

Practical Applications to Music

by Denny Kenaston

The sermon emphasizes the importance of discerning right music by considering the spirit of the music, the message in the words, and the fruit that the music produces in the lives of those who listen to it.

Duration: 59:10

Scripture: Psalm 46:1, Psalm 95:6, Galatians 5:7, Galatians 6:7, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, 1 Timothy 1:17

Topics: "Music"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of discerning the spirit, message, fruit, and lives behind the music we listen to. They highlight the need for music to be rich in the truths of God's word, rather than repetitive or emotionally-driven. The speaker also mentions the importance of sound musical principles and how they have been distorted in modern music. They urge listeners to be cautious of music that promotes adultery, alcoholism, and other sinful behaviors, and instead focus on music that aligns with biblical principles. The sermon references verses from Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 to support the message.

Transcript

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I think we'll begin by kneeling for prayer together. Shall we kneel right here in our seats? Our Heavenly Father, we do come to bless your holy name tonight. We do lift our hands up to thee, dear God, as a sign of our consecration, Lord, to thee, that we have given you everything, Lord.

All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him in His presence daily live. Lord, this is the cry of a heart tonight.

Dear Lord, we just ask you to minister to us tonight. As we study some more about music, Father, we want to be right. We want to learn.

We want to grow. We want to be sound, Father, in our music. For we learned already that music will change us.

O Father God, we do not want to change in the wrong way. Give us wisdom tonight, Lord. I ask you for the anointing of your Spirit to be upon the hearers and on the speaker, Lord, that we might all learn together from thee.

We ask it all in the name of Jesus with thanksgiving. Amen. We want to have another lesson this evening on right principles of music.

I entitled my lesson this evening, Discerning Right Music. I'd like for us to read verses I believe that have already been read, but I'd like to read them again in Ephesians chapter 5 and Colossians chapter 3. Discerning Right Music. We'll read Ephesians first.

Ephesians 5, 18 and 19. And then Colossians 3 and verse 16. And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

And over in chapter 3 of Colossians verse 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. Here, I believe, is God's clearest revelation in the New Testament that He gives us to guide us to have right principles and right music in our lives.

These two verses that we've read. First of all, I'd like for us to look at the source of our right music. I'd like us to look at two different sources.

The first one is found in Ephesians 5, 18. It says, be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. That's the first source by which our music should come forth from.

A heart that is full of the Holy Ghost. That is not an accident that the verse right there comes right ahead of the verse about speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. It's not an accident.

The one is the fruit of the other. The songs, the hymns, the spiritual songs, the singing with grace in our hearts, it comes out of a heart that's full of the Holy Ghost. And then also, we see more of the source of this singing.

And it's found in the first part of Colossians 3, verse 16, where it says, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. And that word richly there means a whole lot of it. Let your heart be full of the words of Christ.

So if we can just get the picture. Look up here, young men, look up here. If we could just get the picture.

I've got a burden on my heart tonight. I'm sorry, but I've got a burden on my heart. And I would have to admit that the young people is part of the burden on my heart.

So I'm pleading with you. I'm pulling your eyes up this way. If you see something that distracts you, I'll help you come back up this way.

God's Word says two things should be filled full in our heart in order for the right kind of music to come forth. In order for us to have the right kind of discernment of music. And that is a heart that is full of the Holy Ghost and a heart that is full of God's Word.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. And then we find the verses again. Teaching and admonishing one another in songs and hymns and spiritual songs.

And over here in Colossians it says, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. So the first thing we notice in these two verses is the source of our discernment of music. The second thing is the purpose or one of the purposes of music.

But we see one of the purposes of music right here in these two verses. And it's in both of them. And that is Ephesians 5, verse 19, speaking to yourselves in songs and hymns and spiritual songs.

So in Ephesians it talks about speaking to yourself. That's the purpose for right music. It should be speaking to us constantly.

And over in Colossians it says, teaching and admonishing one another. Now here it has the effect more of a corporate thing. Whereas back and forth, we're teaching and admonishing one another.

The word teaching, I think that's self-explanatory. But the word admonishing, it means warning one another. Teaching one another and warning one another with songs and hymns and spiritual songs.

So you see, one of the main purposes for spiritual music is for the purpose of instructing our own hearts and instructing each other and warning each other. And let us just go back to the context of these verses. Here we have hearts that are full of the Holy Ghost and full of the Word of God, richly full of the Word of God.

And then with that kind of heart, we're going to be teaching and admonishing one another. We're going to be speaking to our own hearts with songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Alright, the third thing we want to notice in these verses is the type of music that God wants us to use.

He even gives us some insight there. He uses three different words. And I studied these in detail today.

Songs, hymns and spiritual songs. The word songs means the psalms. The New Testament Christians, they sang the psalms.

The Old Testament Christians, they sang out of the book of Psalms. It was their songbook. And for the early church, it was still their songbook.

It wasn't the only thing they used. But the psalms was their songbook. So God inspired that to be reaffirmed in the New Testament.

I want you to sing out of My songbook that I gave you using My words that I breathed out into holy men of old by the Holy Ghost. That's the first thing God says. Number two, then it says hymns.

Now, I studied hymns. Now, when it says hymns there, it means songs of praise other than the book of Psalms. We sang number 19 tonight.

Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of His holiness. That is a hymn. It's a song that gives us an opportunity to give praise unto our God.

And then third of all, it says spiritual songs. And spiritual songs are any songs that are packed full and past the requirement of being a spiritual song. They are full of the Word of Christ.

They are full of the Spirit of God. Some of the songs that were given, that it was mentioned in the books as I studied, some of the songs that were sang in the early church would have been 1 Corinthians 13. They sang that.

That was a spiritual psalm. It wasn't a psalm. It wasn't an Old Testament psalm.

It was not a hymn, a song of praise other than what's in the book of Psalms. It was a spiritual psalm. Another that they sang was the song of Moses, which would have been in the Old Testament, but not in the book of Psalms.

Another one they sang is in Timothy. And I don't know, let's see how it goes. Now, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, the honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen. They sang that verse. New Testament Christian.

I don't know if you know the tune to that, but there's a tune to that. To those very words. So, third of all, we notice the types of music that God gives.

Another illustration of a spiritual psalm would have been number 777. A mighty fortress is our God. That's an illustration of a spiritual psalm.

It's not a hymn of praise. It's not out of the book of Psalms, but it is full of spiritual truth and it passes the test that it's full of the Holy Ghost and it's full of the Word of God. It's a spiritual psalm.

And then fourth of all, in these verses, we notice the posture of the singing. And here is the true posture for all singing, and that is worship. Notice it in both of these.

Making melody in your heart to the Lord, it says in Ephesians, and in Colossians it says, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. That's the posture of spiritual music. It comes out of a heart of worship.

It should be done as an avenue of worship to God. Can we see the purity of the principles that God is giving to us here in the New Testament? Purity of principles. Now, the lesson this evening, it came out of a burden of my own heart to make the lessons that we've already had more practical.

It's good for us to look at the principles, but we need to take a look at the application to the principles or many of us here won't know what some of those principles mean. I have two things in mind. Number one, I do have in mind some correction of some of the music that we use, listen to, or sing.

And number two, it's motivational. My heart's desire is to motivate all of us to want the music that truly passes this pure test of Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3. That's my heart. To motivate us to say, that's the kind of music I want.

Now, music affects the spirit, the soul, and the body. Music affects all three. That's one of the principles that Bill brought out.

It has an effect upon us. I believe that Christian music that passes the test that was just given affects, first of all, the spirit. And we can tell that by just looking at the criteria that was given.

The purity of the music. The purity of the doctrine of the music. Done in worship.

We can see that Christian music should first of all minister to our spirit. That's where it should be directed. Then, after it has ministered to our spirit, it's going to affect our soul.

That's our mind, our will, and emotions. We're going to understand something from it. We may be taught something by it.

There's our mind, our emotions. We might be moved to rejoice. We might be moved to sorrow at heart as we're singing a song.

There's our emotions. It will affect our emotions. And then also, our will.

We may be moved to a decision. And in fact, if we're truly singing or listening to right music, it ought to affect our soul in such a way that it changes our actions. That is the way that music is supposed to have an effect upon us.

It ought to bring our spirit up to God. It ought to make our spirit soar heavenward. And it ought to change our thinking, motivate our emotions, maybe to tears, maybe to joy, maybe to sorrow, or whatever.

And it ought to motivate our actions or change our will and redirect our lives. And then last of all, music affects the body. It moves us to do things.

And I might say, a lot of music affects the body more than anything else. But I don't believe that Christian music ought to have much effect on the body at all. I don't believe it ought to.

If it's truly spirit-centered, it's going to have its strongest effect on our spirit. And second of all, it's going to affect our soul. And last of all, it's going to affect our body.

We had a very revealing thing the other evening. We had a meeting up there at... Where is that church building at? Millbox. We had a meeting up at Millbox.

And we sang in a building where the floor is wooden for a while. And all of a sudden, I realized, hey, this whole place is just rocking with these songs. And all the feet were going and you could hear it hitting the floor all over the place.

You don't notice it here. We have cement floor and carpet on it. But I was realizing, hey, this music is really affecting our bodies.

I wonder if it's supposed to be affecting our bodies that much. I wondered that. Now, music has three functions.

And some of this is already a repeat. Number one, it should edify our spirit. Number two, it should instruct and convert our soul.

And number three, it should allow us to worship God. It is an avenue by which we can worship our God. If music is aimed at the soul or aimed at the body, it is not going to have the same effect as music that is aimed at the spirit of man.

I think we can all agree with that. It's not going to. An emotional song that has an effect upon our emotions and that's all, is not going to change us.

In fact, some people have spirit and emotions all mixed up. I've heard people say when they heard an emotional song and I could tell so clearly that's all it was, was a song to stir the emotions. I've heard people say, praise God, there's an anointing on that song.

And I think to myself, do we understand the difference between spirit and soul? If we hear a song that moves the emotions, it's a song of emotion and it chugs that old heart because we hear it. And then when we finish hearing that and wipe the tears away from our eyes, we say, boy, that song really had an anointing upon it. I wonder if we understand what the anointing of God's spirit is when we do that.

I've heard that said many times. So how do we discern right music? Five ways this evening. Five ways to discern right music and I'll give the five and then we're going to go down through them and I'm going to use some practical illustrations this evening.

First of all, we need to discern the spirit of the music. Second of all, we need to discern the message of the words in the music. Third of all, we need to discern the fruit that this music produces in the lives of those who listen to it.

Fourth of all, we need to discern the lives of the musicians who produce the music. And fifth of all, which I know very little about, we need to discern the music based on sound musical principles. And when I say that, I mean just a sound musician.

You know, when you go to school somewhere and you study music, they teach you sound musical principles. In any school, you'll learn the sound musical principles. Now, after they learn them, nowadays, they muddle them all up, twist them all up, turn them all upside down, but a musician has to first learn the right and sound principles of right music in order to be able to produce any kind of music.

They have to learn those. So I'm saying this evening, while we're discerning right music, we do need to consider, does this music fall along the lines of sound musical principles? Can I have something to drink? A little bit of water? Alright, number one. We need to discern the spirit of the music.

What do I mean by the spirit of the music? The spirit of the music has just as much message as the words of the music do. In fact, sometimes, I think the spirit of the music has more message than the words. I'd like to give you an example of a song that does not line up to the spirit of the music, of the words.

There's a song, and you may never have heard it, but from where I come from, we used to sing a song out of Galatians 5. Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Whatsoever man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Now, we all know as we sit here in this room tonight, there's nothing silly about that verse. That is an awesome verse. If we're going to sing that verse, we better have the spirit that goes along with those words or we're not singing right music.

Here's how we used to sing it. Be not deceived. Be not deceived.

God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Does that line up to the spirit of those words? Do you see what I'm saying? We need to discern not only the words, but also the spirit of the music.

Here's another one. And I'd like for us to ponder singing this song on Communion Sunday because it does talk about Jesus dying on the cross and saving us from our sins. Imagine singing this song on Communion Sunday.

Who Jesus is. He died on the cross to save us from sins. Everybody ought to love Jesus.

Everybody ought to love Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

He died on the cross to save us from sins. Everybody ought to love Jesus. Do you notice the spirit of that song? Does it line up to the words of the song? And could we sing it on Communion Sunday? I don't think I could.

That's not the spirit that I'm in when it's time to think about the shed blood in the broken body of our Lord Jesus. I'm just pulling some illustrations out here to help us to see there's more to music than what maybe we realize there is. And music will change us.

Can you imagine being changed into the direction of the spirit of that first song that I sang? Thinking of God's judgment in a lighthearted way. Can you imagine being changed like that? And this often comes into our lives when we're looking at children's songs. For some reason, we have swallowed the world's idea that you relate to children with silly songs about God.

Is God a silly God when you're little? And an awesome God when you're big? Is God any different? Now, I recognize we don't want to hit the little children with all the songs of judgment. But is God a silly God that the songs that our little children learn have to have a silly flavor to them rather than to have some meat to them? Ephesians 5 says that the spirit of our music ought to line up with the Holy Spirit because we're supposed to be singing with our hearts full of the Holy Ghost. What is the Holy Ghost like? Well, He is joy.

Granted, but He's more than just joy. He's love for life. He's awe.

He's majesty. He's depth. He's all of that.

Number two, we discern right music by the message in the words. And here I'd like to bring out some illustrations again. And I'm not totally against some of these little songs I'm singing, but I am saying, where is our heart? And what do we like the most? And what are we feeding on the most? That is where we're going to end up.

That's where we're going to end up. The message in the words. It should be rich in the truths of God's Word.

Not just a little truth over in the corner. Rich in the truths of God's Word. Here's a little song.

Jesus is the rock of my salvation. His banner over me is love. Jesus is the rock of my salvation.

His banner over me is love. And the song goes on saying the same thing over and over again. It's bringing out the truth that Jesus is our rock.

And amen! He is. But let's compare that with a mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never faileth. In the one song, there's only two truths.

In the other song, there's 42 truths. In that song that we sang tonight, number 777, there's 42 different truths out of the Word of God packed in that hymn that we sang. And God said, let the Word of Christ, let your hearts be full of the Word of Christ.

And then, teach and admonish one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So, Jesus is the rock of our salvation and His banner over me is love. But a mighty fortress is our God is so packed full of divine truth and has such an awe about it while you sing it.

I mean, there's quite a bit of difference between Jesus is the rock of my salvation and a mighty fortress is our God. Quite a bit of difference in those two songs. Quite a bit of difference.

Here's another one. And I think, I think this is a Bill Gaither song, but I'm not sure. And these songs, I've sung them too, so I'm not just picking on everybody tonight.

Jesus is alive and well. Jesus is alive and well. Tell everyone you see, go tell them for me.

Jesus is alive and well. There's a song that talks about the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And it has about five truths in it.

If I would have sung the whole song, it has about five in it. We sang, lift your glad voices, it has 40 truths in it. We sang 40 different truths out of the Bible while we were singing that song tonight.

And then last of all, well, let me say this too, just to show you a little bit the way the children's songs used to be. Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. That was written in 1859.

And it is a children's song. But it has 33 truths from the Word of God in it if you sing the five verses that are written. The children, a hundred years ago, did not grow up on what many children in America are growing up on and calling it spiritual songs.

They didn't grow up on those songs. They grew up on the hymns. They learned the hymns.

They memorized the hymns. So one more song to illustrate it. And this one I bring back from Africa.

And just to show you my heart, I sang this song so many times while I was in Africa the two weeks that I was there. I'm not against this little song, but it just doesn't have a lot of meat on it. A little song that they taught us and we enjoyed singing it while we were there.

Take glory Father. Take glory Son. Take glory Holy Ghost.

I am born again. That's it. We would usually sing it about ten times when we sang it.

Over and over and over and over. And hey, I get a blessing out of that. I want God to get glory.

I want the Son to get glory. I want the Holy Ghost to get glory. And I'm rejoicing that I've been born again.

But that's how they sing over there in Africa. Little bitty choruses with a little bit of truth in it said over and over and over again. Compared, and I didn't want to sing this one because I didn't want to take a whole lot of time singing, but compare that to Blessed Savior, we adore Thee.

We Thy love and grace proclaim. Thou art mighty, Thou art holy. Glorious is Thy matchless name.

Great Redeemer, Lord and Master, Light of all eternal days. Let the saints of every nation sing Thy just and endless praise. Both songs sing about the glory that's due unto His name.

When somebody calls that song on Sunday morning, my spirit leaps within me before we even start singing it because I know what song it is. It makes my spirit soar heavenward. It's a song that genders to worship in my own heart.

So, we need to discern the music by the message that is in the words. Thirdly, we need to discern the music by the fruit that it produces. Since music, one of the main purposes for music is to teach and admonish us, that means it's for teaching.

It's for doctrine. It's one of God's methods to fill the church full of the doctrines of His Word. Right doctrine brings right lives.

And wrong doctrine brings wrong lives. So we need to examine also the fruit that the music we listen to produces in the lives of others. And I'll use this as an example of the one, John and Charles Wesley started the Methodist movement back in 1740, somewhere around there.

1740, the Methodist movement started. Those two men were powerful men. They were men of holiness.

They were men of power. They were men of God. And the music that they wrote produced powerful people.

The Methodist movement is not as old as the Mennonite movement, but the Methodist movement was a powerful movement for God. And for a hundred years, more than a hundred years, a hundred and fifty years, the Methodist church was known by everybody around to be a holy people. Sound in doctrine.

Full of God's Word. Sound in lives. Full of the Holy Ghost.

That is the fruit of the music in the lives of the people. And may I say, a lot of the music that Christians are swallowing today, if you'll go trace it out and see what kind of people, what the people live like that feed on that stuff all the time, you'd be shocked. I told one young man who listens to Moody Station all the time, and I guess there's some Moody programming on the local Christian radio station around this area too.

You'd be shocked if you went to Moody Bible Institute and saw the way the young people live there who are feeding off of that kind of music. You would be shocked. Loose, free lives, shallow, they don't know their Bibles.

Another illustration of that would be the charismatic movement. If I can use that as an illustration, most of the time, charismatic people do not know the Word. They know a few texts here and there, the ones that are very important to them.

Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Corinthians 14, and a few others. They know a few of those texts. But as far as being full and sound in God's Word, they aren't.

They are not. And much of the music and much of the choruses that is floating around now, it came out of that. That's where it came from.

Let us be wise. Let us also look and see what kind of fruit the music is producing in other people's lives. Because you see, the music will change us.

And if we are not sound in our music, we won't know what it's going to do for ten years if we don't open our eyes a little bit, get some discernment, look around and realize, hey, look what it's doing, and look what it's doing over there. And I'd like to say this by way of a little bit of qualifying. In the charismatic movement, they are at the height of their spiritual power.

That's what they would say. They are at the height of their spiritual power. And this is the music that is coming forth.

And look at the lives that it produces. Then go back to the Methodist church back in 1740 when it was at the height of its spiritual power. And look at the lives that it produced for 150 years.

Granted, some of these hymns we sang tonight, they sing them in a dead Mennonite church right across the road over there. Granted, but it's not in the height of its spiritual power. They're singing songs without the power of the Holy Ghost.

It's not going to have the same effect. We have to go back and look at it when it was produced in the height of its spiritual power in order to have right discernment. Number four, discerning right music.

We need to discern the lives of the musicians. And this is a big one. And I plead with some of you young people on this one.

To discern the lives of the musicians. And I cite again the Westleys as a good example for us. I don't know how many hymns John and Charles Wesley wrote, but I know what kind of lives they lived.

Fanny Crosby wrote 8,000 hymns. And I know what kind of life she lived. That woman was an anointed woman of God.

When she walked into the back of a church, people knew she was there. Without even turning around to look, they could sense the power of God's Spirit upon her. And look at the hymns she wrote.

I'm just pleading. I'm pleading for that truth right there. What about the lives of the musicians? The hymns that are in this book, they were all burst during revival.

True Holy Ghost revival. Different ones. Some of them, 1,700.

Some of them, 1,500. Anabaptist revival. Some of the hymns are out of the Anabaptist movement in this book.

Some of them are out of the Moravian movement, early 1,700's. Some of them are out of the Westlean movement in the later 1,700's and early 1,800's. Many of them come out of the revival movement of 1859 that shook almost the whole world.

The hymns that are in this book, they came out of that. Hymns by P.P. Bliss and different men like this. Those songs were written in the heat and depth of revival.

And they're packed full of doctrine. Do you see that those songs that came out of those revival movements, they measure up to God's criteria here in Colossians and Ephesians. It meets all of that.

It came out of a heart that was full of the Holy Ghost and it came out of a heart that was full of the Word of God. Brothers and sisters, Fanny Crosby did not sit down with her mind and say, okay, I'm going to write

another song. Let's see now.

It's got a rhyme. I want this in it and I want that in it. She did not write her songs that way.

She wrote her songs on her knees. They flowed out of her spirit and her spirit was full of God's Word and her songs are full of God's Word. Charles Wesley wrote songs the same way.

They flowed out of a heart that was full of the Holy Spirit and they flowed out of a heart that was full of God's Word. And Charles Wesley's songs, they have more doctrine in them than the ones we just sang and read. More doctrine yet.

Powerful songs full of God's Word. These meet the criterion of what we were just reading here. So we need to examine the lives of the musicians.

Birthered in revival? Or birthered in a charismatic movement? What kind of songs are we singing? And where were they birthered? Birthered in revival? Birthered in a charismatic movement? Or birthered just sitting at home by somebody who decided to write a new song with a different flavor to it? That is not the way that God wants us to follow. He doesn't want us to just pick up any old song that somebody wrote out. That thing has got to pass some very important tests if we're going to feed on it all the time.

Or we're going to be wrong. And last of all, birthered out of a worldly wicked heart. You say, well, we've got Christian country songs at home sang by Johnny Cash and I don't know all the names of those fellas that sing the songs and sell them, but I have one thing to say about that.

The spirit of Johnny Cash comes out of that man when he sings his songs. I don't care what kind of words he uses. The spirit of Johnny Cash comes out and he's a whoremonger and he's a drunkard and he's a filthy, defiled man and he's got a filthy and a defiled spirit.

Why do we want to subject our spirit to that kind of defilement? I say, that kind of music does not pass the test. The musician is way off. It's way off.

And all his music does is feed the soul. It does not feed the spirit. It feeds the soul.

Danger. That kind of music is danger. Danger.

To give you another quote, I'll quote Bill Gothard just a little bit here this evening. A testimony that he gave in his seminar while he was teaching a little pleading with people to use right wisdom in choosing their music. He said these words, many of the contemporary musicians come to his seminars and they seek his counsel during the intermission times and tell him what their lives are like.

They're filled with corruption. They're living in spiritual defeat. They have immorality.

Their minds are filled with immoral thoughts and the struggles of immorality are going on inside of them and they're getting up on stage singing songs, writing new songs, publishing songs, sending them out, making tapes, and they're going out in all the quote-unquote Christian bookstores and people are buying them and taking them home and listening to them and saying, hey, that sounds pretty good. It's a little bit less than what I like, but the words are good, so we'll keep listening to it. And those men's lives are corrupted.

And their spirits are corrupted. And we need to turn that stuff off and get back to some purity in our music. The spirit of the musician will affect us.

Oh, not right away. You won't listen to one like that and then go out and have evil thoughts the next day. It won't happen right away.

But the spirit of an evil musician is going to have its continued effect upon us. It'll have a defiling effect upon us over and over and over again. And if I could just say a little bit about classical music here.

Let's have a little bit of wisdom there too. Some of those classical musicians were filthy men. Homosexuals to the deepest degree.

Vile, filthy men. And they wrote their classical music. And the spirit of that man comes out of that music.

It may not have any words to it at all. And it may make you feel good while you listen to it, but the spirit of that defiled man is coming out of whatever he's writing and whatever he's playing. It comes out.

And this may all sound like, whoa, what is this? This is completely new. And it may be bad medicine tonight, but I'm just pleading with some of you. Consider what I say concerning right music.

And I think just about every father in this room is saying, praise God, praise God. And I'm just pleading with all of us, especially our young people. Let's get some wisdom.

And if we don't have it, let's go to somebody who does and say, here's my tapes. Take care of them. I'll keep whatever's left when you're done.

Some of you would be real smart to do that. And then last of all, our music must pass the test of sound musical principles. And Bill brought some of this out, so I'll just go over it a little bit again.

The melody should lead. In all spiritual music, the melody should be out front. The harmony should be following along after it.

And the rhythm should be in the background. That is sound musical principles. Every good musician knows that.

Every bad musician knows it also. The harmony is in the middle, and twists it and distorts it to come up with a new creation of music. Melody is in the lead, harmony is following, and rhythm in the background.

Now, Bill made mention about sliding notes. And I thought while he was saying it, I wonder if anybody in here knows what sliding notes is. How many of you know what sliding notes is? Alright, more than I expected.

I'm going to give you an illustration for those of you that don't know. I'll give you a little song here that has sliding notes all over it. And by the way, right musical principles would say that is garbage.

Music with sliding notes all over it, anybody who knows anything about music will say, that's garbage. Why are you feeding on that when you can eat steak? That's what they would say. Alright, here's a little bit of a song that has sliding notes all over it.

And I realize you can sing it without, but it's a song that leans toward it and most people sing it this way. Had it not been for a man called Jesus, then forever my soul would be lost. Did you see the sliding notes?

All over through the song were sliding notes.

And those come from the soul. They do not come from the spirit. And they feed the soul.

They do not feed the spirit. Maybe I overemphasized it a little bit, but now you know what they are. Much of what is called country gospel music is nothing but a bunch of sliding notes.

Because that's what country music is. The twang in country music is sliding notes. They just slide the notes all the way through it and then that's called country music.

So, country gospel music is gospel music with all the slides in it also. Other things. Staying too high or too low for too long or staying the same for too long is not right music principle.

And by that I'll just use the example of the hymn, A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. And notice in the melody of this song, it goes up and down and up and down and up and down. And that's right music.

It takes discipline to sing a good hymn. It takes some discipline. We need to put our mind on it to sing it because it goes up and down and up and down.

A mighty fortress is our God A bulwark never failing Up, down. Up, down. All the way through the song.

That's right music. If it stays all down, you have melancholy music. Somebody gave me a tape.

I don't know where it came from, but somebody gave a tape to us. And the whole tape has songs where it stays down too much. And that thing is so melancholy.

You sit and listen to that thing and when you get done you just think, oh, I just feel sad and I just want to mope around. Because it's defying music principle and it keeps down all the time. Music that is up all the time, it'll have you high strung.

If you listen to a whole tape of music that stays on the high notes, high notes, high notes all the time, it'll have you high strung. And adding beats where they don't belong. This is all part of right music principle that any worldly musician who studied music could tell you.

He could get up here and teach you the same thing. In fact, he could do it. I can't.

I don't understand enough of it. But adding beats to the music. Here's a song that we sing all the time that has an extra beat in it.

And if you could look at the notes of the music, you'd spot it just like that. Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. There's an extra beat in that song.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound. It's right there. There's an extra beat in there in that song.

And it changes the spirit of the song quite a bit, doesn't it? It makes you want to start clicking. Doesn't it? We need some wisdom about these things. Now, I want to say a little bit more about country gospel music and get into some of the other principles that we've spoken about here.

Much of country gospel music is nothing but a bunch of storytelling. That's what country music is. That's what has made country music sell all over this country because country music is sad stories put to music.

That's what it is. In the world, it's a guy who lost his gal. It's a man who lost his wife and he's sitting there alone all by himself cooking his own breakfast.

And, oh, it's a sad, tear-jerking story and they've got the music playing along with it. And if you listen to the thing, you'll cry because it's directly aimed at emotions and it's aimed at emotions because that's what sells it out in the world. Now, let's just jump over on the other side to the sanctified side, if you can call it that, and call it country gospel.

Now, we're going to tell stories. We're going to tell gospel stories and put it to music. And all it does is aim again at the emotion.

And when you hear them, they make you cry. Right? The story about, Daddy, please find a reason to stay with my mama. That's just a story.

Now, maybe it's effective in a prison where there's a bunch of men who left their wives at home. Where there's a bunch of men who were living in adultery and living in alcohol and all those things and they hear a story like that, it might make them cry. But do we want to feed on that? And besides, it's full of sliding too, isn't it? Daddy, please find a reason to stay with my mama.

Please don't go, Daddy. Please don't go. See all the sliding in there? That's emotion.

That's coming out of my soul. That's not spirit. That's soul.

That's country gospel. Where is the meat? Where is the meat? That's my plea. Here's another one.

I was just listening to a tape this evening so I could keep some of these in my mind. Daddy, I'm lonesome since you went away. It's a story about a girl whose daddy died.

And it's a very sad story. And it touches my heart too. And it makes me cry when I listen to it.

But where's the doctrine? Where's the doctrine? That's my question. Sure, there's a little truth in it. Yes, the song does say that he's in a better place.

That's good. Where the flowers grow. Amen.

That's fine. But most of the song is just an emotional story. That's all it is.

No meat. No meat in it. How many of you ever heard of Steve and Annie Chapman? Let me see your hands.

Oh, more than I expected again. Steve and Annie Chapman, they sing songs about the home. They travel all over the country singing.

They go to churches and sing songs about the home. I never cried more in my life than I did when I listened to a couple of those songs. Oh, they are tearjerkers.

But it's all emotion. It's just a bunch of stories put to music, sung with an emotional appeal to it. And I listened to it a couple of times.

And even the words ahead of the songs are emotional. They get down on the emotional level and they start pleading with you. Do you remember back when you had a little girl? And they start preparing you

emotionally and then sing a little song about how the little girl grew up and she's gone and she got married.

I heard that song and I just cried like a baby and in the middle of it I thought, wait a minute, what am I crying for? What moved me to cry? The emotion of the song. It went into my soul and made me cry. But where was the doctrine? There was no doctrine in that song.

None. Here's my plea. And I realize some of this is probably castor oil tonight.

But castor oil is good for you. Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3. If we take those two verses in the depth of what God is saying, I believe that God will help us to discern our music some. What kind of music we are using.

What kind of music we're listening to. What it's really doing to us. Where is it going to lead our lives in five or ten years.

And parents, we need to be wise here. The ones that are at home that are six and seven years old, you are training their music appreciation right now. And if they grow up and can't appreciate those solid hymns, but want to always be listening to the other tear-jerking stuff, hey, it's just going to have a weakening effect upon the church and upon the coming generations that come forth from you.

It will have a weakening effect upon them. It won't come out right. Hymns, the hymns that are in this book are disciplined music.

It takes discipline to sing them. A lot of little choruses, they don't take much discipline to sing them. That's why we like to sing them.

That's why we'll favor them over a good solid hymn. Because it doesn't take a lot of discipline to sing them. But the Christian life is a life of discipline, not a life of ease.

And you say, and I say some too, but the hymns, they can have a drying effect in the congregation. Well, why is that? Is it because the hymns are more in tune with the powerful spiritual life and our spiritual lives don't line up with the spirit of the hymns? Therefore, we don't sing them with our heart. And then they have a deadening effect.

I noticed this, and I'm not picking on Crossroads at all, but I noticed this at Crossroads when I was out there for a week of meetings. We sang hymns and choruses and hymns and choruses, you know, some or both, and that's fine. I have no problem with that.

We sang hymns and choruses through the week, and mostly choruses through the week. And then on Sunday morning, after a whole week of preaching, getting right with God, and you know how it is, the spiritual temperature rises in a congregation as meetings go on and people pray more and they seek the face of God more. And by Sunday morning, I mean the temperature was way up.

And the song leader felt led that morning just to call, just to let everybody choose what they wanted to sing. And everybody chose hymns. And we must have sang ten hymns that morning.

It was powerful. Everybody's spirits were in tune. They were feasting off the words of the hymns while they were singing them.

People were worshipping God. People had their eyes shut. Hands were in the air.

And there was an awesome majesty of God that settled over us that morning. I think we need to discipline ourselves in our spiritual lives so we can enjoy singing the hymns like we did tonight. Tonight, we sang hymns and they were a blessing.

They were a strength. They were a joy. And I'd like to say one last thing in closing.

I feel as we discern the truth in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5 that God had in mind singing, not listening. Now, I'm not saying we should never listen. But I think what God's heart was there was singing, not sitting around listening.

I don't feel that we're fulfilling Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 when we pop a music tape on and go on down the road. I don't believe we're fulfilling the spirit of those verses. Now, you may put a tape on that has hymns on and sing along with it.

Then I feel like you're fulfilling that. But if you just flip the old music in so you've got noise while you're driving in your car, put a music tape on while you're in your house so you've got a little noise going on while you're there to keep you company, that is not fulfilling Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5. May God give us the wisdom to be motivated after the right kind of music to want it. Now, I realize everybody's not going to be able to swallow this pill overnight.

But my only heart's desire is that we would be motivated tonight to say, that is sound. What He's saying is sound. I may not understand it all and my heart may not want to do it tonight, but it is sound.

My heart's desire is that we would be motivated in the direction of the kind of music that purely and completely lines up with Ephesians and Colossians. And may I say this also, we do sing a lot of the psalms here and I'm all for that. That's in accordance with those two Scriptures that we read.

When we sang the song this evening, Come bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. That's word for word right out of the Bible. I'm all for doing that.

As long as the spirit of the song lines up with the Word.

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