



# **Some Thoughts & Quotes On Music**

by

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## Some Thoughts On Music

Sound affects the entire body including every nerve cell. Natural sound or sound from natural instruments *cannot* hurt the ears, yet when mechanical or electronic sound is turned up it can seriously or permanently damage the ears. Music affects children emotionally, intellectually, and in the psychomotor areas. Music can affect babies even *before* birth. When classical music is played in maternity wards it keeps the babies quiet. Yet the same babies will not settle to pop, jazz or rock music. Certain styles of music have also been proven to help children to be ‘smarter’.

Music can affect emotions. Music is communication and as Christians the music we have and how we use it is surely our expression of our communication with God. The Bible says to ‘**take heed what ye hear**’, (Mk.4:24) and to ‘**take heed how ye hear**’, (Lk.8:18).

Is music ‘*amoral*’? The dictionary meaning of the word ‘*amoral*’ is: ‘*without a sense of moral responsibility*’. It is interesting that this word was only invented *this century*, and especially with the arrival of the term ‘*contemporary Christian music*’! All the music experts that I know of do not say that music is ‘*amoral*’. Is music really neutral?...Is speech neutral? In speech we have the alphabet and the individual letters are neutral but combine them into letters and can they not take on a moral quality? Lines and circles are also neutral, but combine them and you have ‘*art*’! Can we really separate the *medium* from the *message* in music? The fact is that music can range from philosophical to orgiastic! It has power for evil or for good!

How powerful is music and what effect does it have on our Christian walk and the presentation of the Gospel? One professor of social thought in Chicago says, ‘*TV compared to music plays a comparatively small role in the formation of character and taste... Rock music has one appeal only, a barbaric appeal to sexual desires*’. This statement comes from an *unsaved* man! As with so many false things within the church today, the secular experts have to tell many in the church the truth! Another secular writer says: ‘*The concept that music affects character was the one great inspiring force behind the lives of the great composers*’. Aristotle said: ‘*If one listens to the wrong kind of music he will become the wrong kind of person. If he listens to the right kind of music he will*

*tend to become the right kind of person*'. Arguably there is some truth in this statement. Yet, why is it that many of today's Christian musicians and church leaders cannot see nor understand the powerful effect music has on Christians?

Music reflects a philosophy. When songs were being sung about free love and sex, we had free love and sex in society. Today we have songs that encourage suicide and suicide is at an all time high, particularly amongst teenagers. Many suicides have been *directly* linked to the music the victims have listened to. So too New Age music reflects a mindset: it has what some call 'ambient sound': short repeated patterns, a lack of variety and form, little melody and no rules. New Age magazines write: '*for the purposes of occult dominion, minds must be rendered passive*'. Another example is varieties of disco music. This music attracts the homosexual element. Nth Africa had the strongest church in the world in the first three centuries but they turned to heathenism which was reflected in their music with its excessive rhythm and beat. In short, musical styles reflect a school of thought.

*In church I am convinced that worldly music breaks down separation between us and the world.* Music reflects our view or our philosophy and therefore *reflects our view of God*. Christian rock is Christian lyrics (at best), mixed with *rebellious* music. Rock music is steeped and rooted in rebellion and drugs, sex, and rock-n-roll. I do not have to prove this - the secular artists, the media, and the world admits it! The underlining premise is: you cannot escape the *way* something is said!

An orchestra may have 100 musicians with only 3 or 4 rhythm instruments, (1-2%). However, Christian rock music and much of today's contemporary music is more than 75% rhythm! Contemporary world star, Paul Simon says '*Rock is rhythm*'.

We are *tripartate beings* made up of a spirit (Matt.6:33), soul (mental - mind, will, emotions, 2Cor.10:5), and body (Rom.13:14), as *one being*.

Whatever appeals to the flesh opens the door for *more* flesh. Ephesians 5:18 says we are not to be in the flesh wherein there is excess but that we are to be filled with the spirit. This scripture is showing a definite contrast between the flesh and the spirit. The word '*filled*' denotes a *control of* - that we are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit

which is already in us. Interestingly the verses following speak about music, (*‘psalms, hymns and spiritual songs’*)!

Christian music is often a replica of it’s worldly counterpart. Several top Christian singers are knowingly or unknowingly copying the world’s style in music. Indeed many of these stars are now highly rated in the music charts of the world and being signed by secular record companies.

*‘Torch singing’* is another style that is seen in nightclubs. This is the use of voice inflection to transmit provocative thoughts. Many believe the popular Christian singer Amy Grant has increasingly become more worldly in her style of singing, particularly with the way she uses voice inflection. It has been shown that voice inflection can transmit sexy thoughts. A rock magazine stated: *‘Some female vocalists invite sexy thoughts because of voice inflection... vulgar lyrics supported by provocative sound results in music pornography’*.\*

Most popular secular music today is very much rhythm and has a profound effect on the body. Enthusiasts of contemporary Christian music and Christian Rock sometimes cite the Old Testament scripture where David led the people in a dance. A close examination of the passage should warn any against taking too much out of this scripture. David simply beat time with his feet! This was not a sensual dance! The music of that day was not sensual like much of today’s contemporary music! If it were, then David would have defied the boundaries of the lusts of the flesh. The fact is that rhythm affects the body immediately. This is not to say we should have no beat in music for there needs to be *some* pulse or the music is dead. However, such events as Christian rock concerts step way over the boundaries of the use of *some* beat. Preaching the Gospel through this medium is not effective. It has been said that the bait you catch them with is the food you have to continue to feed them with. *Time Magazine* writing of some contemporary Christian music stated: *‘New lyrics for the devils music’... ‘the sound of a swarm of angry insects amplified several thousand times’*. Why should it be that the world can see and admit to the dangers of our contemporary music or our ‘Christian Rock’, yet the church slumbers on with very few voices being raised against such evils? Jesus said: *‘The children of this world are in this generation wiser than the children of light’*, (Lk.16:8).

In one Christian Rock concert in the USA where the Gospel was preached, follow up at a later date showed not one person to be committed to their original decision for Christ. Similarly, I have personally before written of similar results where the Gospel has been polluted in some way. It very often becomes '*another gospel*' and '*another Jesus*' and many can receive '*another spirit*', (2Cor.11:4; Gal.1:6,8,9). Today, we have youth organisations such as *Youth Alive* (AOG) openly using Christian Rock music and even secular bands as a means to bring the Gospel to youth. The results of this are a huge 'backsliding rate' and 'carnal Christians' of whom many should question if they are Christian at all. Can we 'Christianise' this with (debatable) Christian lyrics?

I am not here advocating 'dead' music or only old hymns sung with little life. If the music is dead, young people will unfortunately add their own 'artificial' life. I have no problems with lively choruses and a variety of musical instruments. Many churches could well learn from some aspects of so called 'Charismatic' worship. However, the beat must be controlled and minimised in comparison to the melody and the harmony. Songs should not be repeated over and over so as to introduce the hypnotic element so prevalent in many churches today. (Rhythm can be a useful tool for hypnotic induction). The lyrics should be Christ centred, doctrinally sound, and meaningful enough to cause people to think about who the Lord is and what He has done for us. The music and the words should glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. In my opinion, these things alone should make Christian music *different* to the world's music. The problem with contemporary and Christian Rock music is that the world has come into the church to take the church into the world - this ought not to be.

Is my music God's music? Does it honour God and his ways, (1Cor.10:31)? Does it help me to think on what is right and true, (Phil.4:8)? Does it reinforce my faith, (Rom.14:22,23)? Does it approve what God condemns, (Pr.19:27)? Do the words displease God, (Eph.4:29)? Can I listen to this song in the name of the lord Jesus, (Col.3:17)?

Some of the above material was extracted from '*The Language of Music*' by Frank Garlock, *Majesty Music*

\* '*The Secret Power of Music*' by David Tame.

## Some Quotes On Music

### **Music is a language:**

*‘You can research the findings in science, psychology, biology, history, philosophy, musicology, and theology and not find anything referring to the moral neutrality of music. This fallacious belief found not only its beginnings, but also its sole supporters, within the Contemporary Christian Music Community. If there were any credible evidence from any source outside CCM that music (apart from its text) had no formal influence on the listener, we would be glad to quote it here. But in more than twenty five years of reading and researching the topic, we have yet to find a single reference supporting the neutrality of music’. (‘Harmony at Home’ by Tim Fisher, P.84)*

*‘When I was with the Fleshtones we toured a lot of countries where people didn’t speak much English. I remember in Spain, the audience didn’t know what the words meant, but they would sing along. It was a real tribal type of thing...it was the rythmn...that got them. They had no idea what they were singing, but it didn’t matter. Later it occurred to me that some of my favourite songs are ones where I don’t really know what the words mean, but I like the way they make me feel’. (Robert Warren, Rock bassist/singer/ songwriter)*

*‘...tragically, most Christians measure the effectiveness of music by the yardstick of the flesh, not the yardstick of the spirit. If a song thrills us we like it. If it doesn’t excite us, we don’t like it’. (‘Harmony at Home’ by Tim Fisher, P.74)*

### **Rock Music:**

In the early 1950’s Cleveland Disc Jockey Allan Freed, revolutionised the music world. Borrowing a ghetto term for sexual activity, he coined the term ‘Rock N Roll’. The Encyclopedia Britannica for 1956 described ‘Rock n Roll’ as *‘insistent savagery...deliberately competing with the artistic ideals of the jungle.’* The Christian community at the time cried against this ‘tool of Satan’. (*‘Christian Rock: Blessing or Blasphemy?’*, Dial The Truth Ministries)



Rock star David Bowie said *'Rock has always been the devils music'*. (Rolling Stone, Feb.12, 1976, P.83)

Secular rock bad girl Lita Ford, said: *'Listen, rock n roll aint church. It's nasty business. You gotta be nasty too. If you're goody goody, you can't sing or play it'*. (Los Angeles Times, Aug.7th, 1988)

### **'Christian Rock':**

*Time Magazine*, March 11, 1985, called Christian Rock Music *'New Lyrics for the devils music'*.

*'Instead of simply saying 'Rock music is worldly', teach your children what 'the world' is from 1John 2:15-17 and other related passages. Teach them that the world isn't just material things but a system of thinking ('cosmos') contrary to God's way of thinking..'* (*'Harmony at Home'*, Tim Fisher P.50)

*'It is true that rock music attracts people to church, but not to godly living'*. (*'Harmony at home'*, Tim Fisher P.134)

### **Christian Contemporary Music (CCM):**

*'...some within the CCM camp are beginning to make the same observations... In 'Contemporary Christian Music Magazine', a regular contributor, John Fischer, expressed his concern about the subject matter of CCM. Consider these excerpts from his article 'Watering Down God': 'I noticed it during a coast to coast drive across Florida...listening all the way to a Christian hit radio station. The focus of almost every song was the love of God, but at the end of this two hour marathon I can't say I found out anything distinctive about God's love, except that it was real, it drowned me in the sea, it flowed all over me, it put its arms around me and held me close, and it generally made me feel pretty great. But the disturbing fact was that most, if not all of these things, could have just as easily come from someone other than God. There was no Cross in this love. No sin. No guilt. No redemption. No commitment. No cleansing. No forgiveness. No blood. No death. No heaven. No hell. No*

*saviour. No need to be saved. Just love. Lots and lots of it oozing out all over. These were not songs about God's love, they were songs about love in general, with God named or implied as its source'. ('Harmony at Home' by Tim Fisher, P.131)*

*'Stan Moser, former head of Word Records... was one of the pioneers and most important executives in CCM. After 26 years in CCM, in November 1995, he walked away from CCM. In an article in 'Christianity Today', titled 'We Have Created a Monster' Mr Moser freely admitted: 'To be candid, I look at the majority of music today and think it's virtually meaningless.'* ('Christianity Today', May 20<sup>th</sup> 1996, P.27)

*- CCM artist Michael Card: 'The lyrics of a good number of songs don't betray anything specifically Christian... What happens when we start getting the music to as many people as possible? There is an essential part of the Gospel that's not ever going to sell. The Gospel is good news but also bad news; 'You are a sinner and you are hopeless'. How is a multi-million dollar record company going to take that? (Christianity Today: 'Can't Buy Me Love', May 20, 1996, P.25)*

### **The Fruit of CCM:**

*CCM is littered with fallen leaders even to this day. 'Sandi Patti was committing adultery with Don Pesli as far back as 1991...she took part in two extra-marital relationships, in both cases with married men. A large part of Sandi Patti's career - she was committing adultery with married men... Sandi's adulterous appetite 'wrecked' two families. On Aug. 6th, 1995 after divorcing her first husband, she married Don Pesli'. ('Christian Rock: Blessing or Blasphemy?' by Dial The Truth Ministries referring to an article in Christianity Today 1995, Sept 11, P.72-74; Oct.23, P.89)*

### **Pragmatic Thinking (Rom.3:8):**

*'But what about those who have been saved?' you may ask. Let me use a simple illustration to respond. When you travel by car, you often see graffiti near the streets and highways of our nation. Suppose you were*

*driving down an interstate highway and noticed on a bridge that someone had spray painted 'Trust Jesus'. Would it be possible for someone driving by to read the words and become convicted?...Perhaps the phrase would call to mind a Gospel tract or a sermon... The Holy Spirit could use the message to convince this person of his sin - even to trust Jesus. Would the person be genuinely saved? Of course; and any Christian would rejoice at his conversion. But what about the person who spray painted the bridge? Do we hail him as a great witness? Do we praise his innovation in getting the Gospel out? No... this person has broken the law. It's not legal to spraypaint bridges. Were people saved? Yes. Do we excuse the illegal method because of apparent results? No. 2Timothy 2:5 tells us 'And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully'. ('Harmony at Home' by Tim Fisher, P.136,137)*

## About the Author and the Ministry

Terry Arnold holds a Doctorate in Theology (Dth), a Masters degree (MABS) and several diplomas. He was founder and president of *South Pacific Bible Institute*, a Bible college training and equipping people for ministry. In addition he was the founder of Hervey Bay Bible Church in Queensland, Australia. He has for 25 years served as an elder and then pastor.

Terry is the author of several books and is involved in a full time ministry of *teaching, informing* and *equipping* the church. He is also editor of a growing worldwide publication '*Diakrisis (Australia)*'.

His ministry includes preaching/teaching and conducting seminars and conferences in a wide range of churches and colleges.

**TA Ministries** is a non-denominational and non-profit faith ministry founded in 1989 when the book '*To Catholics Whom I Love*' was written by Terry Arnold. This book went through several re-prints and served as a fruitful outreach to Roman Catholics.

In 1996 the ministry became a full-time operation with the introduction of a free newsletter, later named '*Diakrisis (Australia)*'.

*Diakrisis* is published bi-monthly to *teach, inform* and *equip* the church of Biblical truths and to warn of false teaching. It has also been a valuable reference aid to hundreds of pastors/elders.