

Holy Spirit – Holy Music

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Foreword

1 Timothy 4:1 reads "*Now **the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.***" The word expressly (in Greek-rhetos) signifies that the one speaking (**in** this case the Lord) would be out-spoken, authoritative, and distinct in speaking on a particular thing. I believe that we are indeed living in the times that the Spirit described, and that the departing from the faith has come as a consequence for not believing that the Word of God is the "*voice of the Lord your God*" (Deut. 8:20). Many regard it as a 'holy book' with words for guidance, but they are not "*spirit and they are [not] life*" (John 6:63), nor are they the "*power of God to salvation for everyone*" (Rom. 1:16). The devil's questioning lie to Eve was "*Has God indeed said?*" The phrases he inspires today are of similar stock, such as "we don't know for sure that Jesus ever said that," and, "that's just your interpretation." Few are those of whom the Lord said He would look upon. Him who is "*of a contrite spirit and who trembles at My word*" (Is. 66:2)

Jesus said of these times that "*because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold*" (Matt. 24:12). The coldness is a lack of real love for His word, lacking *any serious desire* to obey it and to be conformed by it. Many in '**accepting**' **Jesus as Lord** and Saviour "*did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved*" (2 Thes. 2:10). Not content with the 'dry' walking in the light of the Word, "*the commandment is a lamp and the law is light*" (Prov. 6:22),

today many professed believers claim 'hunger for God' has led them to experience a more dynamic 'walking by the Spirit.' In this present generation, what this equates to is a revival of "everyone did what is right in his own eyes" (**Jud.** 21:25), but disguised with 'the Spirit spoke to me.' Many also claim to passionately 'love the Lord,' but without a manifest love for what He says. "Haters of the Lord would pretend submission to Him" (*Ps.* 81:15). "He who hates disguises it with his lips" (**Prov.** 26:23). Bibles are carried into churches and into 'bible studies,' yet God still asks "Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, since he has no heart for it?" (*Prov.* 17:16).

The saints will not be ashamed of their devotion to and reliance on God's Word, for it reveals accurately and absolutely the unchangeable Lord; who He is, what He has done and will do, what He desires, what He desires for His children, and what is pleasing in His sight. Many prefer to conduct their lives, and their churches, without any absolute authority but themselves and what others think. "But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." (*2 Cor.* 10:12).

This effort is not to propose that I have the last word on music or any other subject. But to take music from out of the darkness of subjective seasonings and traditions of men, and place it in the light of the Word of God for exposure. Jesus says "everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be seen that they have been done in God" (*John* 3:20,21).

—Richard Taddeucci

Worshippers in Spirit and in Truth

Jesus said "When He the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth" (*John* 16:13). He revealed that our guidance to truth regarding music or any other issue must come by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will bring each seeker to the Word of God, which speaks to each of us as our ultimate authority, assuring us that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (*2 Tim.* 3:16).

The Word of God describes a true worshiper as one who "does His will, and hears Him" (*John* 9:31). He has a ready ear to not only hear what the Word of God says, but to obey it. Furthermore, Jesus said truth will distinguish his worship. "True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him ... and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth" (*John* 4:23, 24).

All true worshipers will be convinced by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God that the One to whom they render their due worship is indeed "Holy, Holy, Holy" (*Isaiah* 6:3; *Rev.* 4:8) and "in Him there is no darkness at all" (*1 John* 1:5). The desire to please self will be supplanted by a desire to please God. Holiness will not be something taken for granted by true worshipers, for they will be convinced that "God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore, he who rejects this does not reject man, but God" (*1 Mess.* 4:7). They will also believe that when He says "Be holy, for I am holy" (*1 Pet.* 1:16), He means that to be called a follower of God, and not desire His holiness, is to be a contradiction to the truth.

Holy worship, by holy worshipers, is the only worship that is acceptable, as well as beautiful, in the eyes of God. That is why the Spirit urges God's children "Oh, worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness!" (*Ps.* 96:9), "exalt the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool, for He is holy" (*Ps.* 99:5). It is only the faithful and true that will find a place of worship before Him, for the wicked cannot abide there. "I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of holiness" (*Eccl.* 8:10).

False teachers have convinced the Church that they can use just about anything that has been generated in the world by man for use in the kingdom of God, as long as it's been 'rededicated' to God. Of the so-called 'rededicated' things, one that has become especially effective in the devil's purpose to leaven the whole lump, is false music. Jesus prophesied of false prophets, and said that *"you will know them by their fruits"* (Matt. 7:16). Therefore, due to the heavy influence of contemporary 'Christian' music permeating the Church, it is harvesting a 'bumper crop' of sexual immorality, sensuality, and worldliness through which the Church's rightful place of separation from the world is rapidly becoming non-existent. Today more than ever we need to hear and to heed the exhortation of the Lord to pursue *"holiness, without which no one will see the Lord"* (Heb. 14:12).

False ... Rock ... Music

Numbers 21-25 records a sobering event that followed Israel's 40 years in the wilderness, and just prior to its entrance into the promised land. As Israel moved steadily toward their destination, they were given overwhelming victories over two Amorite kings, Sihon and Og. This caused other nations to be gripped by fear. These nations were aware of how even Egypt and its army had been destroyed because of them. However, Moab, whose king was Balak, rather than give in to fear sought the aid of Balaam, the ex-prophet turned sorcerer.

Balaam was persuaded by king Balak with promises of fame and fortune, to curse the Israelites—calling down catastrophe on them. But the Lord intervened, and forced Balaam instead to pronounce blessings on His people. With his original plan frustrated, and with his promised rewards from the Moabite king at stake, Balaam deviously plotted a counter strategy. The purpose for which would be to make God's people unholy, defiling themselves before Him, which in turn would cause God to turn His back on His own people.

Balaam's strategy succeeded. He advised the Moabites to invite the Israelites to attend their sacrifices. This exposure eventually led to the Israelites bowing down to false gods and committing sexual immorality. *"Then Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab"* (Num. 25:1).

This brought the wrath of God on the Israelites, though many in the congregation did come to sorrow and repentance. Yet, in the midst of judgement and remorse, there were some who had the audacity to continue in their sin, even in the very presence of Moses and the congregation. *"And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and the congregation of the children of Israel who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting"* (Num. 25:6). Appalled by this 'boldness in sin,' Phinehas the priest became so aroused that he took a javelin and thrust them both through. Noteworthy, was that it was Phinehas' zeal that put a halt to the Lord's wrath, and that the Lord pronounced an eternal blessing upon him and upon his descendants because *"He was zealous with My zeal ... zealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel"* (Num. 25:11, 13).

Brothers and sisters, we need to ask ourselves today, just what is a harlot in God's eyes? Is it not one who seeks to lead others astray from the path of life, through persuasions, flattering lips, and sensual excitement? (See Proverbs 5:6, 21, and 7:5, 21, 25). Additionally, could it be more than just ironic regarding the names of the slain offenders mentioned in the above incident? The man's name was Zimri, which means musical, and the woman's name was Cozbi, which means **false**. Furthermore, her father's name was Zur, which means Rock. In actuality, Zimri may or may not have been **musical**, but he had embraced a harlot, and had proposed to bring defilement to his brethren in the sight of God. Could others today by embracing false music, whether knowingly or unknowingly, in a similar way be bringing defilement to the Body of Christ?

Certainly today the Lord does not condone putting away falsehood with the physical

violence of Phinehas, but his *zeal* was of the Holy Spirit and this zeal remains. The same Spirit will continue to zealously confront with His weapon of truth all that is false. And the confronter will, as Phinehas, be blessed of the Lord!

A New Song

Born again Christians are also called, according to Scripture, new creations because *"old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new"* (2 Cor. 5:17). This new creation must be preceded by a death to the old self life, whereas one can say as Paul did, *"I have been crucified with Christ"* (Gal. 2:20). The new life in Christ is lived out in a daily denial of the old self life. As Jesus said *"Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me,"* and *"whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple"*, and also *"whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple"* (Luke 9:23; 14:27, 33). Thus it is through a continuous death to self, through the cross, that one can have a prosperous, continuous life to God. This new life as a new man can only be maintained as one yields himself to the commands of the Holy Spirit, who says *"put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness"* (Eph. 4:22, 23).

The Word of God says that the new man will issue forth a new song, a song that he cannot help but sing. *"I will sing to the Lord because He has dealt bountifully with me"* (Ps. 13:6). It is likewise a song that he is commanded to sing. *"Sing to the Lord a new song"* (Is. 42:10). And it is a song that **only** the new man in Jesus Christ can sing. *"Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! For He has done marvelous things, sing to the Lord, bless His name; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among the peoples"* (Ps. 98:1; 96:2, 3). The new song is also the only song that will truly have an eternal impact for the glory of God on the spirit and soul of man. *"He has put a new song in my mouth praise to our God; many will see it and fear and will **trust** in the Lord"* (Ps. 40:3).

The new song, both in words and music, bears witness to the truth of the Lord, and is edification for the new man. Whether he's singing, or just listening, he will be renewed in the spirit of his mind (Eph. 4:22). Since the Holy Spirit is the source of the new song, it is unlike the song of the old man that Scripture refers to as the self-exalting and attention seeking *song of the harlot*. *"Take the harp, go about the city you forgotten harlot; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that you may be remembered"* (Is. 23:1). It is unlike the old song that is like the harlot herself *"loud and rebellious"* (Prov. 7:11), sung and played in order to resurrect the old man, in order to stimulate his whole being through music, and lure him back to the world of self, and eventually put him in bondage to it once again *"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again are entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning"* (2 Pet. 2:20).

Therefore the Holy Spirit warns *"purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump ... let us keep the feast ... with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"* (1 Cor. 5:7, 8).

Chief Musician, Singer, and Songwriter

The words *"To the Chief Musician"* are a lead-in to over 50 of the Psalms. These words, in and of themselves, contain much helpful instruction to all who would consider themselves to be songwriters, performers, and promoters of Christian music. In these opening words there seem to rightly be a recognition that the One who has bestowed gifts of musical talents to men is Himself

supreme in every individual element and aspect that pertains to music. The Holy Spirit confirms this when He says *"that in all things He may have the preeminence"* (Col. 1:18). The Lord is preeminent in music.

Some have simply thought that when these opening words in the Psalms were penned by David, that they were in reference to someone else. Perhaps one who had been appointed by David, who was responsible for Temple worship. In David's administration this person was Asaph. However, the Scriptures more accurately refer to Asaph, and others, as director, stating that the music was *"under the direction of Asaph"* (1 Chron. 25:2). Moreover, the title Chief Musician is *one* word in the Hebrew, and not two as in English translations, and is not used in reference to any person, musician or otherwise, outside of its use in the Psalms (with the exception of its use by Habakkuk). Furthermore, its translation seems to put its application far beyond the attainment of any mere human.

The title is rich with several meanings including **to glitter brilliantly**. Did not Jesus say that He is *"that Bright and Morning Star"* (Rev. 22:16), and nothing shines brighter than the *"Light of the World"* (John 8:12). Its meaning includes **to be conspicuously outstanding and readily perceived**. After all, He alone is truly awesome, says the Spirit, who declares *"How awesome are your works,"* and, *"He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men"* (Ps. 66:3,5), therefore, *"Let all the inhabitants of the earth stand in awe of Him"* (Ps. 33:8). And His created universe is not silent about Him. *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world"* (Ps. 19:1-4). Its meaning also includes the concept of a **goal to be reached; a distant bright object that one is traveling toward**. Even though Jesus is our only *"righteousness and sanctification and redemption"* (1Cor. 1:30), it is still the objective of the Father that we be *"conformed to the image of His Son"* (Rom. 8:29). The sure reward upon the completion of the Father's objective is sure to be a brilliant one. *"I will give to him the morning star"* (Rev. 2:28).

This lead-in of dedication seems not only to be an acknowledgement of the attributes of the One to whom each song is to be dedicated, but as well, the aspiration of the composer. That all who hear his song may be drawn near to Him as their object, and that they be transformed by Him! Furthermore, the song is to be a mirror, a reflection of the excellencies of the Godhead, not just in the words used, but in the musical arrangement of it, and even in the performance of it.

The prophet Habakkuk in awe by his revelation of the Lord, dedicated his hymn of faith (Hab. 3:17-19) to the Chief Musician, or in some translations, to the Chief Singer. Think of it. The Lord a singer! The Holy Spirit declares that His divine singing is one of rejoicing and gladness *"He will rejoice over you with singing"* (Zeph. 3:17). The cause of His rejoicing is truth, for *"love ... rejoices in truth"* (1Cor 13:4, 6). The objects of His rejoicing are his children who walk in truth. *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth"* (3 John 4). His singing is also joyful because of all that is to be accomplished by the cross *"Jesus ... for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross"* (Heb. 12:2). And since the Spirit instructs us to be *"singing with grace in your hearts"*, (Col.3:16), we can be assured that His Divine singing is full of grace from His heart. His singing is also holy, because it is sung in unity with the Holy Spirit, even as Paul said *"I will sing with the spirit"* (1 Cor. 14:15), and He sings with *"His glorious voice to be heard"* (Is. 33:30).

The Lord is Himself a songwriter, as shown in Deuteronomy 32:1-43. Though referred to as 'the song of Moses,' the Holy Spirit reveals earlier in Deuteronomy 31 how Moses came to compose the song. *"And the Lord said to Moses" ... "Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel."* (Deut. 31:16,19). Characteristic of this song as well as all the other songs of Scripture, which includes the Psalms, is that it is **truth** revealed through song. Truth with musical accompaniment. Truth that is sung rather than spoken, but is

consistent with whatever else is revealed in the Scriptures for *"The entirety of Your word is truth"* (Ps. 119:160).

Though we do not possess the original musical arrangements to any of the songs of Scripture, truly both the words and the music were in harmony with the Holy Spirit, perfectly penned, arranged, and dedicated to the Godhead. They stand as reflections of His holy perfections, and as examples to be modeled. Music that is truly birthed by the Spirit will neither conflict nor contradict His own magnificent works. Their purpose will be to declare truth, because that is what He speaks, and to magnify Him. *"Oh give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works. Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord. Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face evermore. Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgements of His mouth"* (Ps. 105:1-5).

The theme of holy music writers will be the Lord. *"My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer"* (Psalm 45:1). And when the holy performers who are commissioned with the divine privilege to magnify Him and reflect Him in song and music are truly under His influence, there will be a witness of Divine inspiration and outpouring for *"both the singers and the players on instruments say, all my springs are in You"* (Ps. 87:7). In other words, what springs or flows forth from the musician, will be directly flowing from the Chief Musician Himself.

Speaking to One Another

The most important purpose for a Holy Spirit musical composition is to convey truth. And it is for this reason that accompanying music be 'servant' to the words. The music assists in the transmittal of the truth in a message to the hearers, and will be used by the Holy Spirit as a 'help' to the hearer in recalling it. *"He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you"* (John 14:26). An example of this is found in 2 Kings 3, when Elisha prophesied to the kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom. It seems that on that particular occasion, the circumstances and individuals involved called for a special musical accompaniment to his message to the kings, *"Now bring me a musician. And it happened, when the musician played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him. And he said "Thus says the Lord..."* (2 Kings 3:15,16). Whatever additional reason there might have been for this unique incident, there was at least one specific use that the Holy Spirit would have at His disposal from that day forward. Should that music that was played in that wilderness ever again be played in their hearing, it would bring to their minds a reminder of the truths of God that Elisha had spoken to them. These would be 'quickened' to their consciences as they heard the music so that they would once again *"hear the voice of the living God, speaking"* (Deut. 5:26).

This is all the more reason why songwriters, musicians, and singers need to be serious students of God's Word. The Holy Spirit emphasizes that we are to *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"* (Col. 3:16). The mere fact that one is born again by the Spirit of God, having grace in his heart, and possessing musical talent of some kind, neither equips him for ministry to saints nor to sinners. It is the wealth of the Word of truth that is dwelling in the person that is his primary equipment. Needless to say, it is this lack of wealth that disqualifies the worker for the work.

The Holy Spirit states that Christ Himself gave us apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers, for the *"equipping of the saints"* (Eph. 4:11,12), who are to be *"speaking the truth in love"* (Eph. 4:15). Songs birthed by the Holy Spirit continue His work of teaching and admonishing the saints who are to *"grow up in all things into Him who is the head-Christ"*

(Eph.4:15), accomplishing this by the truth both in word and in song. Therefore, true workers know that it is only what the Lord says that will bring forth His blessing, as Jesus has said *"the words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are life"* (John 6:63). These workers are occupied with the truth, being instructed by it, conformed by it, and then declaring it to others. *"I have instructed you today, even you. Have I not written to you excellent things, of counsels and knowledge, that I may make you know the words of truth, that you may answer words of truth to those who send to you?"* (Prov. 22:20, 21).

Each worker chosen by the Holy Spirit to speak to the saints will be directed by Him to choose carefully the words for each song, measuring them by the truth, in a manner similar to a preacher. *"The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright-words of truth. The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd. And further, my son, be admonished by these"* (Eccl. 12:10-12).

The richness of the Word of God that dwells in the worker will be evident in the fruit of his labor. He is in reality a sower of truth, as Jesus said, *"the sower sows the Word"* (Mark 4:14). The sowing of the Word of truth will not be done sparingly, for the Spirit says *"He who sows sparingly will reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully"* (2 Cor. 9:6). Nor will he hide the truth, veil it, or disguise it in any way. *"My mouth will speak truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse is in them. They are all plain to him who understands, and right to those who find knowledge"* (Prov. 8:7-9).

He will neither gloss over truth, nor attempt to 'crossover' truth (veiling truth to cater to worldly radio stations and listeners) for *"those who want to pass from here to you cannot"* (Luke 16:26), but he will faithfully and openly declare it. The worker who desires to declare the truth will not be hindered in any way whether he finds himself speaking to the saints, or to the world, whether to those of high status, or of low status. *"Hear this all you peoples; give ear all you inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall bring understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will disclose my dark saying on the harp"* (Ps. 49:1-4). Furthermore, to hinder truth in any way contradicts the specific instructions of Jesus. *"Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and whatever you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops"* (Matt. 10:27).

In regard to words, the Holy Spirit warns against attempting to use words of no value. He has many descriptive phrases that declare His view regarding them, referring to them as *"wisdom of this world"* (1 Cor. 3:19), *"corrupt communication"* (Eph. 4:29), *"foolish talking"* (Eph. 5:4), *"empty words"* (Eph. 5:6), *"lies"* (1 Tim. 4:2), *"profane and vain babblings"* (2 Tim. 2:16), and *"great swelling words of emptiness"* (2 Pet. 2:18). Those who would choose to excel in them, rather than in the truth, are either false teachers, or immature saints who are not hearing the voice of the Spirit. Of the first group the Spirit says to *"note those who ... by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple"* (Rom. 16:17, 18); and to the second group the Spirit implores, *"When I was a child, I spoke as a child I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things"* (1 Cor. 13:11).

Promoters of these false or immature musicians, who do so by promoting either their songs or their performances, need to be reminded of their obligation to the Spirit of truth. The Spirit urges them to uphold the responsibility of godly parents, namely, that *"the father shall make known Your truth to the children"* (Is. 38 :19).

Singers, Musicians, and Instruments

Error and confusion that surround today's contemporary 'Christian' music could be greatly

lessened by the lessons of Scripture. Scripture says that *"whatever things were written before were written for our learning"* (Rom. 14:4); and that *"these things became our examples"* (1 Cor. 10:6). Therefore, all singers and musicians would do well to study intently the example of the Levites. This study would reveal that, along with their Levitical responsibilities for assisting the priests and attending to their duties of Sanctuary ministry, came their responsibility to assist in the declaration of truth. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, knew that he would not have a strong kingdom unless he sent out the Levites to teach the people. *"So they taught in Judah, and had the Book of the Law of the Lord with them and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people"* (2 Chron. 17:9). The revival of God's people under Nehemiah and Ezra was also assisted by the Levites who *"helped the people understand the Law; and the people stood in their place. So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they [the Levites] gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading"* (Neh. 8:7, 8).

Under David's administration, another dimension to the 'Word-based' Levitical role was added when *"David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps and cymbals"* (1 Chron. 15:16). The singing and even the musical accompaniment was to be provided by these men of the Word, as shown in 2 Chron. 7:6 *"And the priests attended to their services; the Levites also with instruments of the music of the Lord,"* and *"David offered praise by their ministry."*

David himself, a man of the Word, knew that acceptable praise could only be offered with similar men in whose hands musical instruments served as an **accompaniment to their prophesying** who *"prophesy with harps stringed instruments, and cymbals"* (1 Chron 25:1). Therefore it was fitting that David appointed thousands of Levites, making instruments for them, for it says that they *"praised the Lord with musical instruments, 'which I made,' said David, for giving praise"* (1 Chron. 25:3).

On the contrary, the apostate Israelites under Jeroboam II's administration, having set up their own version of worship in rebellion to the instructions of God, were not holy unto the Lord. And since they were not men of the Word, they therefore could not prophesy to His people in their singing, and their musical accompaniment with their instruments was regarded by the Lord as merely *noise making*. Though they assumed that their music was acceptable, the Lord through His prophet Amos clearly declared that He thought otherwise. *"I hate, I despise your feast days ... take away from Me the noise of your songs, for I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments ... who chant to the sound of stringed instruments, and invent for yourselves musical instruments, like David"* (Amos 5:21, 23; 6:5). Many of today's musicians and singers are under this same deception having followed the same false presumptions of the previous apostates.

He Who Sows Discord

One who sows discord is one of the specific things that the Lord says that He hates. This person is further described by the Holy Spirit as *"a worthless person [who] walks with a **perverse mouth, perversity is in his heart, he devises evil continually, he sows discord"*** (Prov. 6:12-14). Perversity, or in some versions, 'frowardness,' means to willfully do wrong, and to be a contradiction to what the evidence declares. Furthermore, being fully persuaded in his perversity, he strives to convert others to it, and as the Scriptures declare, even to the making of these new converts into *"twice as much a son of hell as himself"* (Matt. 23:15).

Any person can become a sower of discord when he insists on cleaving to that which is a contradiction to the evidence that is revealed by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. The doctrines of the Lord should not only effect our lifestyles, but our 'tastes' in things-such as music. When the Israelites were converted to the beliefs and practices of the Canaanites, they became traitors to the truth. Furthermore, they sought converts from among their own, just as the Lord

said would take place *"they will turn your sons away from following Me"* (Deut. 7:4), forgetting that they were to be a *"holy people to the Lord. .. a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth"* (Deut. 7:7).

He sows discord in music whose lyrics speak flattery, rather than truth to God's people, and flippantly, even sensuously, *"you comfort me with empty words"* (Job 21:34). **He sows discord** who performs hilarious, satirical, and even crude songs that are in essence no different than a worldly *"taunting song"* (Lain. 3:14, 63). **He sows discord** who performs music with a dominant or driving beat, which has found its way even into the 'new versions' of traditional hymns. A song with a continuous dominant or driving beat can be no less irritating than the irritation that Scripture says comes from *"a continual dripping on a very rainy day and a contentious woman"* (Prov. 27:15). **He sows discord** who insists that driving ('upbeat') music even has a place in the Body of Christ when it is clear that the Lord doesn't *drive* His people (like a taskmaster), but He *leads* them like a shepherd. His children proclaim *"He leads me"* (Ps. 23: 2, 3). Even the Good Shepherd, the Son of God Himself, while on earth, was *"led by the Spirit"* (Luke 4:1). It is the sons of disobedience that are like sheep that have been *"driven away"* (Ez. 34:4). Driving music is designed to put a man on the same course as the possessed man of Gadarenes who was *"driven by the demon"* (Luke 8:29). Had not Jesus cast the driving spirit out of him, his end would have been as the possessed swine that *"ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned"* (Luke 8:33).

He sows discord who does not reflect the Good Shepherd in his music of Whom it says *"He will quiet you in His love, He will rejoice over you with singing,"* and Who inspires and uses music that conforms to His truth to *"gather those who were driven out"* (Zeph. 3:17, 19). **He sows discord** who, by his music, sows to the flesh, mocking God, caring not that *"the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these two are contrary to one another."* To him the Scriptures declare *"God is not mocked"* (Gal. 5:16; 6:7).

The Father of Those Who Play

Origins of people, places, things, and for that matter, even the names used in Scripture, can help to shed some beneficial light revealing more truth. *"The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness ... the Word of the Lord is proven"* (Ps. 18:28, 30). Origins may provide valuable information to take into consideration in an effort to arrive at the truth of a matter. Consider for example the issue of divorce that the Pharisees brought to Jesus in their attempt to catch Him in error. His answer to them required a look at the origin of marriage. *"Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female"* (Matt. 19:4). The origin of marriage not only revealed the Author of it, but the depth of the bond between a man and woman joined together in marriage. Likewise, much may be discovered by looking at music's first mention in Scripture.

The first mention of music takes place in Genesis 4 in the genealogy of Cain, mankind's first murderer, who followed after his *"father the devil,"* who Jesus said was *"a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth"* (John 8:44), who through his deception 'murdered' Adam and Eve. Cain's name has root meanings that imply to 'strike a musical note,' and to 'strike fast, as with a spear or a lance.' Six generations later, to Lamech, a son was born who was named Jubal, and it is recorded that he *"was the father of all those who play the harp and flute"* (Gen. 4:21). Jubal's father's name, Lamech, means 'overthrower,' and in his own words spoken after he too became a murderer, he reveals the same pride that was in his forefather Cain. He displays self-confidence, disregard for human life, and is void of any respect toward God. Within this heritage and influence, Jubal developed his 'art' of music. Jubal's name means 'stream' and is rooted in a word that means 'to flow.' Scripture says that he is the father (or originator) of those who play the harp and the flute. The word play, or in some versions, 'handle,' means to

`manipulate' with a sense of `trying to capture.' The playing of the instrument may address the manipulation that takes place through the playing of the instrument.

Furthermore, the meaning of the word flute seems to have some significance. Flute, or in some versions, organ, is rooted in a word meaning `to breathe after,' and even `to love sensuously,' which may be a description of the attachment that men would have to this music, readily receiving it and even `loving' it. Thus it appears that the music that would naturally flow out of the heart of man, like a flowing stream, would be designed to cause those who listen to it to flow with it. Therefore, this `music stream' is in itself a weapon of murder, because its intended purpose is the death and destruction of the listeners. And in all of its various sensuous forms, whether they be folk, classical, ragtime, swing, jazz, country, rythm and blues, rock, rap, easy listening, or any other form, the music will have a deadly attraction to the eagerly listening ears that await it. And, unbeknownst to the listeners, this music will become a vital force in fashioning them into a product of this world. Certainly what the Spirit has said regarding the world's wisdom, can also be said of the world's music, in that it *"does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic"* (James 3:15).

All Kinds of Music

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and ruler of the world, made a colossal image of gold and set it up for worship on a plain located in Babylon. He then called for *"all the officials of the provinces to come to the dedication of the image"* (Dan. 3:2). These officials came from all the nations of the world. Three of his officials, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego were from his own province in Babylon. When all of these officials came together and were instructed in the `worship' ceremony, they were informed that they were to take their `cue' from the music. A herald cried out *"To you it is commanded O peoples, nations, and languages that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace"* (Dan. 3:4-6).

This single reference in Scripture to `all kinds of music,' which means both all forms and all sorts, is significant to the Church today, who has become convinced that the `all kinds of music' that are of this world are acceptable to God. But this is not according to the Holy Spirit. Scripture does mention in Psalm 150 *all kinds of instruments* that are regarded as being acceptable, but not all kinds of music, neither in worshipping of the Lord, nor for the edification of the saints. Just the opposite is true. He calls for His music to be distinctly identifiable with a Holy God. He says *"even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction **in the sounds**, how will it be known what is piped or played? For if a trumpet makes **an uncertain sound**, who will prepare himself for battle"* (1 Cor. 14:7, 8). The Holy Spirit's music is distinct and certain in its sound, just as certain as the sound that the disciples heard at Pentecost was a *"sound from heaven"* (Acts 2:2), and just as certain as every calling of the Holy Spirit is a *"holy calling"* (2 Tim. 1:9) and that all gifts from the Holy Spirit are *"holy gifts"* (Ex. 28:38). Musical instruments are to be used in a holy way in ministering to the *"holy convocation"* (Lev. 23:2, 3).

As the world and its music continues to synthesize (blending one form into another) the Holy Spirit's true Church and its music will become even more distinct. Once again a people will arise who will not be like the priesthood of old of whom the Spirit said *"have violated My law and profaned My holy things; they have not **distinguished between the holy and the unholy**, nor have they made known the difference"* (Ez. 22:26).

Music is continuing its purpose to condition the world for worship of the Antichrist in the

new Babylon. Thus with Babylon's final destruction, will come an end to the influence of its music, and bring rejoicing to heaven *"the sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore"* (Rev. 18:22). Those who will be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, not submitting to false worship, must today not allow the *"beast and his image"* (Rev. 14:11) to be formed in them by false music coming from the world or the Church.

A False Balance Is an Abomination

We hear it often said that 'there must be balance!' In today's language, the word balance can convey many different meanings, from equilibrium to something we do to our check books. Balance also refers to weighing by comparing one item to another, or even one opinion against another. This latter meaning is more in line with what the Holy Spirit was referring to when it was written *"a false balance is an abomination to the Lord"* (Prov. 11:1). There are certain things that are impossible to compare. Especially when it comes to making comparisons between God and man, or between His ways and man's ways *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts"* (Is. 55:9). Yet the most foolish kind of comparing was manifested in Elijah's confrontation on Mount Carmel.

Elijah was astonished that God's people would even attempt to make comparisons, as if deciding between who they thought would be better to serve, the Lord or Baal. Thus he said to them *"How long will you falter between two opinions?"* (1 Kings 18:21). The word falter not only means 'halting' and 'ceasing,' but can also imply 'becoming lame.' In a sense, in hesitating to 'weigh' the benefits of service to Baal, as a people they had become spiritually lame.

No one can afford to 'weigh' the possible benefits of darkness, knowing that *"God is light and in Him is no darkness at all"* (1 John 1:5). The opinions mentioned by Elijah indicate having 'sentiments' or 'feelings' for. Because of our carnal nature, our hearts have an automatic bent toward the world's ways and its wisdom. This will have a crippling affect, even on the born again believer, as Scripture says *"you are restricted by your own affections"* (2 Cor. 6:12). Here the implications are to be cramped up, incapable of walking because of our sentiments. Therefore the Spirit asks *"What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God"* (2 Cor. 6:16). Is it possible that we could be similarly **faltering** between two opinions because of our sentiments toward a particular style of music (past or current), music group, or singer?

When the Church chooses to use words and music that are of the world, not of the Lord, seeing no difference, and even seeing darkness as 'effective for ministry,' it has weighed falsely. It is a false balance, and an abomination before the Lord. Furthermore, when we have failed to have truth in the message, or detracted from the message in any way, whether in emphasizing the performer, or the music that is performed, we've weighed falsely and have done the abominable. In much of today's contemporary 'Christian' music, not only is truth de-emphasized, but it is carefully camouflaged, or in some cases, drowned-out for the sake of **emphasizing** a domineering beat, sensuous instrumentation, and carnal vocals. In doing so, there is a false balance, a total reversal of the Lord's order and the emphasis for His music, which emphasizes the message first, followed by the music, with the percussion **least** emphasized. *"The singers went before, the players followed after, among them were the maidens playing timbrels"* (Ps. 68:25). Of our faltering, the Spirit warns *"make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather healed"* (Heb. 12:13).

Abstain from Every Form of Evil

The new priesthood of Jesus, made up of all born again believers, was foretold by the Spirit as those who would *"again discern between the righteous and the wicked between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him"* (Mal. 3:18). As the enemy sends a flood of ungodliness sweeping into the Church, it will be from these new separate priests that *"the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him"* (Is. 59:19).

The Spirit cautioned the Church to *"Test all things; hold fast what is good Abstain from every form of evil"* (Thess. 5:21, 22). The word 'form' addresses both the appearance and fashion of evil. There would be no commandment addressing appearance if there was no evil in it. Many of today's admired contemporary 'Christian' musicians model the world in talk, in behavior, in dress, and in the performance and promotion of 'their' music. And yet while doing so, one *dare* not critically judge them as being *"of the world"* (John 15:19). This is a far cry from the teachings of Scripture. Though Jesus did say *"Do not judge according to appearance,"* He went on to say *"but judge with righteous judgement"* (John 7:24). This is to say that a righteousness test will go beyond the outward appearance, and will expose the evil that originates from the inward. His condemnation of the Pharisees did not include their *appearing* holy and separate to God, but that it stopped there. Jesus never said that outward display of holiness was not beautiful. In fact, He said that it did indeed *"appear beautiful outwardly"* (Matt. 23:27). But it was like the appearance of a coffin that was beautifully painted on the outside, hiding death that existed on the inside. He demanded that they, as well as any follower of His, *"first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also "* (Matt. 23:26). When the Church altogether drops any outward standard for holiness, even if its intentions are to 'identify' with the lost, it has deceived itself.

Therefore, to those insisting upon keeping pace with the world's hair fashions, be it long, short, shaved, or painted, the Spirit shows us Absalom. He was *"praised ... for his good looks,"* and his hair was an outward display of his pride and rebellion. He cut his hair but once a year and placed a high value on it, *"he weighed the hair on his head at two hundred shekels"* (2 Sam. 14:25, 26). To those insisting on keeping pace with the world's dress, the Spirit shows us Tamar, who dressed in such a way that *"when Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot"* (Gen. 38:15) an also the adulterous woman in Proverbs 7, who *"was dressed with the attire of a harlot"* (Prov. 8:10). To those who insist on keeping pace with the world's ornaments for the body, the Spirit shows us Jacob, who insisted that his children give up *"all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and all their earrings, which were in their ears"* (Gen. 35:4). Scripture goes on to say that Jacob buried them before he made his way to Bethel where he would seek the Lord. The Lord also warned His children not to *"covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it for it is an abomination to the Lord your God"* (Deut. 7:25). And to those insisting on the freedom to expose all, or to reveal any part of their body that they wish, in keeping pace with the world, the Spirit would remind them to remember that God is *"clothed in honor and majesty"* and covers Himself *"with light as with a garment"* (Ps. 104:1, 2).

Let No One Despise Your Youth

Youth have become the primary marketing target both for the world and for the Church. Youth represent 'buying power,' 'leadership of tomorrow,' as well as 'growth: But, in order for the Church to compete for its share of the market, it has replaced what is acceptable to the Lord for what is attractive to the world, especially in the area of entertainment and music. In a way, even the the Lord's messenger can become just part of the entertainment. *"So they come to you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and they hear Your words, but they do not do them;*

for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain, indeed You are to them as a lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice who can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them" (Ez. 33:31, 32). How can anyone really believe that they can 'reach youth for Jesus' while employing ways that contradict Christ's teachings? Oh that it would hear the heart cry of the Holy Spirit "Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; forget your own people also, and your father's house; so the King will greatly desire your beauty" (Ps. 45:10).

The Holy Spirit does desire the youth. But His primary concern, using Timothy as an example, is that they be not **despised** youth. In giving instruction to Timothy, He also furnished His description of a godly youth. God forbid that the Church would refuse to make the Lord's definition, that which would help define and shape any true youth ministry **"be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity"** (1 Tim. 4:12). In having become an example, the Holy Spirit points out that Timothy was a youth who had been trained in the ways that meet with the Lord's approval. He makes mention of both Timothy and those who influenced him. *"I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also"* (2 Tim. 1:5). If the Church were fully persuaded by the Spirit, they would know that God desires *"truth in the inward parts"* (Ps. 51:6). Further, they would be convinced of the importance of teaching the Word of God by capable teachers, which was **the** key to the success of Timothy's upbringing. For the Holy Spirit said *"from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim. 3:15). Children are commanded to be trained in the Scriptures from childhood on. That is why the Holy Spirit places the greater emphasis and attention on the **elders** rather than on the youth. True elders are not just Church leaders, but overseers of children, whose responsibility it is to help *"train up a child in the way that he should go"* (Prov. 22:6). To accomplish this, they need to be competent teachers who do not live contrary to the Scriptures, which declare that *"even a child is known by his deeds, by whether what he does is pure and right"* (Prov. 20:11), and also describes them as **proven trainers** *"having children in submission with all reverence"* (1 Tim. 3:4). While the 'market' is saturated with youth, competent elders, so much needed in the training of youth, are not only hard to find, but as it seems, hardly sought after. Yet, still the Spirit describes them as a far greater asset for a Church *"let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and in doctrine"* (1 Tim. 5:17).

He Encouraged Moral Decline

King Ahaz made Israel weak. Scripture says *"For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz, king of Israel, for he had encouraged moral decline in Judah and had been continually unfaithful to the Lord"* (2 Chron. 28:19). The Lord held him accountable for Judah's decadence, due mainly to his own lack of faithfulness. Responsibility for sin in the world, as well as in the Church, will likewise be layed at the feet of those who are in leadership. This group will include the musicians, youth leaders, pastors, teachers, television and radio owners and personalities, bookstore owners, authors and other key influentials who have chosen to use their 'position of influence' to **encourage** moral decline, and for gain, being more concerned about marketing than in being faithful to the Lord. And it is toward this corrupt leadership that Jesus said *"Therefore, you will receive the greater condemnation"* (Matt. 23:14). In having given them more responsibility, from them will be demanded more accountability.

When the Church chooses to be 'contemporary' rather than holy, and embraces obvious contradictions, such as 'Christian' Rock music, it opens wide the floodgates of worldliness into the Church. As well, all who promote it in any way share in this guilt. Along with the music

comes its accepted beliefs, lifestyles, and fashions. Assemblies become entertainment centers, youth groups become hangouts for the sensual minded, and radio and television stations merely the 'Christian' equivalents to their worldly counterparts, staying afloat through worldly advertising and marketing schemes. Tragically, a world that needs the truth, becomes little more than a marketplace, which must be appealed to in the right way in order to 'cash in.' Furthermore, the buying power from each potential 'tithcr' becomes a necessary factor in order to 'keep things running.' Therefore, the destructive cycle continues. The world floods into the Church, not seeking the Holy One of truth, but the 'god' who has been marketed to them; one who can be easily invoked and appeased in like fashion to the other heathen gods of this world.

Consequently, the contemporary Church has become the image of this world. Modeling it in fornication, adultery, homosexuality, divorce and remarriage, high debt, sports madness, and in its unquenchable thirst for entertainment. In doing so, it has rejected the Spirit's warning *"because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them"* (Eph. 5:6, 7). It has lost sight of the fact that Jesus gave Himself for it *"that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish"* (Eph. 5:26, 27). And to those leaders who continue in their encouragement of moral decline, Jesus declares the words spoken of Jezebel *"who calls herself a prophetess to teach and beguile My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols ... I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death. and the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works"* (Rev. 2:20-23).

Love In Truth

A man without God can neither love God nor love like God, for Scripture says *"we love Him because He first loved us"* (1 John 4:19). We cannot know God's love, or know how to love like God, without God first loving us, dwelling in us, and then instructing us in His love. He is the Supreme Father Who purposes to make known *"truth to the children"* (Is. 38:19), and will therefore teach His children to **love in truth**. He will have us first to come to Jesus, Who says *"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me"* (Matt. 11:29). He desires that we come to *"know the love of Christ which passes knowledge"* (Eph. 3:19) whose love consists not in words only, but in things that are done. *"My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth"* (1 John 3:18).

When He teaches us the meaning of love in truth, we will learn to be more concerned with our brother's well being, than in our own 'rights' as children of God. We will not persist in proclaiming *"Do we have no right to eat or drink?"* (1 Cor. 9:4), but will rejoice in renouncing even our rights or privileges for Jesus' sake. *"Nevertheless, we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ"* (1 Cor. 9:12). If we believe that we have a right to enjoy a particular type of music (or any other earthly thing for that matter) and find that our music grieves our brother, we will gladly lay it aside, knowing that to do otherwise would mean that we are *"no longer walking in love."* In fact, *"it is evil"* (Rom. 14:15, 20). And we will also remember our Father's teaching not to *"do anything by which your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak,"* and that the *"strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves"* (Rom. 14:21; 15:1).

When truth is presented to us children of God, whether it pertains to the gifts of the Spirit, or such things as abortion, money, or music, it is joyfully received for *"love rejoices in truth"* (1

Cor. 13:13:6). If it seems to come as a painful correction, we know that our Father's correction is in love, for He has told us that *"as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten"* (Rev. 3:19). If the correction comes through a brother, it will not bring about our anger towards him. Instead our attitude will be *"let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness"* (Psalm 141:5).

Furthermore, if we truly desire to manifest God's love to the world, it will be manifested in the same way that Jesus manifested His love for the Father to the world *"That the world may know that I love the Father ... as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do"* (John 14:31), and *"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome."* (1 John 5:3).

To believe and to teach otherwise is to believe and to teach folly. The end of which will eventually force one to have to woefully declare *"Surely I am more stupid than any man, and do not have the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have knowledge of the Holy One"* (Prov. 30:2, 3).



The author became a student of Scripture following his salvation in the summer of 1985. In 1992 he received ministry credentials, and that same year began a graphic design and communications production business in which he is currently engaged.