

Hymnspiration

Why We Sing What We Sing!



A Brief Study of the Music of the Bible Believing Christian

Part Three – Claiming the Higher Ground

Pastor's Edition

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Claiming the Higher Ground

Satan is Rapidly Destroying Biblical Christianity – Let’s Take the Higher Ground

I. The Science of Music

A. So now, what is music?

1. It is a **Language** all its own. The internationally renowned pianist, Van Cliburn, told ABC News during the Person of the Week interview on July 15, 1994, “The language of music is readable, writable, and recitable.”
2. Oscar Thompson, in his book *How to Understand Music*, states, “Music is a language of itself, and can and does convey its message without translation into some other language” (pp. 14-15).
3. Music is not a “**mystical** thing”, but it shares traits with all other forms of language.
 - a. The notes on the staff are merely visual representations (icons) of aural activity.
 - b. Just as in any language where particular letters and even words are inconsequential standing alone, when grouped and placed in context and given specific emphasis and nuance, those letters and words can be joyous or depressing, complimentary or degrading, blessing or curse; so too, are musical notes and phrases.
 - c. And while music may not have the capacity to communicate specific thoughts, it can create general moods and cause *determinable* reactions.

B. Yet, listen to what modern CCM musicians and “pastors” say:

1. 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
2. “*There is actually no such thing as ‘Christian Music.’ There is no such thing as a ‘Christian’ musical instrument. There is no such thing as a ‘Christian’ key or a ‘Christian’ note or tone. Only ‘Christian’ lyrics set to music. Christian lyrics can be set to any music. In the same way, ... the Christian message can be proclaimed in every language, even the language of "rock" music. One of the very best sermons and invitation I have ever heard was delivered by Mark Farner, he used to be with Grand Funk Railroad, ... at a Christian rock concert. Scores of teens responded to receive Christ that night. Years later, ... I still remember him singing about "Judgment Day Blues" and playing some great blues licks as he communicated the gospel to those teens in a language they could understand.*”
Email correspondence with Pastor Jerry Lewis

C. Most musicologists and theoreticians agree that there are **five** basic elements of music: melody, harmony, rhythm, tempo, and volume.

1. The **melody** is simply the “tune.” We know melody is important because we are commanded to “sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19). A tune hummed on its own can stand up to the criteria of being musical. In fact, every age has appreciated the beauty of unison melody.
2. Implied in every melodic line is **harmony**. A harmonic sequence is an acoustical phenomenon based on sympathetic vibrations in what is called the overtone cycle. In other words, Every note has other notes that complement it in the context of a given melody.
3. **Rhythm** is often called “the pulse of music.” It gives the melody a sense of drive or pause, of agitation or restfulness.
4. The **tempo** is the speed of the music. In music, the same rhythm can be played fast or slow.
5. **Volume** refers to the loudness or softness of the music.

- D. The Apostle Paul knew the nature of man and the nature of music when he suggested that the appropriate way to pray is the same as an appropriate way to sing (I Corinthians 14:15):
1. Spiritually - “with the spirit”
 2. And “with the understanding also” - mentally
 3. Principle: Unless the mind is saturated in biblical truth (a renewed mind washed in the water of the word), the spirit of a person will seek out fleshly and sensual things.
- E. God says, everything has two sides to it – the good, clean, holy aspect, and the unclean, unwholesome, profane aspect. It is the job of the pastor to teach people right and wrong and to command them to stay separate (Ezek 44:23; 22:26)
- F. Music is an expression capable of crossing cultural boundaries, linguistic obstacles, and eras of time. Music can generate emotional and physical responses in human beings without preconditioning or sensitizing education. It is naïve to think that music is beyond the scope of a Christian’s ability to prove appropriateness according to God’s terms. Certainly, a pastor who is engaged in the Word and led by the Spirit ought to be able to distinguish between carnal and holy music in the same manner in which he evaluates literature, art, movies, activities, and any other current social phenomenon not specifically defined in Scripture.
- G. Music that does not conform to a list of biblical criteria is wrong. By the admission of all but some contemporary Christians, there are forms of musical expression which are encourage sinful behavior, rebellion, hate, new age spiritualism, and even paganism. We must through God’s grace, by His Word, and through the help of His Holy Spirit prove all things — including our music.

II. The Power of Music

- A. Music is Not **Neutral** – the music is just as important as the words
1. 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 worship of a holy God.
 - a. Yet, you could not worship God any way you wanted in the Old Testament – see Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-3)
 - b. You could not approach God any way you wanted
 - c. God laid down VERY specific rules for approach
 - d. He simplified those rules in Christ, but He Himself has not changed – you MUST still come: Humbly, Sober; Broken, Sinner, Condemned, Trusting Jesus Christ and Him alone!
 2. The Music behind old silent movies **created** emotion. There were no words to the movies except the text shown on the screen, but the musicians (sometimes a lone pianist or organist; sometimes an orchestra) could create feelings of fear, haste, happiness, sorrow, romance, anger, indignation, tension, and uncertainty merely by changing the style of music. If there was a scene with the bad guy slowly sneaking up on the unsuspecting, sleeping heroin, the music would be tense and gloomy. If upbeat classical or peppy march music were put to 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, because music is not neutral.
 3. Music is extremely important to movies today – great movies HAVE to have great scores that express what’s happening on the screen, musically!

4. If all musical styles are neutral...
- a. Why can an orchestra create different feelings by changing the style of the music?
 - b. Why do pubs and night clubs always play only a certain kind of music? (They know what some modern backslidden preachers seem to be ignorant of)
 - c. Why did the old bluesmen believe that certain kinds of rhythms caused women to be morally loose? (They know what some preachers seem to be ignorant of)
 - d. Why do rock musicians claim that their heavily syncopated rhythm is sexy? (They know what some preachers seem to be ignorant of). Why do these secular rock lovers describe the heavily syncopated rock rhythms as sexy, primitive, seductive, rough, hardcore, 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. Music is a language.
 - e. 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."**
 - f. Why did the 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"?
 - g. Why did the world famous conductor Leonard Bernstein say that “music is a language that reaches the heart.”?
 - h. 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).
 - 1) The word "spiritual" should mean set apart for god, different from the things of the world.
 - 2) A pub or nightclub owner would never play psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs over the music system, even if the words were not included. It would create the wrong atmosphere.
 - 3) Why, then, should believers use the same music that pub/disco owners use to entertain and lull or stir the drinking crowd to their lascivious pleasures?
 - i. If all musical styles are neutral, THAT MEANS THAT THE DEVIL HASN'T CORRUPTED MUSIC. Such an idea is nonsensical. The devil hates God and has attempted to corrupt everything that God has created. Music is one of the most powerful influences in society. To think that the Devil has not corrupted music to his own wicked purposes and for the enticement of fallen man is contrary to everything the Bible teaches us.
5. 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.

B. Music affects **every** living thing – Rock Music effects living things **WRONGLY!!!**

1. It’s effect on Mice

- a. Suffolk, Va. AP- David Merrell assembled three groups of 24 mice. One control group, a hard rock group, and a classical group. The music was played ten hours a day. The control group improved their time through a maze from 10 to five minutes. The classical group improved from ten to two minutes. The rock group went from ten minutes to THIRTY.
- b. David said, "I had to cut my project short because all the hard rock mice KILLED each other. None of the classical mice did that at all."
- c. The entire article was in the 8-10-97 Washington Times weekly issue p. 2, and the daily paper on 7-29-97.
- d. The value of this test was that mice, even the smartest ones with classical music, do not understand ONE WORD of the LYRICS. It is for certain something in the MUSIC itself.

2. Its Effect on Plants

- a. In 1973, a woman named Dorothy Retallack published a small book called [*The Sound of Music and Plants*](#). Her book detailed experiments that she had been conducting at the Colorado Woman’s College in Denver using the school’s three Biotronic Control Chambers. Mrs. Retallack placed plants in each chamber and speakers through which she played sounds and particular styles of music. She watched the plants and recorded their progress daily. She was astounded at what she discovered.
- b. Her first experiment was to simply play a constant tone. In the first of the three chambers, she played a steady tone continuously for eight hours. In the second, she played the tone for three hours intermittently, and in the third chamber, she played no tone at all. The plants in the first chamber, with the constant tone, died within fourteen days. The plants in the second chamber grew abundantly and were extremely healthy, even more so than the plants in the third chamber. This was a very interesting outcome, very similar to the results that were obtained from experiments performed by the Muzak Corporation in the early 1940s to determine the effect of "background music" on factory workers. When music was played continuously, the workers were more fatigued and less productive, when played for several hours only, several times a day, the workers were more productive, and more alert and attentive than when no music was played.



Dorothy Retallack and Professor Broman working with the plants used in music experiments.

- c. For her next experiment, Mrs. Retallack used two chambers (and fresh plants). She placed radios in each chamber. In one chamber, the radio was tuned to a local rock station, and in the other the radio played a station that featured soothing "middle-of-the-road" music. Only three hours of music was played in each chamber. On the fifth day, she began noticing drastic changes. In the chamber with the soothing music, the plants were growing healthily and their stems were starting to bend towards the radio! In the rock chamber, half the plants had small leaves and had grown gangly, while the others

were stunted. After two weeks, the plants in the soothing-music chamber were uniform in size, lush and green, and were leaning between 15 and 20 degrees toward the radio. The plants in the rock chamber had grown extremely tall and were drooping, the blooms had faded and the stems were bending away from the radio. On the sixteenth day, all but a few plants in the rock chamber were in the last stages of dying. In the other chamber, the plants were alive, beautiful, and growing abundantly.

3. It’s effect on Chicken and Livestock

- a. Cows prefer Beethoven to the Beatles. But it doesn't mean they're highbrows, it just means they prefer a soothing beat, say psychologists at the University of Leicester, U.K., who claim that exposing bovines to slow music increases milk yields.
- b. Music researchers Adrian North and Liam MacKenzie involved 1000 Holstein cattle at two dairies in their yet-unpublished experiment, which exposed the milkers to fast (>120 beats per minute), slow (<100 beats per minute), or no music from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day for 9 weeks. They found that cows hearing music such as Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony gave 3% more milk than those with no soundtrack. Fast, screechy music such as Bananarama's "Venus" actually caused a small decrease in production. "We believe that slow music relaxes the animals as it does humans," says North. The researchers now want to test their hypothesis by directly measuring how different musical diets affect cows' stress hormone levels.

4. It’s effect on People

a. Examples:

- 1) Play a waltz for a room full of unconditioned three-year-olds, and they sway gracefully around the room in perfect three-quarter time.
- 2) Play a march, and their actions become soldier-like and precise.
- 3) Play jazz and they will jump and jive frenetically. Play rock and they will swing their bodies in ways they are physically too immature to understand.
- 4) Music affects all ages the same way.
- 5) Jazz is designed to free us from otherwise guarded passions, to loosen the listeners up.
- 6) Rock is designed to unleash pent-up rebellion and suppressed or inhibited sexual desires.
- 7) New Age music is designed to free the mind from logical thought and promote pantheistic, transcendental meditation.
- 8) Easy listening music is played in shopping centres so that people want to stay and relax and spend

b. The “Mozart Effect” – classical background music HELPS learning. Rock music RUINS thought patterns!

c. Rock Music In homes

- 1) Divides the home - Everyone having their own taste
- 2) Drives people’s attitudes against authority
- 3) Damns people from their ability to hear God’s “still small voice”

d. Rock Music (“christian” rock that is) in Church – it has turned our world against the Gospel, against the Bible, against God – no true growth in Christianity since the 70’s

III. The High Value of the “Older” Songs

- A. Hymns are a unity of voices
- B. Everyone may not sing well, but they sing from the heart.
- C. It's not the instruments that's important per se, but congregational singing makes sure the instruments don't get in the way of true worship.

IV. Hymns to Know

A. There’s Room At The Cross for You.

1. Words & Music by Ira R. Stanphill 1914-1994
2. Out of the varied experiences of a fruitful life have come the many moving hymns of Ira Stanphill. As a child he traveled by covered wagon from Arkansas to New Mexico, then later moved to Oklahoma and Kansas. Saved at the age of 12, Stanphill began preaching at 22 in revival meetings and later served pastorates in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas. At 17 he wrote his first gospel song and traveled for several years with evangelists, playing the piano, organ, ukulele, and accordion.
3. Mr. Stanphill began to write his own gospel hymns, and he employed the unusual practice of creating a text from titles suggested from the congregation during a service. He would explain: "The basic reason I have written songs is that I love God and Christ has loved me. Most of my songs are the outgrowth of real experiences with Christ. I think they appeal to people because I have had trials, heartaches, and sorrow in my own life, and I know what I write about."
4. "Room at the Cross" was a title suggested to Ira in 1946 at one of his meetings. He wrote it on a scrap of paper, which he found in his pocket after returning home. Impressed with the title, he quickly wrote both words and music as they appear today. Only eternity will reveal the number who have been directed to Christ through this one gospel hymn that reminds us that there is always room at the cross for one more sinner.



There's Room At the Cross for You

There's a room at the cross for you
 There's a room at the cross for you
 Though millions have come
 There's still room for one
 Yes, there's room at the cross for you

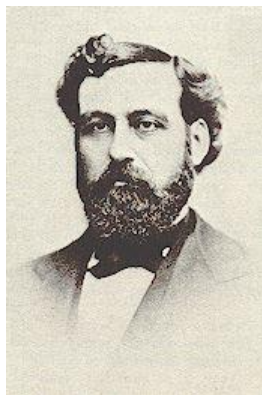
Chorus:
 The cross upon which Jesus died
 Is a shelter in which we can hide
 And its grace so free is sufficient for me
 And deep is its fountain; as wide as the sea

Though millions have found Him a friend
 And have turned from the sins they have sinned
 The Saviour still waits
 To open the gates
 And welcome a sinner before its to late

Chorus
 The hand of my Saviour is strong
 And the love of my Saviour is long
 Through sunshine or rain
 Through loss or in gain
 The blood flows from Calvary to cleanse every stain

Chorus

B. I Am So Glad That our Father in Heaven – **Jesus Loves Even Me.**



1. Written by P.P. Bliss,
2. "I think it was in June, 1870, that 'Jesus loves [even] me ' was written.

Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were at the time members of my family, at 43 South May Street, Chicago. One morning Mrs. Bliss came down to breakfast, and said, as she entered the room: 'Last evening Mr. Bliss had a tune given him that I think is going to live and be one of the most used that he has written. I have been singing it all the morning to myself, and cannot get it out of my mind.' She then sang over to us the notes of 'Jesus loves [even] me.' The idea of Mr. Bliss in writing it was that the peace and comfort of a Christian were not founded upon his loving Christ, but upon Christ's love to him, and that to occupy the mind with Christ's love would produce love and consecration in keeping with Romans 5:5: "...the love of God [to us] is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This view of gospel truth was at this time being very precious brought to the souls of believers in Chicago by the preaching of Moorhouse and Mr. Moody and by the Dublin tracts and English commentaries upon gospel truth, which, through Mr. Moody, began to

be circulated among Christians. How much God has used this little song to lead sinners and fearful, timid Christians to 'look away to Jesus' eternity alone can tell."

3. Mr. Sankey had a beautiful experience with this song. A little girl, a member of his singing-class, lay dying, and as he was talking with her one day she said, "Don't you remember when you were teaching us to sing, 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me,' you told us that if we only gave our hearts to Him He would love us? and I did give my heart to Him." Mr. Sankey added, "What that little dying girl said to me helped to cheer me on more than anything I had heard before, because she was my first convert."
4. A missionary of the American Sunday School Union once sang that song in a meeting he was conducting in a small town in Missouri, where he had just organized a Sunday school. At the close of the song the missionary asked: "Are you glad? If not, why not?" On this a young man rushed up to the missionary, threw his arms about him, and said: "O, that song! I could not keep away from it, and it has saved me."

Jesus Loves Even Me

I am so glad that our Father in Heav'n
Tells of His love in the Book He has giv'n;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.

Refrain

*I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me.
I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves even me.*

Though I forget Him, and wander away,
Still He doth love me wherever I stray;
Back to His dear loving arms I do flee,
When I remember that Jesus loves me.

Refrain

Oh, if there's only one song I can sing,
When in His beauty I see the great King,
This shall my song through eternity be,
"Oh, what a wonder that Jesus loves me!"

Refrain

Jesus loves me, and I know I love Him;
Love brought Him down my poor soul to redeem;
Yes, it was love made Him die on the tree;
Oh, I am certain that Jesus loves me!

Refrain

If one should ask of me, how can I tell?
Glory to Jesus, I know very well!
God's Holy Spirit with mine doth agree,
Constantly witnessing Jesus loves me.

Refrain

In this assurance I find sweetest rest,
Trusting in Jesus, I know I am blessed;
Satan, dismayed, from my soul now doth flee,
When I just tell him that Jesus loves me.

Refrain

C. Rescue the Perishing.

1. Words by Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915
2. Music by William H. Doane, 1832-1915
3. Fanny Crosby, the blind American poetess, has often been called the queen of gospel song writers.



Although she did not begin writing gospel songs until she was forty-four years of age, from her radiant heart and prolific pen flowed more than 8,000 gospel hymns before her home-going at the age of ninety-five, on February 12, 1915. The authoress has left the following account of the writing of this hymn:

4. It was written in the year 1869. Many of my hymns were written after experiences in New York mission work. This one was thus written. I was addressing a large company of working men one hot summer evening, when the thought kept forcing itself on my mind that some mother's boy must be rescued that night or not at all. So I made a pressing plea that if there was a boy present who had wandered from his mother's home and teaching, he should come to me at the end of the service. A young man of eighteen came forward and said, "Did you mean me? I promised my mother to meet her in heaven, but as I am now living that will be impossible." We prayed for him and he finally arose with a new light in his eyes and exclaimed in triumph, "Now I can meet my mother in heaven, for I have found God." A few days before, Mr. Doane had sent me a theme for a new song, "Rescue the Perishing," based on Luke 14:23. While I sat in the mission that evening, the line came to me "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying." I could think of nothing else that night. When I arrived home, I went to work on the hymn at once, and before I retired it was ready for the melody. The song was first published in 1870 in Doane's Songs of Devotion.
5. This hymn, like so many of Fanny Crosby's soul-stirring songs, has been greatly used of God to bring conviction of repentance to many. Ira Sankey, who used this hymn continually in his evangelistic campaigns with D.L. Moody, tells this story in his book *My Life and the Story of the Gospel Hymn*: On a stormy night a middle-aged man staggered into the Bowery Mission. He was intoxicated, his face unwashed and unshaved, with clothes soiled and torn. He sank into a seat, and, gazing around, seemed to wonder what kind of place he had come to. "Rescue the Perishing" and other familiar gospel hymns were sung and seemed to interest him and to recall some memories of his youth long forgotten. As the leader of the meeting told the simple story of the Gospel and how the Lord had come to seek and to save sinners, the man listened eagerly. The leader in his younger days had been a soldier and had seen hard and active service. In the course of his remarks he mentioned several incidents which had occurred in his experience during the war, and he gave the name of the company in which he had served. At the close of the meeting the man staggered up to the leader and in a broken voice said:

Rescue the Perishing

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

Refrain

*Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.*

Though they are slighting Him, still He is waiting,
Waiting the penitent child to receive;
Plead with them earnestly, plead with them gently;
He will forgive if they only believe.

Refrain

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

Refrain

Rescue the perishing, duty demands it;
Strength for thy labor the Lord will provide;
Back to the narrow way patiently win them;
Tell the poor wand'rer a Savior has died.

Refrain

6. "When were you in that company you spoke of?"
7. "Why all through the war," said the leader.
8. "Do you remember the battle of--?"
9. "Perfectly."
10. "Do you remember the name of the captain of your company at that time?"
11. "Yes, his name was--."
12. "You are right! I am that man. I was your captain. Look at me today, and see what a wreck I am. Can you save your old captain? I have lost everything I had in the world through drink and don't know where to turn."
13. He was converted that evening and was helped by his friend to a life of usefulness and respectability. The captain often retold the story of how God used his former soldier in a mission service to rescue his perishing soul.

D. Saved By the Blood.

1. Written by S. J. Henderson, 1902
2. Nothing seems to known about this man!
3. But GOD knows him, and we sure do appreciate his hymn!

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 Now ransomed from sin and a new work begun,
 Sing praise to the Father and praise to the Son,
 Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!

Refrain
Glory, I'm saved! Glory, I'm saved!
My sins are all pardoned, my guilt is all gone!
Glory, I'm saved! Glory, I'm saved!
I am saved by the blood of the Crucified One!

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 The angels rejoicing because it is done;
 A child of the Father, joint heir with the Son,
 Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 Refrain

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 The Father He spake, and His will it was done;
 Great price of my pardon, His own precious Son;
 Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 Refrain

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 All hail to the Father, all hail to the Son,
 All hail to the Spirit, the great Three in One!
 Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
 Refrain