

THE INFLUENCES BEHIND THE MUSIC

Teaching Notes

Outline:

A Biblical Outlook on: Music Inside the Church

A Biblical Outlook on: Music Outside the Church

Introduction

Spiritual Value of Songs/Music:

The book of Psalms is the song book of the Bible. All the chapters in the book of Psalms are songs that were sung in the tabernacle: some written by David or others written and sung by following generations of priests, like the sons of Asaph.

If you recall in Ezekiel 40, describing the millennial kingdom, God promises to establish priestly worshipers again to sing songs of praise.

If you consider passages like Revelation 4, you realize that the church of Jesus Christ and all believers will worship in heaven. Heaven is filled with praise and worship. This is a noticeable aspect of our future.

Most of you know that chapters and verses were added later. But with the book of Psalms, each chapter is accurate in the sense that each chapter is a different song. There are 150 songs (divided by chapter) in the book of Psalms. If you consider the total number of chapters in the Bible, the book of Psalms comprise 12% of the total chapters in the Bible.

In reference to the amount of words in the Bible, Psalms is the 3rd largest book. The 1st is the book of Jeremiah and the 2nd is the book of Genesis. All to say: Songs of praise and worship are very important to the Lord.

It's important to lastly note that worship did not cease in importance at the end of the Old Covenant. It is something that is still important to the church of

Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. We know one of the key aspects of the New Covenant is LIFE IN THE SPIRIT.

What does “life in the Spirit” look like? Well, look at Ephesians 5:18-19, (**Ephesians 5:18** *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*)

Here we are told of an aspect/command of what life in the Spirit should be.

- To be singing songs to the Lord from the heart.

The Counterfeits of the Devil:

The devil’s objective is to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). In addition, we know that in the last days there will be “other spirits.” There will be the “spirit of the antichrist.” Consider,

(1 John 4:1 *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

1 John 4:2 *By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,*

1 John 4:3 *and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.)*

We know that the spirit of the antichrist is primarily alive at work in the church, because of 1 John 4. Yet, we know that there are demonic spirits at work outside of the church (2 Corinthians 4).

- In other words, the devil and his demons are operating on two fronts. They are operating inside the church and outside of the church.

How does this relate to music?

Let’s first look at music **inside** the church...

Music Inside the Church

There is **only one requirement** for any local church to meet in regards to music inside of the local church. Now people may have other convictions which I'll get to soon. Nevertheless, there is only **one biblical requirement** for any local church in regards to music inside of the local church:

The Songs Must Be:

Biblical Songs of Worship

I want to make this clear: Singing biblical songs in the church of Jesus Christ is **non-negotiable**.

How do we know that this is **non-negotiable**? Because the Apostle Paul is explicitly clear on this issue:

(**Ephesians 5:19** *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*). Let's look at the Greek words here"

Psalms in the Greek:¹

- Psalms in the Greek is *psalmos*. (ψαλμός).
- Its definition is, "a striking or twitching with the fingers on musical strings."
- Second, "a sacred song sung to musical accompaniment."
- The word *psalmos* usually denoted that which had a musical accompaniment.
- An example usage of this word is when the Lord Jesus said to the scribes in Luke 20:42, (**Luke 20:42** *Now David himself said in the Book of Psalms: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,)"**quoting Psalm 110.
 - Here, Jesus references the Spirit-inspired songbook of Israel.

Hymns in the Greek:²

- *Hymnos* in the Greek (ᕿμνος)
- The word denotes a "song of praise addressed to God."
- The word in verb form (*humneo*) is rendered to sing praises.
- What makes the word *hymns* different from the word *psalms* (in the Greek)?
 - One possibility is explained when Jesus went with His disciples to the garden.

¹ Vine's Expository Dictionary was primarily used for definitions.

² Ibid.

- (**Matthew 26:30** *And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*)
- In other words, it was simply a capella.

Spiritual Songs:³

- The word for song is *ode*. It was always used in the New Testament in praise of God or Christ.
- Check this out: In the example of Ephesians 5:19, the word “spiritual” as an adjective was added. Why should the word *spiritual* be added to *song* if the implication of *song* was always in reference to praise to God? I believe the Holy Spirit led the Apostle Paul to make sure that the church of Christ would have very clear instruction to know that worshipping the Lord in song requires that the songs are **spiritual** songs.
- Define spiritual songs? Again, songs that are biblical, not secular, that give praise to God.

To sum it up:

Worship to the Lord cannot be done through secular music or music that is unbiblical. Worship to the Lord is exclusively done by **spiritual songs**, songs that are biblical.

Exposing the Work of the Enemy:

Recently, we had a visitor at our midweek Bible study. I spoke with him after service. After I introduced myself, this is what he said: “Your message was good (along with a couple of other things), but the music - ohhh! - that touched my heart, the words that were sung really got to me.” The guy was crying. It was a heartfelt moment for him, and I was happy to see it, but he never came back to church after he promised he would.

All to say: It’s a sad thought to think that the other church down the street with better music and better musicians might steal his attention. That is a scary thought because many false-doctrine, demonic churches have incredible music. Because the word of God did not have the same impact that the music

³ Ibid.

did for this man, I fear that if this man is looking for a church with good music only, rather than the word. If so, he'll likely end up in a false doctrine church.

This is a topic of discussion that watchmen have been discussing for years.

While I think the enemy's method of drawing people to false doctrine churches through music will continue, we are seeing something else on the rise.

Today, more and more churches throughout the United States are hosting theatrical performances, where musicians and dancers are performing **secular music** in the church.

- I'm talking about the church's Sunday service performing secular music.

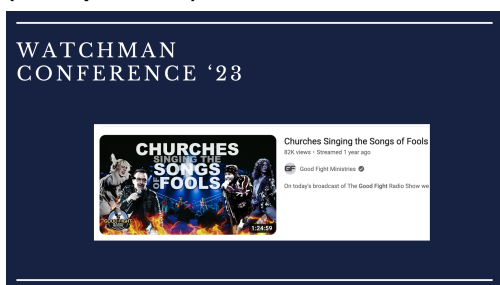
(Graphic 1)



- A southern baptist megachurch performed a secular techno song, Avicii. Yes, it's said that Avicii committed suicide, but that doesn't make it right to play a secular song in a church.
- The picture below is a picture of Northpoint church, the church that Charles Stanley's son, Andy Stanley pastors. His church band led the Sunday morning service with Led Zeppelin tunes. And if you know anything about Led Zeppelin, you realize that they are one of the most demonic bands popular today.

While music draws the crowds to hear false doctrine, I believe the next thing to keep the crowds is that churches will now forsake spiritual songs for secular songs.

(Graphic 2)



You might say, “Is this really happening? Will this really grow?”

- Let me remind you of where we are at today:

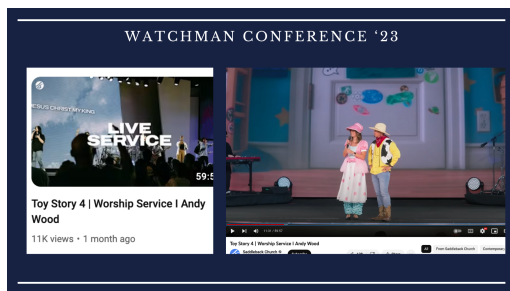
(Graphic 3)



(1). Who would've thought that many churches throughout the United States were going to do “A Summer at the Movies” series for their Sunday morning church services? Why? “To discover the Biblical truths in these movies and teach about them on Sunday Services.”

- A Sunday sermon on the Biblical truths from the movie, BARBIE?

(Graphic 4)



Again many churches did this, including Saddleback Church, once pastored by Rick Warren, now pastored by Pastor Andy Woods and his wife, Pastor Stacie Woods:

Who would have ever thought that toy story 4 and worship would be in the same title? Who would have ever thought that a senior pastor would dress up as Woody on a Sunday service?

(Graphic 5)



Who would have ever thought that one of the biggest shifts in evangelical Christianity in 2023 would be women pastors?

Here's Pastor Daniel Fusco. Some of you might be familiar with him. He was a Calvary Chapel pastor of a previous CC in Vancouver, Washington. For years, he was a popular conference speaker at the CC pastor conferences. In the past, I personally enjoyed his books and his teachings. But now look at one of his Sunday services - taught by *Pastor* Amira Onuoha.

(Graphic 1 again)

So when we see churches start to play secular music on their Sunday services, don't be surprised. It's rising.



In the Tribulation, there will be the end-times religious system, called “the whore of Babylon.” This ecumenical, one-world religion system will take the world by storm in the Tribulation. And guess what? We are starting to see signs of it already in our churches. Remember, the Apostle John calls this false doctrine within the church “the spirit of the antichrist.” The spirit of the antichrist is alive and it is only growing!

THE POINT

The True Church of Jesus Christ must always be a congregation that sings biblical, spiritual songs. Nothing else.

What are some directives for you personally?

(1). If your church is hosting performances, ministries, or events that encourage, use, or allow ungodly music, it is probably best to prayerfully approach the leadership about it. If the leadership does not heed you, it is probably best to find a solid, bible-teaching church.

(2). When your church introduces a new song, test it with scripture. Are there things in there that contradict the nature of God, the person and work of Christ, the person and work of the Spirit, or simply what is revealed in all of scripture?

- For solid, bible-teaching churches, this is something we are mindful about and seek to honor the Lord with.
- I will say there are times that the worship team might play a popular song that other churches are playing. Later, they realize that it's unbiblical. So they avoid playing it. *I can say this from experience in years past.
 - On that note, it's important to remember grace - in the sense that, some if not most of the worship team are people who are still growing in their knowledge of scripture. Some worship team members are much newer in the faith. The more mature should learn how to serve them by discipling them.
 - In a situation, if it's not addressed by the pastors for whatever reason, with humility and love it is good to converse with some of the worship directors regarding the questionable songs that you hear.

Now, let us talk about some negotiables on the topic:

The Negotiables

(1). As a church, can we play songs that are Biblical but written by ministries that are questionable?

- Some are very strict: Some churches have stripped away so many songs simply because the churches that produce these songs are questionable, and anyone associated with these artists are now questionable as well. Others are more lenient.
- Each church has their perspective and conviction on this.

(2). As a church, can we play more modern-style songs: in other words, instead of singing hymns from the 1600s-1800s, can we also play more modern songs with more instruments and more of a "rock sound?"

- Each church has their perspective and conviction on this.

(3). As a church, should we only pick songs that are extremely "word-y," like humans that are theologically rich, avoiding songs that are simple songs of praise to Jesus."

- Each church has their perspective and conviction on this.

Bringing up these negotiables, I assume all of us probably take positions and perspectives. It might even be split in half.

Each church and each believer will have convictions on these issues. But remember these are **secondary issues**.

Today, I want to remain focused on what really matters:

The primary issue is:

These songs must be praise songs to God and the songs must be biblical. They cannot be unbiblical and secular.

Music Outside the Church

I want to preface this topic with this statement:

There are people who think that music can be demonic, that music has inherent power that is either evil or good. But I will say this. That cannot be proven biblically. What we know to be biblical is that music is one of God's lovely creations.

As a musician myself, the more I study music and play music, the more my mind is blown. Whenever I talk to my scientist-type friends, for example those who study physics, my mind gets blown by the greatness and unknowability of the universe. As a comparison in the realm of physics, it would be illogical to say that physics is bad just because you can use physics to create an atomic bomb. In logic, this is called the "fallacy of composition." So to say that a particular composition of chords is evil because some artists with ungodly lyrics use those chords is a fallacy of composition.

What's interesting is that a worship song can be played with a G chord Em chord C chord and D chord progression; yet, demonic songs also use that chord progression? This would mean most of the songs we play at church could never be played because of chords.

- Side note: the book of Psalms does not have music sheets, as if the melodies were inspired. It's the words that were inspired, not the sounds. Again God created music. Music is a beautiful thing. It has nothing to do with chords and music.

What then has power, in the hands of the church or in the hands of demons?

Words are what have power!

(Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.)

Words have power.

On the positive,

(Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.)

More powerful than any other word is God's word. And we know that God's word is truth.

Let's go back to the negative, in the last days there will be a growing deception:

(1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

1 Timothy 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,)

What we must know is that the demonic voices from within the church are also outside of the church. And remember, the lyrics of songs have the ability to deceive you.

People in the last days will give heed to deception and lies, lies that are ultimately controlled by the spirits.

One lie can be planted into your head, by your flesh, by a false teacher, by a book, or by a lyricist over music. If you start to entertain that lie, if you start to believe that lie, you have fallen right into the deception.

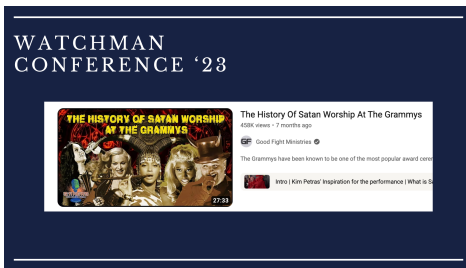
All those people over the years who left our churches because of false doctrine or lustful living, I am curious what playlist of songs they listened to as well. I'm curious what impact ungodly lyrics played into their pursuit of deception.

(Graphic 6)



I thought this video was great to expose some of the spiritual dangers within rock music. The folks speaking are ex-musicians in the rock scene. I'm sure there are other videos that address other styles of music like rap or hip hop, but those are genres of music and watchman videos I am not familiar with. In this video, you will realize that lyrics of songs are quotations from occult literature or ideas influenced from the occult. Even in some songs, that are popular, reference these "deities" and demonic entities, in acknowledgment or worship.

(Graphic 7)



It's not worth looking up, period. But for those who remember a few months back, the Grammys took many by surprise when there were performances that were flat-out demonic and/or praising the demonic. Sam Smith came out and sang his song dressed up as a demonic figure singing his song "unholy."

- Personally, I haven't watched the Grammys since I was a kid. But from what I read, oh my goodness.
- It's not just the old-school "rock-and-roll" songs that people need to be warned about, it's equally and possibly more important to safeguard yourself against the popular music of our day today!

Opening Doors:

I think an important question that people have and should be addressed is, "Can one open doors to the demonic realm by listening to this music?"

Yes, you can open demonic doors and portals:

(1). Via the lyrics of the music.

- Remember, the music itself does not have power. The words have power. This is the primary way people open up themselves to the demonic. The words.

(2). Secondly, via the things the artists recommend:

- Remember, there are musicians themselves who have repeatedly admitted to selling their souls to Satan. They have admitted to the practice of witchcraft and other occult practices.
- I want you to understand that musicians don't make money like they used to before let's say 2010. People don't buy cds anymore; and concerts are just super expensive these days. People now have streaming platforms like Spotify, who do not pay musicians well. With that said, musicians make their income by their brand, their clothing, their art, their objects, etc. How many people buy things and objects from their favorite artists?
- I think this one might be more relevant to kids.
- When you invite anything occultish into your life, even at the recommendation of your favorite artist, you are opening doors.

Negotiables

On the topic of secular music, I must mention that there are negotiables, meaning that there are secondary issues:

Can a believer listen to non-Christian music?

- Each believer has their own conviction.

Can a believer listen to some "good" songs from an artist but avoid the other artist's "bad" songs?

- Each believer has their own conviction.

Can a believer listen to the instrumental versions of catchy "bad" songs they may like?

- Each believer has their own conviction.

Can a believer go to a secular "concert at the park" to enjoy live music and dancing?

- Each believer has their own conviction.

Even with this, if I said to you all, who thinks this or that, potentially half of you would go to this side or the other.

While I have my own personal convictions, I want you to understand that these are secondary issues:

- On a side note, I believe in this principle: There is always the safer option. As I've told people in the past for one's "liberties in Christ": it is better to be safe than sorry. Also, as you continue to mature in your relationship with the Lord, those secondary things that were once so important to you, those things you felt like you could not live without, you were able to give them up.
 - How many of you were addicted to social media, deleted it, and now just love life?

Again, what's the real issue? The devil would like to keep us focused on secondary issues and think too much upon things that are not as important.

The real issue is that the devil uses lyrics of songs to lie and deceive.

Directive:

My brethren, I encourage you to be very careful what non-Christian songs you are allowing to go into your head and soul, both for you and your kids. While the music may be great (remember music is a wonderful gift from God), the lyrics (words) have incredible power, godly or demonic. Some need to go back into their playlists and music collection and ask with a humble heart:

- (1). Are there albums and songs I should get rid of because of the words and lies and that I should not allow into my mind and heart?
- (2). Are there songs that my kids are listening to with words and lies that are detrimentally affecting my kids, that are inspiring my kids to stray away from the truth of the Bible?
- (3). Is a particular "liberty in Christ" that I am doing actually damaging my soul and leading me away from a better relationship with the Lord Jesus?
- (4). How can I get better at safeguarding and analyzing what I am allowing into my head and my soul?

Our flesh and the enemy wants to keep any of us in bondage to any thing to keep one from experiencing the abundant life that Jesus Christ promised. For some, it's what they are watching. For some, it's what they are reading. And for others, what we looked at today, it's the words they are listening to.

(John 8:32 *And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*)
