

(**Psalms 95:16-6**), and a means of worship. We are told to offer up the sacrifice of praise to the God of heaven (**Hebrews 13:15, I Peter 2:5**). So, singing is a part of this spiritual sacrifice of praise and offering to God. Singing is also a means of communicating with God, **Ephesians 5:19**, “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*” and a way to teach and admonish one another, **Colossians 3:16**, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*” The singing of God’s songs purifies the soul and strengthens the inner man, for the Word of God is sung into His people. Music plays a vital role in the life of every believer as well as the life of the local church.

THE POWER OF MUSIC

The power of music is seen not only in the words, but also in the style. In **I Samuel 16:23**, this is illustrated very plainly, “*And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*” According to **verses 14-18**, the Spirit of the Lord had left King Saul and an evil spirit tormented him. David, playing the harp with his hands, brought great comfort to Saul. There is no mention of singing, but just

musical sounds apart from words. Please note that Saul was refreshed and well and that the evil spirit had departed from him. He was physically, mentally, and spiritually uplifted by the music. In the opinion of this writer, spiritual music brings relief and bad music attracts devils. Music, even without words, has power for good and evil. It is a powerful tool. We repeat again, music is not neutral or amoral. The secular world knows this very well, which is why department stores and restaurants have used music to control shoppers in various ways. Music is a language and that is why we are to prove what is acceptable unto the Lord (**Ephesians 5:10**).

CONCLUSION

We must seek the Lord with our whole heart in determining the difference between good music and bad music. We must be able to tell a difference between the Holy and profane (**Ezekiel 22:26**). Singing is a part of God’s witness to mankind. Good singing will make you want to go to heaven and good preaching will tell you how to get there. Remember, there is no song in hell (**Luke 16**) but there is much singing and rejoicing in heaven. Learn to enjoy God’s song here on earth in preparation for the Lord’s coming. Amen.

“*The LORD is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.*” **Psalms 118:14**



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“*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*”
Acts 16:31

The RICHES OF GRACE

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"hath appeared to all men." Titus 2:11

MUSIC

“*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*”
Ephesians

+ Sacred or Secular +

This article will discuss the issue of sacred music in comparison with secular or worldly music. It has once been said, “Let me make a people’s songs, and I care not who makes their laws.” This statement proves that music has a tremendous impact on a people either for good or evil. Music is not for entertainment, amusement, or to humor the hearts of men, but to bring glory and honor to God. Singing or music is mentioned about five hundred times in the Scriptures and no command is more frequently imposed upon God’s people than praise. Christian music plays a very important role in the life of the believer and the local church. Music in the Old Testament was a part of divine worship and also throughout the centuries of the Christian Church.

Adam Clark, spoke this about 200 years ago: “It is too often the case, that in public worship, men are carried off from the sense of the words by the sounds that are put to them. And how few choirs or singers are there in the universe whose hearts ever accompany them in what they call singing the praises of God.”

“Music is probably the most crucial issue facing the church today. There is to be a vast difference between church music (sacred) and secular music. Church music is to be different from anything else in the world. We pray that God will help us in determining the difference between the two.” - Taken from the booklet *God’s Songs*.

The Principle of Music

Music originated with God. Its original design is for the purpose of glorifying the Creator. We need to learn to appreciate singing for there is music in heaven (**Revelation 5**). Music is called, by many, a “universal language” because it crosses all barriers put up by man. Music is probably the most popular activity in the world. It is a part of most everyone's life in that it is listened to or performed by most people. Music, as Scripture, is an exact science in that it is ordered and precise. Neither are to be altered by man in any way (**Revelation 22:18-19**). The Scriptures are written with precision, even to every jot and tittle (**Matthew 5:18**). The same is true with music, which is why we should desire to keep it holy. The music given to us by the Lord is called a new song in contrast to the old songs of the world (**Psalms 33:1, 40:1-4, 144:7-10, Isaiah 42:8-11**). The new song is associated with a new heart, new creature, new life and a new name (**II Corinthians 5:17**). This new song is a song of hope, deliverance, and joy, whereas the songs of the world are of despair and hopelessness.

Sacred music is different from the world in words and style. The word sacred means separated from

common use, consecrated to God and His service, and that which is holy. According to **Ephesians 5:19**, our music is to be spiritual, “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*” The word spiritual is in contrast to that which is natural, fleshly, or carnal (**II Corinthians 2:13, 3:1, 10:1-3**). For example, the Psalms were the Jewish hymn book in the Old Testament. The Psalms are spiritual in that they are written by the Spirit of God. The hymns we sing must be spiritual in nature in that they glorify the Lord in word and style. God’s song is different from the music of the world. Church music is to be different from anything else. There must be a clear distinction between it and the music of the world. The world has their song of the harlot (**Isaiah 23:15-16**), the song of the drunkard (**Psalms 69:12**), the song of fools (**Ecclesiastes 7:5**), the song of vanity (**Job 35:13**), the song of derision (**Lamentations 3:14**) and the song to a heavy heart (**Proverbs 25:30**). These songs are seen in many different styles of music: ragtime, rap, rock, country & western, blues, soul, etc. Church music and the world’s music must maintain a clear distinction between them, and the boundaries are never to be crossed or blended together. Music is not neutral or amoral. It is either glorifying God or man. It is going in one direction or another. It is either headed toward heaven or hell. Sacred music is the only music qualified to be used for the worship of God.

THE PURPOSE OF MUSIC

Music is designed to glorify the Lord in our worship and to communicate truth (doctrine). Music was never intended for the purpose of mere entertainment or to humor the hearts of men. The first song mentioned or recorded in Scripture is in **Exodus 15**. The last recorded song in the Scriptures is in **Revelation 15**. Both songs are songs of redemption and deliverance. In **Exodus 15**, the children of Israel (God’s people) have just experienced a miraculous deliverance out of Egypt through the Red Sea. The song begins with a chorus in **verse 1** and is repeated again in **verse 21**. The song proclaims the redemption and salvation of the Lord. Please consider the **first two verses**, “*Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.*” God’s people are singing people because the Lord is their strength, salvation, and song. In **Deuteronomy 31:16-19**, God told Moses to compose a song that would be a witness to the nation of Israel even after his death. This song (**Deuteronomy 32**) would proclaim the righteousness of God to His people. The content of this song would deliver God’s people from apostasy.

As already stated, music is designed to communicate (**Psalms 147:1**); to glorify God