

A Comparison of Sacred Music

Versus

Worldly Music

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In Today's Culture

What makes a song a sacred song? Is it the words? Is it only the words? Can the music itself be a medium?

SACRED MUSIC

In the New Testament, the sacred songs were labeled: hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs. Hymns are songs sung to God. Psalms are Bible verse songs, especially from the book of Psalms. Spiritual songs are songs of encouragement, exhortation, or testimony. The words are sacred. Without the words, music can show characteristics of godliness or worldliness. The music is sacred in that it portrays the qualities of God: peace, joy, love, or majesty, etc.

Sacred music has a definite melody or melodies. The melody can stand alone or have a supporting harmony or accompaniment. The underlying chords match most of the melody notes. This arrangement lifts the spirit to God. The music shows the character of God in its beauty and order. The mind is educated by the harmonies. The mind is stimulated by different "tracts" in the brain which follow the lines of harmonies whether consciously or unconsciously. The body feels love, peace, joy, etc. Relaxed music relieves tension. Music that is calm—meaning slow in tempo with a lot of consonance (non-dissonant chords)—will relax the mind, calm the emotions, and help bring a meditative quiet spirit. This quiet spirit provides an atmosphere for prayer. In contrast—faster, louder music with lots of harmony, and resolving dissonances, creates an atmosphere of joy and praise. Upbeat music brings excitement and happiness. Solemn music empathizes or reflects emotions of sadness or seriousness.

SECULAR MUSIC

Secular (non-religious) music includes music which is broadly named classical music or classical-style music from the 1600s to the present. This includes concert orchestra music, band or big band music, family movie music, and marches. This music has a definite melody or melodies and supporting harmony. Usually the song begins and ends on the tonic chord or a dissonance that resolves. Throughout, dissonances resolve to consonance. The song has a definite key but even in the development sections the chords still support the melody. Traditional music has form, order, and patterns, whether simple or complex. The mind either consciously or unconsciously registers the patterns of two or more notes either playing at the same time or intertwining with the melody or harmony. The melody shows beauty. The harmony supports the melody and enhances the beauty of the song. The rhythm supports the harmony.

Drums in classical music, in particular percussion in the orchestra or band, add drama to the performance but their role is not for sensual fleshly lust. Percussion's role is to provide rhythm by adding to the structure of the harmony. Some percussion drums play tones and can play a melody. In marches, drum accents are on the first beat of a measure so a person can literally march. The arms and legs are moving in a consistent fixed time. It is the arms swinging, not the hips.

Traditional music has form, order, and patterns. Whether simple or complex, this music shows the ordered creation of orbit, time and space, seasons, etc. Various melodies and harmonies show the creative character of God.

WORLDLY MUSIC

Worldly music is that which has appeal to the sensual, or fleshly desires-- based upon a rock beat. The melody and harmony are there, but the beat is persistent. This is true of soft rock, as well as hard rock. The forerunner was rhythm and blues which is a jazz-based music with a heavy, insistent beat. The beat is there for you to rock your body, and to "swing" your hips. That is the definition of rock---rock 'n roll---which beat comes from the drums. Contemporary Christian music can be worldly. Contemporary Christian music has a worldly beat that is predominant. This is the same beat that the rock radio station has. In addition, there is the appeal to the flesh, mainly by the drum beat, but also by the showiness of the performer for self-glorification.

Twentieth-century music is characterized by: no defined melody, no definite key signature, no consistent rhythm to know the time signature, and clashing tones of prolonged dissonances which the mind and body register as tension. Twentieth-century music tends to be haphazard, which denies the ordered creation of God.

SATANIC MUSIC

Satanic music is characterized by its heavy beat. It is excessively loud. There is a repetition of a few notes over and over. It is destructive to the body literally because of the loudness and pulsating beat. It is destructive mentally because of the hypnotic nature of the repetition and the rebellion it portrays. Heavy metal, hard rock, acid rock, dubstep, and rap all have a heavy beat. Satanic music is aggressive, angry, sexual, demonic, perverted, and profane.

FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4).

Do you really want to be an enemy with God? Worldly music caters to the flesh. Fleshly, carnal music and sacred music are opposites because one caters to the flesh and the other caters to the spirit to bring us closer to God. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:6-8). Did you hear what the Spirit says, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Fleshly music produces fleshly appetites. If you are a Christian, then you should seek to please the Spirit and not the flesh. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh" (Romans 8:12).

There is an admonition to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). The world includes the music of the world. Do not love the music of the world, but instead love godly music which is the opposite of sensual, lustful, prideful music. Love not the world. The worldly music

includes pop, rock, country, etc. It is worldly because it stirs the lust of the flesh. All rock is sensual. That is the meaning of the term rock 'n roll. Rock is sexual. This music directs your eyes to this life, things of this world, to women, to riches. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Worldly music directs your eyes toward self. Worldly music stirs up the me first, I am no. 1 attitude. This is the pride of life. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:16).

Another admonition is the calling of God to be holy. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I [God] am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16). No person is perfect, but we can be set apart for God. Our music also must be pleasing to God and not a reflection of the world and its worldly standards.

Some of the music of the last 100 years has no tonal center. There is a key signature but no clear key, and no clear meter. This defies the ordered creation and the Creator who made the times and seasons in cycles, in an ordered pattern. The thought is: I can do what I want; I don't have to stick to the rules. It doesn't matter; there are no absolutes. There is no God.

"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Corinthians 6:16). The temple of God is the Christian's body. The temple of God, your body, has the Holy Spirit within. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (II Corinthians 6:17). We are separated unto God and our music must be also separated from the world and separated unto God. The rock crowd is not holy, separated for godliness, but on the contrary is worldly, fleshly, and sensual.

The music itself without the words can bear witness to the Creator by showing the character of God. God is the Creator and music can show creativity and diversity as opposed to the monotonous repetition of rock music. The earth and heavens declare the glory of God with their patterns and orderliness. The sun, moon, and stars all have an orbit which can be timed for exactness. Music also has form, patterns, melodies, harmonies, and rhythms that can glorify the Creator. Godly music directs your eyes toward God. It directs your mind to praise God. Godly music directs your heart to worship God.

| Sacred | Secular | Worldly | Satanic |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>WORDS about God's love Christian life Bible words Usually rhyming words</p> | <p>WORDS about Nature Life</p> | <p>WORDS about Lust Pride of life CCM—Christian words CCM—Often false rhymes</p> | <p>WORDS about Drugs Rebellion Anger Perversion Killing</p> |
| <p>TYPES Hymns – directed to God Psalms – Bible words Spiritual songs – testimony – admonition – encouragement</p> | <p>TYPES Classical Traditional Patriotic Marches</p> | <p>TYPES Pop Rock Soft rock Country CCM—Contemporary Christian Music 20th Century</p> | <p>TYPES Hard rock Acid rock Heavy metal Rap</p> |
| <p>MUSIC Definite melody Supporting harmony Rhythm – blending, not overpowering</p> | <p>MUSIC Definite melody Supporting harmony Rhythm – blending, not overpowering</p> | <p>MUSIC Rock beat 20th Century - No direction or progression to melody No definite harmony Clashing tones No defining key</p> | <p>MUSIC Heavy rock beat Excessively loud Pulsating</p> |