

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.15 (musical nature of Lucifer)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 17-19

Angelic beings have demonstrated throughout time their ability to express themselves using the powerful communication tools of speech and music (Rev 4:8-9; 5:9, 12; 14:2-3).⁶ Remember, fallen angels, most notably Lucifer, retained their communicative abilities after they fell. Paul warned Timothy, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Tim 4:1). There is no reason textually or logically to exclude music from the list of ways angels, elect or fallen, communicate. Two specific passages of Scripture describe Lucifer, his fall, and his character. In both cases music is referred to specifically or by inference in the greater context.

In Ezekiel 28:2-19, the prophet rebuked the King of Tyre. In describing the king, Ezekiel compared him to Lucifer himself. In this description, Satan (made clear by vs. 13 “You were in Eden” ESV) is described as beautiful.⁷ Verse 13 lists a number of precious stones that make up his “covering.”

Next, the passage states that Lucifer was created with “tabrets and pipes.” The question among Bible translators is how should תֶּבֶל (*top*) and נֶקֶב (*neqeb*) be translated? NASB and others opt for “settings and socket”; whereas KJV, NKJV, Youngs, Latin Vulgate, and others translate the text as “tabrets (timbrels or tambourines) and pipes.” Much of the discussion comes down to a question of whether the context *insists* that *top* be translated as something other than “tabrets,” which is the preferred translation in the 17 other times תֶּבֶל (*top*) is used, or must it be understood as “beat” as one might beat gold to make a setting. I believe the word “setting” is exceedingly unlikely. The context does not *demand* this word at all; it only reflects the prejudice of some who believe “beats” presents an easier reading. Just as Ezekiel is using physical jewels to describe Lucifer’s beauty, he is using musical instruments to illustrate the truth that Lucifer is musical. The use of the instruments as a way of describing Lucifer’s beauty is not difficult to understand.⁷

The Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (BDB), a respected lexicon among theologians, lists Ezekiel 28:13 as one of the places *top* should be translated “timbrel or tambourine.”

תֶּבֶל timbrel, tambourine; abs. ת' Gn 31:27 pl. מִיָּת Ju 8|11:34 +; רִיָּת Ez 28:13, רִיָּת Je 31:4;—*timbrel*, held and struck with hand, especially by dancing women, often with other musical instr.:—sign of merriment, gladness Gn 31:27 (E) Jb 21:12, revelry Is 5:12; 24:8 cf. Je 31:4 Ez 28:13 (CO *setting*) triumph Ex 15:20 (E) Ju 11:34 1 S 18:6 Is 30:32; used by prophets in ecstasy 1 S 10:5; in praise of 2 S 6:5,

1 Ch 13:8, 81:3; 149:3; 150:4. – Vid. Prince⁸

Later, *BDB* translates the term *neqeb* as a “jeweler’s socket.”

נֶקֶב... term. techn. of jeweller’s work, prob. some hole or cavity (Hi. Sim. Co. Berthol; ToyHpt leaves untransl.),—only pl si. נֶקֶבִּים וְנִיִּים Ez 28:13 thy sockets and thy grooves (Da), or thy settings and thy sockets.⁹

The second word in question, נֶקֶב (*neqeb*), is used in this form only here. The etymologically close verb form, נָקַב (*naqab*) gives the idea of boring holes, mining, or piercing.¹⁰

Although there is not unanimity on the translation of musical instruments for the two words in this passage, there is no reason to depart from the more normal understanding of the word by the original Jewish audience. תֶּנֶּף (*top*) is translated “timbrel or tambourine,” a musical instrument, in all other usage. I believe there is no convincing reason to translate it otherwise. If it is an instrument, as I believe it is, then the immediate context of נֶקֶב (*neqeb*) would argue for a translation of a musical instrument with bored holes like a pipe or flute. Rabbi Mosha Eisemann offers this translation, “Your [Lucifer’s] skill in making instruments, or your musical ability, was bred into you at the moment of your birth.”¹¹ I believe these two words should be understood as musical instruments that illustrate the beauty of Lucifer’s musical communication just as the jewels illustrate his visual beauty.

Hebrew does have the word מִשְׁבֶּסֶת (*misbesot*) which clearly means a setting for a gem. It is translated “settings” in the NKJV, NASV, NET, NIV, NET, and others but as “ouches” in the AV in Exodus 28:11, 13, 14, 25, and 39:6, 13 (see *TWOT* 2320b). If the writer would have meant to communicate “settings” instead of “timbrels,” he could have chosen the word מִשְׁבֶּסֶת (*misbesot*).

In a similar passage, the prophet Isaiah compares the King of Babylon to Lucifer in Isaiah 14:4-23. Just as in Ezekiel 28, this passage has a dual meaning. Isaiah essentially calls the King of Babylon the Devil, describing Satan’s heart of rebellion and pride. In Isaiah 14:11, the prophet declares that the “music” (NASB) הֶמְיָה (*hemya*) or “noise” (KJV) of the “viols” (KJV) or better “harps” (NASB and others) נֶבֶל (*nebel*) of the rebellious will be judged. Lucifer is clearly presented as a communicative being, as are all angels. There is every reason to presume that this innate ability to communicate includes their ability to communicate musically.

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.76 (prophecy and music)

From, *The Word on Worship and Music Matters*

pp. 88-92

This passage is particularly interesting because the oldest texts were set in the poetic form, which in antiquity was consistently intoned. These passages use the term *אמר*, *amar* (*say*) to refer to saying something through singing. Walvoord also refers to this ancient practice.

This ancient poem (Jud 5), which may have been initially preserved in a collection such as “the Book of the Wars of the Lord” (Num. 21:14) or “the Book of Jasher” (Josh. 10:13), is literally a victory hymn (well known in examples from the 15th to 12th centuries b.c. in Egypt and Assyria).¹⁰

Deborah’s song has been recognized as one of the most powerful poems of antiquity, even by secular scholars.¹¹ Carson suggests it may have been one of the songs included in the Book of Jasher discussed above.¹² As both prophet and judge (*אִשָּׁה נְבִיאָה*), Deborah parallels Miriam in Exodus 15:20. Her role as a prophetess may have similarly been connected to her proclamation as a singer. Block concludes his introductory material regarding this passage with an interesting observation:

Two introductory questions of intention remain: (1) Why was this song composed in the first place? (2) Why did the author of the Book of Judges insert it here? The answer to the first depends upon the generic classification ascribed to the poem: as history it informs; as a ballad it entertains; as a heroic ode it inspires; as a hymn it calls for celebration. As a poetic recital of historical events, this ode offers the reader/hearer a glimpse into the early history of Israel.¹³

I underscore the truth here again that we can use music in the proclamation of significant truth. In Deuteronomy 31-32 and Exodus 15, the Israelites were directly commanded to remember God’s works through singing; here in Judges 5, we see another example of using music to record a significant historic event. I am going to take this opportunity to further develop the contrasts between prose and poetry (that which the ancients sang or intoned). The *New American Commentary* demonstrates differences between prose and poetry and their strengths and weaknesses. Evangelicals have begun to explore the idea that genre should make a difference not only in how we understand a passage but also how we might best proclaim it. I am attempting to bring forward this idea to the genre of music in the Word.

Early in man’s history, perhaps in the garden, the difference between singing and speaking may have been indiscernible. The semantic overlap may have been more complete—a “sound/language.” Today, the semantic overlap between singing and speaking is more distinct, though among the more ancient oriental

languages, distinctions are still strongly tonal. Still, even today some mediums do overlap in English.

As to purpose and effect, the Bible demonstrates a larger overlap. Consider Paul's use of prose vs. poetry in the Epistles. Below, I offer a chart illustrating some of the ways in which I believe speech and singing are similar to and unique from each other. [*This chart if only available in the book*]

You will find that it is similar to the observations made by Block above.

Singing, it seems to me, is more suited to the function of prophet and speech to the function of the teaching priest, though both used the tools of music *and* speech.

Speech seems best suited to a more propositional presentation of truth or a presentation where an authority exercises his role and in essence is saying, "I am your spiritual leader, you need to do this for these reasons."

Singing is best suited as a motivational reminder of God's truth. Music goes right for a volitional or emotive response in the listener. At times, as in the case of instrumental music, it circumvents the cognitive altogether and goes right for the will and emotion. Music lends itself to expressions that are filled with emotion, even passion. Music in the Bible is predominantly prayer, testimony, or creed (celebration of a truth). Prose is predominantly linear, a logical explanation of truth or persuasive logic.

The role of the musical prophet in Greek culture is even better documented. Consider the following quote in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)*.

Belief in a link between the divine Muse and the human poet is found in the earliest Gk. poetry, where it is obviously traditional and finds its simplest expression in the appeal to the Muse, Hom. Il., 1, 1, esp. 2, 484–492 etc. The Homeric poet-singer feels that in his work he is dependent on the divine (θεός ... δῶκεν ἀοιδήν, Od. 8, 44); by contact therewith he is a θεῖος ἀοιδός, Od., 1, 336; 8, 43 etc. The gift sought from the Muse is not only song (τέρπειν Od., 8, 45) but also the content of the past which is to be depicted. The Muses have seen and know all things (ἴστε πάντα Il., 2, 485) and they remind the singer (μνήσασθαι, 492), who is first the hearer and then the poet and speaker in the endowed power of presentation. Continuing this view, but breaking free from the epic of chivalry, Hes. with a new claim to truth (ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι, Theog., 28) finds the relation of the poet to the Muse in his personal experience of calling by the Muses, who breathe into him the divine voice, 22–34 → 350, 4 ff.¹⁴

Each time we sing, we are communicating. For this reason, we must take the musical life of our congregation seriously. Since musicians are powerful teachers, we must be careful in our music choices, and specific in our cautions about musical teachers. Positively, we should give our people musical tools to help them remember God's great acts. Don't misunderstand me as saying I think speaking is not the central force in propositional exposition of truth.

I am certainly not denigrating the speaking of truth but elevating the singing of truth and the important role of both speaking and singing truth into the believer's life.

Samuel, the last of the judges, called Israel to leave false worship (1 Sam 7:3-4). As a part of Samuel's mission, he started a "school of the prophets" (1 Sam 10:5, 10-11). These men could be seen prophesying "with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp." As "mouthpieces" of God, they used music as one of their tools in teaching Israel (1 Sam 10:5).¹⁵ It is in this context that the transition to the United Kingdom (and our next chapter) is introduced.

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.94 (David's Dance)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 64 (Miriam's Dance) 101-105 (David's Dance)

Last, Miriam brings up two interesting topics. First, she acted as a “prophetess” or “mouthpiece” (נְבִיאָה *nebiha*) of God as she led the women in enthusiastic worship through music (Ex 15:20-21). This is the first in a number of occasions when the root word *nabi* (literally, mouthpiece) or its derivatives are used to refer to people who act as mouthpieces, using music as their means of communication. Moderns tend to think of music in terms of its entertainment value and not primarily as a means of communication generally, let alone as a fitting vehicle for Divine revelation. We cannot fully investigate the relationship of music and the prophetic office in this book, but the Bible considers both music and speech as valid means of communication while acting in the prophetic office.

David's dance has been the topic of a lot of discussion surrounding worship. Other more in-depth studies of this topic have been done, but since it is very much a topic in worship today, I offer the following perspectives. First, the specific word (כָּרַר *karar*) has only two occurrences, both in this passage. The AV translates it as “dance” both times. Its secondary understanding is to whirl or be whirling. Two closely related words are used in other places: (לָחַל *machowlah*) occurring eight times and (מָחַל *machowl*) which occurs an additional six times. This verb contains two basic ideas: first, whirling around in circular movements (reflected in the derivatives *mahol* and *mehola*) and second, writhing in labor pains (reflected in *hil* and *hila*). The Chronicler uses different words, here contrasted by Keil and Delitzsch.

1 Chron. 15:29–16:3. V. 29 and 1 Chron. 16:1–3 agree in substance with 2 Sam. 6:15–19a, only some few words being explained: e.g., מְרַקֵּד וּמְשַׁחֵק, v. 29, instead of מְפַזֵּז וּמְכַרְכֵּר (Sam.), and אָנְרַיָּהוּ בְּרִיתֵי יְהוָה instead of אָנְרַיָּהוּ (Sam.).⁵ The variant word used in Chronicles, (רָקַד *raqad*), is also used in Job 21:11 “little ones like a flock, and their children **dance**,” Psalm 29:6 “He maketh them also **to skip** like a calf,” Psalm 114:4 “ye **skipped** like rams,” and Ecclesiastes 3:4 “a time to mourn, and a time **to dance**” (**emphasis mine**). The use of this word by the Chronicler makes it even clearer that nothing of a choreographed or sensual manner was occurring and that David's skipping or whirling “dance” would not have been related to dance as we commonly know it today.

Jeremy Montagu, in his book *Musical Instruments of the Bible* (which includes much more than just a complete discussion of musical instruments), deals with dance quite exhaustively. He suggests that (מָחַל *mahol*), which is also used in Psalm 30, 149, and 150, may actually have been a musical instrument and not physical dance at all.⁶ Much like the term “waltz” in modern music can refer to

a musical genre rather than an actual dance, *mahol* may refer to a musical instrument originally associated with these spontaneous physical movements the AV translates as dance. In my opinion, this would fit the context of these Psalms more easily. In any case, to suggest that this passage is somehow a biblical defense for the modern practice of cross-gender, choreographed, modern dance is not justifiable textually or contextually.

Returning to the narrative, we read that Michal rebuked David for publicly celebrating in an “unkingly” way (2 Sam 6:20-23; 1 Chron 15:29). David’s response, “It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house” (2 Sam 6:21), and the Chronicler’s specific mention of Michal being the daughter of Saul (1 Chron 15:29) further illustrate the political implications of the text. Remember, part of the overall context of 1 Samuel is the demise of Saul and the rise of David.

Some have conjectured that Michal’s childlessness was the unique chastisement of God for her criticism of David’s worship and infer that any criticism or censure of the worship of others today will be similarly chastened by God. The text reads more naturally without this contrived idea. McCarter chooses a more “normal” reading in light of the greater context (Saul’s demise and David’s rise) and simply says Michal was “excluded from his [David’s] bed,”⁷ which of course resulted in her remaining childless. It would be hard to imagine intimacy between David and Michal after this event.

What about David’s dance? God is silent in this narrative about His specific approval or disapproval. If you are looking to defend dance as a practice, go somewhere else, like Psalm 150. Even then, the issue of whether *mahol* is a musical instrument or not still exists. If in the context you are convinced it is physical movement accompanying music, the original context will only allow a spontaneous activity of whirling or skipping. Modern dance does not parallel biblical dance in this narrative or the rest of Scripture, for that matter. As I mentioned when dealing with Miriam’s dance, this specific event *may* give us some insights into the spontaneous physical reactions of joyful believers. Even then, we must remember that dance is nowhere mentioned as a part of any of the corporate worship of the Temple, synagogue, or church. For this reason, I would suggest we “abstract” the concept of “wholehearted” participation from this narrative instead of making a direct application (transference) of dancing for today. And for clarity, let me say again that this event is wholly distinct from the choreographed, sexually oriented, contemporary understanding of the word as modern people use it today. Imagine how a same-gender athletic team might react after a victory. An observer might say a team member was “beside himself with excitement, jumping or skipping around spontaneously.” David’s procession was characterized by exuberant celebration as the nation rejoiced in their newfound unity (1 Chron 15:27-28; 2 Sam 6:14-16).

As I mentioned above, “dancing” and “writhing” share a semantic link. You may wonder what “dance” could possibly have to do with “writhing.” The connection is not as curious as it might seem on the surface. Both activities are a spontaneous reaction to an event. For example, when David said “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing” (Ps 30:11), he may have been referring to this or another time in his life. David at times “mourned” (‘תָּפַח and may have spontaneously “writhed” under the judgment of God. David now rejoiced and spontaneously “danced” (דָּנָה) having experienced the blessing of God. The two activities, mourning and dancing, are used antithetically in both Testaments (Jer 31:13; Eccl 3:4; Lam 5:15; Mat 11:17; Luke 7:32).

This whole historic event happened in the context of a theocracy, so direct applications can be difficult. Although not everyone will agree with my assessment, in my mind, this event has all the trappings of being *primarily* a political event: thirty thousand people were called to attend, the previous administration is debunked, people exuberantly celebrated, a parade was given, and a feast was enjoyed at the end. Yes, God was exalted and it is true that sacrifices were offered by the priests. However, I still think this is best understood as *primarily* a national event for which God was rightly praised, not *primarily* a worship service narrative from which we should attach significant doctrine. It certainly does not follow Mosaic Law or NT practices.

Any physical response in the context of public worship will be bound by concepts outlined in 1 Corinthians 11-14 which we will look at later. In summary, worship should be wholehearted, mutually edifying, and spirit-controlled, not sensual or self-focused in any way. The other ditch we could fall into is the assumption that all physical responses in worship are necessarily sensual and self-focused. Again, we are to demonstrate our love for God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and we need not imagine that physical involvement is sensual just because abuses are possible, even common. If you have further questions about David’s actions or his relationship with Michal, I suggest two sources in the endnotes that I have found very helpful.⁸

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.125 (The Prophet and music)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 64 (Miriam as Prophetess) 176, 178,

Last, Miriam brings up two interesting topics. First, she acted as a “prophetess” or “mouthpiece” (נְבִיאָה *nebiha*) of God as she led the women in enthusiastic worship through music (Ex 15:20-21). This is the first in a number of occasions when the root word *nabi* (literally, mouthpiece) or its derivatives are used to refer to people who act as mouthpieces, using music as their means of communication. Moderns tend to think of music in terms of its entertainment value and not primarily as a means of communication generally, let alone as a fitting vehicle for Divine revelation. We cannot fully investigate the relationship of music and the prophetic office in this book, but the Bible considers both music and speech as valid means of communication while acting in the prophetic office.

The Bible’s use of the word *nabi* (mouthpiece) includes both the spoken and sung word. The father of prophets, Moses,¹⁸ used music as the tool for communicating God’s legally binding covenant (Deut 31-32), a “covenant-treaty” that was sung and deposited in a special place after its proclamation.¹⁹ The prophets regularly used the poetic/musical genre to communicate messages from God. Habakkuk 3:1 and 3:19 not only reflect the poetic/musical literary genre but specifically mention the musical form and instrument used. Jeremiah’s Lamentation is also divided into five “dirges” that were likely sung. A similar dirge structure is also used at the deaths of Saul (2 Sam 1:17-27) and Absalom (2 Sam 3:33-34). Men and women who functioned in musical roles were often called “prophets” or “prophetesses.” Seel suggests that “specific reference to ‘the prophesying of the prophets with a psaltery and a harp’ (1 Sam 10:5, 19:20; 2 Kings 3:15) were probably instances of improvised music.”²⁰ As mentioned earlier, Ulrich Leupold asserts that “poetry recited was unknown in antiquity.”²¹ Isaiah sang his messages. It takes some fancy hermeneutical high stepping to imagine that “Now will I sing to my well beloved a song” (Isa 5:1) could mean anything other than that Isaiah sang memorable, emotional, and at times lamenting songs as he delivered his impassioned messages to a largely illiterate people.

Allow me to beat the drum once more. We are reading contemporary culture back into the text when we exclude the possibility that serious messages with significant content can be delivered through song. I would suggest that the genre Isaiah chose to deliver God’s message to his original audience was singing for five reasons. First, this honors a hermeneutic that opts for a “normal reading” of the passage (conservative scholars like Walvoord²⁷ and Wiersbe²⁸ for example, also identify these as songs). Second, music was used as a memory aid to deliver information of great import throughout the Ancient Near East (Deut 31-32).

Third, many in Isaiah's audience would have been illiterate. Kaiser says:

It is also true that the vast majority of people did not own any of the Scriptures, and most could not read, although literacy was more common among Jews than among the rest of the Greco-Roman world.²⁹

To the extent they could read, their reading material would have been limited and carefully guarded. Fourth, music was used significantly in connection with the prophetic office (1 Sam 10:5; Hab 3:1). Levites who were involved in music were referred to as exercising a prophetic role (1 Chron 25:1, 3). Fifth, Isaiah's message would have been served by the strong emotive properties of music. Consider choosing music for a worship service based on the "big idea" of the service. Though we need simple texts that people can meditate on, there also needs to be substantive, deep truths communicated in our music. When someone presents truth through singing, they may be praying, testifying, teaching, counseling, or prophesying ("forthtelling" truth). Each of these roles may have a slightly different paradigm for selection. Think deeply about what may be different about each. We will look at this again through the eye of Paul in the Epistles.

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.155 (Fear and Worship)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 147-150,

There is a clear relationship between worship and “the fear of the Lord.” Mentioned 14 times in Proverbs, fearing the Lord is the concept on which the whole of wisdom is built. Proverbs affords another opportunity to expand upon your definition of worship. I have posited that worship is seeing God clearly for who He is and responding with heart, soul, mind, and strength in offering up sacrifices of praise and service to Him within the context of an obedient life. Since worship starts with seeing God clearly, then worship events should stimulate a reverent awe, a fear while standing before a transcendent God and a glorious celebration of the forgiveness and access reconciled believers have in our redemption. In fact, when God miraculously appeared before people throughout history, they naturally and spontaneously responded by falling on their faces in fear and humility.

Of course there are different kinds of fear, and not all fear is godly. *TWOT* suggests five different categories when commenting on the Hebrew word *yare*:

...biblical usages of *yare* are divided into five general categories: 1) the emotion of fear, 2) the intellectual anticipation of evil without emphasis upon the emotional reaction, 3) reverence or awe, 4) righteous behaviour or piety, and 5) formal religious worship. Major [OT] synonyms include *pahad*, *hatat*, and *harad* as well as several words referring to shaking or quaking as a result of fear.... In the Piel, *yare* means “to make to fear” (II Sam 14:15; Neh 6:9, 14, 19; II Chr 32:18). In the Niphal, the meaning is passive, “to be feared” (Ps 130:4). The Niphal participle is frequently used to describe things as “terrible,” “awesome,” or “terrifying.” This is a good example of the gerundive character of the Niphal participle, “to be feared” (GKC, 116e). It may describe places (Gen 28:17), God (Ex 15:11), God’s name (Deut 28:58), God’s deeds (Ex 34:10), people (Isa 18:2), and the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:31 [H 3:4]).⁶

God came to the Israelites with a message that should have alleviated some fears (Gen 50:19-20). Since fear is both condemned and encouraged in Scripture, it is obvious that there are two ways in which to process the raw emotion of fear, one beneficial and the other detrimental. Remember, context rules supreme in matters open to interpretation. The problem is the inadequacy of our English word. For example, without many qualifiers, we would never use the term “fear” to describe a positive relationship with, say, one’s father or someone in authority. In fact, western minds typically view fear as an exclusively negative emotion. I will refrain from dealing with fear in the NT until we arrive there in our study, but again we will see that fear has two distinct connotations.

Fear is an element in several of the worship narratives we have already examined

(Lev 9; Deut 5; as well as Isa 6 and others). At times fear is used synonymously for right living. Leviticus 25:17 states, “Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God.” It is precisely this fear that God rewards in Exodus 1:21. “And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that He made them houses.” In Joshua 22:25 fear is used to express the totality of the worship ritual centered in Jerusalem. The Eastern tribes worried that their children might “cease from fearing the Lord” (see the greater context). As confusing as it may appear, “fearing the Lord” became so synonymous with worship that at times it is used to refer to the worship cultus (practice) itself (cf. Deut. 6:2; 8:6; 10:12–13; 31:12–13), even when pious living was absent. II Kings 17:33 gives us a rather startling contradiction by saying, “They feared the Lord, and served their own gods.” When describing the syncretistic worship of Israel, the Northern kingdom “feared” the Lord in respect to their worship practices, while not “fearing” the Lord in respect to righteous obedience. Observe this in the follow passage.

So they feared the LORD (*cultus*), and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places (*lifestyle*), which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD (*cultus*), and served their own gods (*lifestyle*), after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD (*lifestyle*), neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them (*cultus and lifestyle*) (II Kings 17:32–35). (*Italics added*)

For the Jews, the fear of the Lord was both the motivation and the result of living in light of who God was as a Person. *TWOT* summarizes by stating:

Fear of various sorts may be caused by God’s great deeds (Ex 14:31; Josh 4:23–24; I Sam 4:7–9), by judgment (Isa 59:18–19), and God’s law (Deut 4:10) as well as by various human agencies (I Sam 7:7; 15:24).⁷

Acts of worship should happen in the context of this fuller understanding of a life of worship.

Solomon understood that worshipping God meant that people must first see Him in His fullness, and having seen Him, they then must respond with proper reverence, contrition, humility, obedience, and service. Living in light of the full Person of the Godhead might be a helpful definition for the totality of worship. In Isaiah 8:13 we read, “The LORD of Hosts, Him you shall honor as holy. Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.” (ESV) I agree with Aitken when he says,

Here in Proverbs, therefore, the expression “the fear of the Lord” touches the pulse of Israel’s religious faith and practice in all its vitality, embracing reverence for and devotion to God, and, above all, loyalty and obedience to him.⁸

We have talked often about the need to see God both as immanent and transcendent. This is where worship must begin. Those who believe we can know God personally through an intimate relationship with God may lose touch at times with the reality of our need to properly fear God. Some, I am afraid have made the mistake of thinking that our *standing* in Christ, which ought to give us great boldness, eliminates the need for us to revel in and respect the transcendent greatness of our heavenly Father. Some of the ministries that taught me so much about the joy we have in Jesus have at times forgotten to consistently show me a balanced Trinity. How well have I communicated the fullness of the Godhead in my worship choices, especially in instilling a fear of the Lord? Do my people know God is approachable? Do they understand His transcendent greatness? Do I? Do you?

As I look at the slice of Christianity I am most familiar with, I think we could do a better job teaching the fear of the Lord. How bold, you might say. But tell me, can you list three songs in your hymnal or even your broader Christian listening that refer to the fear of the Lord? Because we are in Jesus and are the recipients of so many wonderful privileges, it is easy for us to forget that they are indeed privileges. When we boldly enter the throne room of God, we must remember He still sits as King of kings and Lord of lords. Let me remind you of Solomon's conclusion in Ecclesiastes. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl 12:13).

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.201 (Associations in 1 Corinthians 8-10)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 256-260

Before looking at these particular chapters in 1 Corinthians, it is important to understand the general mood and worship themes of the entire book.

Surprisingly, though Paul is writing to Gentile believers in a pagan culture, he used OT worship terminology throughout. In 1 Corinthians 3, when Paul is talking about building the church, he refers to it as “God’s building” (1 Cor 3:9) and asks rhetorically,

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. (1 Cor 3:16-17 ESV)

Later, referring to the essential purity of individual believers, he again uses Temple terminology: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own” (1 Cor 6:19). Paul also assumes the Corinthians’ knowledge of the Passover and the Law regarding leaven when making reference to Christ’s sacrifice:

For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1 Cor 5:7-8)

Peppered throughout Corinthians are admonitions to avoid idolatry (1 Cor 5:9, 10; 6:9; 10:7; 12:2). Paul offers practical help in making certain of this by giving believers several principles about idolatry and those things clearly identified with them.

Unlike America today,²¹ the problem of idol worship and meat offered in worship to idols was a real one in Corinth.²² The prohibition of the early church in Acts 15:20, 29 was designed to preserve testimony, and also, as seen in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10, to encourage believers to actively “flee from idolatry” (1 Cor 10:14). Paul warns believers that fellowship with idols in any way provokes God to jealousy. “Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than He?” (1 Cor 10:22). Paul makes the following line of argument when addressing the thorny issue of associations in these two chapters.

- Idols are nothing, and the meat is innately good, but such knowledge can lead to pride (1 Cor 8:1-2; rhetorically again in 1 Cor 10:18).
- Believers should live by a higher standard than just knowledge-based decisions. Believers should move toward love-based decisions (1 Cor 8:2-3; 1 Cor 10:24).
- Idols are nothing, but some people could not move beyond the identification

these idols had with the meat at that time (1 Cor 8:4-5; 1 Cor 10:25-27).

There is a place for “educating” those who may have a conscience that is unduly sensitive, but that is not the primary solution to the immediate situation in this passage, though later Paul seems to move beyond these circumstances. (see 1 Tim 4:1-5)

- The believer should not use things or do things that would cause another brother to violate his conscience and fall into false worship again (1 Cor 8:7; 1 Cor 10:25, 29).
- The believer should ask himself if the inclusion of this element is truly important and edifying (1 Cor 8:8; 1 Cor 10:32-33).
- Care must be taken not to cause a spiritual disaster by emboldening another brother to slide back or lean into error. Garland says, “Their minds are still infused with old conceptions that spring up involuntarily.”²³ In fact, Paul says that if a brother is defiled, there has been a sin against Christ Himself (1 Cor 8:9-11).
- The believer should lovingly choose to forfeit his “rights,” if need be (“while the world stands”), if doing that act which a brother associates with evil emboldens him to move toward paganism or endears him to a system that would lead him back into the world (1 Cor 8:12-13).

In applying this passage, it is important to remember that worship music is not specifically in view here. Nor was this meat being used in worship. Instead, Paul is addressing meat as it may be eaten in one’s home. I would suggest that if Paul were talking about bringing this meat into church for a love feast of some kind, the idea would need more careful scrutiny.

Second, music and meat are fundamentally dissimilar. Meat is not mood-altering, nor does it influence volition and personality as music does. Meat does not enter into the mind to teach or admonish. These passages are dealing with associations more strictly. Also, meat is a “thing” in the passage, an inanimate object. We are not discussing a method of communication between two moral beings. For that reason, when applying this passage, we might better talk about musical instruments than musical style. Certainly, style has associations, but making applications regarding style is an application by extension and not primarily in view. The shortest trip up the “abstraction ladder” would call for one to make the application to inanimate objects, such as guitars or maybe electric guitars with flames and trap sets, rather than style of communication. Or, if we bring Romans 14 into the discussion, the place some musical instruments, perhaps organs or tambourines, may have had in a former religious tradition. Since I did not address Romans 14 specifically, let me reference it here.

Romans 14 deals primarily with practices associated with Judaism. Perhaps by abstraction, some might apply this to religious practices from a new believer’s former religious heritage. Allow me to suggest a line of reasoning that might look something like this:

- Believers should stop judging a brother about having or using traditions or instruments (possibly organs or tambourines) from a former religious heritage (Rom 14:1-2).
- Believers should leave final judgment of other believers in such matters up to God (Rom 14:3-4).
- Believers should come to a definite conclusion for themselves, for each believer will answer to God for his own choice and how he made that choice (Rom 14:5, 12).
- When a believer makes a liberty choice, that liberty choice should not cause someone to stumble back into the error of a previous religion because of the “baggage” associated with the choice (Rom 14:13).
- Believers should make decisions, “as much as lies in (them),” that promote peace, unity, and Christian growth (Rom 14:19).
- If the believer’s conscience condemns him, he should “cease and desist” (Rom 14:23).

In 1 Corinthians 8 and 10, as well as Romans 14, Paul’s stance is not one of promoting a personal agenda or “right,” but one of humble service to others, all with a careful commitment to avoid any associations with the surrounding pagan idolatry. Yes, associations do change over time, and there may be musical instruments, or by application, forms/styles or specific songs, that we deem to be unusable and that over time will lose their close identification with the false teaching. We must always do the hard work of lovingly and wisely considering associations for our people.

Since I will not deal with the meat question in detail when it appears later in Revelation, I find intriguing a passage in Revelation 2:14, 20. Twice Christ mentions meat offered to idols and fornication. First, to the church in Pergamos, He references Balaam (Num 22-24) who “cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things offered to idols, and to commit fornication.” Second, He condemns the church at Thyatira: “Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.” Further, as I have mentioned, Acts 15:29 and 21:25 asks Gentiles to keep from idol-meat, which was strictly forbidden for OT Jews, and avoiding any hint of fornication (*porneo*) that was so much a part of pagan life and worship.

I am committed to the inspiration and unity of the Scriptures, so I know there is no contradiction between Paul, Luke, and John. God expresses through these writers His great caution about using or doing things associated with idolatry. I must also conclude that there seems to be some relationship between carelessness over separation from idolatry (illustrated by the idol-meat eaters) and fornication. Those who are unconcerned with associations with evil may easily fall prey to immorality. Or, as Romans 1 teaches, idolatry can lead to fornication. Whatever your applications of 1 Corinthians to using certain

instruments or by extension musical styles associated with the world's idolatry, consider the whole of Scripture. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Don't let your desire for anything, including a kind of music, blind you. Don't needlessly exclude beneficial, truly edifying music because of an imagined association that does not really exist. Please, proceed with great care.

Let's be transparently honest. Because we always do worship and music within a culture, interacting with culture in a Christlike way is always a challenge. As I sit before my computer screen today, a week after Christmas, I am struck again with the reality of Christ becoming a man and entering into His cultural setting. He never, ever, even one time, compromised His God-nature to blend in to His surroundings. Yet, in perfect love and wisdom, He did live in the culture in ways that allowed Him to seem "normal" in some ways. His dress, His choice to speak Koine Greek instead of Greek's more formal communication, His customs, practices, and standards of decorum into which He interjected Himself were always holy and still indigenous—so much so that "the common people heard Him gladly" (Mark 12:37). In fact, it became a derogatory label that Jesus was "a friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Matt 11:19). How did Jesus live in the culture lovingly, wisely, and at the same time, purely? How can we do the same in our worship and music choices?

Come, Let Us Worship! The Journey Further Notes

p.216 (Colossians 3:16 and 1:28)

From, The Word on Worship and Music Matters

pp. 247ff

If I could only share one passage with someone concerning the place and importance of music in the life of the believer, it would be this verse. Understanding the truths in the overall context of this passage can unleash the power of a long-neglected tool in the believer's life.

To begin, I would like you to consider the greater context of the book of Colossians. Paul directs his listeners to remember the greatness of Christ, who in all things is to have "the preeminence" (Col 1:18). This phrase is found in what most conservative commentators believe is an early hymn (Col 1:14-20). The passage is a wonderful pattern for a creedal hymn (one that states doctrine). Believers are encouraged to remember that their "life is hid with God in Christ" (Col 3:3) and to "mortify" the old desires and "put on the new man" (Col 3:5, 10). An important part of putting on and putting off is allowing God's Word to take up residence in the believer through the powerful tool of music. Paul talks about music in the context of practical living, just as he did in Ephesians. I am grieved that many have neglected the intensely practical tool of music in discipleship.

First, consider the command to let the Word "dwell" (ἐνοικεῖτω, *enoikeito*), or take up residence, or inhabit the life of the believer. This cardinal truth is one Paul often emphasized and is a predominant thread running throughout the NT. Christ prayed, "Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Peter said that if one is fruitful "in the knowledge of Christ," growing in the Word of truth, he would "never fall" (2 Pet 1:8-10). In 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul says growth occurs as we are continually "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." It is through the Word "richly," (πλουσίως, *plousios*) or abundantly inhabiting our lives, that sanctification and growth occur.

Paul implores the church to accomplish the task of teaching and admonishing with great wisdom (σοφία *sophia*). The punctuation in the AV is unfortunate. Allow me to explain with a homey illustration. Consider the sentence "A woman, without her man, is nothing." Now compare the same words with different punctuation. "A woman: without her, man is nothing." Since there was no punctuation in the Greek, two readings are possible. The first "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" ties the word wisdom to what the Scriptures are able to bring to the believer's life. This is true of course. A second punctuation, "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing in Psalms" ties the word wisdom to the way in

which we ought to teach and admonish. A very similar text in Colossians 1:28, where the grammar and syntax is comparable, helps us with this hermeneutic decision. When Paul describes his ministry of “preaching,” (καταγγέλλομεν, *kataggellomen*, the AV translates this word as “preach” 10 times, “show” three times, “declare” twice, “teach” once, and “speak of” once)¹⁷ he states his desire to teach and admonish “in all wisdom.” The emphasis here is more clearly on the action of teaching and admonishing. Paul is using the structure in 3:16 to command the believer to be wise in how he teaches and admonishes using musical mediums. I believe this better represents Paul’s intention.

This universal need for the Word to dwell abundantly in our lives, this deep desire in every true believer, is accomplished when believers are involved in two activities: teaching (διδάσκω, *didasko*) and counseling (νουθετέω, *noutheteo*). When Paul preached, he taught and admonished; when believers sing, they “teach and admonish.” The implications of this powerful feature of music are profound. Other references to warning (νουθετέω, *noutheteo*) include an explanation of Paul’s overall ministry (Acts 20:31; 1 Cor 4:14; 1 Thes 5:12) and his challenge for believers to be involved in admonishing others (Rom 15:14; 1 Thes 5:14; 2 Thes 3:15). Melick gives this insight:

Admonishing differs from teaching. Admonishing has the element of strong encouragement. It is generally practical and moral, rather than abstract or theological. It is the way teaching is reinforced in the lives of the hearers. Such orderly arrangement of truth and strong practical encouragement are to be done in wisdom. Among other things, that means the person exercising these gifts will understand, in the will of God, how to exercise them appropriately. It also means that their exercise will be distinctly Christian in motivation and method... Singing effectively teaches and encourages. In 3:16, the pastoral function Paul claimed for himself in 1:28 is broadened to include the entire congregation and the medium of music. Few activities have such ability to teach, prompt recall, and encourage, and they have always been a vital part of Christianity.¹⁸

References to the importance of teaching and teachers for the NT believer are almost too numerous to mention.¹⁹ All of the NT writers address the need for good teaching and learning and sternly warn about the influence of false teaching. Since music is used as a teaching and counseling tool, musicians are indeed teachers and counselors. We live in a day when technology makes the impact of these musical teachers unprecedented.

Speaking and singing do indeed differ linguistically and practically but they *overlap* semantically (see pages 90-91). For example, the songs of Scripture are largely prayers, testimonies, or proclamations (statement of fact or creed). The examples of speaking in the Scriptures tend to be more didactic and/or propositional in nature. Generally, music is more volitional and emotional in its impact, and speech is more suited to didactic and propositional delivery—precisely why speaking and singing should be powerful partners in the teaching

and admonishing of biblical truth. Paul makes it clear that when we sing and are sung to, music has the potential for positively getting the Word in our hearts, heads, and actions. The potential for musical teachers to do this work is profound.

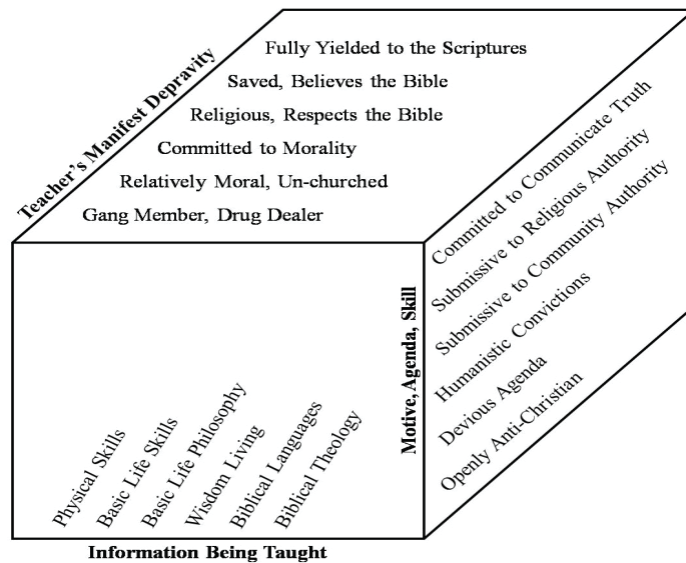
The reference to Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs were dealt with in Ephesians, but allow me to add Richard Melick's comments on the trio of song types:

Although there is a consensus that the terms have significant overlap and cannot be distinguished sharply, there is some help in seeing where they most differ. "Psalms" are, no doubt, the psalms of the Old Testament. The word "hymn" occurs only twice in the New Testament, here and Eph 5:19. It may describe a "festive hymn of praise." Recent studies have addressed the presence of hymns in the New Testament and found them in many places, such as Col 1:15–20 and Phil 2:5–11. In Scripture, however, they are never called hymns, and the use of the term reflects modern church worship more than is necessarily true of the first century. "Spiritual" songs seems to describe other musical compositions, perhaps like gospel songs. Whatever they were, Paul cautioned that they must be spiritual, not secular. Together, these three terms address the entire scope of musical expression in early church worship.²⁰

So there is no confusion about the importance of personal singing and not just listening to what others may sing, Paul repeats the command to be continually "singing (ᾄδοντες, *adontes*) with grace in your hearts." Here, Paul not only reinforces the need to actively participate in singing the truths of God, but uses the OT word "heart" to represent the totality of the person. Nothing teaches and admonishes more emotionally and permanently than heartfelt, grace-filled singing. Once again Paul underscores the vertical and horizontal elements of worship music and ends the verse with a command for heartfelt, gracious singing to the Lord first and foremost.

I can pray no greater prayer for the people in my family and congregation than that the Word of God would take up residence in their hearts. If my people become people who are constantly taught and admonished by the Word as they live, they will shine as bright lights in my town. That is why this worship and music issue is such a big deal. It really *does* matter what believers sing and have sung to them not only in church but all week long. In fact, I would rather have an influence on what plays in the minds of my congregation the 110 waking hours a week they are *not* in church than the 3 or 4 hours they are in church. I am not saying that believers must sing hymns every waking hour, but the music that circles in our heads at any given time has such an influence on how we think it often undoes the godly thoughts we so longed to live out at the end of the last sermon we heard. What is playing in your head right now? What is "dwelling" in your heart? If the Word of Christ is not permeating your thinking, it may be that you are allowing too many negative influences in, or you may be neglecting the powerful influence of godly music in your own discipleship.

If this truth grips your heart, you will understand why we must exercise great wisdom as we go about teaching and admonishing in our songs. I am disappointed that some of my brothers and sisters do not exercise this much-needed wisdom. I fear some thoughtlessly endear impressionable young believers to musical teachers with little knowledge about what these musical teachers believe or what their agenda may be. If you are wrestling with how to apply the truth that musicians teach and admonish, you understand that this is not simple. The following chart may help.



Thinking three dimensionally about this thorny issue using this diagram may serve to stimulate your thinking. First, there are levels of **Information Being Taught**. For example, a musical teacher may simply teach about a common human experience reflected in the natural order of things. Or, he/she may accurately convey the Scripture's teaching on a certain subject. He/she may intentionally or inadvertently twist what the Scriptures teach about the nature and character of God (how God feels or thinks about something).

Second, consider the **Teacher's Manifest Depravity** (their visible morality). The teacher may be openly rebellious to any morality, or committed to human goodness, or submissive to human government, or submissive to Christian morality, or honestly attempting to yield to the Scriptures.

Third, consider the musical teacher's **Agenda, Motivations, and Skill** in communication. Thinking through this, you can see how even an unredeemed person *could* be committed to a level of integrity in communication that allows him/her to teach something of value. On the other hand, some teachers are so twisted in their agenda, so influenced by their demonic counterparts, they are not to be trusted at any level.

As hard as it may be to think through this paradigm, no matter how much deep thought it requires, no matter our thirst for the simple answer, we are called to

exercise great wisdom.

The teaching and counseling power of music is something I believe the contemporary church has not shown wise caution about. As a practical matter, I usually start with those musical teachers who are the most akin to my biblical presuppositions, those most committed to the Scriptures, and then work cautiously out from there. Yes, I have found some truthful, helpful material among those who believe very differently than me, and I believe that music can be used with some caveats. Some musicians I would otherwise disagree with are committed to the wholesome communication of some specific truth. Sometimes material can be usable with a simple disclaimer: "Although I do not endorse everything this author or artist has written, I have found this piece to be edifying." Many times this is all that is necessary to keep your people from downloading music they would regret purchasing. Be as specific as you can be with your disclaimer. Teach people the truth(s) that combats specific error and grow their discernment. If you disagree with a writers' view on some specific doctrine, teach the truth without throwing away everything that particular writer may believe.

Let me say candidly that most of the writers in the hymnals I have used in my over 40 years of music ministry I do not entirely agree with doctrinally. There are few hymn writers (that I have freely used) who would feel comfortable being on the same pastoral staff as I, and I would venture to say they would feel the same about me. I admit it is hard to be completely consistent. And although consistency is praiseworthy, I have seen some arrive at a pretty radical position based on consistency as a highest good. I pray you will make the best, most balanced judgment call and trust God for the results. I appreciate what C. H. Spurgeon included in the preface to his hymnal, *Our Own Hymnbook*.

The area of our researches has been as wide as the bounds of existing religious literature, American and British, Protestant and Romish; ancient and modern. Whatever may be thought of our taste we have used it without prejudice, and a good hymn has not been rejected because of the character of its author, or the heresies of the church in whose hymnal it first occurred; so long as the language and the spirit commended the hymn to our heart we included it, and believe that we have enriched our collection thereby. The range of subjects is very extensive, comprising not only direct praise, but doctrine, experience, and exhortation; thus enabling the saints according to apostolical command to edify one another in their spiritual songs. - A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Public, Social, and Private Worship 1866 (pdf available online).

This is not simple to apply, as I have said. I encourage you to strike a balance between endearing believers to teachers and counselors that may lead them astray while retaining what is the best of those with whom you disagree on some points. Do not withhold that which is "good to the use of edifying" when clear teaching on your part might make useful resources available to them.

I believe that music is a powerful tool believers today have not fully utilized. I encourage you, consider taking the next series of messages, missions conference, or special meetings and teach some Scripture songs that will allow your people to take God's truth to work with them. Sing songs to yourself that are full of the truths of the Word so they will be with you in the heat of the spiritual battles you face from day to day.

I would also challenge you to take a good hard look at what we are really teaching our children with the musical choices we are making for them. Not only are we handicapping our young people by teaching silly drivel or that which makes little sense to them, we are also missing a wonderful opportunity to bring the power of music to bear in their lives. Certainly we must be age appropriate, but that does not mean we have the liberty to denigrate our God with songs that don't reflect God's character. If you want to sing some silly songs about spiders or whatever to get the wiggles out, go ahead, then transition to simple, reverent songs that accurately portray the God they need a lifelong relationship with. If we tie God to the silliness of some of what passes for children's church music in some circles, we run the risk of having them leave their relationship with the Lord behind with their other childhood silliness. Again, take an objective look at what your children are learning about God in their music and teach them wisely.

Reference on p. 260 of a four week template for worship service preparation I have used.

Here is a 4-week planning model that I have used.

Overall Goals

- Each service supports the pastor's central idea—whether thematic, sequential, or rooted in a foundational attribute of God.
- Each worship leader (every musician) contributes to the whole. It is not just their individual piece.
- Each service seeks to equip and empower the body for ministry.

Music Selection Questions

- The content of the text—Is it a reverent prayer, a clear statement of truth, or a faithful testimony?
- The music itself—Does it serve as a fitting vehicle for that worthy text?
- The associations—Since music communicates, what does this music suggest or reinforce for your people?

3-4 weeks ahead-

- get a general handle on where the preacher is going. Pick a theme.
- Pick a choir number that is somewhere “in the same universe” as the message or chosen theme.
- Begin selecting hymns. This usually means choosing 10-15 hymns, songs, choruses, and Psalms that reinforce the central big idea, either thematically or sequentially.

1-2 Weeks Ahead

- Settle on congregational songs, aiming for balance among concrete/abstract, objective/subjective, teaching/testimony, and prayer.
- Make final decisions with your congregation in mind—their familiarity and receptivity. If the choir or special music is new, keep congregational songs more familiar (and vice versa).
- Engage the hearts of the other musicians. I contact those providing special music (a term I will use for clarity) and say, “*The pastor is preaching on ____, the theme of the service is ____, and the choir is singing ____.* Do you have ideas that would support the service?” This does several things:
- It brings the musician into the ministry of the Word as a participant, not merely a performer.
- It encourages them to think in terms of truth, not merely preference.
- It allows me to guide the choice when needed—suggesting alternatives or, at times, assigning a specific piece. *I have found this to be a meaningful way to build both unity and relationships within the team.*
- I also communicate to the instrumentalists the overall plan for the service.

Sunday-

- We do have a “mic check” on Sunday morning for all special music for the day. This gives us all one last “look-see” at the music from my point of view, and it gives the sound folks a chance to

anticipate levels, etc. It also gives us another opportunity to pray together for guidance and for the Lord's work in the service.

- I usually write out the Scriptures or the comments I want to make during worship, even if I don't follow these notes exactly.
- Work out any transitions with the instrumentalists so no one is caught off guard. Do all things decently and in order.