

## What is Wrong With Contemporary Christian Music

MUSIC in the Old Testament had accompanied all of Jewish life and it has become a parallel practices in other religious systems. Trained musicians appeared during the time of Solomon in the Temple worship which involves elaborate adaptation of pagan rituals and practices.

The Tabernacle Jewish music had six general characteristics: No untrained musicians were commissioned and they were given limited responsibilities. Professionalism was the rule in the Temple services. The Temple Choir consisted only of 12 male adults who were 30 years and above old. No young people or female were involved.

There were no percussion instruments and there were no dancers. The music was traditionally Jewish and purely religious. The congregation was musically involved. The music was never emotionally manipulated so as to produce results or decisions.

A handful of New Testament passages provide us information how music was performed during the early church: The Jewish music styles were not carried over to the Church Age music. No disciple or apostle mentioned the existence of a choir or any person giving a special number during worship.

Music then was short and doctrinal in nature. It was actually Bible doctrine preaching in Jewish poetry added with melody from surrounding nations (Acts 16:25, 1 Corinthians 14:15, 26). King Solomon was responsible for bringing radical changes in the Temple worship as demanded by his foreign wives.

The priority of the Lord Jesus Christ was to teach Bible doctrine not to teach church music [Ephesians 5:19]. Both in the Old and New Testament, music did not take the center-stage of the believer's spiritual life. The center of our spiritual life is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Modern day religious music is devious and deceitful. The so-called "music ministers" are skillful in manipulating and captivating ignorant followers into emotional and ecstatic experiences. They can easily sway the life of the church into a new dimension of religious experience devoid of spirituality.

The priority of every local church is to teach Bible doctrine using the four basic systematic approaches to biblical studies: exegetical, categorical, historical, and grammatical methods. The local church is robbing the believers not only of their precious time, energy and resources but also with spiritual blessing in eternity.

The Christian music [musical presentations, concerts, choirs, etc], provided by some churches are not only diverting the focus of believers from the Lord but also substituting God with Christian popular singers who are idolized more than the Lord Jesus Christ. Church musicians are always the source of problems and conflicts in the congregation. These artists are often the most carnal and arrogant. Anybody can sing contemporary Christian music or hymns with a lot of emotional expression.

Satan was the greatest musician in the entire universe without equal (Isaiah 14:11a) and as the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4) he controls and manipulates everything including the music sector. He is using music as an instrument of deception and destruction against believers and it has proven very effective.

Music does not prepare the heart and soul for worship. Filling of the Holy Spirit is the only preparation believers need prior to worship. We are filled with the Holy Spirit by rebound not by asking God to fill us with Holy Spirit through emotional music. Music can only excite the emotion of man and pampering the ego of the singers or musicians. The singers, composers and musicians are always deceived to think more highly of themselves than those who do not have skills and talents.

## SUMMARY OF THE PROBLEMS

Majority of the contemporary Christian music has no doctrinal truth or basis, misleading and parlays a distorted concept of God. The rhythm may sound good to the human ears but the entire composition is not scripturally correct. Oftentimes the lyrics may sound biblical because it uses Christian vocabulary but it is distortion of biblical truth. The Methodist, the Lutheran and the Baptist hymnals contained too many hymns that are doctrinally wrong and inconsistent to the truth of the Scripture.

Their Christian music shows strong emotion distorted by human viewpoint. The musical composers were mostly young and spiritually immature who adopted the trends and styles of the world. The corrupted culture of the world is influencing Christian music and worship faster than the work of preaching and teaching the Gospel influence the world. Most church musicians are entertainers rather than communicators of Bible doctrine.

The singers and musicians can easily become sensational and popular but remain carnal or unbeliever. The choir or the church's musical group is the best hideout of the immature and carnal believers. Some carnal believers can easily show pseudo-spirituality by manipulating facial expressions and vocal tones. Facial expressions, physical gestures and "Christian's mannerisms" have nothing to do with genuine spirituality and spiritual maturity. Spirituality is the condition of the soul not of the physical body.

Anybody can sing (believer or unbeliever) Christian music and lead the people into religious emotional experience that excites the heart and the mind but without spiritual benefits. The theology of worship is not only ignored in actual practice but openly rejected even by some fundamentalists who eagerly responded to contemporary Christian music with excitement. They welcomed the changes not only in methodology but also in theology.

Such passiveness in theological and methodological gave way to modification of essential biblical doctrines that welcomed the unregenerate to the rank of church musicians. With corrupted Gospel messages and diluted Bible doctrines, the whole church system has been corrupted. The change often happens gradually and the tremendous increase in attendance gratified the ignorant believers who cannot see the doctrinal decline.

Doctrinal truths are carefully and deliberately omitted from such worship service to make it more palatable to many church goers. The trend today in many churches is good music, good presentation, big attendance, popular preachers and singers, and comfortable facilities.

Church leaders designed the "musical worship service" as an attraction for the emotional church-goers. It is the glue that keeps the crowd returning week after week. People are going to these churches for music and for the good feeling they get. There is a grave error in evaluating your worship by the feelings of those who cannot define the meaning of genuine worship. The modern Christian musicians are not concerned about doctrinal truth but aspiring to be famous and sensational within the Christian community by using the resources of the world.

Christian music has become a lucrative business and the source of pride especially for some arrogant believers who wanted to be appreciated and recognized. Popularity and wealth are great enemies of every believer. Few can survive prosperity and popularity. Public appreciation and recognition ignite the soul to puff-up and seek more self-glory.

Music is a difficult medium for teaching Bible doctrine, for this reason the ancient hymn writers were careful not to use any material from the secular world, either in lyrics or melody. Most of the ancient hymn writers were physically and spiritually mature as revealed by the doctrinal content of their hymns, yet some were discriminately rejected by the Puritans because they adopted the music of the world.

For some churches, music seems to be everything. They cannot pray, worship and praise without it. Worship is not verbal praises and exaltation of God. If worship is a verbal expression then God must be unjust toward those who cannot speak or sing. Christian music has become a giant cult within the churches.

True worship is based upon proper doctrinal teaching. Genuine worship is the result of right thinking pattern of the worshiper. The worshiper must understand what he is doing. We are mandated to worship (John 4:23) in spirit (spirituality) and truth (the truth of Bible doctrine). We cannot separate Bible doctrine from genuine worship and we cannot worship God with our emotional impulses.

The worshipers must possess the three requirements or elements of worship: salvation, spirituality and Scripture. The expressions of worship (prayer, praise, adoration, etc) are useless without these elements. Only the saved and Spirit-filled person can worship God through Bible doctrine. Any worship without these three elements is not the worship of God but of the devil (1 Cor. 10:20).

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[www.dikaosune.com](http://www.dikaosune.com)

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