

Pop Music And The Gospel

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Dear Members of the Endtime Issues Newsletter:

One of our subscribers encouraged me this morning to post this biweekly newsletter no later than Friday so that he can enjoy reading it on the Sabbath. It is a good suggestion and I will do my best to post a Bible Study addressing a current issue every other week, possibly before Friday. If I do not succeed to stick to this schedule, forgive me. Beginning from April, I will be away practically every weekend conducting weekend seminars. This means that I will need to post the newsletter by Thursday. Rest assured that on my part I will put forth my best effort to email you a timely Bible Study every two, or at most, three weeks.

The last Bible Study on "BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH MUSIC," generated an incredible number of encouraging responses. Last night I printed out a dozen of them for my wife to read before our evening devotion. Some of them were from Adventist pastors who express sincere appreciation for gaining a whole new understanding of the distinction between sacred and secular music that existed in the Temple, synagogue, and early church. A pastor said that he was eager to share the new insights with his congregation.

After reading these messages, I told my wife that ten years ago I would have never dreamed that one day I would be able through the internet to share my research into biblical truths with thousand of Christian friends and fellow believers around the world. Truly I am grateful to God for this unimaginable opportunity granted me. Now I am looking forward with great anticipation to my early retirement from teaching at Andrews University this coming June 2000. I have enjoyed teaching for the past 30 years, but I would like to devote the remaining years to study in greater depth those biblical truth that relates to the endtime issues we face today.

A PREVIEW OF THE NEXT TOPIC

During the past few days I have been thinking about what could be the next timely endtime issue to address in our newsletter. In this moment I feel that a biblical study on marriage, divorce, and remarriage should be timely. In my itinerant ministry around the world I have been made forcefully aware of the ever increasing number of broken homes. It would seem to me that there is a real need to strengthen Christian homes, including our own Adventist homes.

What I would like to do for the next several issues is to share with you some of the highlights of my research on marriage, divorce, and remarriage. As you may know, I have written a book on this subject, *THE MARRIAGE COVENANT*, that has been favorable reviewed by scholars of different persuasions. The aim of the book is to help people discover some important biblical principles for building a happy and lasting marriage covenant. I may begin the series with the next newsletter, exploring biblical principles to build a marriage covenant.

What do you think of this topic? Is it a good choice? Feel free to advice me? What other important issues do you think should be addressed during the coming months? Your guidance is much appreciated.

PLEASE TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF THE BOOK-COVER?

The cover of the upcoming symposium on *THE CHRISTIAN AND ROCK MUSIC* was posted today, Friday March 10, 2000, at my website:

<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com> or directly at
<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/rockbook>

If you have a moment to look at it, I would greatly appreciate receiving your comment. The cover is designed by one of our subscribers, Donald J. Wood, a student at the School of Journalism at Indiana University. I told Don that I would share his art work with you and pass on to him any constructive criticism you may wish to offer. Thank you for your suggestions.

God willing, the symposium should go to the press within two weeks. All the contributors, except one, have submitted their essays, which we are now editing. The last remaining essay should arrive this weekend. For me it has been a growing experience to learn so many new things about both sacred and secular music. Especially thrilling has been for me to read the outstanding essays of our contributors. Truly, they have blessed my soul and I know they will be a blessing to you. You have already read the inspiring testimony of Brian Neumann.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR OF THIS ESSAY

For this newsletter I would like to share with you one of the two chapters contributed to our symposium on *THE CHRISTIAN AND ROCK MUSICI*, by Prof. Calvin Johansson, a leading authority on church music and author of two classic books, *MUSIC AND MINISTRY: A BIBLICAL COUNTERPOINT* and *DISCIPLING MUSIC MINISTRY: TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY DIRECTIONS*. Incidentally, Prof. Johansson has served as an external examiner for the doctoral dissertation of Wolfgang Stefani, presented here at Andrews University. Dr. Stefani is also a contributor to this symposium.

The chapter you are about to read by Prof. Johansson will help you understand the fundamental differences between the values and goals of pop music and those of the Gospel. Eight specific areas are compared and contrasted. I found this essay very enlightening and I greatly honored that Prof. Johansson condescended to contribute two chapters to our symposium. Tell me what you think of this essay. The other chapter on "How Pop Music Entered the Church" is equally informative and you will read it when the book comes out.

You might be interested to know that in the last telephone conversation with Prof. Johansson we spent about an hour talking about some of the distinctive Adventist beliefs, especially the Sabbath. He expressed a genuine interest to study our beliefs and asked me to mail you several of my books which I was happy to do. We plan to interact together in the months to come. I found him to be a sincere and gracious gentleman, eager to understand and experience more fully biblical truths.

A CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE BOOK *SHALL WE DANCE?*

You may recall that in my last newsletter (no. 39) I referred to the symposium *SHALL WE DANCE?*, stating: "The symposium was authored by 20 Adventist scholars and youth leaders who conducted what is known as "Valuegenesis Study" on how well does the church transmits its values to its youth. The study was conducted under the sponsorship of the North American Division of SDA. On the subject of dance, the book explicitly states: "Dance is a component of divine worship. When we study Scripture we find that what it says about dance and dancing is not only *not* condemnatory, but in some cases positively prescriptive."

A church leader alerted me to the fact that the above statement is inaccurate in two ways: (1) Only two of the twenty contributors to the book *SHALL WE DANCE?* participated in "Valuegenesis Study," and not all of them, as my statement suggests. (2) The North American Division does not endorse the ideas found in *SHALL WE DANCE?* or any other book produced as an outgrowth of Valuegenesis.

Let me respond first by apologizing for the inaccuracy regarding the contributors to the book *SHALL WE DANCE?* The fact that there appears splashed across the front cover "VALUEGENESIS," gave me reason to believe that all the 20 names listed on the cover were connected with the study. I should have checked into the matter more fully.

Regarding the second observation that the North American Division does not endorse the ideas contained in the book *SHALL WE DANCE?*, I am troubled by the fact that the back cover of the book explicitly states: "This volume is the fourth in a series of Project Affirmation publications jointly sponsored by the Department of Education of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, the John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry, La Sierra University, and La Sierra University Press."

It would seem to me that if a book is sponsored by four major Adventist institutions, its content reflects, at least to some extent, the views of the sponsors. For the future it would be advisable for books of this nature, which blatantly misrepresent the position of our Adventist church, to be published privately, without any sponsorship from Adventist institutions.

This is what I have done for the past 23 years. I have published privately my own books, without seeking sponsorship or endorsement of Adventist institutions. This means that if some of the conclusions of my research differ somewhat from the traditional Adventist position, the image of the church is not affected because of the private nature of my research. At any rate it is reassuring to know that our church leaders do not endorse the view that "Dance is a component of divine worship."

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ENJOY A VIRTUAL SABBATH TRAIL?

If the weather is not conducive to a pleasant outdoor walk this Sabbath, why not enjoy a virtual walk on the internet of a unique SABBATH TRAIL? By walking through the trail, you read the story of the Sabbath on engraved granite markers in a nature setting. You can also listen to audio narratives by Pastor Merlin Knowles who was the architect of the Sabbath Trail. Web site is: <http://www.tagnet.org/washington>

POP MUSIC AND THE GOSPEL

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Analyzing the characteristics of popular music,¹ a genre which includes many styles, must of necessity be quite general. The traits mentioned here are endemic to all of them. It should also be noted that within each category of popular music, from rap to Broadway to CCM, there are levels of worth. Music is not all of the same quality.

Obviously, the broad category of popular music in no case has the standard of excellence found in art music, a music of great integrity and depth. If it did, it would by definition no longer be popular music. "Pop," as I am using the term, refers to that which is made for the express purpose of becoming popular at the expense of those compositional traits which yield a music of artistic greatness.

Objectives of This Chapter. This chapter attempts to help the reader understand the fundamental differences between the values and goals of pop music and those of the Gospel. Eight specific areas are compared and contrasted. The analysis of these areas show that pop music is inimical to the gospel and can ultimately pervert its meaning and relevance for today.

Entertainment Versus Edification

The first and most obvious trait of all pop music is that it is entertaining, a fact generally missed by those who use religious pop music in worship. Nevertheless, entertainment is at its very heart. Myopic and narcissistic, pop is oriented around musical pleasure based on individualistic whim and caprice rather than on objective musical value and worth. No matter how vehemently people deny it, pop entertains. That is why it exists.

Pop musicians know this and readily design their renditions to be frivolous, if not witless. This fun music with its constant bombardment of musical silliness tends to reform the listener in its own image; a result which eventually may turn out to be anything but "fun." Again, easygoing, breezy, informal, mad, wild, secular, or Christian, pop music has at least one thing in common—it all entertains.

Pop's musical composition insures that this is so. Entertainment occurs when music is crafted devoid of musical reason. Harmony, melody, rhythm, and timbre are shaped to be fun and viscerally stimulating. Without theoretical depth, pop utilizes a construction which is empty of serious musical thought. It is one-sided, costing the listener little in the way of intellectual investment. Sweet, sour, saccharine, or belligerent, pop washes over the listener with gay abandon. Its purpose, its *raison d'être*, is to amuse.

The Gospel Is Not Entertainment. Gut-wrenching, life-changing redemption has little in common with amusement. Jesus' sacrifice was not an idle pastime. Nor is the life He calls us to either frolicsome or filled with tomfoolery. Christians are called to a life that is painful at times and yet is sometimes full of unspeakable joy. The Christlife was never intended to be frivolous or supercilious. Further, the worship of the Saviour, the One who suffered, died, and rose again to give us new life, ought not reflect popular culture's contemporary predilection for trivialization.

Worship which focuses on providing the worshiper a rollicking good time is sacrilege. In accommodating the gospel to society's love of entertainment, worship is turned around 180 degrees. Even though we believe such worship is directed toward God, in reality it is directed toward people. What we utilize in worship is that which pleases us, the created. We want things we like—things which feed our selfish drive for having a good time. Naturalism's hedonistic tendencies end up in the house of the Lord. In fact, worship which is based on its entertainment quotient is idolatrous. The worshiper is worshipping himself or herself.

It should be obvious that to use popular music of any type in worship simply turns worship into entertainment, no matter what category, stripe, style, or subspecies of music it is. Whether rock, CCM, swing, or ragtime is used, the end result will be the same: convoluted worship, trivialization of the faith, and immaturing of the believer.

On the other hand, great music edifies the listener. The composer invests in the work musical traits which call the listener to reflect seriously on levels of musical content that go beyond the temporal. With emotional and intellectual balance as a result of competent craft, musical depth in great music sympathetically resonates within the heart and mind of the listener in the manner of a gestalt.

Those who give their whole beings to a piece of fine music are translated to realms beyond description. They are enlightened and moved. These experiences leave them with a sense of wonderment. In the manner of general revelation, the listener is built up and edified. Far beyond entertainment, fine music brings one face to face with a world which reflects God's glory.

Novelty Versus Creativity

Popular Music Is Novel. It relies on facile decoration (often obnoxiously obvious!) to provide the illusion of true creativity. It requires constant changing because it doesn't wear well. The Top 40 are a case in point. Continual dropping and adding of titles indicate how the genre needs the momentum of change to stay alive.

Disposability supports a kind of fad approach to composition which pop music must have in order to survive. Integrity defaults to expendability. Pop music cannot tolerate the degree of creativity that art music demands because then it would cease to be pop. Novelty depends upon hype and gimmicks, plentiful in the annals of pop history.

Some of the more extreme innovations are not only novel; they are bizarre. Biting the head off a dove or amplifying the throbbing thump of an ear-splitting trap set may be novel, but they certainly have little to do with creativity may be defined as making with imagination and integrity. Imagination comes from the innate talent and vision that an artist possesses.

The competence of compositional craft determines the work's integrity. Both imagination and craft are necessary. It is a fallacy to think of creativity (in the sense we are using the term) as simply "newness." In fact, creativity only exists as it mirrors, haltingly to be sure, the creativity of Almighty God. When God looked back upon the world that He made in the initial creation, the Bible says that "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."² This is a statement of quality. The creation was not only created, it was created good. More than that, it was created with a high degree of excellence; it was created *very* good.

Creative Excellence. God, the "Maker of heaven and earth," saw fit to tell us of His creatorship at the outset of His revelation to us. Further, He tells us that we are made in His image. Among the various ways that His image is shown in us, certainly the one which stands out among all the others, is the fact that we have been made in the image of a creator. When reading the Bible from the beginning, the narrative begins with the fact of God's existence. Then there is a recounting of the initial creation. When we come to verse 26 of Genesis 1, the only things we have been told about Him is that He exists and that He is a creator. "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" leads to the logical conclusion that we have been made *creators* in the likeness of a *Creator*.

Creativity is no small thing. It is the first thing we know about God and the first thing we know about humans, which gives it a certain priority. The councils which framed the creeds (such as the Nicene and Apostles' creeds) recognized the importance of God's creatorship by affirming it at the outset of each formulation: "We believe in one God, the father, the almighty, *maker* of heaven and earth." And again "I believe in God, the Father almighty, *maker* of heaven and earth."

When using God's creativity as a model, it is imperative to note that whatever He made, it was made excellently. Even more to the point, the products of God's creativity were not banal, trite, mad, or wild. They were not casual, hackneyed, or stereotyped. They were not easygoing, trifling, silly, or wacky. Nor were they disposable or expendable. To be sure, when Adam and Eve disobeyed in the garden, all of creation was brought under the curse of sin. But even so, we see a level of creation which defines for us creative excellence.

Pop Music Lacks Creative Excellence. Popular music does not aspire to the highest degree of creative excellence. It is too facile, too obvious. It lacks the musical craft and imagination of great music. While some pop songs may be better than others, none rise to the level of excellence found in serious music. It may be novel, but it does not have Godly creativity.

Since pop has no musical depth (as in art music), the inevitable conclusion is that pop creativity and Godly creativity run counter to one another. This makes pop an inadequate medium for theistic witness. Since one of God's main attributes is His excellent creativity, we testify about Him best when our church music witness is deeply creative. Novel church music may be fun to listen to, but musically it suggests that the Christian faith is similarly slick. It implies that the author of such a superficial faith is likewise a creative lightweight—hardly a fitting representation of God Almighty.

We know that Jesus, as agent of creation, literally holds the universe(s) together by the power of His word. *Creatio continua*, God's continuing creation, speaks eloquently of His power to sustain what He originally created and that that sustainability is just as creative as the original creation. Moreover, God chooses to work through humans in the continuation of creation. He has given us a creation mandate to fulfill the potential He placed in the world at the beginning. Hence, humans are arms of God's *creatio continua*.

If humans are to be God's creative agents, the Church should realize that it too is part of God's creative call. The Body of Christ on the earth, in its representation of what it means to witness to God's grace, should include works of the highest creativity of which humans are capable. The corporate worship of the Church is its collective witness. Can one omit the musical means of Godly creativity and expect good witness through forms which are absolutely poverty stricken?

Popular culture has so captured the minds *and* hearts of the Church that, without a second thought, worship has become stripped of much musical creativity. This lowers the standards of the Church in order to meet the approval of the wider culture. Ought the Church be a warmed-over version of the society it is trying to save? That does not make sense. What is needed is firm resolve. A beginning would be to avoid pop church music which is reminiscent of our culture's infatuation with the novel. We should rely instead on that which has inculcated in it the Godly attribute of high creativity.

Immediate Gratification versus Delayed Gratification

The general aesthetic principle upon which pop is based is immediate gratification. This principle, more than any other, defines the genre. Every aspect of the musical structure, whether melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, or form, is built upon the notion of supplying musical gratification in the quickest, most direct manner. Little aesthetic subtlety exists in pop. Just as our culture is one of credit card immediacy NOW, so pop mirrors culture by being a music of expeditious indulgence NOW.

Immediate Gratification. The music of pop is conspicuously easy to assimilate. This fact alone accounts for the rapidity with which it wears out. The musical components of pop rarely outlive the listener's interest in them. They are composed for easy assimilation which provides no significant challenge to the listener. That which is fully comprehended is as interesting as yesterday's newspaper. Nostalgia excepted, new

songs supplant the old in an endless parade because the aesthetic principle of immediate gratification demands constant turnover if the genre is to be perpetuated.

Leonard Meyer has shown that when musical goals are “reached in the most immediate and direct way,”³ aesthetic value is slight. In addressing pop and art music, Meyer suggests that the difference between “art music and primitive music lies in speed of tendency gratification. The primitive seeks almost immediate gratification for his tendencies whether these be biological or musical. Nor can he tolerate uncertainty. And it is because distant departures from the certainty and repose of the tonic note and lengthy delays in gratification are insufferable to him that the tonal repertory of the primitive is limited, not because he can't think of other tones. It is not his mentality that is limited, it is his maturity. Note, by the way, that popular music can be distinguished from real jazz on the same basis. For while ‘pop’ music whether of the tin-pan-alley or the Ethelbert Nevin variety makes use of a fairly large repertory of tones, it operates with such conventional cliches that gratification is almost immediate and uncertainty is minimized.”⁴

The speed of tendency gratification is an indicator of musical value. Pop's goal-inhibiting tendencies are negligible; art music's CHECK THIS PHRASE are significant. To the degree that the final tonic, for example, is creatively worked toward, the ultimate arrival of the concluding cadence postponed until the subtly crafted digressions have been worked through, is the degree of value a piece has attained.

If there ever was an aesthetic principle which perfectly matched a culture, it is this principle of immediate gratification. From “How to Play the Piano in Ten Easy Lessons” to instant mashed potatoes to contractual theology to sex outside of marriage, the prevailing attitude of our culture is to consummate desire with an immediacy which finds delay repugnant.

Such practice cuts across the broad cultural front and is strongly ingrained in the collective psyche. It is clearly seen in the casual attitude toward fornication and adultery. If immediate gratification has bent morality to its own norms, how much more should we expect that it has done the same to society's aesthetic appreciation. This is why pop is a musical analogy of our culture's values.

Delayed Gratification. The opposite corollary of immediate gratification is delayed gratification. It is one of the key aesthetic principles employed in the creating of music of integrity and worth. My experience over a lifetime of rehearsing college and church choirs has been that music of delayed gratification wears well over weeks and months of rehearsal. But popular music of whatever ilk does not fare as well.

Choristers tire of rehearsing its predictable tunes and harmonies. In spite of any technical difficulty, when musical components exude obvious musical patterns that are trite, the very thing that makes the music popular in the first place is the very thing which kills it in rehearsal. The same can be said for careful listening. Pieces which can be assimilated without travail, so to speak, do not have the power to engage the listener for long.

The mystery is gone, the challenge dissipated, the music plastic. But music built on delayed gratification has built into it distance, adventure, and challenge. The joy of anticipation is a propellant toward eventual gratification. The process of listening is one of looking forward, of new discovery, of finding in the music a similitude with the human condition.

A Gospel Principle. Delayed gratification is a major gospel principle. Consistent with God's dealing with humanity, the New Testament continues the Old Testament pattern of progressive revelation. From the earliest encounter with Abraham to the ascension of our Lord, “that which is to come” always entices us. Hebrews 11 chronicles heroes of the faith who died in the hope of receiving that which was promised.

The New Testament reveals that Christians will some day sit down at the Messianic banquet. Some day, there will be no pain, no sorrow; some day, we will receive an incorruptible body; some day, the lion and the lamb will lie down together. As stated in the Lord's Supper, Christ has died. That is part of the historical record. It is also true that Christ is risen, but there is also the hope that Christ will come again. Christians live in hope. We do not now receive everything coming to us. We wait until the fullness of time. That is delayed gratification.

Some day we will be completely vindicated. But not now. Included in God's dealing with us is a time line. Life is a process; our Christian experience is a journey. Though we are fully sons and daughters of our Lord at conversion, more is to come. If the Christian life is anything at all, it is a process of maturing—a process of becoming conformed to the image of the Son. That takes time. Full gratification is delayed. The travail of making us into what God wants us to be a mark of our Christian human condition.

The concept of delayed gratification is also a basic life principle. It is the way God made the natural world. Life comes from seed, then growth toward maturity. The end of life is encapsulated in time. It doesn't happen all at once. Additionally, progress toward the eventual goal is impeded by difficulties and detours. These incursions make life a difficult road to travel. Nonetheless, rightly understood, the rigors of life have a purpose because they give meaning and shape to existence.

Pop Music Is Not the Musical Gospel. These considerations should cause us to reject the present headlong acceptance of immediate gratification as basic life strategy. It is not how God designed life. Nor is it the model for the Christian walk. Aesthetic works based on immediate gratification are unable to aspire to greatness because they are out of step with Godly design. As a life principle, a gospel principle, and an aesthetic principle, immediate gratification fails.

Put in this light, why is the Christian Church so enamored with pop music? Pop, based as it must be on immediate gratification, is incapable of being the musical gospel. Its medium of notes, rhythm, and harmony is unable to display general revelatory gospel witness. Pop music simply has little in common with the gospel.

Worship is an activity which ought be consonant with scripture and with the Christian walk. The fact that much worship is being filled with forms of music built on the aesthetic principle of immediate rather than delayed gratification is grievous. Such has all the ear marks of pop worship and has more in common with the world than with heaven. Worship inconsistent with the gospel is, once more, no worship at all.

Low Standards Versus High Standards

Popular music's standard is determined by the lowest common denominator of public taste. Music for the populace means music which rises no higher than the inclination of the least astute listener. It is predisposed toward the lowering of musical appreciation because it does not call for the hearer to rise to a higher level of musical competence.

Low Standards. What is provided is on the basis that it will not be too cultured, too erudite. Twentieth-century pop music decreases the level of musical sophistication. It reflects the adamic nature of sloth and laziness and fosters a declining ability to compose, play, and sing well. People need high aspirations to excel. The problem with pop is that, as a genre, it is fixated on mediocrity.

Conversely, music of artistry assumes the normalcy of high expectations. Composers don't write "down" to an audience, even at the subconscious level. Unlike pop composition, which exists within an assumed framework of the necessity of mass acceptability, art music expects the listener to rise to the standard set by art work. The hearer does not determine the aesthetic level of the composer's craft. Rather, the composition is made to reflect the very highest aesthetic excellence.

Whether performers or audiences “understand” or “like” the piece is not relevant to the compositional process. If the work is at too high a level, the audience is invited to rise to that level. There is no dumping down, no writing down. Great music calls us to be our best musical selves. Its assumption is that people have the ability to make friends with the highest and best forms of art. Quality comes first.

High Standards. Scripture, too, calls for high standards. They are easily seen, for example, in the Ten Commandments and in the Lord’s requiring Israel to remain separate from surrounding cultures. Not so readily perceived, perhaps, are the New Testament standards under grace. Not being accountable to the ceremonial law might seem to indicate a free-for-all. Because humans look at the outward appearance but God looks at the heart, is behavior a concern any longer?

Jesus Himself gives us direction in Matthew 5. Under the law, adultery and murder were forbidden but under His reign lust and anger are also prohibited. It seems clear that a higher standard is set under grace. Now a person’s heart is an additional battleground on which right must prevail. Further, all that Jesus had to say about personal purity, practicing the God-controlled life, giving good for evil, discipline, and the call to leave everything for the cause of Christ shows unequivocally that grace calls us to a higher standard than the law ever did. In other words, grace fulfills the law.

This being the case, little support is shown for popular culture’s propensity for the lowest common denominator. By accepting the basest cultural standards, the norm simply degrades society. If the gospel call is to high standards, then Christians have a duty to promote them wherever they have the opportunity.

High Standards in Church Music. In worship especially we should expect the high standards of scripture to be borne out in the works of our hands. Music in church must be of a caliber that rises above the low musical standards of the world. Simply because a song is liked is no reason to use it. People may be comfortable with it, but acceptance by a cultural milieu of populists and adamic principles placed by God in the natural world, principles which are cross-cultural and timeless, may be circumvented.

Composers and performers are able to do whatever they desire without concern for the musical worth of what they are doing. While this may appear to be freedom, it really is license. It has a cost: poor music. The statement over the court house in Worcester, Massachusetts, is noteworthy: “Obedience to law is liberty.” Extreme subjectivity is an invitation to anarchy. That is the situation in pop music from a compositional basis. Doing that which is right *in one’s own eyes* may seem like artistic freedom. It isn’t. It is artistic chaos.

Biblical theism, on the other hand, is essentially an objective worldview. God is the boss. His Word goes. While He gives us choice, it is choice with consequences. We will pay the penalty for choosing wrongly. Despite the fact that God is mystery and that His Word may be interpreted incorrectly, Erik Routley has asserted that on all matters of importance, God speaks in scripture, if not by direct reference, then by inference. No scripture is of private interpretation. Such subjectivity is extremely dangerous. The objective nature of God’s dealing with humankind ought not be lost.

Theistic objectivity is important because it is a means by which aesthetic worth can be established. Pop practice, based as it is on subjective taste, is a musical genre consistent with naturalistic assumptions and is contrary to theism. This is one reason why pop music, secular or Christian, is unable to be a musical analogue of the gospel. Its nature is so far removed from the locus of biblical revelation that it is actually an anti-gospel form. Great music is based on objective theistic norms. Pop is based on subjective naturalistic ones. Acknowledged or not, pop’s presuppositions do incalculable harm to musical art. They do even more harm to the cause of Christ.

Objective Divine Revelation. God’s revelation to humankind is not a figment of subjective imagination but a matter of objective reality. Reordering of the world via

supernatural directive is entirely consistent with the fact of God's sovereignty. Such interference in the affairs of humans is both authoritarian and commensurate with biblical theism. As creatures, we are obliged to discover the parameters of the Creator's dealing with us—a discovery which is more informed by God's determinations than ours.

Our relationship to God is fundamentally objective. A theist's relationship to the world is similar. This is not to suggest that there is no human tint to what is observed and known; rather, godly precepts and principles exist apart from human observation. Living in a subjectively driven world is difficult. Relativism so infects the atmosphere in which we live that objective judgments are next to impossible to execute, let alone consider.

But consider them we must. If we countenance a crack in one area, it is bound to spread to others. Using objective musical judgments on the music of worship is important. Allowing music ministry to run on the subjective musical taste of worshipers will broaden to other faith/life territory. Because popular music is taste driven, it has a tremendous propensity toward individual subjectivity.

People in control of the musical contents of worship who are unable to see through popular culture and who do not know or do not recognize basic objective aesthetic rudiments choose music on the basis of preference. The objective nature of theism is then musically thwarted. Worship promotes a music which is fundamentally out of sync with the biblical record. In choosing subjectivity over objectivity, worship is based more on subjective taste than on objective value—a human-centered focus. Worship centered on humans becomes worship of humans.

Commercialism Versus Non-Commercialism

Pop music is firmly ensconced in commercial enterprise. Since acceptability determines sales, the music work is influenced by consumers' demand. The imaginative and technical characteristics of popular music as a whole are shaped by what a songwriter knows about the general expectations of the audience. Even musicians who attempt something that is far afield, even bizarre, do not do so without considering its impact on the audience.

Market Driven. Naturally sub-categories of listeners in the pop field are numerous; some are attuned to acid rock, others to country or perhaps CCM, hip-hop, or gangsta rap. Whatever the sub-style, composers are well aware of what it takes to "turn on" their audience.

Successful writers of popular music are recognized not on the basis of the inherent, objective aesthetic worth of their songs but on how many recordings have been sold or tickets purchased. Crowd-pleasing is a must in the popular field. Fads in vogue today will, of necessity, mutate or be supplanted tomorrow. Yet the style has an innate cyclical nature which makes it a natural for commercial, consumer-driven enterprise, so it easy to see why the fickle changeability of the public is so pronounced.

Recently the music arm of Time Warner and EMI announced a 20 BILLION dollar merger.⁵ Considering the millions that are spent each year on popular music of all stripes, these giants sense further money-making potential in the field. Publicly traded, these businesses know that the bottom line is shareholder earnings. If there ever was a question about the profit motive in popular music, it can now be laid to rest. Even the so-called Christian Contemporary Music field is dominated by a few conglomerates.⁶ Art is out. Money is in.

The language used to describe popular music shows its business orientation. Pop music is a product. It belongs to an industry. Song writers are providers and their songs commodities. The music they write and the bands who perform it are mass merchandized for maximum penetration and saturation in a market. Musical production must be vendible. If it doesn't sell, a song is finished. Hence, taste makers try to insure that a particular piece will be profitable.

Air time, performer exposure, advertisements, and widespread media coverage whip up enthusiasm for a new song or album. The costs are enormous, but with standard entrepreneurial practice, the potential for even greater returns are recognized. Pop music is no different from any other manufactured device. It is beholden to business for its very life.

Obviously, composers have to earn a living just like everyone else. The difference between pop and art music that the composer write, however, is that the former is an entity which has been shaped by the necessity of being acceptable. To insure this, imaginative and technical characteristics of the music are influenced by what the composer knows the public want—who, it might be added, are neither sensitive nor able musicians themselves.

On the other hand, the classical composer, taking on a commission for a new work, does not tie his compositional technique to the foibles of the commissioner. Although parameters are often given to the composer (such as length or performance forces), no composer worth his salt would allow his musical integrity to be compromised by strictures to his compositional technique. The making of a genuine work of art is not tied to acceptability.

The composer of art music maintains control over the compositional process. Moreover, its success is not dependent on making money for huge corporations. Its success is determined by its adherence to an objective aesthetic criteria — imagination and technique achieved with creative excellence. While pop is thoroughgoing commercial music, great art has a life of its own, independent of saleability. Its essence lies in aesthetic goodness.

The Gospel Is Not a Business. Profit is not its motive. Storing up this world's goods or thinking of the kingdom of God as a temporal entity is antithetical to gospel teaching. Material possessions are seen in scripture as a hindrance to achieving God's best. Yet contemporary business practices are often used as models for church organization and development.

The whole church growth-movement borrows heavily from commerce. Terminology (“sinners” are out, “unchurched” is in), methodology (congregations are consumers), and staff organization (the pastor is the CEO) all come from the business model. A church based on this paradigm is bound to earthly, pragmatic, industrial thinking. Biblical methods are subsumed under an avalanche of “modern” ones. The Body of Christ turns into a firm.

The business model works well for the pop-music industry. Treating music as a product allows it to control the art work from beginning to end. Even in the Christian music world, profit motive and shareholder return motivate the industry. All major labels are now owned by profit-driven conglomerates: Zomba, Gaylord Entertainment, and Time Warner.

Worship has taken on a commercial flavor. Not only does business serve as a model for the church, but commercialism has strongly affected the quality of congregational musical composition in worship. Songs with a commercial aesthetic are being sung, and some churches sing nothing but this type of music. Tightly controlled licensing of these songs protect the rights of the copyright owners.

Thus, churches have to pay a royalty to use most CCM songs, either directly or through licensing companies such as Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI). Now the drive to make money makes church services “markets.” Although the gospel is inherently noncommercial, commercialism shapes the church's worship when religious pop music is used.

Indulgent Versus Disciplined

Popular music of all kinds is musically undisciplined. Its compositional traits tend toward the facile, the manipulative, the effect. It opts for indulgence and eschews restraint.

Without compunction, pop goes for the jugular; aesthetic contemplation, tempered and ordered by reason, is replaced by hedonistic titillation. Popular music provides emotionalistic satisfaction in the manner of a cheap thrill. What is missing is the arduous journey toward the arrival. The travail of birthing something valuable is anathema to pop.

To change the sentimental syrupy melodies of Tin Pan Alley, the brash vulgarity of rock's tunes, the coarseness of country, or the bedlam of rap, a more disciplined compositional approach would change the locus of the genre so that it would be unrecognizable. Pop cannot tolerate musical discipline. Its form has become more and more unruly. Heavy metal and acid will be supplanted by even more audacious effrontery because pop breeds disorder.

Music of Excellence Must Be Disciplined. For example, certain notes of the diatonic scale have voice-leading tendencies which limit the composer's choices. These tendencies come from the natural pull of steps and half steps within the context of the piece's texture. They exist whether we agree with them or not, but good writing demands that they be taken into account. We can ignore them. To do so results in a degradation of quality.

The same can be said for the aggregate processes of composition. One writes in the tension between law and freedom. That tension is compositional discipline. Without it, music becomes either bound or indulgent; hence, great music always resides in the discipline between freedom of expression and the restraint of principle.

Called to be disciples, Christians have a duty to embrace discipline. It is the mark of a disciple. Christian discipline is intended to affect not only religious things like prayer or Bible reading; it also ought to impact family life, driving habits, diets, and leisure time.

Included in such a comprehensive list is music and worship. For composition to be good, to be a symbol of the gospel, and to be useful in worship, it must shun indulgence. The antidote to compositional indulgence is compositional discipline.

Worship Needs Disciplined Music. Our permissive society is so prone to having its desires satisfied, that it is a shock when they are denied. Yet, the gospel is about the fulfillment of one's self-denial. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."⁷

Dietrich Bonhoeffer realized this in his book of *The Cost of Discipleship*. Cheap grace might be fun and entertaining, but costly grace is the grace of the gospel. The counter measure to worship which tends to musical indulgence is the inclusion of disciplined forms in the service of worship. Songs which are more ascetic and classic than romantic and popular promote the kind of discipline necessary to foster maturity. When a parishioner inquired of the late Dr. Erik Routley why they couldn't have particular music in church, he answered, "You can't have it because it is not good for you."

Prettiness/Grotesqueness Versus Beauty/Truth

Pop music endeavors to be pretty (as in the case of pre-WW II popular forms), flamboyant, downright grotesque, or even perverted (as in the case of the post-WW II pop). Needing immediate punch without listener exertion calls pop to be direct and without listener discomfiture. Ease of consumption means just that—assimilation without aesthetic travail. In order to meet this requirement, pop's appeal must be instantly apparent; it has little time to make its case. The first impression of a song either makes or breaks it. Therefore, the music needs some kind of hook to arrest listener interest. That necessity is met by designing the piece around an element which most directly appeals to a specific audience. Early pop music settled on making the tune "pretty," meaning openly affected, gushing, sentimental, or "nice."

Later, other forms of pop grabbed listeners by exploiting outlandish rhythms, or by featuring unmusical vocal or other sounds so loud they tended to mesmerize the

listener. Whatever the case, popular music had little depth because it had to expose itself in a manner which held nothing in reserve. The important general impression of the first few bars of a song allowed no highbrow aesthetic impediments to come between the song and its potential audience. It had to opt for a single, apparent, superficial characteristic which made its case without question. From prettiness to sordidness, pop makes its unambiguous stand.

Great Music Takes Another Tack. The concept of great music is to engage the listener in a consideration of the beautiful. Such an engagement requires the composer to invest levels of imagination and craft which, when contemplated, reveal themselves in an endless array of wonderment and awe.

Artistic beauty has little to do with pleasantness. It goes beyond surface decoration and deals with reality. Artists reveal beauty, not by making something pretty (or as is the case with anti-art, by making it singularly kooky), but by making something wholesome. Musical beauty is very much akin to the Hebrew concept of beauty. “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”⁸ Feet are not universal symbols of physical beauty. Quite the contrary. The theistic view holds that good action makes something beautiful.

Integrity and exemplary action result in beauty. Musical beauty is the result of composition which is put together well and has a requisite component of artistic goodness. As universal aesthetic principles are held to and worked out with imagination and integrity, the art work exudes beauty. Thus, art can deal with unpleasant subjects and yet show classic beauty. For example, Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* is beautiful in its investigation of the horrors of war. Art music’s beauty is not the result of making the piece sound attractive but in making it artistically excellent.

The Bible, too, finds beauty and truth in good action. Integrity and wholesomeness yield beauty—beauty that is not merely the outward appearance of a face, for example, but the inner workings of character. The result of doing the right thing may not appear “pleasant,” but it will always be “beautiful.”

Church Music Mirrors the Gospel. The church needs music programs which disavow prettiness and embrace beauty. Saccharine sweet church music, along with increasingly strident popular forms, need to be eliminated. Worship, if it is to be “worth” something, needs music that mirrors the gospel. Although the crucifixion is not a pretty picture, it is a beautiful one. The reality of Jesus’ pain and sorrow is not avoided or glossed over in the gospel accounts.

Jesus, the Lamb of God, central to God’s redemptive purpose (a purpose planned from the foundation of the world), did what needed to be done and did it well. Gospel-inspired music needs to give the same attention to its substance and style. Rather than focusing on the outward appearance, as is done in pop music, composers need the kind of compositional conscientiousness that yields profundity of craft. The inner workings of church composition should at least display an affinity for compositional character which is inspired by the integrity of gospel truth. The music of a church indicates more than musical preference—it is the people’s collective testimony.

Aesthetic Imbalance Versus Gospel Balance

A key aesthetic concept is the principle of a balanced unity and variety. Such a theorem is fundamental to art of all kinds. Every piece of music ever composed comes under its broad reach: rock, pop, sacred, thrash, or classical. The extent to which a piece fulfills an artistic balance between its unifying devices and its varying ones, we can ascribe worth (as far as this principle goes) to the composition.

This aesthetic principle was placed by God in the natural world. When we look at the leaves of a white oak tree, we can ascertain that every leaf is clearly a white oak leaf. There are no red oak or maple leaves on a white oak. Unity prevails throughout the tree.

Aesthetic Imbalance. Unity is a mark of God's creation; it gives cohesion to every created thing. On the other hand, too much cohesion stifles inventiveness and invites boredom. If we carefully look again at our white oak tree, we notice that while all the leaves are white oak leaves, no two of them are exactly the same. So here we have not only unity but also variety. If only variety were at work, absolute chaos would result. The fact that God made the world well connected yet varied within that connectedness is a clue as to how artistic works ought proceed. Both parts of the proposition are necessary. Unity and variety need to exist in beneficent balance.

Since pop is a music of immediate gratification, it must have some way to accomplish that immediacy. A primary one is to make the music overly repetitious. Pop music is overunified. Certain elements are repeated again and again for the sake of easy assimilation. It might be the reiteration of a cliched harmonic formula repeated *ad nauseam* or a melodic fragment (similarly uninventive) repeated over and over again. Both are without the benefit of meaningful technical variety.

Hardly any pop music exists without the steady hammering of percussion or percussive devices in an incessant cacophony of noise. It is essential for pop to have something about its musical elements which overunifies the form. Much pop of the last several decades gives nihilistic and anarchistic impressions to the listener. Almost always this is accomplished through wild and orgiastic-like singing, playing, and electronic decibel overkill. Even if one can get through this level of chaos, one is bound to find few levels of technical excellence. The impression of complete pandemonium is accomplished through repetition violently, even savagely, executed.

Aesthetic Balance. The best music has aesthetic balance between unity and variety. The numerous ways this can be accomplished marks the profundity of great composition. Musicians committed to honest creativity have at their fingertips a wealth of possibilities which cannot be plumbed even in a lifetime.

God has made the world an inspiration for every composer. At every turn, one finds evidence of the tremendous variety within creation's overall unity. Composers shouldn't try to circumvent God's way of doing things. Listeners also have an obligation to encourage the highest and best arts—those with a balanced unity and variety.

If God so made the world that there is a balance between sameness and difference in nature, we should expect a certain consistency in His dealings with us. One can readily see unity and variety at work in human relationships with the Almighty. God made us all one family (unity), yet each person in that family is unique (variety). His dealings with each of us is tailored to what He knows of our contextual condition. His relationship with each one is personal and individual.

On the other hand, God has certain limits beyond which He will not go. God will not tolerate the breaking of His laws. All who are redeemed must come through Jesus because He is the only mediator between God and humanity. The variety in His individual dealings with humankind must come within the unity of laws He has laid down. There is just balance between treating all humans the same and treating each one differently.

God Does Have a Balance. On a deeper level, we find balance in what are essentially mysteries. Humans are so finite and God so infinite that He ultimately resorts to paradox in relating to His creatures. God is at once up and down, inside and out. He is immanent yet transcendent, loving yet our judge. Scripture tells us that the first will be last and the last first; that in losing our lives, we find them. In weakness we are strong, and in giving we receive.

Life (resurrection) comes via death (crucifixion). God directs the affairs of men, yet He allows us to choose. He is absolute sovereign, yet He gives us free will. One hymn says, "I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew He moved my soul to seek him, seeking me."⁹ Calvinists and Arminians have been arguing the relative merits of opposite positions

for centuries. Each armed with biblical chapter and verse eventually arrive at an impasse. These are inexplicable mysteries.

God has a balance between sovereignty and free will, but it is a balance incomprehensible to the finite mind. Both sides of each paradox are fully and completely true. The sides are not watered down to meet in the “middle.” The balance is something only the infinite can comprehend. The best we can do is acknowledge the mystery.

What is germane to our consideration here is that music is the best language we have for dealing with mystery. It was Van Cliburn who echoed what musicians have known for centuries: “The other arts, though highly inspirational, are not as mysterious as music, for music is something you cannot see, you can only hear it and feel its impact. I believe it was Plato who said, ‘Music is to the mind what air is to the body.’”¹⁰

Church Music Must Have a Balance. Unfortunately, not all music is able to deal with mystery equally. Pop music is made purposefully light and direct so that there is little ambiguity. That is its exact ethos. Not intent on searching out great mysteries, it aims instead for entertainment and amusement. Music of creative excellence and aesthetic balance is able to search out the hidden meanings behind the musical symbols. Exactly what happens is a mystery.

Somehow great art touches a nerve deep in the recesses of the heart and mind. We are transported to realms beyond the temporal. In being lifted up, we touch something of the transcendent. The musical and gospel balance between unity and variety ultimately gives way to a balance that is “explained” only by faith.

Church music desperately needs musical art that reinforces the depths of aesthetic wonderment in faith. Entertaining and titillating the congregation with pop music is a sure way to promote infantilism. Church music of excellence, delayed gratification, and a balanced unity/variety is the gospel in musical action. It belongs in worship. The transcendent nature of great music has so much to give, it is unacceptable to substitute pop music for it.

Summary. The foregoing comparison between the traits of pop music and the characteristics of the gospel can be summarized as follows:

Pop Characteristics	Gospel Characteristics
Entertainment	Edification
Novelty	Creativity
Immediate Gratification	Delayed Gratification
Low Standards	High Standards
Subjective Worldview	Objective Worldview
Commercial	Non-Commercial
Indulgent	Disciplined
Pretty/Grotesque	Beauty/Truth
Aesthetic Imbalance	Gospel Balance

The two lists are strikingly opposite one another. Pop characteristics are antipathetic to gospel characteristics. It seems obvious that a music (pop) which is so unlike the thing it is supposed to represent (the gospel) is unable to embody the gospel in its medium of witness (music). Hence, pop is useless in spiritual endeavor. If it is used, it does the cause of Christ much harm by painting an untrue picture of what the Christian life is.

Because the power of music is so strong, worship music which is consistently entertaining, novel, immediately gratifying, etc, plant the idea in the Christian that faith is like these things. One cannot go to church week after week and be fed religious pop without being negatively affected.

If the enemy were to devise a strategy to keep Christians from realizing their spiritual potential, he could do no better than to include in his plan the use of pop in worship. Yet the incursion of worship and praise music after the model of pop is an accomplished fact in many churches.

Revival of Worship Music Needed. A revival of wholesome worship music is needed. To degrade worship into a religious mimicry of pop culture is not only heartbreaking but an outrage. Every religious leader and congregant should do all in his or her power to protect the integrity of worship. How we worship affects the Body of Christ.

Products of firms like Integrity Music, Inc., Maranatha! Music, or EMI provide not only the general traits of pop, but the more extreme traits of various types of rock music. Driving beats, consistent syncopation, funk-like harmonies, back beats, and clipped, unlyrical “melodic” lines combine in strident cacophony.

The overall musical impression is one of bodily looseness, visceral rhythmic manifestations, and sexual gyration. The vocal timbre called for by this music tells the whole story. Just listen to a professional recording. Hard, harsh, unfocused vocal sounds are the norm. Lyrical beauty gives way to stridency—even brutal screaming. Tension-produced guttural utterances do horrendous damage to the vocal mechanism. They also damage the aesthetic sensitivity of the listener. No one can listen to this music for long before the decibel overload and the nihilistic sounds corrode one’s ability to respond to great music. Adherents of rock dismiss such pronouncements. They tend to call such music simply high-energy music.

For the Christian two things are worth noting: first, rock musicians generally allow that rock is for dance (we’re not talking folk dance); second, the definition of musical rhythm implies flow. Ironically, the incessant hammering of rock’s beat inhibits flow. This type of repetitive pounding immobilizes true rhythm. The rock beat paralyzes and incapacitates the listener into trancelike states of reflexivity. Very little energy resides in immobility.

The Need to Evaluate Worship Music. Worship leaders should analyze the P&W (praise and worship) music they are giving their congregations. It is understandable for busy people to get caught up in an assembly’s preferences (shaped as they are by their daily listening habits) and in the stupendous marketing schemes of P&W providers.

But music directors, pastors, and others need to evaluate what is happening. Believing that anything a worship company publishes is fine because it publishes “Christian” material is foolish. So-called Christian publishers actually ought to be screened more carefully than others because their materials are used in worship.

Conversely, the gospel list of edification, creativity, delayed gratification, etc., are traits which can be found in great music. If music directors and pastors wish to find a music which exhibits these traits, they need go no farther than music which is compositionally excellent. Such music need not be complex. It just needs to be good.

Societal Aesthetic Decline. In addition to concern for the quality of worship music, a larger, more inclusive concern exists. The cause of the difficulty with musical standards in the church is, at bottom, the aesthetic decline of the population at large. If the average level of musical appreciation were commensurate with the norms of great music, music directors and pastors would not foist unwanted pop music on their congregations. Because people either prefer or tolerate popular music, it has been provided. Because the church has bought into the consumer societal model, people eventually get what they want.

One solution to the dilemma is for the church to encourage the making of, performing of, and listening to great music in the everyday life of the average citizen. The church would surely wage an intensive educational campaign if people were losing their ability to read the Bible. Similarly, the church should mount a drive to reinvigorate music-education programs, amateur music making, local symphonies and choruses, and piano

lessons. It should discourage the purchase of pop in favor of “classical” music. It is shortsighted to believe that the Body of Christ has no business with the very things that are causing it so much trouble. We are called to be salt in the world.

Throughout these pages, it has been stressed that popular music is made for entertainment. It is amusement music. The title of one giant company tells it all—Gaylord Entertainment. Word Records and Thomas Nelson were purchased by Gaylord Entertainment for \$120 million in January of 1997.¹¹ The leadership of Gaylord Entertainment obviously felt that the new acquisitions would enhance their product line. It is naive to believe that such musical styles can shed their entertainment stripes and all of a sudden no longer entertain simply because they are used in worship. Calling entertainment music “ministry” doesn’t change its entertaining ethos. It is dishonest to imply that religious pop is anything other than entertainment.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing comparative analysis between the values of the gospel and those of pop music has shown that the overall tone of the gospel shuns popularity. A perusal of Jesus' teachings shows a stringency unacceptable to the crowds He taught. Think about His views on worldly possessions or revenge or turning the other cheek. Recall that although the multitudes loved His miracles, they eventually crucified Him.

Wanting an earthly king to put things right, they were not prepared to deal with Jesus' ideas on the Kingdom. Our Lord knew this. He could not have made plainer the gospel position: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."¹²

Jesus acknowledged that few will choose that Kingdom, the narrow way that leads to life. It has no popular appeal. On the other hand, many will choose the wide gate that leads to destruction. It is the popular way with no Kingdom requirements. The gospel of Christ is a gospel of the hard way, the long way, the disciplined way. Although salvation is free, there is a personal cost in serving God with standards to uphold and right choices to make. The gospel was not watered down for easy acceptability; nor has it been changed to appeal to the adamic nature. The conclusion is inescapable. The gospel was not intended to be "popular."

If the gospel was not made for popularity, it is senseless to put it to musical forms which are made for popularity. In doing so, we promote a different gospel. That is the point of this discussion. Music is not the issue. The gospel is the issue. The problem with pop is not merely that it is poor music; the danger of pop is its diabolical ability to denude the gospel and delude the believer. If there ever was a reason to abandon pop in the sanctuary, this is it. Pop transforms into a caricature of itself whatever it touches—even the gospel.

ENDNOTES

1. Some months after Ken Meyer's book *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes* was published (1989), I received a phone call from him. During the conversation he assured me that he had had no knowledge of my *Music and Ministry: A Biblical Counterpoint* (1986) when writing his book, in spite of the fact that both of us, independently, had come to similar conclusions concerning pop music characteristics.
2. Genesis 1:31, KJV.
3. Leonard Meyer, "Some Remarks on Value and Greatness in Music," in *Aesthetic Inquiry: Essays on Art Criticism and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. Monroe C. Beardsley and Herbert M. Schueller (Belmont, CA, 1967), p. 263.
4. Ibid., p.178.
5. Christopher Cooper, "Venerable or Not, EMI Was Bound to Be Absorbed," *The Wall Street Journal* (January 25, 2000), section A, p. 13.
6. Ted Olsen, "Will Christian Music Boom for New Owners?" *Christianity Today* (April 28, 1997), p. 80.
7. Matthew 16:24, KJV.
8. Romans 10:15, KJV.
9. "I Sought the Lord," *The Hymnal 1982* (New York, 1985), number 689.
10. Van Cliburn, "Great Music a Gift from God," *Arts in Religion* 19 (Winter 1969), p. 3.
11. Ted Olsen, "Will Christian Music Boom for New Owners?" *Christianity Today* (April 28, 1997), p. 80.
12. Matthew 7:13-14, KJV.

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