

# WHY POPULARIZE CHRISTIAN ROCK?

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Does Music have an effect on the body?

In 500 BC, Pythagoras said that there are three components to music: (1) rhythm which affects the physical part of the body; (2) melody which affects the emotional and mental aspects of man; and (3) harmony which affects the spiritual nature of man.6:45 It is important that these three components be in balance with each other. For instance if there is an imbalance of rhythm, physical reactions are more emphasized than the spiritual nature of man. Is that good for one's Christian experience?

How does music create tension? (1) dissonance (non-harmonic chords); (2) unresolved cadences (stopping without an ending, leaving one "up in the air;") (3) syncopation (emphasis on the naturally weak beat); monotonous repetition; driving rhythm. It is true that the techniques of the first three are used in the classics, but very sparingly. But when these are used to extreme, tension is built up in the body.6:71-79

Note how music can affect body chemistry. The low frequency of the bass guitar and the driving beat of the drum affect the cerebral fluid which affects the pituitary gland which in turn controls all the other hormone secretions of the body, causing an imbalance of sex and adrenalin hormones. The imbalance of hormones in the body causes radical changes in the blood sugar which affects the brain, in turn inhibiting the moral inhibitions, like alcohol.7:91 The rock-and-roll beat causes an over-secretion of the hormone epinephrine, resulting in abnormal sexual stimulation, calcium depletion, and a serious decrease of blood sugar in the brain. In addition, the vibrations from the rock rhythms can cause more or less permanent functional alteration in the cellular structure within the brain5:36

What is the source of the rock beat?

One Christian group was desirous of converting the primitive islanders of the South Seas to Christ. To attract their attention, they played some religious rock. Soon upset natives were peering from behind trees and shouting, "From where did you get our devil music?" A friend from US brought with her some Christian contemporary music, when she visited the missionary family, the Warkentins. When some members from the local congregation walked past the missionaries' home, they were astounded to hear strange sounds coming from within. They rushed to the house and excitedly asked, "Why are you calling on the spirits with your music?" for they thought the Warkentins had lost their senses and were communicating with demons.6:113

Is music sinful or devilish just because one doesn't like it? David Pratt, a former satanist high priest, has this testimony: "The beat and style of the music used in the occult rituals is the same that I now hear in Christian power tracts." People who were saved from the youth culture of today say, "I cannot listen to this new Christian music, because when I hear it, it takes me back to my past when I was lost. It brings all that back to me--lustful desires, love of money, sex, suicide, and rebellion against authority." Stephen Maphosah from Zimbabwe when visiting US, was shocked when he listened to a Christian radio station. He declared, "The same beat that I used to play to call up the evil spirits is in the music I heard on the Christian station." When several African pastors heard a Christian rock tape sent from US, in disgust they asked, "What are you doing allowing your church people in America to call up the evil spirits with their music?"3:7-8

Does God approve of mixing the sacred with the profane?

I agree with Paul Hamel when he says that Christian rock music is out of place in church, even though the words are orthodox. The source of the music is from the primitive dance and devil worship. Any fusion of secular methods with sacred intentions is in danger of becoming a truce with the world, and the world isn't fooled. In Ezekiel 22:26, the Lord condemns the priests who "put no difference between the sacred and profane."

How does that relate to the secular sources of some of the great hymns?

It is true that some of these were hymns borrowed from secular folk tunes. But we must understand that the type of secular music of that day was similar in style to the sacred music. We cannot say the same of today's music. In addition to the satanic beat as mentioned above, we can also consider the source of rock and roll in this country which came from the prostitute houses of New Orleans.

Knowing this background, are we justified in feeding our young people this invention of the deceitful devil? Bill Gothard likens the use of Christian rock to trying to reach teenagers with "giving out liquor with Bible verses on the bottles."3:6 He further states, "To justify vulgar music on the basis that it is being used to communicate the Gospel is the same as justifying profanity in the pulpit or pornography in Gospel literature."3:18

Are rock groups worthy of imitation?

Christian rock groups are copying the evil dress styles of secular rock musicians. Some are even using satanic symbols on album jackets.3:15 A large sign that attracted youth into the camp meeting youth tent read, "Outrageous Youth Celebration," which was an accurate description of what was transpiring inside.8:22,23 In many of the Christian rock songs, Christ is not mentioned. Take for Instance, "Calling on You." One cannot tell if they are written to the Lord, someone's girl friend or the family dog.4:248 Godwin states that bloodstains of the occult are sprinkled all over Petra's "ministry." They appear clean-cut, but their actions speak much louder than their words. Though they talk about serving God Almighty, their actions reveal Satan to be the true master behind their music4:312 Satan has changed his tactics. At first he couldn't make an impact by trying to enter the front door of the evangelical church. Now he walks right in the wide open back door through which he has been blindly but enthusiastically welcomed by means of contemporary Christian music"6:12

How can Amy Grant's fans grow in their Christian experience, through listening to her Christian rock records or videos? According to Jeff Goodwin in chapter 16 of, *Dancing with Demons*, he reveals her lifestyle. Though baptized into the Church of Christ when a teenager, she rebelled against its strict discipline, so joined a very liberal charismatic group. Her sponsors were so intent in making big money (eventually double digit millions) that performances moved from churches to the concert stage with dancing and prancing. Amy didn't even want conservative fundamentalists coming to her concerts. By looking sexy, she attracted Christian youth who were more interested in this popular glamour than wanting to "dig in to Jesus Christ." Generally speaking, her lyrics seldom mention the name of Jesus as, "You were pretty crazy Back when we fell in love Wanting to be everything That I would be proud of." Jeff Karr's says that Amy Grant's Christian music is so similar to secular music that he compares her to John Lennon. How can such music lead one to a genuine relationship with Christ?

What does Vatican II of 1962 have to do with Celebration services?

One of the ways in which the Vatican hoped to facilitate the merging of all Christendom was to establish musical Celebration services with popular religious songs, and relating the music to the various cultures of the people.8:117 In the light of the prophecy of Rev. 13, should we encourage this merging of all Christendom?

How effective is Christian Rock music in Evangelism?

Barbara Jepon believes that the mix of the sacred and secular is not inappropriate. Rather, the appropriateness should be judged by whether or not it works effectively in evangelism. Religious rock gives a false conception of Christianity. Lowell Hart believes that this unholy alliance of pop music with church music leads many young people into distorted concepts and false impressions of the Christian life.6:11 The cross is treated lightly, and confidence is put in the flesh. There is a superficial conversion where the individual retains his worldly ways. One evangelist was thrilled to see a hundred youth take their stand for Christ, after being inspired by religious rock music. But after a few weeks, all had dropped out, for they had responded only to the music, and not to the gospel.6:180 If not fed and fertilized and controlled by the Word, decisions are made by manipulation, rather than by the power of the truth. It's a conversion, in a way, but not a reformation, for those who are converted, so to speak, continue to listen to secular rock. They are not separated from the world, and see no need for that separation.6:182 James 1:29 admonishes us to keep unspotted from the world. Organist John Ferguson emphasizes: "We don't lower standards so that all can reach them; we provide a ladder and encourage people to use it."1:34 This goody-goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner, encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin. Religious entertainment that

leaves us "feeling good" without feeling like "doing good" is not the goal of worship.<sup>8:51</sup> Christian rock is an attempt to give young people what they want rather than what they need while catering to their immature spiritual values and undeveloped musical tastes. The message is not clear, for this type of music often presents Jesus as a heavenly lover to fall in love with--love-sick sentimentality.<sup>2:132</sup> Instead of emphasizing man's sinfulness and his need of salvation, the emphasis is on ambiguous peace and philosophical humanism.

How are young people affected by religious rock?

A choir singing religious rock was asked what effect this type of music had on them. The youth responded, "It turns us on sexually, just like any other type of rock." Tim Love (18) testified that when the new youth pastor introduced Christian rock, it led him into listening to secular rock. He admitted, "What it did to me was, cause a complete breakdown in morals, which led directly to my becoming involved in immoral habits and illegal activities. I was also constantly plagued with violent and unclean thoughts." Fortunately he was reconverted and became free from that kind of music and its effects.<sup>3:3</sup>

Sari Ann Mitchell (14) at a private Christian school was introduced to religious rock. She revealed that it made her think sensuous thoughts and caused her to sway and dance like the world. This led her to listening to secular rock. It wasn't long before she stopped her daily devotions, her school work suffered, and she rebelled against her parents in music and clothes. After her conversion at the Bill Gothard seminar, she gave the testimony, "I'm not just saying that I think Christian contemporary music is bad and is compromising--I know it is. There's only one way to get out of its addictive clutch, and that's to give it up to God. So please don't let this wolf sneak into the church and kill people unawares."<sup>3:4,5</sup>

The Patrick Hait family were concerned because their unusually well-behaved three-year old daughter became difficult to manage. She started pushing, shoving, kicking, and biting her sister and friends. She lost interest in worship and stopped praying. She was openly defiant and rebellious to her parents, even hitting and kicking them. All these changes took place in a three week period. Finally, they caught on that three weeks before she started listening to a tape of Christian songs that had a rock beat. Three days after they destroyed the tape, she returned to the normal sweet child she had been prior to listening to that tape.<sup>3:13,14</sup>

What influence can consecrated Christian youth have?

Christiane Quick (19) was addicted to Christian rock music that she'd been listening to all her life. But when she met a large group of Christian young people who never listened to Christian music with a rock beat, she was impressed with their peace and joy. A month later when she burned all her Christian rock tapes, she described the result. "God has given me a new desire to know Him better. I have a peace in my life that I never even realized was missing. For years I had a stuttering problem that is now completely cleared up, and I have a new relationship with my parents that I have never had before. It was very important for me not just to get rid of the wrong music, but to replace it with right music. It is my prayer that every teenager will experience that freedom that I am now enjoying."<sup>3:19</sup>

Have Adventists had this problem before?

Following the 1844 movement, various forms of fanaticism arose. Ellen White as an eyewitness, states, "I went into their meetings. There was much excitement, with noise and confusion. One could not tell what was piped or what was harped. Some appeared to be in vision, and fell to the floor. Others were jumping, dancing, and shouting." In 1900 Eld. Haskell wrote to Ellen White, describing the Indiana camp meeting, as being carnival-like, satanic, noisy, and irreverent worship. In answer to his letter, Ellen White wrote, "The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. the senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, sanctifying truth for this time. . . The power of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival. I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ to make the truth disgusting to sensible people," and making the third angel's message of none effect upon the minds of unbelievers.<sup>11:34-37</sup>

How can effective soul winning be achieved?

"The place should be holy, where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness, and humility."12:257 Ellen White writes that evangelism is not to be like a concert. Strong emotions are to be avoided, and that we are not to follow the world by depending on theatrical display to arouse interest.9:501 It is not the kind of music found in heaven. "Let us learn the song of Eden now that we may sing it when we join their (angels) ranks."10:289,290

How can we make the change?

Anyone can learn to enjoy classical, religious and secular music. Take for instance, the experiment with university students who had never studied music. They were exposed to Bach and rock, alternately for 25 days. At the conclusion of the experiment, they were questioned as to their preference. Unanimously, they said, "Bach, because rock is too much like the confusion of everyday living to be ultimately satisfying."6:58 Before Nathan was an Adventist, he was addicted to rock music to such an extent that church hymns had no appeal to him. So he listened to Christian rock. But finally he came to the conclusion that it was so similar to secular rock that it had the same effects on him. He concluded that he needed to put away Christian rock. After listening to hymns and classical music for a time, he learned to enjoy it, and it was more beneficial to his Christian walk.

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