

CHRIST-HONORING MUSIC FOR WORSHIP – LESSON 4

VI. Melody, Harmony, Rhythm

1. **The spirit** responds to the melody

Eph. 5. 18-19 be filled with the Spirit...

The words, singing and making melody in 5.19 come from two Greek words, *adontes* (singing) and *psallantes* (psalming or putting music to poetry), which is what the word melody means. Melody comes from two Greek words, *meloidia* (choral song, which is from *melos* or tune, and *aidien*, to sing. Some of the confusion among Christians has come from the fact that the translators of the Septuagint took the word *psallo* and used it to refer to the psalms themselves rather than to the melody, which was put to the words of the psalms. This is an instrumental term and refers to the music and only incidentally to the words. Thus when the AV follows the command to be filled with the Spirit with the musical form, melody, it is accurately teaching that this element of music and God's control in our lives are closely related. (Garlock and Woetzel)

2. **The mind** responds to harmony.

The mind is what responds to the intellectual part of the music. This is what joins the melody and rhythm together. A good, correct, and satisfying harmony can only be done by a trained musician. Harmony comes from the Greek word meaning joint or joining together.

3. **The body** responds to rhythm.

As in the body, the pulse corresponds to rhythm. If the pulse is zero, the person is dead, if it is weak, the person is sick, if it is normal, the person is well. So it is with rhythm. The word comes from the Greek, *rheo*, meaning to flow or pulse. The beat of the music commands a physical reaction. In rock, it is sensuality, but in good music it produces the correct response.

Beethoven said, "Music is the mediator between the spiritual and sensual life."

Deuteronomy 31:

Music stays in the mind, even when the mind does other things. This is proven by modern day scientific studies. God used that powerful concept in having Moses and Joshua write and teach the song in Deut. 31. 19-22, for the purpose of remembering Him.

The Lord wanted the people to have this song in their mouths and minds to:

- Remind them of His presence

- Cause His mercies to be remembered
- Assure them of His presence
- Experience His comfort and care

He could have said to Moses, repeat these words after Me, but no, He wanted them to have a lasting impression.

v. 22, for it shall not be forgotten in the mouths of their seed

v. 19, the song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel

v. 20, this song shall testify against them as a witness

Music here reflects the character of God, so we use it to cause ourselves to think of Him. The wrong kind of music points us back to the pit from which we were digged.

Can Christian lyrics make wrong music right?

Secular people understand that music is an expression of the inner man, so why can't we? It doesn't matter if the lyrics are not understandable, the music tells it all. Word painting means that the lyrics demand and obtain, music that makes them understandable. *Amazing Grace* sung to sultry music is conflicting. Music is either moral or immoral, lyrics are Christian or not.

We have four choices in singing:

- Christian lyrics with moral music
- Christian lyrics with immoral music
- Secular lyrics with moral music
- Secular lyrics with immoral music

What are the effects of good words? Example from our church – singing of the songs with words directly from Scripture. Songs such as these are the most easily memorized and remembered.

The power of rhythm:

Carnal rhythms – backbeat drums, sensual techniques, flesh-appealing rhythms, grooves, trances: Gal. 5.19-21 works of the flesh. Rock uses loud volume and beat repetition, which produces rebellion, sensuality, and anarchy.

Non-carnal rhythms – melody is primary, appeals to the intellect/spiritual, true worship in spirit and truth, “bringing into captivity every thought,” “fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

Summary of CCM

CCM advocates fail to realize that:

- CCM denies the fruit of the Spirit of self-control by promoting aggressive behavior.
- CCM doesn't encourage godly behavior in response to music, but rather invites ungodly, sensual actions, thinking, and behavior.
- CCM uses the enticement of worldly music as a means of supposed evangelization.
- CCM doesn't distinguish between moral and immoral musical styles.

VII. How Should We Then Praise God?

Purpose of sacred music: praise and glorify God: man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. At least 100 of the 500 references about music have to do with praising and glorifying God.

II Chr. 5.12, 120 trumpets, 200,000 singers, 4,000 instruments

They practiced, and must have had a knowledgeable conductor.

They sang: "For He is good, for His mercy endureth forever."

The house of the Lord was filled with a cloud.

Unity and praise=power

"When you open your mouth to praise someone, you open your heart to His will and way." (Dr. Frank Garlock). This is true when praising God or your fellow believers.

Some Scriptural bases for praise:

Ps. 40. 3 And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

Ps. 47. 6-7 Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.

Ps. 92.1 It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High: