

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Colossians 3:16

Frequently one hears the refrain: The Bible doesn't give any guidelines for music. It's all a matter of taste and preference. However, the Bible speaks to all areas of life, and music is no exception.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Ephesians 5:17-21

Music is to be melodious. We are to sing as unto the Lord. It is to be wholehearted. The content is to be Scriptural, with the Psalms predominating. It is to be in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thanksgiving for all things to God the Father in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ is to characterise it.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him. Psalm 28:7

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. Praise the Lord with the harp; make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully with a shout of joy. Psalm 33:1-3

Worship is the natural response of a Christian. When we are saved, God puts a new song in our heart, and we cannot help but rejoice and praise the Lord, with melody, with instruments, skillfully, and with a shout of joy.

I will praise you, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your Name, O Most High. Psalm 9:1-2

Music is to be the overflow of a regenerate heart, it must be wholehearted, it must focus on the marvellous works of our great God and Saviour, and it should be characterised by rejoicing.

Be exalted, O Lord, in Your own strength! We will sing and praise Your power. Psalm 21:13

I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the mud and clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. He has put a new song on my mouth praise to our God; many will see it and fear and will trust in the Lord. Psalm 40:1-3

And the Lord is to be praised even in the worst of circumstances. Paul and Silas, even after having been seized and attacked by a mob, and beaten with rods, unjustly thrown into prison, their response was to sing praises to God. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the prisoners were listening to them. Acts 16:25

I will sing a new song to You, O God; on a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to you. Psalm 144:9

I will sing with the Spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. 1 Cor. 14:15

Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honour of His Name; make His praise glorious. Say to God, how awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You. All the earth shall worship You and sing praises to You; they shall sing praises to Your Name. Psalm 66:1-4

EVALUATING OUR MUSIC

In the light of these clear Scriptural principles, how does our music measure up? Does the praise and worship in our congregation meet the Scriptural standards? And what about the music we listen to in our home, or while travelling? WE

SOLD OUR SOUL FOR ROCK N ROLL <p>Far from praising and honouring our Lord Jesus Christ, many of the popular secular bands openly blaspheme Christ, exalt the breaking of every one of the Ten Commandments, and some, such as Black Sabbath, openly proclaim their allegiance to Satan. One of the albums of Black Sabbath is entitled: We Sold Our Soul for Rock n Roll. One of the lyrics in their song Nativity In Black is a love song from Satan: Some people say my love cannot be true, please believe me, my love, and I'll show you, I will give you those things you thought unreal your love for me has just got to be real look into my eyes, you'll see who I am, my name is Lucifer, please take my hand!</p>

ANTICHRIST ARTISTS <p>Kurt Cobain has been reported to have decorated his home with blood spattered baby dolls hanging by their necks. The inside of his band, Nirvana's, album, In Utero has pictures of chopped up babies. Cobain has been reported to have spray painted abort Christ and God is gay around his neighbourhood.</p> <p>Jefferson Aeroplane produced a most blasphemous song The Son of Jesus which spews out their hate of the Lord Jesus by claiming He was involved in the occult, had illegitimate children by Mary Magdalene, and that God the Father was sexually attracted to Jesus' daughter! These are just a few examples of the many multiplied thousands of blasphemous, anti-Christ elements pervasive in secular Rock, Hip Hop and Rap.</p>

COPYING THE WORLD <p>But what about contemporary Christian music? Incredibly, many contemporary music performers sing songs from these very secular artists, and adopt and adapt songs from them. Many even copy the world's looks and lifestyles.</p> **WE HAVE CREATED A MONSTER** <p>Stan Moser, former head of Word Records, and CEO of Star Records, was one of the pioneers and most important executives in contemporary Christian music. After 26 years in the industry, he walked away from contemporary Christian music and in an article in Christianity Today (We Have Created a Monster) Mr. Moser freely admitted: There is a growing chasm between CCN and the Church between what's actually happening in the real world of ministry, or even in the music ministry of the Church, and what we're doing in Contemporary Christian Music. In fact, I would probably be more inclined to call the industry commercial Christian music rather than Contemporary Christian Music To be candid, I look at the majority of the music I hear today and think it's virtually meaningless we as an industry weren't running away from the Church at that time, but I do think we walked away so we could still basically, get rich. Materialism, a lot of it, crept in and started affecting our values (Christianity Today, May 20, 1996)</p>

<p>Michael Card acknowledges: we started with little root in the Church, and now we're bearing the fruit of that separation there's a big accountability gap in the industry as a result of the lack of connectedness to the Church. (Christianity Today, Can't Buy Me Ministry, May 20, 1996)</p> **MASS MARKETING MUSIC** <p>In an interview in Christianity Today, Michael Card was quoted as observing: The lyrics of a good number of the songs don't portray anything specifically Christian - not a lot of the big songs are identifiably Christian what happens to the message when we start giving the music to as many people as possible? There is an essential part of the Gospel that's not ever going to sell. The Gospel is good news, but it is also bad news: You are a sinner and you are hopeless. How is a multi-million dollar record company going to take that? That's a part of the message, too, and if that's taken out and it frequently is in Christian music it ceases to be the Gospel. (Can't Buy Me

Ministry)

THE PRAISE OF MEN VS THE PRAISE OF

GOD

The great Reformer Martin Luther warned of this nearly 500 years ago: **We should praise God with both word and music, openly proclaiming the Word of God through music** he who believes earnestly cannot be quiet about it. But he must gladly and willingly sing and speak about it so that others may come and hear it. And whoever does NOT want to sing and speak of it shows that he does not believe it.

They did not confess Him for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. **Jn 12:42-43**

It is clear from the Scripture that all music should be for the praise and glory of God. However, it seems that many Christian concerts seem to be everything but that. Here are a few reports of reactions to some major Christian artists and bands: **As teenager shrieks fill the Dallas Convention Centre moments before DC Talk took the stage Friday night, one of the relatively few grownups in the sold out crowd observed this is just like The Beatles!**; **His concerts draw hundreds of thousands of fans each year, mostly teenage girls who scream out their affection for him non-stop throughout** to his fans, Smith is the absolute greatest there is bar none

Inside Music

IDOLATRY IN MUSIC

As Keith Green wrote: **Why do we idolise Christian singers and speakers? We go from glorifying musicians in the world to glorifying Christian musicians. It's all idolatry!** Satan is getting a great victory as we seem to worship these ministers on tapes and records and clammer to get their autographs in churches and concert halls from coast to coast.

So You Wanna Be A Rock Star? by Keith Green

Now, the industry is celebrity driven. The song is almost irrelevant. The focus is on the person and songs have become disposable the direction and value system are getting worse faster than any of us can imagine. **Can't Buy Me Ministry**

Sometimes people give us a hard time because we don't mention God on stage but we feel that our calling is to get people interested in our music, interested in us **(Ghoti Hook, HM magazine)**

God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Luke 16:15

There is tremendous power in music, and whenever any minister of the Gospel questions a form of music or challenges popular trends in music, he will experience much abuse, hostility and an explosive reaction.

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Galatians 1:10

THE MESSAGE, THE MUSIC AND THE MUSICIAN

Christian music should always emphasise the message the Word of God not the music, nor the musician. Christian music is not meant to be entertainment, it is not a performance, a concert or a talent show. Music is to be worship, a ministry as unto the Lord.

Dr. Frank Garlock has written: **Contrary to popular opinion, sacred music is not for entertainment. Christian music is first and foremost a vehicle for praise unto the Lord.** **Music In the Balance**

Church father, St. Augustine, observed: **When I am moved by the voice of him that sings more than the words sung, I confess to have sinned.**

However, much of what is presented as Christian music today not only emphasises the musician, but the medium completely overwhelms the message. In all too many cases the message is vague, ambiguous, obscured or incomprehensible.

Martin Luther emphasised the importance of avoiding worldly influence and ensuring that the message is clear: **But I would like to avoid any new words or the language used at court. In order**

to be understood by the people, only the simplest and the most common words should be used for singing; at the same time, however, they should be pure and apt; and further, the sense should be clear and as close as possible to the Psalm.

SOUNDING LIKE THE WORLD
Fanny Crosby, a prolific Hymn writer who produced over 9,000 songs of praise, despite being blind, was only converted at 45 years old. Before this she wrote many secular songs. This is what Fanny Crosby wrote about mixing Christian hymns with worldly music: *Sometimes I need to reject the music proposed for my songs because the musicians misunderstand that the Fanny Crosby who once wrote for the people in the saloons has merely changed the lyrics. O my, no. The Church must never sing its songs to the melodies of the world.* (*What's Wrong With Christian Rock*)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

When Christian music carries the beat, instrumentation, and exact sounds of the lost crowd, it results in confusion and shame it is shameful to use musicians who in shallow songs daze instead of praise, who entertain instead of train that transfer the worship owed to Christ to concert hopping, money hungry entertainers who have never left the world far enough behind to stop sounding like it (*Shame*, By Dr. Hal Webb)

DEFINING MUSIC
Music is composed of three main components: Melody, harmony and rhythm. By definition, if any of these three elements are absent, then it is no longer music, but noise.

MELODY
Webster's Dictionary defines *melody* as: *An agreeable succession of sounds; a succession of sounds so regulated and modulated as to please the ear. To constitute melody the sounds must be arranged according to the laws of rhythm, measure or the due proportion of the movements to each other to make melody in the heart, to praise God with a joyful and thankful disposition, ascribing to Him the honour due to His Name.*

Amadeus Mozart declared: *Melody is the very essence of music.* (Wordsworth Dictionary of Musical Quotations)
Melody is the main thing; harmony is useful only to charm the ear. Joseph Haydn (Wordsworth Dictionary)

Melody is the horizontal line the notes follow on the music score. Without the melody line, there is no music.

HARMONY
Webster's dictionary defines *harmony* as: *That union of different sounds which pleases the ear; or a succession of such sounds, called chords.* Harmony is the vertical line where the notes meet on the music score.

RHYTHM
Rhythm is defined by Webster: *Variety in the movement as to quickness or slowness, the proportion which the parts of the motion have to each other.* Rhythm is the movement in music, the beat that holds everything together.

NOISE MASQUERADING AS MUSIC
Webster defines *musical* as: *Melodious; harmonious; pleasing to the ear.* By these definitions, much of what passes for music today would be more accurately described as noise.

The greatest musicians in history have agreed that melody is the very essence of music, but in much of contemporary music the rhythm, or the beat, has taken over and the melody and harmony has either become obscured or vanished.

The rhythm in Rock is the dominant part of the sound. The heavy emphasis on the beat is what distinguishes Rock from every other type of music. (Frank Garlock, *Music In the Balance*)

Even Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones has been quoted as admitting: *It's a noise we make. That's all. You could be kind and call it music.*

The Rolling Stones An Illustrated Record, by Roy Carr)</p>

<h3>♦I♦M A SLAVE TO THE RHYTHM♦</h3> <p>♦The sexuality of music is usually referred to in terms of its rhythm - it is the beat that commands a directly physical response.♦ Sound Effects, Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock ♦n Roll</p>

<p>♦Rhythm is the element of music most closely allied to body movement, to physical action. It♦s simple patterns when repeated over and over can have a hypnotic effect on us.♦ (The Enjoyment of Music by Joseph Macklis)</p>

<p>When rock star Michael Jackson was asked why he made filthy sexual hand gestures on stage he replied: ♦It♦s the music that compels me to do it. You don♦t think about it, it just happens. I♦m a slave to the rhythm.♦ The Evening Star, 11/2/93)</p>

<p>While Rock music emphasises the beat, the Bible emphasises music as melody (Isaiah 23:16; Isaiah 51:3; Ephesians 5:19).</p> <h3>CELEBRATING

UGLINESS</h3> <p>Instead of focussing on attractive, uplifting and beautiful sounds and themes much of the modern industry celebrates ugliness.</p>

<p>♦♦popular music seems terminally hostile to any sound traditionally associated with music.♦ Hole In Our Soul The Loss of Beauty and Meaning in American Popular Music, by Martha Bayles)</p>

<h3>THE VODOO CONNECTION</h3> <p>The predominance of the drums in Rock music is noteworthy. Rock music emphasises hard driving beat. The drum is central in Rock, Rave, Rap and Hip Hop.</p>

<p>♦Drums represent the beat of the heart and are played to summon up magic powers.♦ (Marinda Bruce-Mitford, The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols)</p>

<p>♦Pagan dances and rituals are always accompanied by the incessant beat of drums. Rhythm plays a major role in these demonic activities.♦ (Satan♦s Music Exposed, Lowell Heart)</p>

<p>♦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♦Rock ♦n Roll can ultimately be traced back to African music of a primarily spiritual or ritual nature. In a sense Rock ♦n Roll is a kind of voodoo♦♦

(Rock ♦n Roll An Unruly History, by Robert Palmer)</p>

<p>♦Today♦s drummer differs but a little from the shaman in his incessant beating out of a rhythm, and likewise often enters into a form of trance while performing.♦ (The Secret Power of Music, by David Tame)</p>

<p>Little Richard, the self-professed architect of Rock ♦n Roll readily admits Satan♦s control and influence in his life and Rock music: ♦My true belief about Rock ♦n Roll is this: I believe this kind of music is demonic♦ a lot of the beats in music today are taken from voodoo, from the voodoo drums.♦ The Life and Times of Little Richard, by Charles White)</p>

<h3>INSTRUMENTS FOR WORSHIP</h3> <p>It is noteworthy that while the Bible lists many kinds of instruments for music, drums are never mentioned. ♦♦for the music in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, stringed instruments and harps for the service of the house of God♦♦ 1 Chronicles 25:6</p>

<p>♦Praise God in His sanctuary♦praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him according to His excellent greatness! Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him with the lute and the harp! Praise Him with the timbrel and dance; praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes! Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.♦ Psalm 150</p>

<p>The drum was a very common instrument in Egypt and the lands around Israel at that time and yet drums are never mentioned as instruments for believers to use in worship. Christian music should emphasise the melody, not the beat. Christian music should feed the spirit and

not the flesh. Christian music should be rooted in Scripture and focused on glorifying God.

PLEASING GOD **Adulterers and adulteresses!** Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Who then, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

James 4:4 **For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.** For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 8:5-8 **God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**

John 4:24 **Therefore come out from among them and be separate says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.**

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

Romans 12:1-2 **Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**

Col. 3:16-17 **Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song. And His praise in the assembly of saints.**