

# Music and the Bible

## The New “Worship”

### Introduction

- Last week we looked at the meaning of worship and some Biblical principles concerning how to properly worship.
- This week we will look at how the historical and orthodox understanding of worship was redefined in the past century.
- Note – the main sources for the information in this lesson are two books by Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong: “Lovin’ on Jesus: A Concise History of Contemporary Worship” (2017) and “A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship” (2021).

### The Charismatic/Pentecostal Influence

- While Pentecostals have always been known for their ecstatic worship practices, a new theological and practical philosophy of worship can be traced to the controversial “Latter Rain” movement in Canada in the late 1940’s.
- Reg Layzell in January, 1946, took Psalm 22:3 (“But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.”) and reinterpreted it as meaning “if we praise God then He will be present among us”.
  - This reinterpretation of the verse is still widely used today.
- Another key teaching was a typology built around the “Tabernacle of David”.
  - Historically, this was the dwelling place of the Ark after David brought it to Jerusalem – II Samuel 6, II Chronicles 15-16
  - The new teaching was that David introduced the concepts of charismatic praise at this time.
  - Prophecies (Isaiah 16:5, Amos 9:11-12, Acts 15:16) concerning the “tabernacle of David” were reimagined as being about the restoration of that charismatic praise in the last days.
  - <https://www.baptistbasics.org/2022/06/19/the-mysterious-tabernacle-of-david/>
- Another popular teaching is a word study of Hebrew words for praise and worship.
  - These studies are very biased and do not hold up to critical analysis
  - <https://www.baptistbasics.org/2022/05/28/hebrew-words-for-praise/>

### The Pragmatic/Contemporary Influence

- The philosophy of adapting or adopting practices to be more relevant or effective with the times has been around for centuries.
  - We can summarize this philosophy as “the ends justify the means”.
  - Something of this philosophy can be seen in the camp meetings of the 1800’s, the early Salvation Army, and the early Pentecostals.

- Around the 1920's this philosophy was used to reach a newly-minted group – “youth”.
- By the 1960's there was a vast movement to make Christianity more relevant to youth and “modern” people.
  - Key among this was moving away from traditional music, worship, and language and then adopting contemporary and often unorthodox practices.
- The “church growth” movement of the 1970's-1980's promoted these changes to widen the appeal of the church to a broader audience.
- The key verse used is often I Corinthians 9:22b where Paul says, “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

## The Confluence of Influences

- By the 1990's both the Charismatic and Contemporary philosophies began to intertwine.
- I contend that the seeds planted in trying to reach the youth of the 1960's onward were now bearing fruit in that those youth were now adults and leaders who expected Christianity to be the same as the form that was presented to them as teens.
- As the new trends in music took hold, even the designs of church auditoriums shifted to be more like concert stages.
- In many churches today a charismatic theology is being practiced and promoted in music that goes against their own doctrinal positions.
  - On this I would highly recommend the article titled “Stop Singing Hillsong, Bethel, Jesus Culture, and Elevation” (and its follow-ups) by Scott Aniol.
    - <https://g3min.org/stop-singing-hillsong-bethel-jesus-culture-and-elevation/>

## Where Should We Stand?

- I will contend that enough time has passed to prove the “fruit” of new worship methods and philosophies – Matthew 7:15-20
- We must be careful to train the next generation on what is true worship – Proverbs 22:6.
- We must guard our theology from false teachings – I Timothy 6:3-5
- We need to know *what* and *why* we believe and practice.