.com/weblog/2006/01/brian_mclaren_p.html). McLaren says the traditional God of the Bible is a tyrant who "gets his way through coercion and violence and intimidation and domination." McLaren says that the "power of the blood" gospel "raises some questions about the goodness of God."

McLaren ignores the fact that the "somebody else" that God punished for man's sin was Himself! The substitutionary atonement displays God's character, not as a tyrant, but as a God of unfathomable love and compassion.

It was not that God could not love sinners apart from the cross. It was that God's holiness and justice could not be satisfied without the cross.

Rob Bell, author of the influential book *Velvet Elvis*, claims that the God who would allow multitudes to go to eternal hell is not great or mighty (*Love Wins*, Kindle location 1189-1229). He says there is something wrong with this God and calls Him "terrifying and traumatizing and unbearable" (*Love Wins*, location 47-60, 1273-1287, 2098-2113). He even says that if an earthly father acted like the a God who sends people to hell "we could contact child protection services immediately" (*Love Wins*, location 2085-2098).

One of Bell's supporters, Chad Hotlz, a Methodist pastor, calls the God who sends unbelievers to hell "the monster God" ("Who's in Hell?" *FoxNews*, March 24, 2011).

It is obvious that Bell and company worship a different God than the One we worship in "traditional" Baptist churches.

Bell's God is more akin to New Age panentheism than the God of the Bible. He describes God as "a force, an energy, a

being calling out to us in many languages, using a variety of methods and events” (*Love Wins*, location 1710-1724).

“There is an energy in the world, a spark, an electricity that everything is plugged into. The Greeks called it *zoe*, the mystics call it ‘Spirit,’ and Obi-Wan called it ‘the Force’” (Rob Bell, *Love Wins*, Kindle location 1749-1762).

Bell worships a false christ. His Jesus is “supracultural ... present within all cultures ... refuses to be co-opted or owned by any one culture ... He doesn’t even state that those coming to the Father through him will even know that they are coming exclusively through him ... there is only 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).

Yet Rob Bell is very popular among contemporary worship musicians. Consider David Crowder, one of the most influential names in contemporary worship. In October 2010 the David Crowder Band hosted Rob Bell at the Fantastical Church Music Conference at Baylor University. Big name contemporary worship artists Jars of Clay and Matt Redman joined hands in this heretical venture. In January 2012, Crowder led worship for the send-off of Rob Bell at Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Michigan (“Rob Bell Received a Tearful Farewell,” *Christian Post*, Jan. 9, 2012). Many other examples could be given.

The false christ Rob Bell worships is a christ that resonates with many within the contemporary worship movement.

Many of the CCM artists also worship **A REBEL CHRIST**, which is certainly a false christ. Mark Stuart of Audio Adrenaline says, “Jesus Christ is the biggest rebel to ever walk the face of the earth” (*Pensacola News Journal*, Pensacola, Fla., March 1, 1998, pp. 1, 6E). Sonny of P.O.D. says, “We believe that Jesus was the first rebel; the first punk rocker” (<http://www.shoutweb.com/interviews/>

pod0700.phtml). This is blasphemy. The Bible says rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1 Sam. 15:23). A rebel is a lawbreaker, but Christ was the lawgiver who came to earth to fulfill the requirements of His own law (Mat. 5:17-19). Christ was not crucified for rebellion; He was crucified for testifying that He is God (John 10:33).

Many of the CCM artists worship **A ROCK & ROLL PARTY CHRIST**.

In his *Live ... Radically Saved* video Carman says, "Jesus is always cool; He's got his thing together." He blasphemously imitated the Lord Jesus walking along in a hip-jive manner, doing "the Messiah walk." In *Resurrection Rap*, Carman portrays Jesus as a street hippie. In *The Standard album*, he calls Jesus "J.C."; and in "Come into This House" on the *Addicted to Jesus* album, Carman speaks of "Jammin' with the Lamb."

Petra claims that "God gave rock and roll to you/ Put it in the soul of every one."

In "Party in Heaven" the Daniel Band sang, "The Lamb and I are drinkin' new wine."

Phil Driscoll says, "God is the King of Soul; He's the King of all rhythm" (quoted by Tim Fisher, *Battle for Christian Music*, p. 82).

Messiah Prophet Band says, "Jesus is the Master of Metal," and Barren Cross says, "Better than pot, Jesus rocks."

John Fischer described God as puffing on a cigar and swaying to rock music.

"Wait a minute Kid' [supposedly this is God speaking to Fischer]. Leave it [the radio] on. You know, I kind of like this stuff [rock]. I watched in shock as He smiled at me through a casual puff of cigar smoke and swayed His head ever so slightly with the music" (*Contemporary Christian Music Magazine*, July 1984, p. 20).

J. Lee Grady, editor of *Charisma* magazine, a big promoter of Christian rock, says Jesus enjoys dancing with the angels and “grooving to the sound of Christian R&B pumped out of a boom box” (*Charisma*, July 2000). He makes the pretentious claim that worship music in heaven will feature “a dozen Hammond-B3 organs and a procession of hip-hop [rap] dancers.” Not content with this brazen claim, Grady tells us that Jesus Christ “loves all music—even the funkier” and that Jesus Christ enjoys dancing with the angels and “grooving to the sound of Christian R&B [rhythm and blues] pumped out of a boom box.” Grady mocks traditional hymns as “dirge-like,” something only for “grandmothers.”

Barren Cross says Jesus Christ is better than marijuana and invites their followers to smoke on His love! “Give it a chance, freedom at last/ Yours for free, take and receive/ Better than pot, JESUS ROCK ... Smoke on His love and you will see the rock — roll/ Believe” (Barren Cross, “Believe”). Bride sings about “Psychedelic Super Jesus.”

The cover of Rapper Jayceon “Game” Taylor’s 2012 album, *Jesus Piece*, has Jesus portrayed as a gang member, complete with a gaudy gold chain and a tattoo on his face. Taylor isn’t a CCM artist. He is a secular rapper, but his philosophy is no different than that of many of the “Christian” rockers and rappers. Taylor is inventing a “Jesus” in his own likeness. He says, “Last year in August I got baptized [at City of Refuge Church in Gardena, California] and so I’ve been going to church, but I still been kinda doing me out here. I still love the strip club and I still smoke and drink. I’m faithful to my family, so I wanted to make an album where you could love God and be of God, but still get it poppin’ in your life” (“Jesus Portrayed as Gang Member,” *Christian Post*, Oct. 24, 2012). Taylor says his new album is intended to encourage those who “love God but are still street and wanna remain themselves.”

To the contrary, those who are “still street” haven’t been born again. The Bible says that the true Christian is “a new

creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). Baptism is a picture of dying with Christ to the old life of sin and being raised to a new life of holiness.

The Eternal Jam Machine is built on the concept that heaven will be an everlasting rock party. Their first song, “Dancing in Heaven,” was advertised as follows: “God hereby invites you to the biggest welcome home party the world has ever known, with DJ Jesus in heaven. ... Eyes have not seen and ears have not heard a party like this before.”

The party-dude Jesus is a false christ. This is not the Jesus we see in Scripture. Jesus is indeed a friend of sinners. He is the very Greatest Friend of sinners! His love for sinners drew Him from the joys unspeakable of heaven to the wretchedness of this fallen world, where He was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, but Jesus was not some sort of “party dude.” He wasn’t worldly cool in any sense.

In fact, most of the sinners he “hung with” were not party people. They were not very high on the societal rung and were outcasts by the religious elite. Jesus disciples were not party dudes. There is no evidence that Jesus’ close friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were party people. When they were with Jesus, it wasn’t party-hardy time; it was time to be disciplined.

“And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word” (Luke 10:39).

The Jesus we see in Scripture ate with sinners and spent time with the lowest of society (as well as the highest), but He was not any sort of party dude. He warned all men to repent and “go and sin no more” and spent a lot of time describing the horrors of hell and warning men in the sharpest language not to go there.

The following type of preaching would put a halt to any worldly party!

“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5).

“And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell” (Matthew 5:30).

The Lord Jesus didn't come to earth to play games and hold a cool party. That is not what we see Him doing in Scripture, and anything beyond Scripture is vain speculation. Jesus came to earth to fulfill a specific, very solemn purpose, and He was singleminded in His pursuit of that purpose. The Samaritans were offended because He wouldn't spend time with them, but this was because He had no time for anything other than accomplishing His objective (Luke 9:51-53). When He was with His disciples, He was busy preparing them for His departure (John 16:4).

Jesus was here to defeat the works of Satan. He didn't sit around and goof off after the fashion of this present entertainment-crazed generation. He had too much to do and too short a time to do it in. He had three short years of public ministry, and it was packed. He came to preach the gospel and to teach about the kingdom of God, and that is how He occupied His time, whether publicly or privately. That is what we see in Scripture.

The fact that the CCM crowd typically worships a different kind of God than the God the “old-fashioned” biblicist Christian worships, is why they are perfectly comfortable using music that has been identified as sexy by the secular world. Gene Simmons of KISS says,

“... that is what rock is all about--sex with a 100-megaton bomb, the beat” (*Entertainment Tonight*, ABC, Dec. 10, 1987).

Note that Simmons was not referring to the words of rock music; he was referring to the music itself and particularly to its backbeat party rhythm.

Music researchers Daniel and Bernadette Skubik, in their study on the neurophysiology of rock music, warned:

“Whether the words are evil, innocuous, or based in Holy Scripture, the overall neurophysiological effects generated by rock music remain the same. There is simply no such thing as Christian rock that is substantively different in its impact” (“The Neurophysiology of Rock,” an Appendix to John Blanchard’s *Pop Goes the Gospel*, pp. 187ff).

The reason that statement doesn’t bother a CCM defender is because he sees Jesus as a rock & roll party Dude who loves a good time.

Rob Williams of the Eternal Jam Machine describes the philosophy as follows:

“Just because you are a Christian does not mean that your life has to be boring as though everything cool about you should be held back or denied. The truth is that your life should be the complete opposite of boring. God has a desire for his children to know that they are made in HIS image which means you ARE cool. God created cool and He gave each of us gifts to use and not to keep hidden for ourselves. God’s ”cool” is limitless and as His children we can inherit the character of God. He wants us to have fun and celebrate life in relationship with HIM, our Creator” (“Vision behind Eternal Jam Machine,” eternaljammachine.com).

We don’t see a hint of this in the New Testament, not in the life of Christ in the Gospels, nor in the book of Acts, nor in the Epistles. Jesus never hosted a dance party for the disciples. The disciples didn’t celebrate Christ’s resurrection with a dance party. They didn’t have a dance party in the upper room while waiting for the coming of the Spirit. They didn’t celebrate Pentecost with a dance party.

What we see in Scripture is the call to walk as pilgrims in a fallen world filled with spiritual and moral danger, to

separate from the evil things of the world (1 Jn. 2:15-17), to avoid being a friend of the world which is called spiritual adultery (Jam. 4:4), to avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Th. 5:22), to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11), to live a life of self-denial (Mat. 16:24), etc.

At the heart of the battle about music in the churches is the very character of God. Our concept of God will determine what kind of music we use to worship Him and the manner in which we worship Him. If we think that God is a cool dude who hip hops to modern rock music, we will worship him with such music and our lifestyle and very appearance will reflect this concept of God. If, on the other hand, we believe that God is a fearfully holy God before whom the hosts of heaven fall in awe and reverence, our worship music and our very lifestyle and appearance will reflect holiness and separation from the world.

“Those who envision God as a special friend, a kind of lover, with whom they can have fun, see no problem in worshipping him by means of physically stimulating music. On the other hand, those who perceive God as a majestic, holy, and almighty Being to be approached with awe and reverence will only use the music that elevates them spiritually” (Samuele Bacchiocchi, *The Christian and Rock Music*).

Those who mix the holy Rock Jesus Christ with the unholy rock of this world are worshipping a false god.

Contemporary Christian Music is permeated with false christs and false gods, and that should be sufficient reason to have nothing to do with it.

Contemporary Christian Music Is Infiltrated with Homosexuality

In *The Gospel Sound*, which first appeared in 1971, Anthony Heilbut said, “The gospel church has long been a

refuge for gays and lesbians, some of whom grew up to be among the greatest singers and musicians.”

Douglas Harrison, a homosexual who grew up Southern Baptist, said, “... you can’t swing a Dove Award without hitting upon evidence of the longstanding, deep-set presence of queer experience in, and its influence on, Christian music culture at all levels” (“Come Out from among Them,” *Religion Dispatches*, April 30, 2010).

In 1998, CCM star Kirk Franklin said that “homosexuality ... is a problem today in gospel music--a MAJOR CONCERN--and everybody knows it” (*Church Boy*, pp. 49, 50).

James Cleveland, who has been called the “King of Gospel,” was a homosexual who died of AIDS.

Marsha Stevens, author of the popular song “For Those Tears I Died (Come to the Water),” co-founded Children of the Day, one of the first Contemporary Christian Music groups associated with Calvary Chapel. In 1979, Marsha broke her sacred marriage vows and divorced her husband of seven years, with whom she had two children, because she had “fallen in love with a woman.” Eventually Marsha “married” Cindi Stevens-Pino who she calls “my wife.” She started her own label called BALM (Born Again Lesbian Music) and performs between 150 and 200 concerts a year. She has a program called “upBeat” through which she produces a praise and worship album annually with a variety of singers and songwriters.

Marsha Stevens’ lesbian praise music ministry is recommended by Mark Allen Powell, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and the author of *An Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music*. He states:

“The Mother of Contemporary Christian Music continues to capture hearts for Jesus. Argue interpretations of Scripture and debate the ethics and origins of homosexuality all you want--no one with sensitivity to things of the Spirit can deny God is

using Marsha Stevens to bring the love and mercy of Christ to people whom God apparently has not forgotten.”

To ignore the teaching of Scripture for a feeling or an intuition that God is using an unrepentant homosexual for His glory is blind mysticism.

The Bible condemns homosexuality as a sin in no uncertain terms and demands repentance from it of those who come to Christ. Romans chapter 1 condemns man-with-man and woman-with-woman sexual relationships as “vile affections,” “against nature,” unseemly,” and “a reprobate mind” (Romans 1:26-28). No amount of interpretive gymnastics by homosexual-rights activists can change the clear meaning of this passage.

According to Scripture, God made human sex for the context of marriage, and anything outside of the context of marriage is fornication and adultery and is subject to God’s judgment.

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4).

From the beginning to the end of the Bible, God-ordained marriage is defined as a holy contract between one man and one woman. Polygamy was practiced even by some of the Old Testament saints, but Jesus taught that this was never God’s will and He referred men to God’s law of marriage at the beginning.

“And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

Since the Bible teaches that all sexual activity outside of marriage is sin, and since legitimate marriage is only between a man and a woman, there is absolutely no possibility that God would bless homosexual relationships.

Popular CCM singer Ray Boltz announced his homosexuality in 2008. He divorced his wife to live with a man. Today he “tours the country playing at liberal churches and gay-pride events that receive him and his gay Christian message” (*Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*, vol. 2, p. 173).

Other homosexual CCM artists are Anthony Williams, Kirk Talley, Clay Aiken, Doug Pinnock of King’s X, Amy Ray and Emily Saliers of Indigo Girls, and Jennifer Knapp.

In June 2013, popular CCM singer Sandi Patty performed with the homosexual Turtle Creek Chorale at the Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas, Texas. In July 2012, the Chorale attended the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) in Denver (“Turtle Creek Chorale’s 2012-2013 Season,” Turtlecreek.org).

In April 2014, Dan Haseltine of the popular CCM band Jars of Clay announced his support for “gay marriage.” He wrote the following in a series of Twitter posts:

“Not meaning to stir things up BUT... is there a non-speculative or non ‘slippery slope’ reason why gays shouldn’t marry? I don’t hear one. ... I’m trying to make sense of the conservative argument. But it doesn’t hold up to basic scrutiny. Feels akin to women’s suffrage. I just don’t see a negative effect to allowing gay marriage. No societal breakdown, no war on traditional marriage. ... I don’t think scripture ‘clearly’ states much of anything regarding morality. ... I don’t particularly care about Scriptures stance on what is ‘wrong.’ I care more about how it says we should treat people” (“Dan Haseltine,” MetroWeekly.com, April 22, 2014).

In an interview in October 2014, Brian Houston, senior pastor of Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia, which birthed Hillsong worship music, refused to give a definitive answer when asked to clarify his stand on “same sex marriage.” He said that “the Western world is shifting its thinking on this issue, and churches are struggling to stay relevant” (Jonathan Merritt, “Hillsong’s Brian Houston says church won’t take a public position,” Religion News Service, Oct. 16, 2014). He said, “The real issues in people’s lives are too important for us to just reduce it down to a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer in a media outlet.”

Earlier, Carl Lentz, pastor of Hillsong New York City, told CNN that Hillsong has “a lot of gay men and women in our church and I pray we always do,” and he claimed that he is “still waiting for someone to show me the quote where Jesus addressed it on the record in front of people” (“Hillsong New York pastor Carl Lentz,” *Christian Today*, June 6, 2014).

What Jesus did was plainly and publicly limit marriage to one man and one woman as in the beginning of creation (Matthew 19). Obviously this leaves no room for “same sex marriage.”

In the same CNN interview, Laura Lentz, Carl’s wife and Hillsong co-pastor, said, “It’s not our place to tell anyone how they should live, it’s--that’s their journey.”

Like the CCM world as a whole, Hillsong is so “relevant” that they are traitors to the truth of God’s Word, yet their music influences multitudes of Baptists and fundamentalists. When asked by a reporter why Hillsong is so successful, Brian Houston replied, “We are scratching people where they are itching” (“The Lord’s Profits,” *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 30, 2003). That is right out of 2 Timothy 4:3, which is a warning of apostasy. It describes people who itch for a new kind of Christianity, and it describes heaps of preachers who will scratch this illicit itch. “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.”

The reason for all of this is not difficult to discern. Typically, CCM musicians have been accepted as Christians upon the flimsiest testimony of faith and have not been properly taught and disciplined. They have fed their spiritual lives with dangerous authors such as C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Brennan Manning, Leonard Sweet, Rick Warren, and Rob Bell. They have loved corrupt Bible translations such as *The Message*, immersed themselves in sensual music, and have sought after emotional highs and “signs and wonders” instead of living by faith. They have played with the world, which is more dangerous than any poisonous snake, instead of living separated lives.

They have sown to the wind and are reaping the whirlwind.

The fact that Contemporary Christian Music has been home to many homosexuals and the fact that the vast majority of contemporary Christian musicians do not reprove this great sin publicly is evidence of its deep apostasy.

Contemporary Christian Music Weakens the Biblicist Stance of a Church

A final reason why we are opposed to Contemporary Christian Music is that when it comes into a church (or into the life of an individual) it weakens the church’s Biblicist stance and results in a gradual lowering of standards of morality and doctrine.

The late Gordon Sears, who had an evangelistic music ministry for many years and ministered with Rudy Atwood, was saddened before his death by the dramatic change that was occurring in many fundamental Baptist churches. He warned:

“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" (Sears, *Songfest Newsletter*, April 2001).

Dr. Frank Garlock of Majesty Music warned,

"If a church starts using CCM it will eventually lose all other standards" (Bob Jones University, chapel, March 12, 2001).

The late fundamentalist leader Dr. Ernest Pickering gave a similar warning:

"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" (Pickering, *The Tragedy of Compromise: The Origin and Impact of the New Evangelicalism*, Bob Jones University Press, 1994).

Victor Sears called Contemporary Christian Music "the Trojan Horse of the ecumenical movement."

"Good fundamental Baptists and others that refuse the teachings of the charismatic crowd concerning tongues, signs, miracles, and so forth are now singing their music in our churches and preparing our people for the world, the flesh and the devil. It is the new Trojan Horse move ... to deaden our churches to spiritual truth" (Sears, *Baptist Bible Tribune*, 1981).

We can see this happening on every hand today.

The reason is that 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 Biblicist churches stand for. It is a philosophy that is opposed to a staunch, unwavering doctrinal stance, opposed to separation from the world, opposed to ecclesiastical separation.

The writers of the old hymns, though they were not all Baptist in theology, did not represent a movement that was brashly opposed to old-fashioned Biblicist, separatist Christianity, whereas the contemporary worship crowd most definitely does represent such a movement.

Dan Lucarini, author of *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement: Confessions of a Former Worship Leader*, says:

“NO ONE SHOULD DENY THE POWER OF MUSIC TO PROSELYTIZE! Pastors in particular must defend their flocks from false teaching, heresies and ‘ear ticklers’ who bring worldly sensuality into the congregation; you are right to point out how easily this comes into a church through worship music. IT SEEMS WISER TO DECLINE THE USE OF WHAT SEEMS TO BE A PERFECTLY GOOD SONG, RATHER THAN TO GIVE ANY HONOR AND HINT OF ENDORSEMENT TO THE COMPOSER AND HIS/HER MISSION” (e-mail, May 24, 2009).

Consider some examples of the transformational power of contemporary music.

Landmark Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio

Landmark Baptist Church used to be an “old-fashioned” Baptist church with traditional standards of music and dress and a commitment to the old English Bible.

In the 1990s, the church took a turn away from its roots, and music was at the heart of this change. In 1996, the church brought in a Campus Crusade band that played “high energy ‘50s and ‘60s rock and roll.”

In 2001, the church got a new pastor, Mat Holman. The church’s web site said, “Being a firm believer that church should be fun and on the edge, Matt puts all his energy into making Landmark a place where everyone belongs.”

The church now features a teen ministry called EnterRuption. “The purpose of EnterRuption is to create a

relevant environment for students to bring their friends. We utilize a live band (secular and Christian music), dramas, skits and a relevant message.”

I wonder if Paul’s message on Mars Hill, in which he reproved his listeners’ idolatry and demanded repentance, was “relevant”? I have a sneaking suspicion that the messages presented at EnterRuption aren’t exactly Acts 17 in nature. Somehow, such a message doesn’t fit an atmosphere geared toward “fun” and bathed in rock and roll.

The pop group Jump5 performed at Landmark Baptist Church on Dec. 6, 2003. “The music of the Nashville-based group is thoroughly modern pop, high-spirited and 100% fun.”

Bethlehem Baptist Church, Fairfax, Virginia

Bethlehem Baptist Church further illustrates the changes that contemporary music brings. At one time, the church was an “old-fashioned” Baptist church that believed in biblical separation and was committed to the King James Bible, but for many years it has been moving ever more gradually in a contemporary direction. By 2002, when the Baptist Bible Fellowship International conference was held there, the contemporary “worship team” was led by four women.

Bethlehem Baptist Church has gone about as far as possible from its roots in the matter of dress. In a letter dated July 3, 2003, 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” (emphasis added).

If the pastor really means what he says, then it would be fitting for a Sunday School teacher to come in her bikini! Of course, the pastor probably wouldn’t allow that, which proves that what he really means is that he has rejected the OLD conservative Bible standards and has replaced them with his NEW loose, worldly standards.

All churches draw lines in dress, but while some draw them using biblical principles, others draw them using the world's principles. Of course, the latter group consistently labels the first group mean-spirited legalists.

Stokes also led the church to drop its "King James Only" clause from the by-laws and preaches from the New American Standard Version and the New Living Version, among others.

Not surprisingly, along the way the church's name was changed from Bethlehem Baptist Church to Fair Oaks Church.

One of the church's ministries is Skate Night, which is sponsored by secular skateboarding companies. Thus the church is blatantly yoking together with unbelievers in open defiance of Scripture (2 Cor. 6:14-18). A description of Skate Night was given as follows by a newspaper:

"CHRISTIAN ROCK THROBS inside the small gymnasium off West Ox Road in Fairfax, just a few decibels louder than the clacking of wheels. ... It's Sunday night and more than 170 teenagers and young adults--all but one of them male--line the walls of the Bethlehem Baptist Church gym, waiting their turn to grind and swoop and dive over a maze of makeshift ramps and rails" (*Washington Post*, April 4, 2001).

The church testifies that it is using rock music and skateboarding to win young people to Christ, but the Skate Night web site's gospel presentation is so weak as to be almost meaningless:

"We're not talking about religion; we're talking about a relationship. It's about recognizing that you are not perfect. We've all made mistakes. From pimping and drug abuse to telling a little white lie, we are all in need of a Savior. He doesn't care what you look like, what bad things you have done, or even how good you may think you are. He just wants you to know Him!"

That is not the gospel message that we find in the New Testament. There is no clear explanation of man's sin. There is nothing about God's holiness and justice, nothing about what Jesus did to become our Saviour, nothing about His death, burial, and resurrection. Nothing about Christ's blood. There is nothing whatsoever about repentance or turning or surrender. As for God not caring how good a person might think he is, He most certainly does, because if a person thinks of himself as good in any sense, he cannot be saved.

Someone *might* get saved through Fair Oaks Church's Skate Night ministry, but it would be *in spite of* its atmosphere and puny gospel presentation and not *because of* it.

The Bethlehem Baptist Church paper in 2002 featured a photo of the church's new youth pastor, Rob Hoerr. Bedecked with a goatee, an earring, and a P.O.D. T-shirt, this independent Baptist youth director was proudly promoting the Christian rock lifestyle.

P.O.D. is a rock band. The initials are supposed to stand for Payable On Death. The tattoo-covered band members curse in interviews, smoke, watch R-rated movies, and criticize kids "who want to segregate themselves from the world." The group's leader said, "Jesus was the first rebel. He was the first punk rocker going against all the rest of it" (Sonny of P.O.D., www.shoutweb.com/interviews/pod0700.phtml). In another interview, P.O.D. said, "We're not passing out pamphlets saying 'Get your life straight or you're gonna burn in hell'" (Sonny, *Guitar World*, Oct 2000, p. 78). Sonny says, "I like Slayer. I like Manson. I like music and this dark imagery" (2001 interview with Theresa McKeon of Shoutweb titled "P.O.D. The Fundamental Elements of God Rock"). Sonny is talking about the antichrist rocker Marilyn Manson. P.O.D. guitarist Marcos says, "You know, everyone is free to rock---.When we go on stage we go crazy. We are like four guys you should put in a

mental hospital” (interview with Hwee Hwee Tan of Singapore, October 2002).

Is that the example you want your young people to follow, dear parents? I say woe unto the worldly youth directors who are leading young people in such paths, and woe unto the pastors who appoint such youth directors!

We can see that Bethlehem Baptist Church has gone a long way down the road from its roots as a conservative, fundamentalist Baptist church, and music has been at the very heart of the changes.

Temple Baptist Church, Detroit, Michigan

This church was pastored by J. Frank Norris from 1935 to 1950 and by G.B. Vick from 1950 to 1975. In former days, it was the most prominent church in the Baptist Bible Fellowship International (BBFI). Vick was one of the founders of the BBFI in 1950 and was president of Baptist Bible College.

It was a conservative, fundamental Baptist church that eschewed ecumenism, preached strong Bible doctrine, and promoted holy living and separation from the world. It also used only the King James Bible. Preaching in 1975 at the 25th anniversary of the founding of the BBFI, G.B. Vick said:

“It’s become fashionable to use many different versions of the Bible today. ... Listen! This King James Version, our English Bible, the Bible of our fathers and mothers, is the one that has come floating down to us upon the blood of Christian martyrs, our forefathers. It has been, I say, the one text of the Baptist Bible College, and it will be as long as I have anything to do with this school! [loud amens and applause] ... Let’s stick to the old Book.”

In those days at Temple Baptist Church, it was the old Book and the old paths, but that changed in the 1990s.

In 1990, the church got a young new pastor named Brad Powell, and he began to lead the church into a contemporary direction.

The church's music today is described at its web site as follows: "The PRAISE BANDS provide music for all services. The Praise Bands consist of the piano, synthesizer, acoustic and electric guitar, bass guitar, and drums."

The church began having CCM concerts in the early 1990s, starting, of course, with the softer rock groups. In September 1993, for example, they had Steve Camp.

By October 1996, they featured Michael Card, who is radically ecumenical, working with Roman Catholic John Michael Talbot (who prays to Mary) and claiming that "denominational distinctives" are not important.

The music style of the CCM groups at Northridge Church has gotten progressively harder. In September 2003, the church hosted Sonic Flood, and Charlie Hall was scheduled to be there in October. The church has hosted Darlene Zschech (pronounced check), a female pastor who promotes ecumenism, affiliation with Rome, and unscriptural charismatic doctrines and practices.

In February 2000, Temple Baptist Church changed its name to Northridge Church of Plymouth, Michigan, after taking a survey of the community and finding out that most people don't like the name Baptist.

Southside Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina

This church was founded in September 1946. From 1965 to 1996 it was pastored by Walt Handford. His wife Elizabeth is one of the daughters of the famous fundamentalist evangelist John R. Rice, founder of the *Sword of the Lord*. It was long associated with the Southwide Baptist Fellowship and was an "old-fashioned" fundamental Baptist church until the 1990s.

Elizabeth Rice Handford is editorial consultant of *Joyful Woman* magazine, which in the 1990s began to feature ecumenical personalities such as James Dobson and Elisabeth

Elliot, both of which have non-critical affiliations with the Roman Catholic Church.

In September 1993, Southside Baptist Church hosted Ray Boltz for a CCM rock concert.

That same year Southside gave up the King James Bible in favor of the NIV. In support of this move, the speaker at Southside for the Sunday evening service, September 12, 1993, was Kenneth Barker, chairman of the New International Version translation committee, who was allowed to spout his wrongheaded views on Bible texts and versions.

By 1994, the church had a staff member who was also employed by the extremely ecumenical Campus Crusade for Christ. In an interview with *Charisma* magazine in 2001, Campus Crusade founder Bill Bright described his philosophy: "I have felt that God led me many years ago to build bridges. I'm a Presbyterian ... and yet I work with everybody who loves Jesus, whether they be charismatic or Catholic, Orthodox or mainliners. ... I'm not an evangelical. I'm not a fundamentalist." Bright was a signer of the 1994 Evangelicals and Catholics Together document that proclaimed, "We together, Evangelicals and Catholics, confess our sins against the unity that Christ intends for all his disciples."

In 1996, Charles Boyd became pastor of Southside Baptist Church. He is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, both of which are New Evangelical to the core.

Southside Baptist Church changed its name to Southside Fellowship.

It is good that these churches are changing their names, because they are certainly changing their philosophy. In each case, they will profess that they have not changed anything substantial. For those who have eyes to see, this subterfuge won't fly. If Temple Baptist Church was right and scriptural in its early days, Northridge Church is wrong today, and if

Northridge Church is right and scriptural today, the old Temple Baptist was wrong. The doctrine and practice and philosophy of the old church and the new are not compatible.

For the Bible believer, the choice between the contemporary church growth philosophy and the old traditional Biblicist philosophy is not “both and,” it is “either or.”

The pastors who follow contemporary church growth principles claim that they are not changing doctrine, only style. That is simply not true. Many of the so-called “style” changes are doctrinal. To allow church members to dress immodestly like the world, without reproof or correction, is a doctrinal issue. To borrow the music that the world uses for sexual pleasure and to incorporate that very music into the church program is a doctrinal issue. To claim that music is neutral is a doctrinal issue. To yoke ecumenically with charismatics and such is a doctrinal issue. To say that preaching should focus on the positive is a doctrinal issue. To take Matthew 7:1 and Romans 14:4 out of context to approve a non-judgmental, non-controversial approach to the Christian ministry is a doctrinal issue. To use community surveys for planning church policy is a doctrinal issue. To adopt a New Evangelical philosophy is a doctrinal issue.

When a church changes its “style” in these areas, it is undergoing a doctrinal change, and claims to the contrary only serve to deceive the ignorant and the willfully blind. There is little doubt that J. Frank Norris and G.B. Vick would consider the current “style” at Northridge doctrinal issues.

Therefore, we believe Gordon Sears was right when he said:

“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.”

Conclusion

We have given several major reasons why we are opposed to Contemporary Christian Music:

- because of its heretical principle that music is neutral
- because of its worldliness
- because of its ecumenism
- because of its charismaticism
- because of its experience orientation
- because it is permeated with false christs and false gods
- because it is infiltrated with homosexuality
- because of the changes it brings to Biblicist churches

Contemporary Praise Music and the Internet

We are living in the age of end-time technology, which means that one can no longer use songs and hymns without the listeners coming into communication with the authors with great ease. Whereas even 20 years ago it was difficult to contact and be influenced by authors of Christian music, that has changed dramatically with the Internet.

Today if people in a Bible-believing church hear songs by Jack Hayford or MercyMe or Graham Kendrick or Stuart Townend or Darlene Zschech or Keith Getty, songs heard in “adapted form” in many Bible-believing churches, they can easily search for these people on the web and come into intimate contact with them--not only in contact with their music (typically played in “real” rock & roll style as opposed to the watered-down soft-rock ballad versions performed in churches that are beginning to dabble with contemporary praise music), but also in contact with their ecumenical, charismatic, separatist-hating, one-world church philosophy.

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 out the Gettys on the web. He comes across the Gettys rocking out at their concerts and begins to question his church’s stand against rock music. He sees the Gettys associating with anyone and everyone and begins to question his church’s stance on separation. “The Gettys seem so sincere and Christ-loving; maybe I’ve been too hard-nosed in my Christianity; maybe the separatist stance is all wrong; perhaps I should lighten up.”

He comes across Keith Getty’s July 2013 interview with Assist Ministries and decides to listen to what the man has to say. He hears Getty speak highly 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, through the influence of the Gettys, the soul who was once a content member of a Bible-believing church, raising his or her children in a Bible-believing path, is on the high road to the emerging church, and the children and grandchildren will end up who knows where.

The same could be said for the influence of Townend or Kendrick or MercyMe or Zschech or hundreds of other prominent contemporary worship musicians, because they hold the same philosophy and represent the same bridge to spiritual danger.

Men such as Paul Chappell and Clarence Sexton and Ron Hamilton, who should know better but who are defending the use of contemporary praise music either by word or example, will answer to God for the souls that cross the bridges they are building to the dangerous world that is represented by this music.

How to Keep Contemporary Music out of the Churches

I often hear from people who are brokenhearted that contemporary music is taking over their churches.

Why Is CCM Sweeping into so Many Churches?

First, CCM is sweeping in because it is pervasive.

Unless it is steadfastly, purposefully resisted, it will be accepted. No church can be neutral in this battle. Even the strongest Bible-believing churches are continually tested in the area of music, and it is evident that this battle will not go away. There are always people who try to push the boundaries of the church's music standards.

Church members encounter worldly music on Christian radio stations and television programs and in most Christian bookstores, and they are influenced by it.

Second, the new music is enjoyable.

CCM is a great temptation because it is satisfying to the flesh. The sad problem is that even the born again child of God has an sensual nature that can enjoy carnal things, and the most spiritually-minded Christian is perpetually tempted by the lusts of his own flesh. It is easy to enjoy Contemporary Christian Music. Just relax and allow the flesh to have its way.

Third, CCM is the easiest way to draw a crowd.

Pastors are tempted to let down the music standard for the sake of increasing the attendance and making the church more popular in the community. If he does not have his eyes directly upon the Lord of His calling, a pastor will think he is in competition with other churches. Humanly speaking, how can a church compete with Contemporary Christian Music? Only by providing the same type of music.

Pastors all over the world are falling prey to this temptation.

Fourth, CCM is entering homes and churches through the children's music.

The vast majority of Christian music published for children is syncopated and jazzy. Even some of the newer *Patch the Pirate* tapes are troublesome in this regard. The following warning is very timely and important:

“If you raise your child on seemingly innocent but worldly sounding music they will have a definite thirst for the CCM sound when they become a teenager. You won't be able to say, ‘Oh, now that you're older let me teach you what good music is all about.’ It will be too late. You need to give them a standard of excellence and spirituality from their earliest years” (David G. Parker, *Music in Our Contemporary Christian Culture*, 1997).

Fifth, CCM is entering the churches through specials and background tapes.

Contemporary Christian Music is entering into fundamental Baptist and other fundamentalist, Bible-believing churches through the music specials.

This happens when there is a poor choice of music on the part of those performing the special. It is not uncommon to find church members singing popular CCM songs as specials in churches that otherwise stand against CCM. I have witnessed this on several occasions as I have traveled on preaching trips.

CCM is also entering churches through background tapes used during the specials. These tapes frequently use snare drums and an electric bass guitar to produce a rock backbeat and other types of dance syncopation. It is not uncommon that the music on the tapes is performed by professional musicians who are not even professing Christians or by the

same ecumenical-charismatic crowd that produces the popular Contemporary Christian Music.

One of the largest distributors of background tapes is Soundtraks, based in Oklahoma City. On May 31, 2001, I talked with Don, who works in the production department at Soundtraks, and he plainly told me:

“We don’t have any spiritual standards for the musicians. Some are out of Nashville. They don’t have to go to any church. We just use good musicians. The same musicians are used for Southern Gospel and Contemporary.”

Sixth, CCM is entering the homes and churches because it is kin to the contemporary Southern Gospel to which so many are addicted.

Much (though not all) of Southern gospel has always been akin to boogie-woogie. The late Bruce Lackey, who was the Dean of Tennessee Temple Bible School in the 1970s, played the piano professionally in bars before he was saved. He often warned that much of the Southern gospel music would be right at home in these licentious environments because the rhythm is the same. Boogie-woogie is boogie-woogie, regardless of the words that accompany it. Boogie-woogie arose from the same sleazy side of the 1920s and 1930s juke joint culture as rhythm & blues. It is sensual dance music, and is not fitting for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Music that fits the bar scene is not fit to glorify a holy God.

Further, Southern gospel has deteriorated rapidly in recent decades and has become increasingly akin to secular rock. The backbeat has gotten heavier, and the popular groups have gotten worldlier. The Gaithers and The Imperials are prime examples. They have adopted the music and the fashions of the world. Some of the men in these groups have grown their hair long like a woman’s, and the groups use hard rock music.

They have also become increasingly ecumenical.

When I attended the large ecumenical-charismatic Indianapolis '90 with press credentials, I witnessed the Gaithers entertain the crowd with their music. Half of the 15,000 or so in attendance were Roman Catholics, and the Gaithers were at home in this mixed multitude.

I attended the National Quartet Convention (NQC) in 1999 with press credentials, and the evening shows were little more than rock concerts. I observed that most of the 12,000 or so attendees were middle-aged or older. Fifteen years earlier, most of the people in this crowd would not have enjoyed the music they heard at the 1999 NQC. What happened? They have allowed worldly contemporary Southern gospel musicians to lead them, incrementally, into a love affair with sensual music.

Many church members who would never listen to Petra or dc Talk or Audio Adrenaline or other hard Christian rockers, listen to the same rock beat through the Gaithers, etc.

How, then, can churches keep the new music out?

1. Maintaining spiritual standards for music in the church begins with the pastors.

We believe that it is true that “everything rises and falls on leadership.” It is not enough for some of the church members to have high standards of music. If the church as a whole is to be protected from the new music, pastors must understand spiritual music and must have strong convictions and high standards in this area.

This must be reflected first of all in the pastor’s own home and in the lives of his wife and children.

Pastors and deacons do have a greater responsibility to keep their families scripturally sound. God requires this of them. See 1 Timothy 3:4-5, 10-12; Titus 1:6. Those who do not maintain proper scriptural order in their families cease to be qualified to lead the churches.

A school principal recently testified to me that he had to tell the teenage children of deacons and pastors in his own church that the music they brought to an activity was unacceptable.

This type of thing will eventually destroy the standards in the church. If the church in general has good standards for music in the services, yet if the young people in the homes of the leaders are listening to worldly music, the standard overall will break down quickly. Those young people will set the spiritual tone for the other young people. The efforts of parents who try to maintain high standards of music for their children are undermined if the young people in the church leaders' homes flaunt those standards.

Further, it is hypocrisy for a pastor to refuse to allow Contemporary Christian Music in the assembly, yet allow it in his own life and family and in the lives and families of other church officers.

2. Pastors must educate the people about spiritual music and must warn them of the dangers of worldly music.

It does not come “naturally” for God’s people to reject worldly music. The flesh enjoys it, and the flesh is ever present.

Church members must be trained in the area of music just as they must be trained to understand sound doctrine and to preach the gospel and to have a fruitful Christian home and to practice holiness in Christian living.

To be effective, the music training must be very plain and it must be applied so that the people will understand exactly what types of music are helpful spiritually and what types are detrimental.

Wise pastors will use every tool available to help the people understand these matters. They will make good literature and video presentations available. They will bring in speakers who are effective in teaching about Christian music.

This is not a small matter. Music is one of the most powerful influences in this world. Note the following statement by the Bible commentator Albert Barnes:

“Dr. Johnson once said, that if he were allowed to make the ballads of a nation, he cared not who made the laws. It is true in a more important sense that he who is permitted to make the hymns of a church, need care little who preaches, or who makes the creed. He will more effectually mold the sentiments of a church than they who preach or make creeds and confessions” (Barnes’ *Notes on the New Testament*, Ephesians-Colossians).

The pastor that ignores this issue does so to the spiritual detriment of the church for which God has made him responsible.

3. The music personnel must be carefully selected and trained.

If a church is to keep Contemporary Christian Music out, it must be extremely careful about the selection of the people who are involved with the music. This includes the music director, church musicians, those who provide special music, and the choir members.

The best way to be certain that all involved with the music are committed to maintaining the highest spiritual quality is to have written standards and to go through these regularly with all music personnel.

They should be trained in a spiritual philosophy of music and should be prepared to recognize and reject worldly music. They must be committed to this philosophy before they are allowed to be involved with the church’s music ministry.

Church leaders cannot assume that the music personnel understand and agree with the church’s stance. The only Christians who understand the issue of Christian music properly are those who have been trained to understand it.

This comes back to the responsibility of the pastors to educate the people. If there is not an ongoing training program pertaining to music, a church will quickly deteriorate in this area, because the pressures to use the new music are constant and there is a regular change in the makeup of the church family.

Further, the music people must lead by the example of their own lives. If a song director uses sacred music in the assembly but listens to contemporary music in his car and home, his example will have a powerful negative effect upon the church family.

I think of a church that used only excellent music in the services, but one of the key music personnel loved jazz and other forms of carnal music privately. The young people, particularly, pick up on this double standard.

4. The highest standards must be maintained for workers throughout the church.

One of the most important and effective ways to maintain high spiritual standards of living in a congregation is to have the highest standards for teachers and workers. These are the members who most significantly affect the church body. Their beliefs and lifestyles and goals have a large influence on the spiritual climate of the entire church.

If a church's teachers and workers listen to worldly music, other members will doubtless follow this example.

And how can a church know what its teachers and workers are doing in these areas unless it has written standards and makes certain that the standards are enforced?

I have heard pastors say that it is not their business to involve themselves in what the people listen to and what they watch and what they do "in the privacy of their own lives." That philosophy is both unscriptural and unreasonable. It is unscriptural because the Bible says pastors are placed in a congregation "to watch for your souls" (Heb. 13:17) and for the perfecting and edifying of the body (Eph. 4:11-12).

How can a pastor watch for the souls of his church members unless he knows what they are putting into their souls? How can he perfect and edify them unless he knows what is happening in their daily lives? Such a philosophy, therefore, is unscriptural.

It is also unreasonable, because it is to say that the shepherd is not to interfere in the business of the sheep. A shepherd that does not make it his business to know what the sheep are doing is a lousy shepherd.

5. The church must be very careful about specials and background tapes.

We have already noted that this is one of the ways that contemporary music is entering the churches. At the very least, someone should be in charge of approving any background tapes that are used, and it must be someone that is knowledgeable about music and someone with high music standards and convictions.

An excellent way to avoid this problem, of course, is not to use background tapes. Many churches have found this to be a good solution, and it avoids the possibility of people getting their feelings hurt when their tapes are rejected.

6. The youth group must be led spiritually.

In their youthful immaturity, young people are drawn naturally to “new” things. They also pressure their parents to weaken the family’s standards.

In fact, those who promote Christian rock music promote it particularly in the name of the young people. They claim that the only way to reach the youth is with “their own music.”

Yet the Bible says that “God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thess. 4:7). The church is not in the business of entertaining young people but calling them to discipleship in Christ and separation from the world and holiness of living.

What you win youth *with* you win them *to*. If a church uses worldly means to win young people, those won in such a manner will be worldly.

If a church has an organized youth group, it must be very careful about those that lead. Young people don't need a "good times Charlie" youth leader. They don't need another buddy who will pal around with them and lead them in fun and games. They usually get plenty of that.

What young people desperately need, and what the church is required by God to give them, are godly, spiritually mature leaders who will love them and show them the path of God's perfect will, who will call them to reject the vain, "cool" ways of this present wicked world, who will challenge them to be pure, to pull down worldly idols from their hearts, to give themselves wholly to the service of Jesus Christ while there is time, to yield themselves to Christ's command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

I praise the Lord for the many churches that refuse to be infiltrated with worldly music. Those that are standing are not standing by accident.

The churches that do not take a bold and biblically-educated stance against contemporary music will doubtless capitulate to it.

Separation is the Only Protection

The only safe position is the position of separation from compromise. The music issue has been aired and discussed extensively over the past several years. There is no excuse for ignorance.

Therefore, I refuse to join hands with those who are promoting the use of contemporary worship music, because this philosophy and methodology is building bridges to the one-world church, whether it be via Hillsong or the Gettys, and it will bring exceedingly negative consequences in the days to come.

We have documented the fact that all of the contemporary worship people lead to the one-world church. All of them are either openly ecumenical or deeply sympathetic to the ecumenical philosophy. (See *The Directory of Contemporary Worship Musicians*, a free eBook available from www.wayoflife.org.)

Not only do I refuse to build such bridges from my personal life, home, and church, but I intend to tear down those bridges every chance I get.

If a pastor, missionary, or church is messing around with contemporary worship music, I will not join hands with them in ministry. I will not preach for them. I will not support them, nor will I knowingly accept their support. I will not invite them to preach in our churches or Bible college.

“A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished” (Proverbs 22:3).

“A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished” (Proverbs 27:12).

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Questions Answered about CCM

Following are answers to some of the questions that are typically raised in the context of the Contemporary Christian Music issue:

1. Should Christians only use old music?

When we speak of Contemporary Christian Music, we are referring to the style of music, not to its age. We are referring to a contemporary style of music that borrows from the world's dance rhythms.

There is a lot of good sacred music being written today that avoids sensual party rhythms and that is sacred rather than contemporary in style.

2. Is rhythm wrong?

Rhythm is not wrong unless it is misused. In fact, rhythm is an essential part of music. Rhythm refers to the music's movement. Every piece of music has some type of rhythm. It is not the rhythm itself that is wrong; it is the misuse of it and the perversion of it to make it sensual.

A Sousa march has rhythm. Traditional hymns like "The Old Rugged Cross" have rhythm. And a rock song has rhythm. The difference is that in rock, rhythm predominates and rhythm is abused to create a physical sensuality.

It is a matter of balance. Man is composed of spirit, soul, and body. The Bible says that the things of the spirit should have priority (Matt. 6:33; Luke 10:42). Frank Garlock observes, "If the body and physical things are a priority in one's life, that person is sensual. If the rhythm is the primary dominating part of any piece of music, then that music is sensual."

Rhythm is like salt. Some salt is necessary for health, but too much salt can kill.

We deal much more with rhythm in the video presentation “The Transformational Power of Contemporary Worship Music,” which is included with this book and which is available as a free download from www.wayoflife.org.

3. Isn't music neutral?

We have dealt with this in the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to CCM.”

4. Does a b flat note have moral quality?

In the context of the debate over CCM and the alleged neutrality of music, I have been challenged with the question, “You mean that a b flat note has a moral quality, Brother Cloud?”

The answer is that, no, a b flat note is nothing in itself, but a b flat note is not music. When a b flat note is put together with other notes and other components of music and is made into a musical piece, that musical piece becomes a language (music is called the “language of the heart”) and has a moral quality.

It is like the alphabet. The letter “d” has no moral quality in itself, but when it is placed with other letters to make words and sentences and paragraphs, that piece of writing assumes a moral quality. The letter “d” can form either “DIVINE” or “DEVILISH.”

It is the same with art. Lines and circles in themselves have no moral quality, but when they are placed together into a piece of art, the circles and lines cease to be neutral and become a language that spells out a certain message in this world and has a certain influence upon men.

5. How can musical sounds be labeled good or evil?

The following e-mail expresses this question:

“My strongest conflict is that a certain sound is defined as ‘good’ or ‘evil.’ What really constitutes an evil sound? Is a traditional hymn what we should consider a ‘good’ sound? What about classical music?”

Are there certain pieces that we should not be listening to because of a certain harmonic, melodic or rhythmic pattern found in the music?"

In reply we would say that it's not a matter of the sound itself being good or evil; it is a matter of the sound creating a certain effect, and it is a matter of the sound representing a certain philosophy.

The back beat and beat anticipation and other types of rock syncopations are not evil in themselves, but they have a sensual effect, because the body wants to move into the gaps created by the musical style. This is not an accident. The creators of rock music have always aimed for this sensuality, to make people want to dance and to create a feeling of liberty and license.

The effect is sexual, and the rockers themselves have often stated this. Jimi Hendrix, for example, said, "I guess my music is sexy, but what music with a big beat isn't?"

He was absolutely right. Music with a big beat is sexy because of the effect it has on the human body. Also, this type of sound reflects the philosophy of rock music, which is to let yourself go, do your thing, don't be restrained by laws, follow your heart.

The same is true for the "deceptive cadence," which we deal with in *The Transformational Power of Contemporary Worship Music*. The deceptive cadence is not an evil sound, but its non-resolving character creates an emotional effect of restlessness and unease which is not a mark of godly music. A friend with a master's degree in music observed,

"The deceptive cadence is charismatic in effect. It never resolves, so it builds you up and it gets you into an emotional frenzy where you feel that you are really worshipping God."

That, of course, is the objective of charismatic music. It is focused on the pursuit of an emotional experience.

The unresolving chord structure also reflects the CCM philosophy of doctrinal relativism, of “let’s be flexible and not so dogmatic; let’s focus more on unity than doctrinal absolutes; let’s not be critical.”

6. How can you judge music when the Bible doesn’t contain any musical scores and doesn’t say anything about music itself?

While the Bible doesn’t condemn hard rock or soft rock or really any aspect of CCM’s music specifically, it does address such things in principle.

The Bible doesn’t specifically condemn wearing a bikini while teaching a Sunday School class, yet even the most liberal churches don’t allow that.

The same is true for the use of marijuana. This drug is not mentioned in the Bible by name, but there are biblical principles that apply to its use, such as being sober-minded, not being under the mastery of anything other than Christ, being vigilant against spiritual delusion, having a good testimony before others, and avoiding even the appearance of evil.

Likewise, following are a few of the Bible principles that are applicable to Contemporary Christian Music:

- the principle of separation from end-time apostasy (2 Timothy 3:5)
- the principle of not conforming to and not loving the world (Romans 12:2; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-16)
- the principle of doctrinal purity (1 Timothy 1:3)
- the principle that our music should be spiritual (Colossians 3:16)
- the principle of making a clear distinction between the holy and the profane (Ezekiel 22:6)
- the principle of being sober-minded and spiritually vigilant (1 Peter 5:8)

- the principle of not communing with devils (1 Corinthians 10:21; 1 Timothy 4:1)

And those are only a start.

Consider just one of these: the Bible principle of separation from the world as expressed in the following Scriptures:

“Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away” (Proverbs 4:14-15).

“I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers. I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked” (Psalms 26:4-5).

“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).

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:17).

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11).

“Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12).

“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).

“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).

As we see, strict separation from the world is a major teaching of Scripture. It is a fundamental Bible doctrine.

It was this doctrine that convinced me as a young Christian that I had to give up rock & roll if I was going to please the Lord. It wasn't an easy decision, because my flesh loved rock. I had long been addicted to the backbeat, the sensuality and fleshly excitement of rock.

I didn't give up rock because I was some sort of legalistic Pharisee. I was just a young Christian man seeking the Lord's will.

I didn't give up rock because someone was preaching against it. My pastor at the time knew next to nothing about rock music and never mentioned it in his preaching.

I gave up rock for one reason, and that was because I believed that God's Word required that I separate from such things, and that decision was based on the aforementioned Scriptures.

But it wasn't because the Bible says anything specific about rock music. It doesn't say anything about it directly, but it says plenty about it in principle!

God's Word makes it perfectly clear that separation from the world, non-conformity to the world, is not an optional part of Christianity. The contemporary principle that you can

be “theologically conservative and culturally liberal,” as Mark Driscoll describes it, is heresy.

Watch any typical CCM performance and there is an obvious conformity to the world. The musicians sound and look like the world. They dance sensually like the world. The CCM promotionalism and awards system and charting system are all patterned after the world. Their marriages break up about as often as the world’s. In many cases, they curse like the world and drink like the world. They love R-rated movies and trashy sitcoms like the world. They love any sort of secular rock & roll like the world.

How is this not “worldly”?

As far as I can discern, if there is such a thing as worldliness as defined by 1 John 2:16--the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life--it would have to describe the modern pop music field and the pop culture and its religious counterpart, Contemporary Christian Music.

Therefore, we could not disagree more with those who claim that the Bible has nothing to say about the use of contemporary music in the churches.

It has a lot to say in principle.

7. Shouldn’t personal edification be a major standard of music?

A graduate of a fundamental Baptist Bible college wrote the following:

“Can a Christian not be edified by these songs? Is it not more important for a person to be edified?”

Another Bible college student wrote:

“The music standards were changed so that the students could listen to any music they wanted to, as long as it didn’t offend their conscience” (Northland University student).

These statements reflect a perfect description of the CCM and emerging church philosophy. If I am “blessed” by the music, it is OK.

I have read at least 100 of their books, have attended major conferences with press credentials, have attended services at influential churches for research, and have communicated personally with many of them, and the CCM crowd could not state their philosophy more clearly than it is being stated by students at many fundamental Baptist colleges today.

What is edification and how does it happen? “Edification” means to build up spiritually, and it happens by God’s Spirit through God’s Word. True edification in a biblical sense can only happen in accordance with God’s Word. Acts 9:31 associates edification with walking in the fear of the Lord.

“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied” (Acts 9:31).

Knowing the deception of the human heart, the standard of “I was blessed by the music” is insufficient and dangerous. The devil is clever and subtle and can appeal to the “religious” side of the fallen flesh.

The wise person will test every sense of “blessing” by God’s Word.

If I am acting contrary to Scripture and still claim that I am being edified and blessed, I am deceived. This is blind mysticism.

Multitudes who attended Kathryn Kuhlman’s preaching meetings said they were blessed.

Multitudes who attend papal masses say they are blessed.

Multitudes who fall on the floor and speak in gibberish in charismatic meetings say they are blessed.

Pentecostals who have heard voices telling them to love the Roman Catholic Church say they are blessed by these experiences.

Those who attend Marsha Stevens' concerts and hear her lesbian "Christian" music will tell you that they blessed.

We must be very, very careful in this age that our "blessings" are not spiritual deceptions.

Jesus warned that in the last hours of the age false teaching will be so subtle that "insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Mat. 24:24).

When it comes to CCM, its use is disobedience to Scriptures such as Romans 12:2; 16:17; Ephesians 5:11-16; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:5; 4:3-4; Titus 2:11-12; James 4:4; and 1 John 2:15-17.

It is important to understand that mysticism is sweeping the planet, both in the secular, religious, Christian, and now fundamentalist realms. In the book *What Is the Emerging Church?* we document the fact that mysticism is a major element of the emerging church, and to hold the principle that "personal edification" is an important standard for testing music is to be on the emerging mystical road.

Rock music has always been mystical. It is all about a good feeling. The 60s hit song "Hooked on a Feeling" summarizes the whole thing. Modern society is hooked on the feeling produced by sensual music. It stirs up powerful emotions. It doesn't even need words.

Sun Records founder Sam Phillips, who recorded some of the first rock & roll hits, including Elvis' first recording in 1954, knew the power of rock. Reminiscing many years later about why rock music became such a social phenomenon, he said, "It all came out of THAT INFECTIOUS BEAT and those young people wanting to FEEL GOOD by listening to some records" ("Rock 'n' Roll Pioneer Sam Phillips Dies," *USA Today*, July 30, 2003).

Rock music can be hard or soft, fast or slow, loud or quiet, and it is still rock because it still has a sensual swing rhythm that moves the body, and it is still "infectious" or addictive.

If I need sensual, body-moving music to be "edified," and if sound doctrine sung in a sacred "old fashioned" manner

doesn't do the job, then I am addicted to sensual music, and it is easy to mistake a sensual feeling for spiritual edification.

A good feeling does not equate to biblical edification. True edification is always in conformity to God's Word.

The "personal blessing" factor is a very shallow, insufficient, and dangerous standard by which to judge Christian music.

8. Isn't it wrong to have a critical eye?

A graduate of a fundamental Baptist Bible college wrote the following:

"[When I first arrived] I had a critical eye toward all that they had going ... [But] I would rather give account for singing songs written by contemporary artists but sung in a conservative way than for having a critical attitude toward a fellow man of God."

We don't have to make a choice between being wishy-washy about songs written by contemporary artists or having a critical attitude. We should rather aim to have a "critical eye" without having a "critical spirit."

Like judging, criticism can take two forms--carnal and godly.

The Bible commends a "critical eye" in the sense of exercising spiritual discernment and testing everything by God's Word.

We are exhorted to "prove ALL things" (1 Thess. 5:21). That requires a LOT of judging and "criticism"!

Paul had a critical eye toward Peter's hypocrisy and Demas' worldliness and Phygellus' inconsistency and Philetus' heresy and Alexander the Coopersmith's evil (2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17; 4:10, 14).

Christ Himself had a critical eye toward the Pharisees' hypocrisy and the Saducees' rationalism and the disciples' unbelief (Mat. 23; Lk. 24:25).

When I went to Bible School at Tennessee Temple in the mid-1970s, I was only one year old in the Lord, but I had a powerful dose of salvation, I had been devouring the Bible, and I knew that God wanted me to test everything by it. The following Scriptures were as precious and real to me then as they are today.

“Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things to be* right; *and* I hate every false way” (Psa. 119:128).

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

“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).

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1Th. 5:21).

As a young Bible School student, I began to see things that I felt were wrong scripturally, particularly the shallow, unscriptural soul-winning technique I have since labeled Quick Prayerism, the carnal over-exaltation of man, the big-numbers emphasis, the big-church braggadociosness, and the refusal on the part of the leaders and visiting speakers to speak out plainly on some very important issues.

I had a “critical eye,” and insofar as I had a wrong attitude and lack of mercy and compassion and “balance,” I was wrong, but insofar as I was identifying things that were unscriptural and wrong, I was right.

By God's grace, I have grown in my spiritual life, and I believe and hope that I am wiser and more gracious than I was when I was a new Christian, but I also thank the Lord that I have not given up my “critical eye” in a biblical sense. I

still reject the things I rejected decades ago, because they are still unscriptural.

If ever there were a time to have a critical eye in a right sense it is today. It will protect you spiritually. It is the devil who wants everyone to give up “criticism.” If we do that, we have no shield of protection and there is no way to bring correction to error.

I am deeply concerned that so many IFB churches and schools are putting humanistic eye wash in the biblical critical eye.

At the same time, we must guard against a carnal, critical spirit. James described the right spirit:

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish” (James 3:13-15).

I have often emphasized the importance of such things as giving church leaders the benefit of the doubt. My free eBook *Keys to Fruitful Church Membership* emphasizes such things. So does the article “I Am Not Your Pastor.”

The CCM philosophy of not being critical about music comes from the charismatic movement, which teaches people to “let go and let God,” to go with the flow, to not “put God in a box.” This was the philosophy of John Wimber and the Vineyard churches. It is the philosophy of Hillsong. It is the philosophy of most of the CCM artists.

The Bible teaches just the opposite. We are to be very strict, very cautious.

The philosophy expressed above by the graduate of an IFB college in an e-mail to me is something he was taught at school.

“Students at West Coast Baptist College will be taught the importance of appreciating and growing spiritually through the means of godly music. Students will also be taught that worldly music and Christian rock music are destructive to their maturing as a Christian. West Coast Baptist College believes in the importance of following the Scriptural admonitions regarding music found in Ephesians 5; therefore, our emphasis revolves around psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. The 200-voice choir of Lancaster Baptist Church, as well as all musical groups and instrumentalists, adhere to conservative music standards, emphasizing a distinct melody and godly music theory. STUDENTS WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE TAUGHT TO HAVE A JUDGMENTAL SPIRIT OF OTHER MINISTRIES WITH SLIGHT VARIATIONS IN MUSIC STYLE FROM THAT WHICH IS TAUGHT AT WEST COAST BAPTIST COLLEGE. THEY WILL BE TAUGHT THAT A CRITICAL AND JUDGMENTAL SPIRIT IS AS GRIEVOUS TO THE LORD AS PERHAPS AN UNINTENTIONAL VARIATION IN MUSIC STYLE BY A LIKE-MINDED FUNDAMENTAL CHURCH.”

The first statement about the importance of having the right music and the destructive nature of worldly music is largely negated by the second statement about not judging or being critical, and it is the second statement that has become the predominant philosophy at West Coast. It has allowed the music people to continually push the boundaries.

While we should be gracious and wise in our judgments, we must judge! While we should not be carnally critical in attitude, we should most definitely be critical of sin and worldliness and error!

I would ask at what point is it right to be judgmental and critical toward music? If it has a backbeat? If it has other forms of dance syncopation? If it has non-resolving chord patterns? If it incorporates worldly vocal techniques? If it is

repetitious? If it has a vague message? If it is written by CCM people for charismatic mystical worship? If it is written by those who deny the Trinity and promote a non-judgmental god? If it is written by those who believe that Roman Catholics are part of the “body of Christ” and who associate with the pope?

Where are we allowed to draw clear lines and become “judgmental” without breaking West Coast’s rules?

In my estimation, it is not possible to obey this school’s rules on music without disobeying God’s rules.

9. Isn’t an emphasis on “a heart for God” more important than judging music?

A Bible college graduate wrote the following:

“While at West Coast Baptist College one the most important things I learned was the importance of having a heart for God. The music was a lot more of a concern to me when I first started to hear it and I thought of the fact that it was CCM artists that perform it.”

I agree with the importance of emphasizing “the heart” as long as this is defined properly in today’s context. It is so important to emphasize a right heart and true godliness as opposed to mere externals, and I have tried to emphasize that in my ministry. (See the book *Keeping the Kids*, for example.) I have often been discouraged at the shallow emphasis on the externals and neglect of the issue of a right heart in many fundamental Baptist churches.

But this is no excuse for going down the road of saying that music doesn’t matter as long as the “heart is right.” That is one of the fundamental philosophies of CCM and the emerging church, and it is heretical and eventually leads to a complete collapse of godly standards and even of absolute truth itself. This is because of the subjectivity of the principle and the duplicitous nature of the human heart.

The philosophy of testing music by the passion for God exhibited by the performers and listeners or by whether my heart is blessed by it is the mystical charismatic approach, which lies at the heart of CCM.

This philosophy is akin to John Piper's Christian Hedonism doctrine. He says, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied with Him." A passion for God is promoted as THE major principle and sanctifier of the Christian life. As Dr. Peter Masters of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London says:

"Delighting in God ... is made the organising principle for every other spiritual experience and duty. It becomes the key formula for all spiritual vigour and development. Every other Christian duty is thought to depend on how well we obey this central duty of delighting in the Lord. The entire Christian life is simplified to rest upon a single quest, which is bound to distort ones perception of the Christian life and how it must be lived" ("Christian Hedonism - Is It Right?" *Sword & Trowel*, 2002, No. 3).

Only a fool would say that a passion for God is not the most important thing in life; but it is also true that it is easy to deceive ourselves that we are being passionate about God when we are actually being passionate about ourselves. It is not a sufficient standard for saints who are still "in the flesh" in this present sin-cursed world.

The Bible warns that "the heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17:9), and, "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool" (Prov. 28:26).

The passions of the heart must be continually and always tested by the clear teaching of God's Word. If a "passion for God" were THE important standard of Christian living, the New Testament would make no sense. Take the book of Ephesians. It contains some 88 specific commandments, by my reckoning, that the grace-saved, born-again believer is

obligated to obey. Why didn't Paul just summarize everything with one simple principle?

The proper test of music is not merely whether my heart is pleased with it and whether I feel that I am being passionate for God when I enjoy it. A proper biblical test involves many things. We have laid some of these out in this book, such as the following:

- Is the music conformed to the world?
- Can the music be identified as “the lust of the flesh” or “the lust of the eyes” or the “pride of life”?
- Is the music associated with end-time apostasy? Is it a bridge to the one-world “church”?
- Is the music doctrinally unsound?
- Does the music lead to a lack of sober-mindedness and spiritual vigilance?
- Does the music fail to make a clear distinction between the holy and the profane?

If the answer to any of these is yes, it doesn't matter whether or not I like the music. It is still wrong!

10. Isn't the sincerity of the musicians the important thing?

Those who defend Contemporary Christian Music often argue that the really important thing is whether or not the musicians are sincere. Note the following statement by Christian rocker Mylon LeFevre:

“Music is not good or evil because of the formation of the notes or the structure of the beat. Music is good because the heart of the person playing it is innocently and sincerely giving praise to our God” (LeFevre, interview by Pastor Rick Anderson, Minneapolis, Minnesota, *Rock Music--What's the Real Message?* cited by Jeff Godwin, *What's Wrong with Christian Rock?*, p. 122).

We would answer this, first of all, by reminding our readers of the deceptive nature of man's heart.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

“He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered” (Proverbs 28:26).

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

These verses remind us that man's heart cannot be trusted. It is very easy for an individual to deceive himself and others. It is therefore impossible to know for sure whether or not someone is sincerely seeking to please God. It is impossible to know for sure whether or not a person has sincere motives for doing he does. Man's heart is complex, and he often has multiple motives, even conflicting and unknown motives.

Second, God requires obedience to His Word and does not accept man's sincere disobedience.

There are many examples of this in the Bible.

Moses was a sincere man of God, but when he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, God judged him and refused to allow him to enter Canaan (Num. 20:7-14). God did not accept Moses' sincere and earnest disobedience.

When Aaron's sons offered strange fire, God struck them dead, paying no attention to whether or not they were acting sincerely (Lev. 10:1-7).

When Saul disobeyed in the seemingly minor matter of not destroying the cattle belonging to the Amalekites, God judged him and removed the kingdom from him (1 Samuel 15). Saul protested that he had done the deed in the sincerity of his heart, but this did not change God's mind.

When Uzzah steadied the cart holding the ark of the covenant, God struck him dead (1 Sam. 6:6-7). It appears from the record that Uzzah was sincerely trying to assist in the service of God, but God did not accept it because it was not done according to His Word.

Dr. Frank Garlock, who has a doctorate from the respected Eastman School of Music, observes:

“Sincerity and motivation have never been a test of real spirituality or even of Christianity for that matter. The Word of God is that which will abide forever, and it is upon His Word that God hinges all spiritual truth. It is not right to ignore the Bible, to become worldly in philosophy and practice, to call things Christian which are not, nor to disobey the Word of God, even to try to win people to Christ” (Garlock, *Can Rock Music Be Sacred?* 1974, p. 39).

Third, the Bible says that the Christian race must be run according to the divine rule or there is no reward.

“And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (2 Tim. 2:5).

This was one reason why Paul exercised his life and ministry so carefully and strictly.

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

It is obvious that sincerity and earnestness in the service of Christ is not enough. I must run the Christian race according to the Word of God or God does not accept my service.

Fourth, if the chief test of the soundness of music is the sincerity of the performers, it would be impossible for the hearer to test it.

As already noted, we cannot know for certain the sincerity of a musician. Many Christian rock musicians have admitted that they wrote and performed Contemporary Christian Music even while they were drinking and committing adultery and seeking fortune and fame.

The members of the Christian rock band Stryper admit today that they drank and partied in carnal rebellion during part of their touring career. Michael English, Sandi Patty, Kirk Franklin, among others, admit that they were living in fornication and adultery during part of their Christian music careers. Mylon LeFevre admits that he wrote and performed music for years before he got right with God, that he was using drugs heavily and drinking and carousing even while producing Christian music. After their success with the *Supernatural* album and tour, Michael Tait of dc Talk admitted that he “went through a time where I dabbled in a lot of [evil] things” (*CCM Magazine*, May 2001, p. 42). He calls this his “dark days.”

Many CCM spokesmen candidly admit that this type of thing is a big problem in their midst, but a great deal of it is covered up to protect the careers of the worldly musicians and to protect the reputation and financial bottom line of the CCM industry.

How, then, are we to tell if a musician is “sincerely” walking with God? How can we know that “his heart is right”? We cannot know this, so it is unreasonable to make this the measure of whether or not the music is sound.

While it is important to examine the musician’s life, it is not possible to examine “his heart.” A more reasonable test is to examine how the musician lives and his doctrine and the character and lyrics of the music itself.

11. Isn't some contemporary music acceptable?

Is it necessary to condemn CCM as a whole?

First of all, having personally examined hundreds of CCM songs, I have found that THE VAST MAJORITY of them are unacceptable.

It is an irrefutable fact that the movement as a whole is ecumenical, charismatic, shallow, and worldly. Exceptions do not overthrow the rule. The popular CCM musicians who are *not* building the one-world “church” can probably be counted on one hand. In fact, I don't know of any.

Second, to find truly sacred music within CCM one must wade through tons of musical pollution.

For example, Carman's *I Surrender All* album contains an “Old Rugged Cross Medley” which has some acceptable parts, but the very next cut on the album launches into a heavy, sensual, boogie-woogie rendition of “Peace Like a River”!

The music of Twila Paris is another example. While some of her songs have full orchestration, acoustic strings, no bass or drums pounding out the rock backbeat, there are rock songs on the same albums. For example, her rendition of “When the Roll Is Called up Yonder” is sung to a funky beat with heavy bass and constant snare drum. The song “We Seek His Face” is sung to a strong disco-style rock rhythm. Also, many of her songs that begin in a traditional and sacred style blend into a rock style. “Be Thou My Vision,” for example, begins with Paris singing to a traditional sacred organ background, then morphs into a strong backbeat with drums and bass guitar.

Those who purchase Twila Paris' albums for the non-rock songs will be enticed to accept the rock music on the same albums.

Third, CCM creates an appetite for unholy music and is a bridge to secular rock.

Contemporary Christian Music uses the world's sensual dance music, and this music appeals to the flesh. Even soft rock is addictive in character. The flesh is never satisfied.

In this book we have documented the fact that there is absolutely no separation between Contemporary Christian Music and secular rock, and those who listen to CCM are creating and sustaining unholy appetites for the things of the world and building bridges to the world.

They are also building bridges to the spiritually-dangerous world of ecumenism and the one-world "church," as we have documented in this book in the chapter "Why We Are Opposed to CCM."

Fourth, CCM is constantly shifting, and the movement is almost always toward harder rock and a more obscure message.

The CCM musicians themselves continually move in the direction of a harder and more eclectic rock style. Many of those who began with soft rock have progressed to harder rock. The Gaithers illustrate this, as we have documented in the free eBook *Southern Gospel Music*, available from www.wayoflife.org.

Sandi Patty illustrates this. She has gone farther and farther into hard rock music. Her 1993 album *LeVoyage* does not mention the name of Jesus, but it rocks so heavily that *CCM Magazine* made this statement: "... old-line Patty fans are either going to be seeking refunds in droves, or be so flabbergasted at seeing an entirely new side of her..." (*CCM Magazine*, May 1993, p. 40).

What actually happens is that the "fans" are carried along on the artist's worldly journey.

The dramatic changes that have occurred in CCM in a mere two decades were described by John Fischer:

"In 1978, Christian music was unquestionably Christian in content. ... Almost every song had a distinctly gospel message of some sort. Many songs

[from the '90s], however, were hardly recognizable as 'Christian' songs, at least not in the traditional sense. Lyrics were sometimes unintelligible; not every song was about Jesus" (John Fischer, "Two Nights Out," *CCM Magazine*, July 1998, p. 145).

Consider the goal dc Talk had for their "Jesus Freak" video:

"The intention of the clip was to 'PUSH THE ENVELOPE' of the Christian music community ... they expect some of the more conservative members of the Christian community to frown on the adventurous clip" (*Billboard*, Nov. 11, 1995).

These people don't care who they offend.

CCM Magazine acknowledges that Amy Grant has continually pushed the barriers of Christian music (*CCM Magazine*, July 1998, p. 42).

As CCM rockers "push the envelope" of acceptability, they are drawing generations of professing Christians with them, more deeply into complete and total acceptance of every sort of sensual rock music and ever closer to the world.

CCM is dangerous, and all of it is dangerous. It is a package. The musicians don't believe in separation, and they are holding hands with and influencing one another.

Even the most conservative contemporary praise musicians, such as the Gettys, are one-world church builders who join hands with Roman Catholics such as Matt Maher and New Agers such as Leonard Sweet.

CCM is moving farther and farther away from the Word of God with each passing decade.

The only sure protection from its unscriptural and unholy aspects is separation from all of it.

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

12. Since we have selectively used hymns by Protestants, shouldn't we also be able to selectively use those by contemporary hymn writers?

It has been argued that since Baptist churches use Protestant hymns, it is acceptable to use contemporary worship songs that have a biblically-sound message.

We deal with this in the chapter “We Use Protestant Hymns, Don't We?”

13. What about the young people in the churches?

One pastor asked the following:

“What do you have to say to young people who are hearing the arguments from the other side, on the Internet, etc., and these arguments make sense to them because they don't believe they can take a stance against contemporary Christian music and be consistent with it? They find what seem to be good Bible preachers (MacArthur, Piper, etc.) who are taking the different stands and whose material is readily available and oftentimes free.”

My reply is as follows:

First, we have to deal with the spiritual condition of these young people.

In my experience (having preached in more than 500 churches in 49 states and 20 countries and having corresponded with thousands of people in other churches), a large percentage of young people in IFB churches do not give evidence of having been born again. The young people typically have at least one foot in the world.

That is carnality at best, and such a person will never understand spiritual issues.

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even* as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat:

for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able” (1 Cor. 3:1-2).

“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 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 5:11-14).

A carnal Christian walks in the flesh rather than the Spirit. Such a person loves the world’s music because it appeals directly to the flesh, but Peter warned that fleshly lusts “war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

The issue of the person’s spiritual condition is foundational and must be addressed if the issue of music is to be understood properly.

In my estimation, the fact that many young people in Biblicist churches are attracted to the arguments supporting Contemporary Christian Music is not a reflection on their earnest seeking after a biblical position; it is a reflection on their carnality and biblical shallowness.

Churches need to do everything possible to make sure that the young people are born again. A “profession of faith” and a “sinner’s prayer” should be backed up by a changed life and a real testimony that the individual knows Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Churches should look for evidence of salvation.

Beyond the issue of salvation, families and churches need to train and disciple the young people in a serious way rather than merely entertain them with a Christianized form of the world’s emphasis on sports, etc. Young people need to be prepared to face the onslaught from today’s skeptical world

and apostate Christianity by which the devil will attempt to overthrow their faith, or failing in that, to lead them into some compromised path.

We have made many materials available for discipling young people, including the following:

- *One-Year Discipleship Course*
- *An Unshakeable Faith: A Christian Apologetics Course*
- Bible Times and Ancient Kingdoms
- Lessons in Proverbs (one of our Advanced Bible Studies Series courses particularly geared to young people)
- How to Study the Bible (an Advanced Bible Studies Series course)
- Bible History and Geography (an Advanced Bible Studies Series course)
- Dressing for the Lord (available in book and video formats)
- The Emerging Church Is Coming (available in book and video formats)

Descriptions of these materials can be found at the online catalog at the Way of Life web site, www.wayoflife.org.

Not only should such material be used, but the young people need to be tested to help them grasp and hold onto important truths. Every church today needs to be a serious Bible training institute.

We deal extensively with the the issues of evangelizing, training, and discipling youth in the book *Keeping the Kids: How to Keep the Children from Falling Prey to the World*, available from Way of Life Literature.

Second, the young people need to be properly educated about music.

In my experience, such education is grossly lacking in the average church. Assuming a person is saved and walking in the Spirit, it is not difficult to prove from the Bible that

contemporary Christian music has no place in the Christian life.

God showed me this as a young Christian, and it was Scriptural principles that convinced me to give up the rock backbeat and to stay away from CCM. I have used those principles to help many other believers reject these things. I wrote my first book on rock music within the first year after I was saved, and it was packed with Scripture. It is those same Scriptures that have kept me away from secular and Christian rock for more than 40 years.

What I would ask a young person who is leaning toward contemporary music is the following:

First, do you have a testimony of biblical salvation? I am not asking if you have prayed a prayer or grown up in church or joined the church; I am asking if you have a real testimony of having been born again. Have you repented before God and surrendered to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour? Do you know Christ personally and walk with Him?

Second, what is the character of your Christian life? Are you walking with Christ? Is the Bible the book of your life? Are you pursuing God's perfect will? Are you committed to separating from this wicked world to the holy Christ as God demands (Romans 12:2; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17)?

Third, have you made the effort to look into the case against contemporary Christian music? I am not talking about reading an article or two; I am talking about reading some serious books on the subject and watching video presentations.

Young people need to be well trained in the issue of music. Many resources are available to help with this, such as books and videos by Frank Garlock, *Why I Left the Contemporary Worship Music Movement* by Dan Lucarini, and our 11-part video series *Music for Good or Evil*.

I believe that our approach to dance syncopation and the world's music should be like our approach to alcoholic wine. If you take the position of total abstinence and never take a

drink, you will never become a drunkard. It is the safe position. Likewise, if a believer rejects the backbeat because of its intimate association with moral filth and refuses to listen to music that has the dance backbeat, even in its “soft” forms, and refuses to listen to the music that is coming out of the ecumenical-charismatic movement, he will never become addicted to the world’s music and will not be in danger of being drawn into the world or into the ecumenical movement through that music.

Show me a young person that is listening to Contemporary Christian Music and I will show you a young person whose heart is moving toward the world and toward a contemporary philosophy of Christianity.

Show me a church that isn’t grounding the young people in these essential biblical principles, and I will show you a church that is losing a large percentage of its young people to the world.

14. What about the miracles?

Contemporary Christian Music, being for the most part charismatic music, puts a lot of stock in experience and commonly refuses to ask hard biblical questions.

Mylon LeFevre, for example, makes the following claim: “If you come to our concerts, you’ll find people getting born again, people getting baptized in the Holy Spirit, people getting healed of physical ailments” (Mylon LeFevre, *Ministries Today*, January-February 1987, p. 30).

We would reply, first, that the Pentecostal “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is not scriptural.

Pentecostals like LeFevre claim that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that occurs subsequent to salvation as a “second blessing,” something to be sought.

Yet Ephesians 1:12-14 says that we receive the Holy Spirit when we receive Christ, and nowhere in the New Testament epistles are we taught to seek the Holy Spirit or to seek a baptism with or by the Spirit. We are instructed, rather, to

walk in the Spirit and to be filled with the Spirit. This refers to submitting to the Spirit's control day-by-day.

Second, the Bible's prophecies about the Last Days repeatedly warn of deception through lying wonders.

The presence of apparent miracles is not evidence that something is biblically genuine.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and SHALL SHOW GREAT SIGNS AND WONDERS; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Mat. 24:24).

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan WITH ALL POWER AND SIGNS AND LYING WONDERS, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Th. 2:9-10).

“And HE DOETH GREAT WONDERS, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (Rev. 13:13).

The unsaved religionists of Matthew 7:21-23 profess of “MANY WONDERFUL WORKS,” but Jesus does not know them.

The only sure test of a prophet is to compare his teaching and ministry to the Word of God, and when CCM is compared with the Word of God, it fails the test.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

15. Why does traditional church music seem dull?

First, I don't believe there is anything dull or boring about wonderful traditional sacred music such as the hymns written by Fanny Crosby.

Those who think these hymns are boring or “cheesy” have a worldly appetite and are yearning for jazzy music rather than focusing on the all-important message.

This problem is solved by putting away the world’s music and learning to enjoy spiritual music. To enjoy spiritual music, one must develop a spiritual appetite. This does not necessarily happen overnight. When I was saved in the summer of 1973, I was saved out of a rock & roll lifestyle. Rock was my music, if not my god. After a short time the Lord dealt with me about my love for something that was as obviously sensual and worldly as rock music, and I gave it up. It took time to overcome the addiction to the backbeat, but after some time it was possible to enjoy music that sounded nothing like the music the world uses for lascivious purposes.

Second, it is possible to sing spiritual songs and hymns in a boring manner.

I have heard this done many times. When congregational singing is dull and lifeless, the hymns themselves appear dull even though they aren’t. The solution to this problem is not the introduction of contemporary music. The solution is a church that has a diligent and spiritual song leader and where people love the Lord enough to enthusiastically sing His praises through psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.

Third, I agree that there are boring traditional Christian songs and hymns.

When the message is weak or obscure and the melody is uninteresting, the music can be boring.

I have found myself wondering why the music leader or the person performing the special music selected a certain song. Are they thinking about the message? What is edifying about “come, come, come to the church in the wildwood?”

Fourth, sometimes the song service is boring because of lack of imagination and variety.

We have dealt with this in the presentation on song leading in the DVD series *Music for Good or Evil*.

Fifth, there are cultural issues that come to bear upon church music.

When I have visited Ireland and England, I have found that some of the traditional Baptist church services seem dull. Part of the problem is cultural. I am not accustomed to the formality of the services or to the type of music they use.

Sixth, when we recommend “traditional” or “sacred” music, we are not referring to “high church” music.

Many young people who reject “dull” traditional church music do so because they are familiar only with a ritualistic denomination that does not have the power of God. They are familiar with the lifelessness and dry ritualism of apostasy and confuse this with true “sacred” music.

16. Didn’t Luther use tavern music?

Many books that support Contemporary Christian Music justify the use of rock music because of Martin Luther’s alleged use of tavern songs, but this is based on an inaccurate view of Luther’s music.

In reality, what Luther did is nothing like what Christian rockers are doing today. The following are some of the serious differences between Luther’s music and CCM. (An excellent overview of this is found in *Measuring the Music* by John Makujina, chapter 7.)

First, Luther was extremely conscious of the danger of using the world’s music and warned that music has the power for good or evil.

Note the following quote:

“For whether you wish to comfort the sad, to terrify the happy, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate . . . what more effective means than music could you find?” (Luther, “Preface to Georg Rhau’s *Symphoniae Iucundae*,” translated by Ulrich S. Leopold, in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 53, 323).

Luther warned that music is “a mistress and governess of those human emotions . . . which govern men or more often overwhelm them” (Ibid.).

Thus it is obvious that Luther did not hold the CCM philosophy that music is neutral and that it lacks inherent moral qualities.

Second, though Luther adopted things from secular music, he did so only with extreme caution.

Luther carefully adapted the music to fit the Christian message. Of his 37 chorales, only one came directly from a secular song, and it was later replaced by a new tune he had written himself.

“By avoiding dance tunes and ‘de-rhythming’ other songs, Luther achieved a chorale with a marked rhythm, but WITHOUT THE DEVICES THAT WOULD REMIND PEOPLE OF THE SECULAR WORLD. . . . Luther chose only those tunes which would best lend themselves to sacred themes and avoided the vulgar, ‘rollicking drinking songs’ and dance tunes. . . . He carefully tested the melodies he considered, and when necessary molded them into suitability” (Robert Harrell, *Martin Luther: His Music, His Message*, 1980).

“He was not content to accept anything uncritically: he was jealous of congruity between the theme of the verse and the spirit of the music. He carefully tested the propriety for their purpose of the melodies he considered, and where necessary molded them into suitability” (Millar Patrick, *The Story of the Church’s Song*, p. 74).

“Rollicking drinking songs were available in the 16th century too. LUTHER STEERED CLEAR OF THEM. He never considered music a mere tool that could be employed regardless of its original association but WAS CAREFUL TO MATCH TEXT AND TUNE, so that each text would have its own proper tune and so

that both would complement each other” (Ulrich Leupold, an authority on Luther, “Learning from Luther?” *Journal of Church Music*, July-August 1996, p. 5).

“It is perhaps in his selectivity of rhythm that we notice the seldom-acknowledged conservatism of Luther. In order for the congregation to sing in unison, a song had to contain some form of rhythm. The plainsong (Gregorian chant), however, lacked the necessary rhythm. On the other hand, DANCE SONGS AND DRINKING SONGS PRODUCED A RHYTHM FAR TOO INTENSE AND DEFINITE FOR LUTHER’S PURPOSES. Therefore, it is believed that in developing his chorales, Luther managed to discard dance songs altogether and limit the rhythm in other songs” (John Makujina, *Measuring the Music*, p. 192).

Third, though Luther wanted to write spiritual songs that were pleasing to young people, he was careful to wean them away from every type of fleshly music.

“And these songs were arranged in four parts to give the young--who should at any rate be trained in music and other fine arts--something TO WEAN THEM AWAY FROM LOVE BALLADS AND CARNAL SONGS AND TO TEACH THEM SOMETHING OF VALUE IN THEIR PLACE, thus combining the good with the pleasing, as is proper for youth” (emphasis added) (Martin Luther, “Preface to the Wittenberg Hymnal,” *Luther’s Works*, vol. 53, p. 316).

This is not what we see in Contemporary Christian Music! Not only does CCM itself develop worldly appetites in music by uncritically adopting the same, but also most of the musicians are hooked directly into secular rock music in their daily lives. We have documented this in the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to CCM.”

17. Didn't the Wesleys use drinking music?

Another popular myth used to prop up Contemporary Christian Music is that the Wesleys used drinking music.

The following is from the United Methodist News Service, September 30, 2002. It was written by Dean McIntyre, director of worship resources at the United Methodist Board of Discipleship. We are picking this up from *Foundation* magazine, November-December 2002. While we certainly do not support the United Methodist Church, the following is an accurate and important debunking of a popular myth and we are thankful to Mr. McIntyre for taking this stand:

Did the Wesleys really use drinking song tunes for their hymns? This drinking tune myth pervades our denomination and has attained the status of truth in many people's minds, including pastors, musicians, professors, writers, students, and our general laity.

Of particular importance is the distinction between the use of secular music as hymn tunes--a practice that the Wesleys did occasionally use--and the use of drinking tunes or saloon songs as hymn tunes--a practice that they did not use.

The Wesleys did not use tavern or drinking songs to carry their texts. Their theology as well as their sense of aesthetics would have made such an occurrence unthinkable. There are no such examples in their collections. There are no suggestions or recommendations that others do so in any of their writings.

The oft-repeated legend results from some poor, misinformed person who confused the medieval literary bar form, also sometimes known as bar tune, with tavern song. Once spoken out of ignorance, the confused version took on a life of its own and seemingly grows with each repetition.

The legend is now repeated by those who advocate this very practice in the church's worship and music

today. They use the “fact” that the Wesleys did it as justification for their argument that we should also do it. I want to argue that those who wish to commend this practice to the church should not be allowed to appeal to an historical inaccuracy or lie as their justification. They should be able to argue the position on its own merits.

The Wesleys did, indeed, make use of secular music as hymn tunes--rarely. And when they did, THE MUSIC ALWAYS WAS FROM SOURCES OF RECOGNIZABLE BEAUTY AND EXCELLENCE, such as an original composition by the great composer Handel as a tune for “Rejoice, the Lord Is King.” Other secular sources used by the Wesleys included the classical music of their day, a few opera tunes, and perhaps a folk song or two. But IN EVERY CASE WHERE THEY MADE USE OF SECULAR MUSIC FOR THEIR HYMNS, IT WAS ALWAYS OF THE VERY HIGHEST CALIBER, never a little ditty, jingle or disposable contemporary pop tune of the day that would be cast aside as soon as the next one was penned. ...

I feel quite comfortable casting my lot with ... the Wesleys in this matter. I’m happy for us to “redeem” and use secular music in our worship if it is appropriate (and legal) AND IF THE RESULT IS SOMETHING WE NEED NOT BE ASHAMED OF IN OFFERING BACK TO GOD. USE OF THE MUSIC MUST NOT PUT US IN ASSOCIATION WITH ACTIVITIES, LIFESTYLES AND BEHAVIORS THAT ARE INCONSISTENT WITH A LIFE OF LOVE IN CHRIST. ...

The legend has a seductive quality to it. How can anyone argue against the kind of evangelical zeal demonstrated by one who would go out into the bars and taverns of our communities in search of lost souls, and who would be willing to make use of that culture’s music to attempt to appeal to them to hear

our message? It is that very appealing evangelistic zeal that makes us today repeat the story again and again, even if it isn't true. We want to think of the Wesleys as having done that, even if they didn't.

The truth is, while they quite likely preached to the lost, including a fair share of drunks and alcoholics, in many venues, **THEY DID NOT AND WOULD NOT HAVE USED THE MUSIC ASSOCIATED WITH THAT SINFUL BEHAVIOR IN THEIR HYMN SINGING.** They certainly did not use it in their hymnal publishing or in their journal or letter writing (Dean McIntyre, United Methodist News Service, Sept. 30, 2002).

In regard to music, this United Methodist scholar displays more spiritual wisdom than a lot of fundamental Baptists today.

18. Didn't many of the old hymns borrow from secular music?

In an interview in May 2010, Ralph Carmichael, who has been called "the Father of Contemporary Christian Music," was asked how he justified using rock and other forms of pop secular music. He replied:

"In the 1700s and 1800s, poets wrote many of our traditional hymns, combining the unchanging message with popular secular melodies. And they were sternly criticized. The musical 'pop' style of the 1800s is what we now call traditional, though it did not come from within the church" ("He Started the Revolution in Christian Music," AssistNews.net, May 8, 2010).

We have largely answered this in the previous points about the music of Luther and the Wesleys.

It is wrong to compare the use of an innocent secular tune in Christian music to the use of the world's filthy party music.

Just because a tune is “secular” does not make it wrong. What is wrong about using rock music in the Lord’s service is that it was designed from its inception to flaunt God’s laws. The book *Rock Facts*, which is published by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, acknowledges that rock is not just a type of music, *IT IS A LIFESTYLE*.

“... rock and roll has truly become a universal language ... **rock and roll also refers to an attitude, a feeling, a style, a way of life...**” (*Rock Facts*, 1996, p. 7).

In his interviews with *Playboy*, John Lennon said, “The whole Beatles idea was to do what you want.”

The philosophy of rock & roll was encapsulated in hits in the 1960s by the Rolling Stones (“I’m free to do what I want any old time”), the Animals (“It’s my life and I’ll do what I want”), the Mamas and the Papas (“You got to go where you want to go/ do what you want to do”), and the Isley Brothers (“It’s your thing/ do what you want to do”).

When David Byrne inducted David Bowie into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1996, he described rock & roll as follows:

“And like all rock and roll, it [David Bowie’s] was tasteless, it was glamorous, it was PERVERSE, it was fun, it was crass, it was SEXY, it was CONFUSING. And like all rock and roll, it was FREEDOM, it was pain, it was LIBERATION, it was genocide, it was hope, it was dread, it was a dream and it was a NIGHTMARE. IT WAS ABOUT SEX AND DRUGS, it was about combining literature with rock and roll, with art, with anything you could name. It was about SEX as an idea, and SEX as a reality, and SEX as a liberating force. It was about REBELLION, it was about REBELLION as a cliché, it was REBELLION as an idea. It was about REBELLION as a billboard, as an advertisement. It was about the joy of RECKLESS prophecy. ... It was about SEXUAL politics, SEXUAL theater” (rockhall.com).

To take such music, which by its very rhythm preaches licentiousness, and to use it in the service of a holy Christ is confusion and apostasy.

Ralph Carmichael's music is popular across all denominational lines in the most apostate hour of church history. It is part of the soundtrack of the end-time, one-world "church." If that doesn't convince you that it is *not* spiritual music, you are probably beyond convincing.

"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 Timothy 4:3-4).

19. Isn't the music issue a matter of different taste?

There are subjective areas in music, but this is not to say there are no clear biblical guidelines about music. Everything is to be tested by the Word of God.

Ephesians 5:19 instructs the believer to make "melody in your heart to the Lord" and describes what type of music pleases the Lord: *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs*.

Spiritual songs are not the same as unspiritual; hymns are not the same as rock music; melody is not the same as raucous noise.

The Bible also gives instruction about the Christian's affiliation with worldly things, and any music that draws the child of God into fellowship with the world is to be rejected (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-16).

The Bible also gives clear instruction about the Christian's relationship with doctrinal error, and music that contains error is to be avoided.

Further, the Bible warns often about the danger of end-time apostasy and demands that God's people avoid it (2 Timothy 3:5; 4:3-4).

Everything must be brought into subjection to God, and everything pertaining to the world, the flesh, and the devil is to be rejected.

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).

20. Doesn't the Bible encourage the use of loud cymbals?

Psalm 150:5 says, “Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.”

We must understand that an instrument can be used properly or improperly.

Cymbals and stringed instruments are used both in orchestras and in rock bands, but they are used very differently in each situation. Stringed instruments can be electrified and used to preach rebellion and to stir up sensual passions, and stringed instruments can also be used to speak peace to troubled souls (1 Sam. 16:23).

Further, “Loud cymbals” does not equate rock music. Since Psalm 150 was written about 1,600 years ago, it should be obvious that the psalmist was not referring to amplified instruments.

One hundred trumpets playing together naturally create only seven times the volume of one trumpet, whereas one four-man rock band can create as much volume through amplification as a jumbo jet on takeoff!

21. Why are you opposed to drums?

We are not opposed to drums or any other musical instrument; we are opposed to the use of drums in a wrong way.

A drum or an electric guitar or an electronic keyboard is not evil or wrong in itself.

First of all, we are opposed to the use of drums to produce rhythms that are sensual or sexual in nature.

The Bible says that this world is fallen and is under the dominion of sinful men and demons, and God's people are to separate from the evil things of this world. The Bible makes a sharp distinction between the holy and the profane (Ezek. 22:26), between God and the world (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17). John said, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). That has very far-reaching implications, including implications about Christian music.

Drums are used in an orchestra and in a military marching band, but they are used differently in that context than in a rock band. In a military marching band, drums are used to mark a straight beat. In an orchestra, drums are used in moderation to support the music rather than to dominate it. But in a rock band, drums pound out a steady backbeat that dominates the music.

Rhythm itself is not wrong unless it is misused. Rhythm is a necessary part of music. It keeps the music moving, but it should not dominate. The Bible says it is the melody that should dominate in Christian music.

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19).

Contrast a traditional sacred music song like "Onward Christian Soldiers" with a rock song. Both have rhythm, but the rhythm in most rock songs absolutely dominates and overwhelms the musical piece, whereas the rhythm in "Onward Christian Soldiers" simply complements the lyrical message and moves the song along.

Frank Garlock, who has a doctorate in music from the Eastman School of Music, contrasts the rhythm section of an orchestra with that of a rock band:

“How much rhythm is too much rhythm, as thought of from a numerical perspective? The typical symphony, such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra or the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, includes approximately one hundred musicians. Three to four of them are responsible for the rhythm as they play the percussion instruments like the timpani, bass and snare drums, cymbals, triangle, bells, and several other rhythmic devices. Since the percussion instruments do not perform much of the time, it can be concluded that LESS THAN FOUR PERCENT OF THE ORCHESTRA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BASIC RHYTHM. It might be argued that all of the instruments play some part of the rhythm, but this only makes the analogy between rhythm and the pulse stronger. All parts of our bodies are affected by the pulse, but it is the pulse itself which gives the body its basic rhythm. In addition to this, it must be remembered that just as the spirit, mind, and body are interrelated, so are the melody, harmony, and rhythm. One cannot exist without the other two.

“The conventional secular or Christian rock group has a slightly different blend. Typically there are four basic instruments: the rhythm guitar, a bass guitar, an array of drums, and the lead guitar. Although the guitar is not usually considered a rhythm instrument, as used by a rock group it definitely is. All four instruments can be classified as belonging to the rhythm family. The only one which offers the ‘melody’ on occasion is the lead guitar. At best, the sound which comes from THE TYPICAL ROCK GROUP IS SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT RHYTHM” (Frank Garlock, *Music in the Balance*, pp. 67, 68).

It is the drum more than any other instrument that pounds out the backbeat in a rock band. Dan Lucarini, a former contemporary praise leader who led two churches from a sacred to a contemporary stance, warns about rock drums in his book *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian*

Music Movement: Confessions of a Former Worship Leader. Lucarini describes how he led churches incrementally away from the traditional stance. Lucarini associates the drum set with the final stage in this process:

“When the drum set finally appeared on the platform, I believe the church reached the steepest and most dangerous part of the slope. More than any other instrument, a drum set is the key instrument of contemporary music styles” (*Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement*, p. 121).

We have already seen in this book that the rock backbeat is sexual in nature. This is what unsaved rockers have testified. See the chapter “Why We Are Opposed to CCM.”

Therefore we are opposed to drums when they are used in a rock & roll fashion to pound out the sensual backbeat and in a manner that dominates the music rather than merely supports it.

We are also opposed to drums when they are used to produce rhythms that are associated with the demonic.

Not only is the drum an instrument that is at the heart of the rock & roll backbeat in modern society, but it is also intimately associated with the demonic.

One of the greatest experts in drums has testified that they have the power to alter consciousness and to carry people into spirit worlds. Mickey Hart, drummer for the Grateful Dead, has traveled the world researching the power of drums. In *Drumming at the Edge of Magic*, he says:

“Everywhere you look on the planet people are USING DRUMS TO ALTER CONSCIOUSNESS. . . . I’ve discovered, along with many others, the extraordinary power of music, particularly percussion, to influence the human mind and body. . . . There have been many times when I’VE FELT AS IF THE DRUM HAS CARRIED ME TO AN OPEN DOOR INTO ANOTHER WORLD.”

Mickey Hart is not a professing Christian, but his observation that certain types of rhythm produced by drums can alter consciousness and carry people into other worlds is a loud warning to believers who understand the danger of the demonic.

The Bible tells us that there are two spirit worlds: that of God and that of the devil. These worlds are not equal and their power is not equal, but both worlds are real, and the reality of the demonic world is something that every Christian must learn to deal with.

The Bible calls the devil “the prince of the power of the air” and warns that this fallen angel “now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). The Bible speaks of “rulers of the darkness of this world” and “spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12).

Pearl Primus, an expert on voodoo, says:

“THE DRUMMERS KEEP UP A TERRIFIC THROB AND BEAT WHICH VERY EASILY TAKES POSSESSION OF THE SENSIBILITIES OF THE WORSHIPPERS. Observers say that THESE DRUMS THEMSELVES ARE ABLE TO BRING A PERSON TO A PLACE WHERE IT IS EASY FOR THE DEITY (LOA) TO TAKE POSSESSION of their bodies--the defenseless person is buffeted by each stroke as the drummer sets out to ‘beat the loa’ (god) into his head: The person cringes with each large (accented) beat as if the drum mallet descended upon his very skull; he ricochets about the place, clutching blindly at the arms extended to support him” (Pearl Primus, lecture, Mount Holyoke College, Holyoke, Massachusetts, Mary E. Wooley Hall, 1953; cited from Leonard J. Seidel, *Face the Music: Contemporary Church Music on Trial*, 1988, pp. 43-42).

The association between rock & roll and voodoo has been observed by unsaved rock musicians. The British rock session drummer, Rocki (Kwasi Dzidzornu), who has recorded with

many famous groups such as the Rolling Stones, Spooky Tooth, and Ginger Baker, understood that the music of Jimi Hendrix was akin to voodoo. Note the following amazing statement from Hendrix's biography:

“He [Hendrix] had gotten a chance to see Rocki and some other African musicians on the London scene. He found it a pleasure to play rhythms against their polyrhythms. They would totally get outside, into another kind of space that he had seldom been in before. ... ROCKI'S FATHER WAS A VOODOO PRIEST AND THE CHIEF DRUMMER OF A VILLAGE IN GHANA, West Africa. Rocki's real name was Kwasi Dzidzornu. ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS ROCKI ASKED JIMI WAS WHERE HE GOT THAT VOODOO RHYTHM FROM. When Jimi demurred, Rocki went on to explain in his halting English that MANY OF THE SIGNATURE RHYTHMS JIMI PLAYED ON GUITAR WERE VERY OFTEN THE SAME RHYTHMS THAT HIS FATHER PLAYED IN VOODOO CEREMONIES. The way Jimi danced to the rhythms of his playing reminded Rocki of the ceremonial dances to the rhythms his father played to Oxun, the god of thunder and lightning. The ceremony is called voodooshi. As a child in the village, Rocki would carve wooden representatives of the gods. They also represented his ancestors. These were the gods they worshiped. They would jam a lot in Jimi's house. One time they were jamming and Jimi stopped and asked Rocki point-blank, 'You communicate with God, do you?' Rocki said, 'Yes, I communicate with God'" (David Henderson, *Scuse Me While I Kiss the Sky*, pp. 250, 251).

There are proponents of “Christian rock” music who claim that it is “racist” to say there is an association between voodoo and African jungle music and rock & roll, but there is nothing racist about it. In Jimi Hendrix's biography (which is

NOT written by a Christian), we see that the non-Christian son of a voodoo priest saw a direct connection between the music of rock and roll and that of idolatrous voodoo. Is the black rock drummer Rocki a racist for making such an observation about the music of a black rock and roller? His remarks cannot be dismissed conveniently as the ranting of a “white fundamentalist”!

Consider some other testimonies by secular authorities about the intimate association between drums and voodoo and magic. These examples are from *Bible Guidelines for Music* by Terry Watkins:

“[Drums] represents the beat of the heart and is played to summon up magic powers” (Miranda Bruce-Mitford, *The Illustrated Book of Signs & Symbols*, DK Publishing, 1996 p. 80).

“The shaman was the original ‘long hair’, the first rock star draped in leather, dancing possessed to a rhythm banged out on a DRUM. ... To these people, COMMUNICATION WITH THE GODS WAS SYNONYMOUS WITH DRUMS ... the body can become the conduit for a deity, a deity not necessarily the same sex as the worshiper, and DRUMS ARE THE CATALYST FOR THE WHOLE PROCESS. The trance of the RHYTHM then begets the hysteria, which begets what Westerners simplistically call ‘possession’” (Danny Sugerman, *Appetite for Destruction*, p. 208, 181).

“In Siberia, in northern Asia, drums are used in shamanic rituals to heal people. It is believed that THE SHAMAN CAN COMMUNICATE WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD THROUGH DRUMMING” (Louise Tythacott, *Musical Instruments*, Thomas Learning, 1995, p. 37).

“TODAY’S DRUMMER DIFFERS BUT LITTLE FROM THE SHAMAN IN HIS INCESSANT BEATING OUT OF A RHYTHM, AND LIKEWISE

OFTEN ENTERS INTO A FORM OF TRANCE WHILE PERFORMING” (David Tame, *The Secret Power of Music*, p. 199).

Here’s what Robert Palmer, a secular authority on rock music, says about rock and the drum:

“The idea that certain RHYTHM patterns or sequences serve as CONDUITS FOR SPIRITUAL ENERGIES, linking individual human consciousness with the gods, is basic to traditional African religions, and to African-derived religions throughout the Americas. And whether we’re speaking historically or musicologically, the fundamental riffs, licks, bass figures, and drum rhythms that make rock and roll can ultimately be traced back to African music of a primarily spiritual or ritual nature. In a sense, ROCK AND ROLL IS A KIND OF ‘VOODOO’” (Palmer, *Rock & Roll, An Unruly History*, Harmony Books, New York, 1995, p. 53)

Palmer describes how drums are used in “voodoo” possession.

“Bata drummers tap out their toques, or rhythm patterns, like SIGNALS TO THE REALM OF THE GODS, inviting and enticing them to come on down and mount or POSSESS their horses, or devotees. ... THE SPECIFIC DRUM PATTERNS OR TOQUES INCLUDE SOME RIFFS AND LICKS BASIC TO THE ROCK AND ROLL vocabulary” (Palmer, *Rock & Roll An Unruly History*, p. 62).

The same drum rhythms that Robert Palmer describes as “signals to the realm of the gods” form the basic foundation of rock ‘n’ roll and Contemporary Christian Music!

The occult magazine *New Age Journal* also describes the “possessing” power of drums.

“I remembered a conversation I’d once had in Cuba with a reporter from *The New York Times*, ‘Stay away from those drums,’ he had told me, referring to the

ones said to call down the gods in Santeria's sacred ceremonies. 'If I ever really gave in to those DRUMS, my life would change in ways I'm not prepared to take on,' he had added. I knew what he was talking about. IT WAS ALL THERE IN THE DRUMMING. LISTEN LONG ENOUGH, AND SOME ENERGY FIELD, SOME KIND OF INTERCONNECTEDNESS, BECAME PALPABLE. I was hungry for those drums. Yet I still ran from them" (Elizabeth Hanly, "A Shaman's Story, A Vodoun priest leads the author on a journey of understanding," *New Age Journal*, March/April 1997 pp. 56-57).

When the first black slaves from Africa were converted to Christianity in America, they knew the evil power and influence of DRUMS because of their background. And the converted blacks forbade the use of drums! They referred to them as "the devil's drum" (Martha Bayles, *Hole in Our Soul: The Loss of Beauty and Meaning in American Popular Music*, p. 138).

A secular authority on American music, says, "Historically blacks had drawn the line between particular instruments and practices; they permitted tambourines, for instance, but NOT DRUMS" (Bayles, *Hole in Our Soul*, p. 130).

Thus, it is not the drum itself to which we are opposed; it is the use of the drum in a manner that is associated with the sensual and the demonic.

22. What is wrong with "soft rock"?

First, the message of "soft rock" is often as immoral as that of hard rock.

From its earliest days, free sex has been one of the themes that has permeated all of rock music, soft, hard, pop, metal, you name it. It promotes sensual, lustful relationships that are not grounded in marriage. The "love" that is the theme of so much of rock music, is not love at all by God's standards; it is lust. It is very dangerous to allow one's mind to dwell on such things. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or

covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:3).

Second, even soft rock uses sensual “sexy rhythms” that appeal to the flesh.

Dr. David Elkind, Chairman, Department of Child Study, Tufts University, warned, “There is a great deal of powerful sexual stimulation in the rhythm of rock music.”

Certain kinds of rhythms produce certain effects on people. In his history of music in Memphis, Tennessee, author Larry Nager observed that “...the forbidden pleasures of Beale Street had always come wrapped in the PULSING RHYTHMS of the blues” (Larry Nager, *Memphis Beat*).

He is describing the backbeat that is the basic element of rock & roll. The part of Beale Street near the river was infamous for its bars, gambling dens, and houses of prostitution. Those were the “forbidden pleasures.” It is not an accident that those wicked activities were accompanied by certain types of pulsing rhythms. And those old blues and boogie woogie and jazz rhythms were not always loud and boisterous. Like rock music, there were soft blues as well as hard.

Famous bluesman Robert Johnson knew that his guitar music had a licentious affect on women. He said, “This sound [the blues] affected most women in a way that I could never understand.”

B.B. King, one of the most famous of the bluesmen, made the same observation in his autobiography: “The women reacted with their bodies flowing to a rhythm coming out of my guitar...” (B.B. King, *Blues All Around Me*).

These musicians observed that certain rhythms are sexy, and this is true whether the rock rhythm is soft or hard.

This is a loud warning to those who have ears to hear.

“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” (Gal. 5:17).

Third, by listening to soft rock, one develops an appetite for pop music.

Rock rhythm is addictive regardless of how “soft” it is.

Like all appetites, this one is never content. The rock beat, beat anticipation, and other forms of syncopated dance rhythms are intoxicating and addicting.

Many Independent Baptist churches are adapting CCM. They are trying to take the “rock” out of Christian rock and tone it down to make it acceptable for a fundamentalist type church.

Typically what they do, though, is exchange the hard rock for soft. They end up dabbling with soft rock. Since the music isn’t loud and doesn’t have a bass guitar, drum-driven thump, everyone is satisfied that the church isn’t going contemporary.

But the rock is still there. It’s just more subtle.

That is why it is important for churches to listen to someone like Pastor Graham West, who has a background in writing and producing pop music and who understands the essence of rock as well as anyone I know. His series on *The Rhythm of Rock* is available as a download from the catalog at the Way of Life web site.

I greatly appreciate the wisdom God has given Pastor West about music, and he can help IFB churches if they will listen.

Graham West warns about beat anticipation, which is used widely in IFB churches that are “adapting” CCM. It is a subtle form of syncopation that produces a sensual swing effect, and it is at the heart of modern pop music.

(Pastor West explains that syncopation in itself is not necessarily wrong, if used in moderation, but as another music expert said, in pop music, syncopation is “a fundamental constant presence.”)

There are many aspects of rock syncopation that create its danceability. Pop music uses syncopation to create a jerky, dancy feel. The music skips, stutters, pulsates. John Makujina in *Measuring the Music* says, “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.”

The essence of rock is much more than a heavy back beat. In the video series *Music for Good and Evil*, I deal with six types of pop syncopation: the back beat, the silent beat, the staccato beat, the swing eighth, the break beat, and beat anticipation. *The Rhythm Bible* lists over 1,000 types of rhythmic styles that are used in pop music.

Pastor West warns that when beat anticipation and other forms of swing rhythm or pop syncopation are introduced to a church, even in the softest forms, the people become addicted to it and crave for more, just like a drug addict.

Sensual music is that powerful. As Steven Tyler of Aerosmith says, “Rock music is the strongest drug in the world.”

Pastor West says:

“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 wars 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 Rhythm of Rock*).

Dan Lucarini, a former contemporary worship leader, also explains how that the slide toward CCM begins with soft rock. In the excellent book *Why I Left the Contemporary Christian Music Movement*, he explains how that he led churches from a sacred music position to a contemporary position, and it was all about incrementalism. He did it in gradual steps, the first being the adaption of soft rock. He says, “Contemporary always prevailed over Traditional, because it fed the sinful desire of our flesh.”

I am convinced that IB churches that have committed themselves to the soft rock slope will eventually be led to full-blown CCM, if not in the church services themselves, then in

the private lives of the people, if not under the watch of the present administration, then under the next generation.

Fourth, soft rock is a dangerous bridge to the things of the world that permeate rock and roll.

“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).

Fifth, the listener has to sort through the huge amount of garbage in soft rock music to find a few relatively innocent songs.

Is this a safe and wise use of this short earthly life?

“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” (Eph. 5:15-17).

Steve Peters, who does not believe all rock & roll is wrong for Christians, nevertheless makes the following important admission:

“Just about the time I think I’ve found a good-clean-acceptable secular musician, they blow it on their next album or tour. And if I have recommended them, suddenly I find myself scrambling to tell thousands of teens who know--I WAS WRONG” (*The Truth about Rock*, p. 90).

We would remind Mr. Peters that he will never undo the damage he has caused by recommending secular rock even hesitatingly and tentatively. The thousands of teens he describes are not hanging onto his every word! Such recommendations by Christian authority figures are a bright

green light to young people that it is alright to explore the filthy world of rock. VERY few of them will be as cautious about what they listen to as Mr. Peters says he is.

Sixth, we must be concerned about our influence on others.

If I listen to “soft rock,” it is possible and even probable that my influence will encourage others to listen to music that is worse. If a parent, for example, listens to “soft rock,” how can he or she consistently and effectually warn young people about the dangers of rock music in general?

“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth. . . . Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God” (1 Cor. 10:23, 24, 31).

“It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak” (Rom. 14:21).

23. Why would the devil sing about Jesus Christ and the things of God?

Religion has always been one of the devil’s favorite tools. Since the days of the apostles, the devil has used thousands of preachers who use the Bible and preach about God and Jesus. See the warnings in Matthew 7:15-23; 2 Corinthians 11:1-10; 1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:18-19.

The Lord Jesus Christ warned that the end time would be characterized by the multiplicity of false teachers (Matthew 24:11, 24).

The devil doesn’t create anything new. He simply takes the things of God and the things of Christ and twists them and changes them. The devil uses false religion to confuse people and to draw them away from the truth.

This is precisely what he is doing with Christian rock music. Through it, people are being drawn away from sound Bible doctrine to the ecumenical movement and all of its attendant errors.

In Acts 16 we have an example of how the devil will use the name of Jesus and will even preach the truth for his own perverted purposes. A demon-possessed girl followed Paul and his co-workers for many days crying: “These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:16-17).

Everything the girl said under the power of the demonic influence was true, but the Bible says Paul was grieved with this and he cast out the demon and stopped her witness.

The truth given in a context of demonic delusion does not glorify God but results in confusion. If Paul had not stopped the girl, the people would have thought that her idolatrous, demonic religion was also true and safe to follow.

The same is true for Christian rock music. Since multitudes of pastors are allowing the use of rock music in the service of Jesus Christ and are not warning about it, this generation is growing up with the idea that it is proper and safe to fellowship with the world and to enjoy the things of the world.

They have sown to the wind and will reap the whirlwind.

24. Didn't God create all music?

Rick Warren of Saddleback Church in California says:

“God loves all kinds of music because he invented it all--fast and slow, loud and soft, old and new. You probably don't like it all, but God does!” (Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 65).

The Bible tells us all we need to know about music. God did create music and He created man with a capacity to create and enjoy music, but the world is no longer in the pristine spiritual condition it was when God made it.

Man has sinned against God and has created a world in rebellion against Him and against His laws. The devil is called “the god of this world” (2 Cor. 11:4) and “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2).

Music is one of the powerful influences in modern society, and there can be no doubt that the god of this world is intimately involved in helping wicked men create music that will satisfy their illicit lusts and draw men’s hearts away from the truth.

The first makers of musical instruments were the sons of God-hating Cain, the murderer of the first prophet Abel (Genesis 4:17-21). We can be sure that they did not use those instruments to glorify God.

The apostle John taught, “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 Jn. 5:19).

If the whole world lieth in wickedness, what does that say about the world’s music? Obviously man’s wickedness has corrupted the field of music as it has every other field.

25. Aren’t Christians supposed to seek unity rather than division?

John 17:21 is one of the favorite Bible verses of the ecumenical movement, used by everyone from Billy Graham to the Pope:

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

It is commonly claimed that the unity for which Christ prayed is an ecumenical unity of professing Christians that plays down biblical doctrine (since doctrine divides), but the words and context of John 17 destroy this myth.

In John 17 the Lord emphasizes that the unity He desires is one based on supernatural salvation and obedience to revealed truth. It is not a unity of nominal Christians and

regenerate, of truth with error. It is not a “unity in diversity” that ignores doctrinal differences for the sake of a broad tent.

The unity of John 17 is a supernatural, God-created unity

“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are” (John 17:11).

There is nothing in Christ’s prayer to indicate that men are to do something to create the unity for which He prayed. *John 17 is a prayer addressed to God the Father, not a commandment addressed to men.* It is not something man needs to do; it is something God has already done.

Christ’s prayer was answered 2,000 years ago. It is a *spiritual reality* that is created by God among genuine believers who are committed to the Scriptures, not a *possibility* which must be organized by man.

Each born again child of God is adopted into the family of God and is a part of Christ’s kingdom.

In contrast, the ecumenical movement, even its most “evangelical” aspect, is often careless about the gospel and salvation. I have attended many ecumenical conferences with press credentials and have asked attendees, “When were you born again?” and more often than not I get an unscriptural answer. I get answers from people who are trusting in their good works or their baptism or their church membership or a “sinner’s prayer” or their mystical charismatic experiences or the fact that they “have always been a Christian.”

In my research in preparation for writing the book *What Is the Emerging Church?* in 2008, I read dozens of testimonies by emerging leaders, and most of them were unscriptural. (For documentation, see *What Is the Emerging Church?* chapter 3, “No Clear Testimony of Salvation,” available from www.wayoflife.org.)

Prominent evangelical leaders such as Rick Warren preach a shallow “gospel” that is not the gospel we find in Scripture.

(See the free eBook *Purpose Driven or Scripture Driven*, www.wayoflife.org.)

Any unity that is a unity among those who aren't clear on the gospel and haven't experienced supernatural salvation is not the unity that Jesus was praying for in John 17.

The unity of John 17 is a unity in truth.

“I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world .. THEY HAVE KEPT THY WORD. ... I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and THEY HAVE RECEIVED THEM ... I HAVE GIVEN THEM THY WORD ... SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH; THY WORD IS TRUTH ... SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE TRUTH ...” (John 17:6, 8, 14, 17, 19).

Christ emphasized that He was praying for those that love and obey the Word of God.

This is not a prayer that envisions the modern ecumenical crowd that downplays and ignores the Word of God for the sake of a broad, lowest-common-denominator unity. It is not a prayer for a judge-not philosophy and a wrong-headed principle of reducing “essential” doctrine to a short list of “fundamentals,” while downplaying the so-called “non-essentials” of God’s Word for the sake of peace and unity.

In conclusion, Christ’s high priestly prayer in John 17 offers no support for the modern ecumenical movement.

26. Christians aren't supposed to judge, are they?

The doctrine of non-judgmentalism permeates Contemporary Christian Music, but it is wrong to make a blanket statement that Christians are not supposed to judge. The Bible forbids certain types of judging and commends other types.

The Lord Jesus forbade hypocritical judging in Matthew 7:1-5, but in the same sermon He commended judging false teachers in Matthew 7:15.

Romans 14:4-5 condemns judging in matters of Christian liberty such as in diet and the keeping of holy days.

But in 1 Corinthians 14:29, God's people are commanded to judge preaching, and in Ephesians 5:11, Christians are commanded to reprove the works of darkness. That involves judging which things are the works of darkness and which are not.

Paul judged Peter to be a hypocrite and reprovved him publicly (Gal. 2:11-14).

Paul judged the sin at the church of Corinth (1 Cor. 5:3).

Paul said Christians will judge the world and angels and should therefore judge things in the church (1 Cor. 6:1-5).

Paul even taught that genuine Christian love involves judgment. "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment" (Phil. 1:9).

Further, Paul taught that "he that is spiritual judgeth all things" (1 Cor. 2:16). The spiritual man does not judge by his own thinking but by the Word of God.

27. Love is more important than music and doctrine, isn't it?

When Bible-believing Christians take the Word of God today and measure leaders, churches, denominations, and movements by it, they are invariably charged with a lack of love. A woman wrote to me and said:

"You preach separatism from heresy. WHAT ABOUT LOVE? ... The lost will never be reached through SUCH HATRED" (Letter from a reader, May 1997).

A graduate of an IFB college recently wrote along the same line:

"Last I checked, the Lord Jesus Christ was more concerned about our love than He was about our music or anything else"

To this generation, the “negative” aspects of “fundamentalist” Christianity are unloving. To carefully test things by the Bible is a lack of compassion. To mark and avoid false teachers is hateful. To warn of false gospels and to discipline heretics and to separate from error is mean-spirited.

A few years ago, evangelist Jack Van Impe, a former fundamentalist, rejected biblical separatism and adopted the ecumenical philosophy. He immediately began contrasting biblical discernment and separation with love, as follows:

“Let’s forget our labels and come together in love, and the pope has called for that. I had 400 verses on love. Till I die I will proclaim nothing but love for all my brothers and sisters in Christ, my Catholic brothers and sisters, Protestant brothers and sisters, Christian Reformed, Lutherans, I don’t care what label you are. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.”

This is the popular view of love: love doesn’t judge, isn’t critical, doesn’t separate. But it is a false and dangerous position.

If we define love by the Bible itself, we find that it is never set in contrast to godly judgment and holiness and a zeal for the truth.

John said that godly love purifies the saints and keeps God’s commandments (1 John 3:1-3; 5:1-3).

This is true Christian love, not the feel-good, rock & roll-driven mysticism of the contemporary movement that preaches world-loving license and broadminded tolerance.

The contemporary crowd is confused about the definition of love.

Love is essential, of course. God is love, and the Bible says that without love “I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

What is love, though?

To human thinking, “love” is a tender feeling, a romantic sentiment. This generation speaks of “falling in love” and “falling out of love.” This refers to an emotion.

To this generation, “love” is broadminded acceptance and non-judgmental tolerance.

This is not what the Bible says about love. Consider the following Scriptures:

“Jesus answered and said unto him, IF A MAN LOVE ME, HE WILL KEEP MY WORDS: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

“And this I pray, that your LOVE MAY ABOUND YET MORE AND MORE IN KNOWLEDGE AND IN ALL JUDGMENT; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ” (Philippians 1:9-10).

“For THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

“And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which WE COMMAND YOU. And the Lord direct your hearts into THE LOVE OF GOD, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now WE COMMAND YOU, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (2 Th. 3:4-6).

Biblical love is obedience to God and His Word. We see in 2 Thessalonians 3 that the love of God is sandwiched between two verses that emphasize obedience to God’s commandments, including separation from disobedient brethren!

Love is not a warm fuzzy feeling. Christian love is not an emotion, though emotion is closely associated with it.

Feelings of love come and go in this present life, but the action of biblical love can be steadfast. For a woman to love her husband means she submits to him and serves him according to the Bible *as unto the Lord*. For a man to love his wife means he treats her in the way the Bible commands.

The emotion of love is important, but it is a very secondary thing, and true love is not dependent on an emotion.

Biblical love is spiritually and doctrinally vigilant. It is based on knowledge and judgment from God's Word. It proves all things and approves only those things that reflect the will of God.

Was the Lord Jesus Christ unloving when He drove the moneychangers from the temple with a whip (John 2:15-17), or when He looked on the people "with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts" (Mk. 3:5), or when he called the Pharisees a "generation of vipers" (Mat. 23:33), or when he addressed Peter as Satan (Matt. 16:23), or when He instructed His disciples not to give holy things unto "dogs" and "swine" (Mat. 7:6), or when He called His own disciples "fools and slow of heart to believe" (Luke 24:25), or when He said that He hates the deeds and doctrines of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6; 15)?

Was the apostle Paul unloving when he rebuked Peter publicly for his compromise (Galatians 1)? Or when he named the names of false teachers and compromisers such as Hymenaeus and Alexander ten different times in the Pastoral Epistles? Was the apostle Paul unloving when he forbade women to teach or to usurp authority over men in 1 Timothy 2:12?

Of course not! And neither are preachers today unloving when they follow in these godly footsteps.

God's Word equates godly love with the willingness to reprove and discipline. Jesus said to the churches, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19).

Biblical love does not mean that I ignore things that are wrong and things that are spiritually and morally injurious.

So the contemporary crowd is very confused about the definition of biblical love.

The contemporary crowd is also confused about the direction of love.

The first direction of love must be toward God.

When discussing these matters, the contemporary crowd talks much about love of man, but what about the love of God? According to the Lord Jesus Christ, what is the greatest commandment?

“Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Mat. 22:35-39).

The first and great commandment is not to love one’s neighbor. The first and great commandment is to love God with all the heart, soul, and mind. My first passion must be to please God.

The contemporary crowd points a finger at the Bible-believing “fundamentalist” and charges him with a lack of love toward men because he exercises judgment and discipline and separation.

What, though, about love for God and His Word?

The ecumenist tells me that I need to love all the denominations regardless of doctrine. I reply that I need to love God and His Truth first, and that means that I will obey the Bible, and that means I will measure, mark, and avoid those who are committed to doctrinal error.

A genuine love for God requires that I care more about God's Word and God's will than about men and their feelings and opinions and programs.

We agree with Charles Haddon Spurgeon when he said:

“On all hands we hear cries for unity in this, and unity in that; but to our mind the main need of this age is not compromise, but conscientiousness. ‘First pure, then peaceable.’ It is easy to cry ‘a confederacy,’ but that union which is not based upon the truth of God is rather a conspiracy than a communion. Charity by all means; but honesty also. Love, of course, but love to God as well as love to men, and love of truth as well as love of union. It is exceedingly difficult in these times to preserve one's fidelity before God and one's fraternity among men. Should not the former be preferred to the latter if both cannot be maintained? We think so” (Spurgeon, “The Down Grade - Second Article,” *The Sword and the Trowel*, April 1887, Notes, p. 16).

The direction of love not only must be toward God but it must also be toward those who are in spiritual danger.

The contemporary crowd tells me that I need to love the Roman Catholic, the emergent, etc., but they are largely silent on the subject of love for those who are deceived by these people.

We are charged with being unloving, for example, when we expose the fact that the late Pope John Paul II or Mother Teresa promoted a false sacramental gospel and venerated Mary as the Queen of Heaven. But the fact is that we love people enough to warn of false gospels so they will not be end up in eternal hell.

In about 1980 my wife and I had a discussion with a Catholic nun who worked with the Sisters of Charity, the organization founded by Mother Teresa. She said she “loved Jesus” and doubtless was a very earnest, religious, self-sacrificing person, but she believed that Jesus is the

consecrated wafer of the mass, that Mary was assisting in her salvation, and that even Hindus who pray to their gods sincerely will go to heaven.

The Christian rock approach would be to accept this nun's "love for Jesus" as genuine and not to analyze her beliefs very carefully and certainly not to criticize them. The CCM approach, in fact, would be to join this nun in worshipping God with praise songs.

But that's not true biblical love. It's not love for God who has given His Word and demanded that we obey and honor it, and it is not love for the nun herself, who according to the Bible worships a false christ and follows a false gospel that will lead to hell (Galatians 1:6-9).

To love a false teacher does not mean that I turn a blind eye to his error and seek to maintain unity with him regardless of his doctrine. It means that I obey the Bible and mark and avoid him (Romans 16:17), that I expose his error publicly to protect those who might be led astray by his teaching.

A shepherd who loves wolves more than the sheep is a confused and harmful shepherd.

In conclusion, we quote from the words of James Henley Thornwell, a staunch Old School Presbyterian preacher who fought against theological modernism in the 19th century. He was the sixth president of South Carolina College (today the University of South Carolina). He was weary with the compromising evangelicals of his day, who said they loved the truth but were soft in their stance for the truth and refused to withstand heresy boldly.

Note his powerful words and his correct understanding of biblical love:

"To employ soft words and honeyed phrases in discussing questions of everlasting importance; to deal with errors that strike at the foundations of all human hope as if they were harmless and venial mistakes; to bless where God disapproves, and to make apologies

where He calls us to stand up like men and assert, though it may be the aptest method of securing popular applause in a sophisticated age, is cruelty to man and treachery to Heaven. Those who on such subjects attach more importance to the rules of courtesy than they do to the measures of truth do not defend the citadel, but betray it into the hands of its enemies. Love for Christ, and for the souls for whom He died, will be the exact measure of our zeal in exposing the dangers by which men's souls are ensnared" (quoted in a sermon by George Sayles Bishop, author of *The Doctrines of Grace and Kindred Themes*).

28. Won't you be shocked to see CCM lovers in heaven?

Many have written to challenge me with something along the lines of the following:

"You spend your time warning about this Christian and that Christian; don't you realize that we will all be together in heaven? Why can't we then get along on earth?"

The simple answer to this is that we will be perfected in heaven, but that is not true at the present time. In heaven there will be no false teaching or worldliness or spiritual compromise. There will be nothing to reprove.

That will be the sweet by and by, but in the mean time we live in the nasty here and now.

And in the nasty here and now, God has commanded us to earnestly contend for the faith and to reprove the works of darkness and to separate from error and to do many other things that we won't be doing in heaven.

As for who will be in heaven, every individual who repents and trusts in the true gospel and receives the true Christ as Lord and Saviour will be there by God's free gift of grace, and we thank God for it.

I will not be shocked to find people there that I have warned about in this life. I believe there are many saved people involved in the Contemporary Christian Music movement.

When we get to heaven, believers will have unity, because God will straighten us out! But in this present life we *must* judge one another's teaching and practice by God's Word and let the chips fall where they may, even to the point of separation (Romans 16:17).

If we don't do this we are disobedient to God's clear commands.

29. Since God looks on the heart, why are you concerned about the externals?

It is true that God looks on the heart, but the same passage of Scripture also reminds us that man looks on the outward appearance.

“But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7).

The Christian must be concerned about how his appearance influences others.

Further, God's Word has something to say about man's dress and appearance. When Adam and Eve sinned, one of the first things God did was clothe them properly (Gen. 3:21). He put coats on them. Before Adam sinned, his mind was pure and nakedness was not a moral problem, but after he sinned men's minds became impure, and in this sinful world steps must be taken to avoid sinful temptations.

The Lord Jesus warned, “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Mat. 5:28). The Bible forbids a man or woman to look upon the

nakedness of someone other than one's own wife or husband (Leviticus 18, 20).

Therefore, it is wrong before God to dress in such a manner that our bodies are displayed to the view of others or in such a manner that others would be tempted to lust. The Bible identifies nakedness even as the revealing of the thigh of the leg (Isaiah 47:2, 3).

A person can be right in his external appearance and not be right with God in his heart, but when a person is right with God internally he or she will be concerned about dressing modestly and not causing others to stumble.

Paul taught that modesty is first an issue of the heart. It is an issue of a shamefaced, sober spirit that reveals itself in one's dress.

“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; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works” (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

30. Isn't Christianity all about grace and doesn't grace mean that in questionable things we should come down on the side of the path of greater liberty?

A Bible college student wrote as follows:

“Another thing that is taught is that if there is a doubt or question concerning practice, standards, or anything else, that because we are under grace, we should choose the broader path, otherwise we are still acting under yoke of bondage” (Northland University student).

Grace is certainly at the heart and soul of biblical Christianity. The true gospel is called “the grace of Christ” (Galatians 1:6). The grace of God, though, does not lead to “the broader path.”

This has long been a New Evangelical principle. Consider the following statement by Charles Swindoll:

“There was a time ... when I had a position that life was so rigid I would fight for every jot and tittle. I mean, I couldn’t list enough things that I’d die for. The older I get, the shorter that list gets, frankly. ... More than ever we need grace-awakened ministers who free rather than bind” (*Grace Awakening*).

Calvary Contender editor Jerry Huffman observed that Swindoll’s book leaves “the impression that rules or restrictions upon the believer steal from him the exuberance and joy of the Christian life and relegate him to a morbid and dreary existence.”

In the aforementioned book, Swindoll implies that those who strive for strict moral purity are legalists who need to learn grace. He claims that it is legalistic to make prohibitions about movies, dress, music, dancing, etc.

This is precisely the philosophy that is permeating IFB churches and schools today, and messing around with Contemporary Christian Music is feeding this philosophy.

In reality, the grace that Swindoll describes is not biblical grace; it is a form of license.

Biblical grace teaches a form of Christian living that encompasses strict separation from every form of evil.

“For THE GRACE OF GOD that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, TEACHING US THAT, DENYING UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLY LUSTS, WE SHOULD LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY, AND GODLY, IN THIS PRESENT WORLD; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from ALL INIQUITY, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS” (Titus 2:11-14).

To live in such a manner requires the continual exercise of judgment and extreme caution pertaining to all forms of entertainment, etc.

The “grace” that is typically taught by Contemporary Christian Music performers is not biblical grace because it does not produce strict separation from worldliness. It does not produce “peculiar people”; it produces worldly-minded people.

We are to “have NO fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Ephesians 5:11). That is a very strict standard and a very narrow walk.

We are to keep the New Testament precepts “WITHOUT SPOT, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:14). A “spot” is a small thing, so Paul was teaching Timothy to pay attention to every detail of Scripture.

This is the “jot and tittle” type of strictness that the contemporary crowd rejects, and the contemporary attitude and philosophy is now permeating fundamental Baptist churches.

Further, a strict position is a safe position. The Bible repeatedly and emphatically warns about spiritual dangers, particularly in the context of the end times.

There are temptations and snares. The devil is wily and subtle and beguiling. He appears as an angel of light, and his ministers appear as ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11). There are seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. There will be a great falling away, a turning from sound doctrine to fables. There will be men who operate by cunning craftiness and that lie in wait to deceive.

We must therefore prove all things and try the spirits.

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24).

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3).

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:1-2).

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul” (1 Peter 2:11).

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

31. Shouldn't we reach the youth with their own music?

First, the lost are reached not through music but through the preaching of the gospel.

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21).

Nowhere in the New Testament do we see music used for evangelism.

Second, obedience to God does not allow us to use the world's music or methods.

Romans 12:2 forbids the Lord's people to be conformed to the world. God is never pleased with disobedience to His Word. The Bible says that the Christian race must be run according to the divine rule or there is no reward.

“And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully” (2 Tim. 2:5).

We have seen in Question #10 (“Isn't the Sincerity of the Musicians the Important Thing”) that even sincere disobedience is displeasing to God. When Uzzah steadied the cart holding the ark, God struck him dead (1 Sam. 6:6-7). It appears from the record that Uzzah was sincerely trying to assist in the service of God, but God did not accept it because it was not done according to His Word.

Third, the apostles did not use the entertainment of the world to reach the world.

Nowhere do we see Paul attracting people to his preaching through worldly means or through any sort of entertainment. The Word of God calls people to holiness, and it is wrong to use unholy things to draw people to a holy Christ.

Fourth, what you win people with, you win them to.

If people are won through worldly means, how could they ever be expected to separate from the world as the Word of God demands?

Those who are reached through New Evangelicalism, usually become New Evangelical. Those who are reached through a tainted gospel and unscriptural doctrine usually cleave to those things.

32. Isn't it Pharisaical to make rules and standards?

“Legalism” is a term frequently used to describe Bible-believing Christians who are zealous for pure doctrine and who desire to maintain holy standards of living in this wicked time.

This “free thinking” attitude was expressed at a “Christian” rock concert called Greenbelt '83:

“We don't believe in a fundamentalist approach. We don't set ground rules. Our teaching is non-directive. We want to encourage people to make their own choices.”

Those with this type of mindset mislabel the “old-fashioned” Bible Christian a “legalist” or a “Pharisee.”

But what is a Pharisee?

The Pharisee's error was not his love for the truth and his zeal for biblical righteousness. The Pharisee did not love the truth; he loved his own man-made tradition (Mt. 15:1-9). If the Pharisee had loved the truth, he would have loved Jesus Christ (Jn. 8:47)!

The Pharisee did not love God's righteousness; he loved his own self-righteousness (Lk. 18:9-14).

The Pharisee did not have a zeal for God; he had a zeal for his own false religion (Mt. 23:15).

The Pharisee did not preach salvation by grace; he preached salvation by the law.

The Pharisee did not believe in regeneration; he believed in mere external reformation (Lk. 11:59).

To call the fundamentalist Bible-believing Christian--a Christian who is saved by the grace of Jesus Christ and who knows that he is only an unworthy sinner with no self-righteousness and who loves the precious Word of God and wants to please God in all things--a Pharisee is a vicious slander.

And what is legalism?

True legalism has a two-fold definition:

First, legalism is to mix works with grace for salvation. This was the error of the Judaizers who were troubling the early churches, and this is the theme of the book of Galatians. Paul said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel" (Gal. 1:6). Anything added to the grace of Christ is a false gospel and is legalism.

Second, legalism is to exalt human tradition to the same authority as the Word of God.

The Pharisees committed both of these errors. They taught that the way of salvation was by keeping the law, and they made their human tradition authoritative over people's lives without a biblical basis. Of them Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat. 15:9).

For a Bible preacher to proclaim that God's saved-by-grace people are responsible to obey the details of the New Testament faith is not legalism; it is obedience to God. Jesus commanded in the Great Commission that those who believe are to be baptized and taught "to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Mat. 28:20). To be taught to obey all things in the New Testament faith will make you some sort of "fundamentalist"!

Strict obedience to God's Word is the way of liberty, not bondage.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him,
If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples

indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

33. Didn't Paul teach that the Christian has liberty?

Consider the following verses in their context:

1 Corinthians 6:12-13--“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.”

1 Corinthians 10:23-24--“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.”

These verses are frequently misused by those who desire liberty to fulfill their carnal desires, liberty to love the sensual pop culture. They would have us believe that the apostle Paul is saying that the Christian has liberty to wear immodest clothing, watch indecent movies, frolic on the beach half naked, listen to sensual rock music, and to fellowship with anyone who says that he “loves Jesus” regardless of his doctrinal beliefs, etc.

Is that what Paul meant by the statement “all things are lawful unto me”? By no means!

Obviously there are limitations on the Christian's liberty. The New Testament Scriptures, in fact, put great limits upon our liberty. We are not free to commit fornication (1 Cor. 6:16-18; 1 Thess. 4:3-6), nor to be involved in any sort of uncleanness (1 Thess. 4:7), nor to fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11), nor to be drunk with wine (Eph. 5:18), nor to allow any corrupt communication to proceed out of our mouths (Eph. 4:29), nor to allow any filthiness of the flesh or spirit (2 Cor. 7:1), nor to be involved in something that has even the appearance

of evil (1 Thess. 5:22), nor to love the things that are in the world (1 John 2:15-17), nor to befriend the world (James 4:4), nor to dress immodestly (1 Tim. 2:9), etc.

I have counted 88 specific rules that the believer is to obey in the book of Ephesians alone, and that is the book that says we are saved by grace and not by works!

What, then, did the apostle mean when he said all things are lawful? He meant that the Christian has been set free by the blood of Christ, free from the wages of sin which is eternal death, free from the condemnation of the law, free from the ceremonies of the Mosaic covenant, but not free to sin or to disobey the Bible or to do anything that is not expedient or edifying.

He explains himself clearly in the context of both passages.

In 1 Corinthians 6:12-13, Paul uses the example of eating meat. In 1 Corinthians 10:23-28, he uses the example of eating things that have been offered to idols.

In all such things, the Christian is free. There are no dietary restrictions for the New Testament Christian as there were under the Mosaic Law. We do not have to fear idols; we know they are nothing.

This is the type of thing Paul is referring to in 1 Corinthians 6 and 10, if we allow him to explain himself rather than attempt to put some strange modern meaning upon his words that would fill the Bible with contradiction.

Paul addresses the same thing in Romans 14. The Christian is free from laws about eating and keeping holy days (Rom. 14:2-6). We are not to judge one another in these matters or any other matter in which the New Testament is silent.

Obviously this does not mean that we cannot judge anything whatsoever and that we are free to do whatever we please. Such a philosophy is contrary to the entire tenor of the New Testament and is an appalling perversion of these passages.

FOUR TESTS FOR CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES

In the two passages we have cited in 1 Corinthians, Paul gives four tests to determine whether the Christian should allow a certain thing in his life: First, does it bring me under its power? Second, is it expedient? Third, does it edify? Fourth, does it help or hinder my fellow man, does it cause my fellow man to stumble?

These are tests that are to be applied, not to sinful things that already are forbidden in God's Word, but to things the Bible does not specifically address.

If these tests were to be applied to things commonly allowed in the world of "rock & roll Christianity," it would put a quick stop to many practices.

Rock music does bring people under its power because of its addictive nature; it does not spiritually edify; it is definitely influenced by demons (a study of the history of rock music will confirm this), and is not therefore expedient for the Christian who is instructed to be sober and vigilant against the wiles of the devil.

Rock appeals to the flesh, which the Christian is supposed to crucify.

Immodest clothing, such as shorts and bathing suits and short skirts and tight tops and jeans, does hinder our fellow man by putting before him a temptation in his thought life; it does not edify those who see us clothed in such a fashion; it does cause others to stumble.

Ecumenical relationships between those who believe sound New Testament doctrine and those who do not, does hinder my fellow man and cause him to stumble by confusing him about what is true and what is false Christianity and by giving him the impression that doctrine is not important. Such relationships are not edifying because they weaken the believer's spiritual discernment and zeal for contending for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

The Bible says we have liberty in Christ, liberty from eternal condemnation, liberty to serve Christ and to enjoy our unspeakably wonderful salvation in Christ, but we do not

have the liberty to sin. We do not have the liberty to do whatever we please. We do not have the liberty to do anything that is not expedient or edifying.

The apostle Paul had such a low view of “personal liberty” that he was willing to forego eating meat for the rest of his life if he thought that eating meat would harm his fellow man.

“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend” (1 Cor. 8:13).

Paul did not have the idea that he was in this world to live as he pleased and that if someone didn’t like it, he could “lump it”!

Paul’s attitude is in direct contrast to the view of Christian liberty that reigns in the world of CCM. Those who are consumed with their personal “liberty” will not forego even highly questionable things such as rock music for the sake of glorifying Christ and edifying their fellow man. When confronted with such things, they are puffed up and lash out against straw men such as “legalism” and “lack of love.” Instead of taking the reproof to heart, they attack the messenger.

34. Didn’t Paul say that he was made all things to all men?

In 1 Corinthians 9:22, Paul said, “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

If this were isolated from the rest of Scripture, one could assume that Paul was willing to do anything whatsoever to reach the lost, including adopting a pagan lifestyle. This is a doctrine that is popular among the “rock & roll Christian” crowd today.

However, when we compare Scripture with Scripture, we find that Paul did not mean this.

In 1 Corinthians 9:21, he says, “To them that are without law, as without law, (BEING NOT WITHOUT LAW TO GOD, BUT UNDER THE LAW TO CHRIST,) that I might gain them that are without law.”

Thus, he explains that he was always under the law to Christ and was never free to do anything contrary to the Scriptures.

For example, Paul would not have adopted long hair in order to reach the heathen, because Christ’s law says long hair on a man is shameful (1 Cor. 11:14). Paul would never have conformed in any way to the world, because Christ’s law forbids this (Rom. 12:2). He would never have allowed any of the Christian women working with him to dress immodestly, because Christ’s law forbids this (1 Tim. 2:9).

Further, a few verses farther along in the same passage Paul says, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27).

Thus, Paul was always strict in regard to what he allowed himself to do, and he would not have done anything spiritually careless or “borderline.”

In Galatians 5:13, Paul says, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

Thus, Paul’s liberty was not the liberty to serve the flesh in any way.

Paul taught that believers are to “abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thess. 5:22).

That is the strictest form of separation. Not only did Paul avoid every type of evil but even the very appearance of evil.

We agree with the following statement by Iain Murray:

“The Christian faith is rather at its strongest when its antagonism to unbelief is most definite, when its spirit is other-worldly, and when its whole trust is not ‘in the wisdom of men but in the power of God’ (1 Cor. 2:5)” (Murray, *Evangelicalism Divided*, 2000, p. 212).

35. Didn't David dance before the Lord?

David's dancing in 2 Samuel 6:15 and 1 Chronicles 15:29 is often used to justify contemporary worship.

There is even a song entitled "Undignified" that purports that since David (allegedly) was undignified that day and supposedly dancing in his "underwear," it is fine to do the herky-jerky to Christian rock. The lyrics go like this:

I will dance, I will sing, to be made for my king,
Nothing, Lord, is hindering the passion in my soul,
Some would say it's foolishness, but
I'll become even more undignified than this.

Former CCM worship leader Dan Lucarini describes the origin of this concept:

"Once upon a time, some young rock 'n' roll worship leaders were criticized by other Christians for 'undignified' behavior in public worship. It is very important to now remind the reader exactly what type of behavior was under fire. These young worship leaders were playing loud rock music and imitating the physical actions one would normally associate with a secular rock concert. They incited the 'worshippers' to act just like the crowd at a rock concert--wild, animalistic body movements, fist-pumping, body surfing and other actions not usually found in a church service.

"Rather than pausing to consider if their actions were offensive to others, or perhaps simply the result of youthful indiscretion, the young rockers searched the Bible to justify their behavior. In an astounding feat of circular reasoning, they found the story of David dancing before the ark, and adopted it as their battle cry against the traditionalists" (*It's Not about the Music*, p. 160).

There are three Scripture reasons to reject this.

First, David was not dancing a pagan style dance.

“And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you...” (Lev. 20:23).

“Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen...” (Jer. 10:2).

“And be not conformed to this world...” (Rom. 12:2).

We can be sure that David was not imitating some pagan dance style of his day. As Dan Lucarini says:

“David’s dancing was in the Jewish male tradition of leaping and whirling, springing about joyfully and skipping along with glee. ... He was most certainly not trying to shock the crowd with Philistine dance moves or edgy Hittite music” (*It’s Not about the Music*, pp. 161, 162).

God’s people are forbidden to conform to the world’s sensual ways, such as their dress fashions and sexy styles of dancing. Yet if you go to a “Christian rock” concert, the dress and dancing is exactly like the world’s.

Second, David was not in his underwear.

Though David’s wife Michal said that he was “uncovered” (2 Sam. 6:20), this does not mean he was wearing something skimpy. He was not in his “underwear.” Michal was referring to the fact that David was wearing a linen robe typically worn by priests instead of his royal apparel (1 Chron. 15:27). The robe was a long garment that reached to the feet. There was nothing indecent about what David was wearing.

Michal was not saying that David was half naked; she was complaining about his “unkingly” action in not wearing his royal robes and walking in stately decorum. She was a carnal woman who was concerned about her position in society.

Third, David was not being carried along by sensual music.

Contemporary worship is all about being carried along by music; the worshipers are moving to the music; their bodies move to the rock rhythm; but this is not what was happening with David.

Trumpets and cymbals and harps were playing (1 Chron 15:9), but there is no indication that David's dancing had anything to do with the music. He was dancing because he was rejoicing in the Lord's mercy and truth.

He wasn't trying to "experience God's presence in a tangible way." Contemporary worshipers are seeking a mystical experience, and this is why they use rock & roll. With its sensual dance syncopation, its unresolving chord sequences, its sensual vocal techniques, and its repetition, rock has the power to create the mystical experience sought by the contemporary worshiper, but this has nothing to do with what David was doing 3,000 years ago.

36. Why does Psalm 150:4 say we should praise God with dance?

"Praise him with timbrel and dance..." (Psalm 150:4).

Psalm 150 is not a command that every should Christian dance today, any more than Psalm 69 is a commandment for Christians to curse their enemies. Consider Psalm 69:27-28:

"Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."

Christians are not supposed to pray like this. See Luke 9:54-56.

Most of the things Israel did, in fact, we do not do today in the church age. This includes circumcision, sacrificial offerings, temple worship, dietary restrictions, sabbath laws, religious festivals, multiple tithing, and many other things.

We draw spiritual lessons from every part of the Old Testament, but we determine what part of the Old Testament

to keep by comparing it with the New Testament. The believer's way of life is found in the New Testament faith.

And there is no instance of dancing in the New Testament churches. Nowhere in the Gospels do we find Jesus dancing. There are no examples of the apostles dancing. There is not one example of dancing in the first churches. New Testament believers are commanded to sing spiritual songs, but we are not commanded to dance.

The dancing in the Old Testament was associated with God's kingdom (Psa. 149:3-5). When Jeremiah described God's New Covenant with Israel and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, he mentioned dancing two times:

“Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. ... Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow” (Jer. 31:4, 13).

The reason dancing is not mentioned in the New Testament churches is probably because this is the period of Christ's rejection and exile. The Bridegroom is away in a far country (Mat. 9:14-15).

At the Last Supper the Lord Jesus said, “But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom” (Mat. 26:29).

When the marriage of the Lamb comes, then will come the time to “be glad and rejoice” (Rev. 19:7). And I have no doubt that the joyful dancing referred to in Psalm 149 and 150 and Jeremiah 31 will begin then. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

When the kingdom of God comes again to this earth at the return of Christ, we will dance, but it will not be rock & roll dancing.

37. Why do you say that the Pentecostal-Charismatic movements are unscriptural?

An analysis of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement is beyond the scope of this book, but we have addressed the matter in detail in *The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements: The History and Error*, which is available from Way of Life Literature, www.wayoflife.org.

I will only say here that I was led to Christ by a godly, old-fashioned Pentecostal and it was through much Bible study and earnest prayer and heart searching that I rejected Pentecostal doctrine in my Christian life.

38. Aren't you hurting individuals and ministries by your position against CCM?

Petra's spokesman, Bob Hartman, complains that preaching against Christian rock music is hurtful:

“It hurts us when some senior pastor says to his youth leader, ‘Don't go to this concert.’ ... Not only does it deny the kids the opportunity and encouragement to go to the concert, but it hurts terribly our ability to minister. We experience a lot more skepticism” (Hartman, cited by Brian Newcomb, “Petra's Battle,” *CCM Magazine*, October 1987).

I can understand why a Christian rocker like Hartman would think like this, but I see it differently.

First, I would reply that as a preacher I have a responsibility to preach the Word.

It is not popular to preach against Contemporary Christian Music, even in many fundamentalist and independent Baptist circles today. I believe a man would have to be certifiably insane to preach against CCM unless he is convinced that God gave him the message.

I have prayed diligently about the matter of music and whether or not I should warn about CCM. I have examined this issue and re-examined it throughout the 40 years I have

been saved. I have a background in playing music. I also immersed myself in rock music for many years before I was saved. When I began an intense study into the subject of CCM in the 1990s, I did so, as far as I know, with an open mind to obey whatever the Lord showed me.

I was willing to re-evaluate my position against Christian rock, but my concerns were only strengthened and I am more convinced than ever that I must preach against CCM.

I understand how difficult it is to be the brunt of reproof and rebuke, but the preacher is responsible to preach his message regardless of what the hearers think.

Second, if I am right about Christian rock music and if it IS worldly and unacceptable to God, it is essential that people hear this message so they can have an opportunity to be warned about something which is hurtful to their spiritual well-being and also to the spiritual well-being of the churches.

Third, staying totally away from rock music has never hurt anyone spiritually, but loving it has definitely hurt people.

Even if preachers like me draw the line against rock music a little too sharply, those who heed our warning will not be hurt by avoiding rock music. It is like alcohol. No one ever became an alcoholic by avoiding alcoholic beverages, but many have been deeply injured by alcohol that thought they could handle it in moderation.

Can the Christian rocker promise that young people who are influenced by his music and example will not be drawn into the devil's snare through entanglement with rock and roll? Can he promise that the young people he draws to rock music will not go on to become addicted to ever more vile forms of rock? Can he promise that they will not be enticed by the licentious lifestyle and rebellious demeanor and philosophy of secular rock and roll?

39. What about the young people who are being saved through CCM?

Promoters of Christian rock music claim that many young people are saved through it. Hard rocking Mylon LeFevre claims that tens of thousands have signed decisions cards at his concerts:

“There are 52,000 people who have signed a little card that says, ‘Tonight, for the first time, I understand who Jesus is and how He does things, and I want Him to be my Lord’” (LeFevre, cited by John Styll, “Mylon LeFevre: The Solid Rocker,” *CCM Magazine*, March 1986).

This is an amazing statistic by any standard, especially in light of the fact that LeFevre admits that he did not get right with God until 1980 and the aforementioned statement was made in 1986.

Many other CCM performers claim that people are being saved through their ministries. The book *Soul 2 Soul* contains salvation testimonies from CCM groups such as 4 HIM and dc Talk. They say that people have been rescued from committing suicide through Christian rock.

I am thankful for every soul that is saved regardless of whether or not we agree in all matters with those instrumental in the conversion. I do believe that some CCM groups are genuinely concerned for the salvation of souls, and I do believe that some young people are saved in the context of Contemporary Christian Music.

Even if people are being saved through a ministry, though, it does not follow that the ministry is to be commended.

Many have been saved through Billy Graham’s ministry, including my own wife and mother-in-law, but this does not mean we should overlook the dangerous and unscriptural methodology of his ecumenical evangelism, that we should ignore how that he has turned tens of thousands of his

converts over to Roman Catholic and liberal Protestant churches.

Jehoshaphat was a godly king who did many things to glorify God in his life and ministry, but the prophet was instructed by God to rebuke him for his serious disobedience in yoking together with Ahab.

“And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD” (2 Chronicles 19:2).

The disobedience of Jehoshaphat is akin to that of evangelicals today (including contemporary Christian musicians) who refuse to practice biblical separation.

Just because a church or ministry pleases God in some things does not mean that God will not rebuke it for unfaithfulness in others.

The Lord’s admonitions to the seven churches of Asia in Revelation 2-3 illustrate this. Jesus did not overlook areas of disobedience even in the best of the churches, and it is the preachers that God uses to rebuke error today.

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2).

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee” (Titus 2:15).

Paul did not overlook Peter’s disobedience in a seeming insignificant matter of a “little hypocrisy,” but rather rebuked him publicly (Gal. 2:11-13).

I would also remind CCM defenders that God has told us *how* to do evangelism, and there is absolutely nothing in the Bible about entertainment evangelism. It is the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16), and the Bible says that God has chosen to save people through the foolishness of preaching (1 Cor. 1:21).

There is not one example in the New Testament of music evangelism.

When someone is saved in the context of Christian rock music, I don't believe they are saved *because of* Christian rock music but *in spite of* it.

Further, I have serious doubts about the statistics that are given of great numbers being saved through Christian rock music, and the following are the reasons for my doubts.

First, the decisions are suspect because of the message.

Salvation comes only through repentance and faith in Christ as presented in the one true gospel.

The following verses remind us that salvation comes through hearing and believing the right WORDS of the gospel:

“Who shall tell thee WORDS, WHEREBY THOU AND ALL THY HOUSE SHALL BE SAVED” (Acts 11:14).

“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but YE HAVE OBEYED FROM THE HEART THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE WHICH WAS DELIVERED YOU” (Romans 6:17).

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13).

“For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in THE WORD OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth” (Colossians 1:5-6).

A corrupt message of salvation does not produce biblical salvation. The one true gospel of Jesus Christ is summarized in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

The Bible warns that there are false gospels and false christ.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth ANOTHER JESUS, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive ANOTHER SPIRIT, which ye have not received, or ANOTHER GOSPEL, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him” (2 Corinthians 11:3-4).

The Galatians were sharply rebuked because they turned aside to a false gospel:

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto ANOTHER GOSPEL: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:6-7).

In light of these Bible warnings, we must ask some serious questions about the claims of Contemporary Christian Music. What gospel is being preached?

The answer is that the gospel is rarely clear and sound in the context of an ecumenical-charismatic CCM concert. There are exceptions, of course, but some men from within the CCM movement have admitted that this is generally true.

“One of my criticisms of those of us who use music in evangelism is the nature and content of the ‘gospel’ which is preached. ALL TOO OFTEN, A SUPERFICIAL KIND OF BELIEVISM IS OFFERED, along with promises of large helpings of love, joy and peace” (Graham Kendrick, CCM musician and

organizer for British rock festivals, *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 142).

“An analysis of the lyrics of MOST gospel songs indicates A VERY SUPERFICIAL VIEW OF SALVATION and of Christianity” (Garth Hewitt, CCM musician, *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 142).

Stan Moser was the head of Word Records and CEO of Star Song Records. He was a pioneering executive in CCM. He was responsible for signing Amy Grant. In 1995, after 26 years in the field of Contemporary Christian Music, he left it and expressed disgust with what it had become. Note his testimony about the doctrinal content of CCM:

“But to be candid, I look at THE MAJORITY OF THE MUSIC I HEAR TODAY AND THINK IT’S VIRTUALLY MEANINGLESS. ... I would probably be more inclined to call the industry ‘commercial Christian music,’ rather than ‘contemporary Christian music’” (Stan Moser, “We Have Created a Monster,” *Christianity Today*, May 20, 1996, p. 27).

Kerry Livgren, former guitarist/songwriter for the secular mega rock group Kansas, claims that many people have been saved through a song he wrote *before he became a Christian!*

“More people have been led to Christ with [the song ‘Dust in the Wind’] than with everything else I’ve ever written. Not only did that song not mention Jesus, but I was not a Christian at the time. It just happened to be a truth that the song emphasized” (Kerry Livgren, *CCM Magazine*, Feb. 1989, p. 8).

Livgren is saying that many have been saved through a rock song that was written by an unsaved man, a song that doesn’t mention Jesus and doesn’t describe the gospel of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. That is ridiculously unscriptural.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

It is the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that is the power of God unto salvation through faith (Rom. 1:16).

The late Rich Mullins was a very popular CCM writer and performer. He wrote songs popularized by Amy Grant and other well-known singers. His gospel, though, was very murky. When he was killed in 1997, it was reported that he was in the process of joining the Roman Catholic Church. In his song “Screen Door” he presents the false gospel of faith plus works:

“Faith without works baby/ It just ain’t happenin’/
One is your left hand/ One is your right/ It’ll take two
strong arms/ To hold on tight” (Mullins, “Screen
Door”)

This song presents the false gospel that is taught by every cult today. One of the marks of false Christianity is to confuse faith and works, to mingle faith and works together for salvation. While it is true that faith without works is dead and that true saving faith produces works, it is not true that faith and works are the two strong arms by which we hold on tight to God (Eph. 2:8-10), yet that is exactly the heresy that this song teaches.

Paul stated just the opposite:

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Romans 11:6).

Michael W. Smith is one of the very biggest names in Contemporary Christian Music, yet the name of Jesus Christ does not appear even once in three of his albums--*Change Your World*, *I’ll Lead You Home*, and *Live Your Life*. The lyrics to the albums contain more than 6,000 words, but the

name of Jesus does not appear even one time. The Bible says there is none other NAME under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). It is impossible to preach the gospel clearly without naming the name of Christ Jesus?

Consider the words to the song “Bargain” which Rez Band popularized for Christian young people:

“I’ll pay any price just to get you/ I’ll work all my life
and I will/ To win you, I’d stand naked, stoned, and
stabbed/ I’d call that a bargain/ The best I ever had/
The best I ever had ... I’ll pay any price just to win you/
Surrender my good life or bad/ To find you/ I’m
gonna drown an unsung man/ I call that a bargain/
The best I ever had...”

Rez band got this song from legendary rock guitarist Pete Townshend of the violent/immoral/occultic rock band The Who. Townshend wrote “Bargain” as a tribute to his Hindu guru Meher Baba. Townshend testified: “Baba is Christ, because being a Christian is just like being a Baba lover” (Bob Larson, *Rock*, 1984, p. 140).

Not only is it blasphemous to take a song by an immoral rock star about a Hindu guru and sing it as unto Jesus Christ, but the song itself promotes a false gospel. We do not and cannot win the true God by sacrifice. Salvation is “not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9).

Further, the sinner has no “good life” to surrender. All our righteousness is as filthy rags before God (Isaiah 64:6). There is “none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. 3:12).

Note the following song by the popular CCM group Delirious. This is “Revival Town” from their *King of Fools* album:

“Well I’ve got a story to tell/ About the King above all
kings/ He spoke for peace, hope and justice/ Things
that we all need today/ You let a broken generation/
Become a dancing generation/ That is revival

generation/ You may not hear it on the radio/ But you can feel it in the air.”

This doctrinal murkiness is typical of the “gospel message” preached by most CCM groups today.

The following song is from “Adventures of the O.C. Supertones” (1996):

“You probably ask yourself, how’d this Jew boy get so crazy/ Come from kickin’ mad knowledge, didn’t come from being lazy/ We got the rhythm and the rhythm’s got roots/ I’m a crazy little Hebrew onstage wearin’ monkey boots/ I love to be onstage and sing and bimskalabimmin/ I love to be out in the crowd a skakin’ and a swimmin’/ King David, my great grandfather, was a dancer/ King Solomon, my great grandfather, was a romancer/ Jesus came from Jesse, but Jesse came from Jesus/ Now come to the Lord cuz Lord Jesus frees us.”

Is that a plain presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Could someone be saved through a mixed up message like this? Not according to Romans 6:17.

“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart THAT FORM OF DOCTRINE which was delivered you.”

The following is an eyewitness description of a Deliverance concert:

“When it came time for the ‘preaching,’ the members of Deliverance took turns talking about love and victory and not being a ‘wimp.’ Nothing about repentance. Nothing about salvation or separation from the world. Instead of an altar call, there was a cattle-call yodel where all the Christians were instructed to yell for Jesus” (Jeff Godwin, *What’s Wrong with Christian Rock?* pp. 225, 226).

Aaron and Jeffrey are a father and son music team. As much as we enjoy seeing a close father/son relationship, we

cannot support Aaron and Jeffrey because of their worldly rock music and the unscriptural doctrine they sing. Note the following message from the song “Moment of Mercy” from *The Climb* album (1997):

“We’ve all been weakened by the choices we have made/
Wrapped in chains it seems we can’t undo/
It doesn’t matter what we’ve done or where we’ve been/
With one honest prayer/ We can be forgiven ... And
with a simple act of faith we start to see/ Our failures
are forgiven” (Aaron and Jeffrey, “Moment of Mercy”).

This is not the gospel of Jesus Christ that Paul preached in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. The biblical gospel says that Jesus Christ died for OUR SINS according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Aaron and Jeffrey speak not of forgiveness of sin, but of “failures” and of “choices we have made.” A failure or a bad choice is not the same thing as sin, which is disobedience to God’s law. This is a wrong-headed approach to salvation, and it is common among CCM performers.

Further, Aaron and Jeffrey’s gospel is not achieved by faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for sin, but by an “honest prayer” and “a simple act of faith.” People can honestly pray many things and not be saved, and a simple act of faith in itself does not save. The act of faith must be directed specifically to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Many people who are not saved have faith in God and faith in God’s goodness and faith in God’s love (James 2:19), but they have not put their trust in the finished cross work of Christ.

Jesus described false Christians who will try to get into heaven by their works:

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mat. 7:21-23).

The following lyrics to the song “Lovely Mausoleum” by the group Big Tent Revival (from the album *Open All Nite*, 1996) illustrate the hazy, erroneous CCM gospel:

“Sunrise open your eyes/ When are you gonna see?
New day coming your way/ What is it gonna be?”

Chorus: “Your choice, your voice/ You are in control/
Jesus, Jesus/ He will make you whole” (Big Tent Revival, “Lovely Mausoleum”).

There is no gospel here. What new day is coming my way? What is my choice? I am in control of what? Who is Jesus? Is he the non-judgmental Jesus of *The Shack*? What does Jesus have to do with a sunrise for me? How does He make me whole?

Consider Don Francisco. When he does give the gospel in his songs, it is often unclear. Consider the words to “Step across the Line” from the *Forgiven* album:

“You gotta take a step across the line/ Let Jesus fill
your heart and mind/ I can show you where to look/
but you gotta seek to find.”

Is that a clear presentation of the gospel? Could someone be born again through that?

Contemporary Christian Music evangelism is almost always this hazy.

Consider another example. This one is from Francisco’s song “I Don’t Care Where You’ve Been Sleeping.”

“I don’t care where you’ve been sleepin’/ I don’t care who’s made your bed/ I’ve already gave my life to set you free/ There’s no sin you could imagine/ That’s stronger than my love/ And it’s yours if you will come back home.”

It is wonderfully true that Christ died for all of our sins and that His grace is sufficient to forgive any sin, but how do we receive His forgiveness? How can a person be born again? A hazy “come back home” is not the answer. Come back home to what? Don Francisco’s audience is a mixed multitude of believers and religious lost. What does “come back home” mean to them? Come back home to the Roman Catholic sacraments? Come back home to baptismal regeneration? Come back home to the “hold on tight because you might lose it” insecurity of a Pentecostal gospel? Come back home to what?

Most CCM musicians do not make the message clear because they do not have a strong understanding of Bible doctrine and because they do not want to cause divisions.

Here’s another example of Don Francisco’s gospel. This one is from his song “Give Your Heart a Home.”

“If you are tired and weary, weak and heavy laden/ I can understand how it feels to be alone/ I will take your burden/ If you let me love you/ Wrap my arms around you and give your heart a home.”

This is not the message that the apostles preached. It is not anything like the messages that were preached in the book of Acts.

CCM performer Dallas Holm was trained by Pentecostal evangelist Dave Wilkerson. Note the following feeling-oriented gospel message from the song “Love Has Come over Me” (from the album *Chain of Grace*, 1992):

“So won’t you make a fresh evaluation/ Think about your life, about your soul/ He can touch your heart and make you whole/ Then you will have a wonderful

sensation/ When you decide to give Him everything/
Then you'll join the holy celebration/ And lift your
voice and begin to sing. Chorus: Because/ Love has
come over me/ Captured my spirit/ Set my soul free/
Now I just can't believe/ How different I am since/
Love has come over me."

Is salvation deciding "to give Him everything"? Who is "Him"? There are many false christs and false gods in this world. Which one is Holm singing about? His fans won't know from listening to this song. Is salvation a wonderful sensation? Not necessarily. Oftentimes salvation is no sensation at all as far as a feeling.

The hazy message of "love coming over me" is too vague to be of true help to the young people who listen to CCM. In the context of the ecumenical confusion that surrounds Contemporary Christian Music and the New Age confusion that permeates modern culture, this message could mean almost anything. It could refer to a faithful Catholic attending mass or a baptismal regenerationist at his baptismal service or a charismatic becoming "drunk in the spirit." The ecumenical movement thrives on hazy doctrine like this.

Note the following "gospel" message by the Imperials:

"Friend, I know where you're comin' from/ Seems
your life's under the gun/ With no real chance of
escape/ There is hope right outside your door/ It's
what you've been searchin' for/ A love that will never
fade/ So don't you run away/ Don't run away/ You
can't hide/ Gotta keep reachin'/ You must keep
reachin'/ Gotta keep reachin' for higher
things" ("Higher Things," The Imperials, 1988, *Free
the Fire* album).

What does this song mean? It's hard to tell. If it's for the unsaved, it presents a false gospel that salvation is obtained by a continual reaching for God. In contrast, consider the following:

“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:8,9).

If the song, on the other hand, is for the saved, it says hope is “outside your door.” This is false. The Bible says “Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27).

Following is an eyewitness account of the message which was presented by the News Boys on their 1997 “Take Me to Your Leader Tour.” This tour was voted #1 by *CCM Magazine*.

“Then the music stopped and what was to be their gospel message began. The band member who spoke said to the effect, we should have a passion for our faith, that people should see we are different, we should be salty Christians, that we should tell our friends what Jesus did in our lives and how God has changed us. He told how salt preserves, and how we can help stop the spread of decay and corruption and how if we lose our saltiness we are good for nothing. ... In conclusion he said to those who didn’t know Jesus to ask those they came with or ask someone around them about what Jesus did in their lives and he said to the effect, before going back into their rock music, ‘I know you don’t want to hear anymore preaching’” (John Beardsley, “The Invasion Begins: A Review of the News Boys Take Me to Your Leader Tour,” *The Christian Conscience*, 1997).

That was the only message that was given. The young people were not told about their fallen condition. They were not warned of eternal hell. The gospel was not explained. They were not told how to be saved. We must recall, too, that the lyrics to the rock songs performed by the News Boys are vague. Further, the words are almost impossible to understand because of the loud, riotous music.

Reviewing the News Boys' *Take Me to Your Leader* concert, even a local secular newspaper noted the lack of clarity to the message:

“Although most of the choruses are straightforward, THE VERSES ARE HARD TO FOLLOW, A FLAW THAT SERVES TO TRIVIALIZE THE BAND’S CHRISTIAN MESSAGE. ... Built on lyrics that leave too many holes to be filled, THE BAND’S MESSAGE GETS LOST SOMEWHERE IN THE ALTERNATIVE MUSIC” (*Rapid City Journal*, Rapid City, South Dakota, May 13, 1997).

The WOW 1998 CD contains 30 top CCM songs for the year, thus giving us a clear window into the world of Contemporary Christian Music. The CD jacket says, “This is music that can make an eternal difference,” yet there is no clear gospel presentation in any of the music. How can it make an eternal difference?

We could give countless other examples, but to me it is obvious that a large percentage of “decisions” made in the context of Contemporary Christian Music are suspect because the message being presented is either unclear or overtly unscriptural.

There are exceptions, of course, but exceptions do not make a rule.

Second, the decisions made in the context of Contemporary Christian Music are suspect because of the atmosphere.

Not only are the CCM salvation statistics suspect because of the murky message, they are also suspect because of the atmosphere created by the music itself. Powerful music can produce emotional decisions, but biblical salvation is not the product of an emotional decision. It is the product of Holy Spirit-wrought repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ through the clear preaching of the gospel.

Note the following warnings from men who are very knowledgeable about music:

“The element of relentless beat in rock music increases THE DANGER OF A SHALLOW, EMOTIONAL, UNTHINKING RESPONSE, made at the wrong level and for the wrong reasons” (John Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 23)

“In loading our evangelistic programmes with manipulative music, are we not greatly increasing the RISKS OF PRODUCING ‘CONVERSIONS’ THAT ARE PSYCHOLOGICAL RATHER THAN SPIRITUAL? The set-up could not be more perfect. Impressionable young people can undoubtedly be so conditioned by the music that they are much more likely to accept whatever the preacher says. Add a good communicator and the chances are that he will produce an impressive number of ‘decisions.’ However, THE DANGER IS THAT THESE ‘DECISIONS’ ARE THE RESULT OF MUSICAL CONDITIONING RATHER THAN SPIRITUAL CONVICTION” (John Blanchard, *Pop Goes the Gospel*).

“One day I talked with a pastor who had been in charge of follow-up after a large city wide evangelistic campaign. Christian rock had been used prominently throughout the meetings. Several hundred young people had responded to the invitation at the close of the services. This is what he reported: ‘A few weeks after the meetings I had difficulty finding any who had signed decision cards. There were none in the churches, none attending Bible studies, NONE GOING ON WITH THE LORD AT ALL.’ He concluded that THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE RESPONDING TO THE MUSIC MORE THAN TO THE MESSAGE” (Lowell Hart, *Satan’s Music Exposed*, p. 180).

“Here is the testimony of Phil, a young man who had been saved out of a rock band: ‘In 1973 I became a Christian after playing with rock bands and being in the music business for about seven years. ... Some well-meaning Christians encouraged me to ‘use my talents for the Lord,’ so we formed a group to play what we considered to be the new Christian sound. It was nothing more than secular rock with Christian words. We thought that the type of music we played, the length of our hair and the way we dressed would more effectively reach these young people. We gave our testimonies with soft, slow music in the background. When we gave the invitation sometimes a hundred or more teenagers would come forward. Were these conversions genuine? We decided to begin a follow-up. We were shocked to find that almost everyone who had given us an address had gone back to their old ways. I can’t think of one person i could show you today as fruit of our ministry. I REALIZE NOW THAT THEY WERE RESPONDING TO THE MUSIC, NOT TO THE HOLY SPIRIT” (Phil Wilson, June 1978, quoted in *Satan’s Music Exposed*, pp. 180, 181).

Third, the decisions made in the context of Contemporary Christian Music are suspect because of the medium.

A large percentage of CCM is so loud and raucous that the words are not clear. How can the gospel be presented in its saving power if the very words are not plainly understood!

This exposes the hypocrisy of CCM defenders. They know that the message is frequently unclear, yet they claim that it is the message that is important and that the music is insignificant! If they would be honest, I believe they would be forced to admit that what is preminent to them is their love of sensual music.

A man who attended an Audio Adrenaline/dc Talk concert in Rapid City, South Dakota, testified:

“All the while the music was so loud if anyone could hear the words it wasn’t enough to get a message from; hence, the reaction was to the ‘rock’ beat not the words” (John Beardsley, “DC Talk Examined,” *The Christian Conscience*, June 1996).

I experienced the same thing when I attended a Christian rock concert sponsored by a Southern Baptist church in Oklahoma City in 2001. The music was so loud and grinding and the singers were screaming so fiercely that it was impossible to understand the lyrics.

Consider the following description of a Sheila Walsh concert, and she is not known as a particularly loud Christian rocker:

“For some of us, however, communication ended when she sang because, more often than not, the band was too loud for us to catch the words” (*Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 159).

While in Nashville, Tennessee, a few years ago on my way to a preaching meeting, I listened to WAYFM radio station, which advertises itself as “Christian Hit Radio.” I was completing my research in preparation for writing the book *Contemporary Christian Music under the Spotlight*. They played a skit that made fun of using Bible terms to reach today’s generation, alleging that no one can understand terms such as “justification,” “sanctification,” or “grace.” Instead, “Christian Hit Radio” professes to communicate plainly on a level people today can understand.

Having heard that, I listened carefully to song after song to see what message they are presenting. Though I listened off and on for a long time, not one song gave a clear gospel message. There was not even a clear Bible message of any sort. In fact, the words to many of the songs were difficult to impossible to understand.

I concluded that while it is true that they are not using difficult Bible terms, they also are not communicating a clear Bible message, so their boast is meaningless.

This is true for Contemporary Christian Music at large.

Fourth, the decisions made in the context of Contemporary Christian Music are suspect because of the fruit.

If Contemporary Christian Music is of God, the fruit will be genuine salvation, holiness, perseverance in the faith, sound doctrine, Christian discipleship. In a nutshell, the fruit will be obedience to the Bible.

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:3-4).

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27).

“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:3).

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God” (John 8:47).

John Blanchard researched 13 mission agencies in Britain to see how many of their candidates were converted at Christian rock concerts. Not one was found. The following reply was typical:

“I cannot call to mind anybody who has been converted through this type of youth evangelism and

has subsequently gone to missionary service” (*Pop Goes the Gospel*, pp. 110-112).

When decisions made at Christian rock concerts in Britain were followed up, it was found that very few were genuine. For example, of 200 decisions recorded at one youth meeting, only four attended a follow-up session. Of the 100 students who made “decisions” in a school visited by a CCM performance, only one later showed even “a mild interest” in Christian things (*Pop Goes the Gospel*, p. 110).

The devil has provided many alternatives to the new birth and there are many sorts of false professions of salvation. Note the Bible’s warnings:

- A person can believe in God and not be saved (James 2:19).
- A person can pray to Jesus and not be saved (Mat. 7:22-23).
- A person can prophesy in Jesus’ name and not be saved (Mat. 7:22-23).
- A person can do wonderful works in Jesus’ name and not be saved (Mat. 7:22-23).
- A person can have a zeal for God and not be saved (Rom. 10:2-3).
- A person can have a zeal to make proselytes for God and not be saved (Mat. 23:15).
- A person can be very interested in Jesus Christ and not be saved (Mat. 19:16-22).
- A person can profess to know God and not be saved (Titus 1:16).
- A person can follow Jesus for a while and not be saved (Jn. 6:66).
- A person can serve Christ as an apostle and not be saved (John 6:70).

- A person can even believe on Jesus' name and not be saved (John 2:23-24).

“Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men” (Jn. 2:23-24).

The reason why these people were not saved is because they did not believe on Jesus as their Lord and Saviour from sin but as a “prophet” and a worldly messiah who would feed them and rescue them from their political enemies. See John 6:26.

“Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.”

Fifth, the decisions made in the context of Contemporary Christian Music are suspect because of the scant emphasis on the gospel.

I have been investigating Contemporary Christian Music off and on for 40 years. I have listened to and read the lyrics to hundreds of songs, visited at least 400 web sites produced by CCM musicians and their fans, listened to CCM radio stations in various parts of the country, visited major churches that are producing CCM, etc.

My conclusion is that there is *some* gospel preaching done by CCM artists, but this is definitely *not* the main emphasis of CCM. In fact, evangelism comes across as a very low priority, generally speaking.

Consider the **songs** themselves. Only a VERY tiny percentage of CCM songs present a clear gospel.

Consider the **websites**. The majority of websites produced by CCM artists or fans do not contain a clear gospel message or a challenge to the unsaved.

Most **biographies or interviews** of CCM artists do not contain a clear testimony of salvation or any challenge to the unsaved.

As we have seen, it is common for CCM **concerts** NOT to give a clear gospel message. There are exceptions, but we are speaking here of the general picture.

Charlie Peacock polled 35 popular CCM artists and asked them “to estimate the number of letters received from non-Christians over the span of their careers.” Peacock concluded:

“... over 50% gave ten or fewer letters as their answer. ... we must give serious consideration to the possibility that we’re producing very little evangelism and cultural penetration for the cause of Christ” (Peacock, *At the Crossroads*, p. 184).

When all of these elements are combined (no gospel preaching, no clarity even when the gospel is preached, vague lyrics, deafening music, little emphasis on evangelism), it is impossible to believe that large numbers of young people are being genuinely saved through Contemporary Christian Music.

Emotional decisions and religious experiences, faith in God, spiritual reformation, religious commitments, rebuilding of self esteem--none of these things add up to biblical salvation.

Biblical salvation is a supernatural new birth, and it comes through repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ via the doctrinal content of the one true gospel.