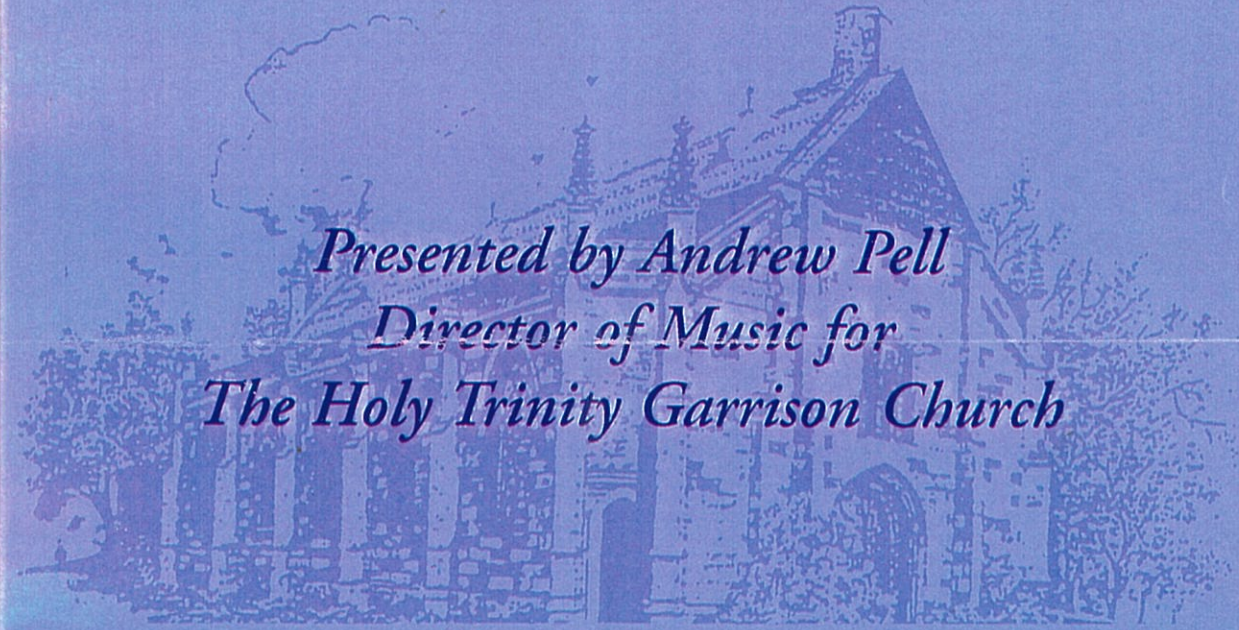


BIBLE STUDY ON MUSIC



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Sources On Being Magazine
Mr San Lopez
The New International Version of The Bible
Selected Texts

MAKE MELODY TO GOD - A BIBLE STUDY ON MUSIC

“Music is the art of organising sound in significant forms to express ideas and emotions through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony and colour.”.....(Macquarie Dictionary)

“Music is the universal language of mankind and God is the Author of this language of mankind and God is the Author of this language.”

The Bible places the origin of human music right at the beginning of history; Jubal (it says) was the Father of all who play the lyre and pipe. (Genesis 4:21)

Owen Salter - editor of “On Being” states that humans have always sensed that the music they make is able to provide contact with the deepest music of God. He also goes on to say that whenever God has moved in history, people have responded with new songs. This continues today.

Music grips the human spirit in ways that mere (spoken) words never can.

At its best, music engages us more fully in relating to our Creator..... “A prayer sung is said thrice”...an ancient christian aphorism.

Martin Luther: “I would gladly see all the arts, especially music, serving Him Who has given them and made them what they be”.

Music has always and everywhere been an integral part of human life: It is human to hum and sing.

Music is the perfect vehicle for expressing and celebrating our experience of what it means to be human in God’s world.

Man is to praise God in song. God declared to Job (38:7) that there was a time “when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Everyone who has been touched by God will feel the need to sing and praise God.

Music and song have been used since creation to express the full range of human responses to the world and to God. Christian music should always be a time of celebration and joy.

1. MUSIC IN FORMAL WORSHIP

Throughout Israel’s history music was used in different ways:

2 Samuel	6: 1-5
1 Chronicles	6: 31-47
	15: 16-22
	23: 5
	25: 1-8
2 Chronicles	5: 11-14
	7: 6
	29: 25-30
Ezra	3: 10-13
Nehemiah	12: 46-47
	13: 10-11

2. MUSIC AND LIFE

The Israelites were a community that employed music as part or the whole range of their communal and individual experiences:

1 Samuel	18: 6-7
2 Samuel	1: 17-27
Nehemiah	12: 27-43
Genesis	31: 27
Isaiah	16: 10
Exodus	15: 1-21

3. MUSIC PERSPECTIVE

Daniel 3: 1-7

Music is used as a sign which calls people to worship the golden idol set up by Nebuchadnezzar. In Isaiah 5: 12 and Amos 6: 5 music forms part of the debauched lifestyle of the rebellious Israelites. In Amos 5: 21-24 God indicates that liturgical worship (including music) is not substitute for true devotion.

4. QUALITY MATTERS

In Psalm 33 the Psalmist instructs musicians to play skilfully to the Lord. (Verse 3)

In 1 Chronicles 15: 22 Kenaniah was placed in charge of Levitical singing - because he was skillful at it.

In 1 Chronicles 25: 6-8 we find that students shared equally with their master in the temple music.

5. INSTRUMENTS

Psalm 150 uses a variety of instruments eg. trumpet, harps, lyrics and tambourines.

- Do you think churches today have lost the practice of using the variety of instruments as stated in Psalm 150?

- Is it right to just use an organ or piano in Church?

6. DANCE

In the Bible, dance is often linked with music and song in times of Joy, Victory and Celebration.

Exodus	15: 20
1 Samuel	18: 6
2 Samuel	6: 14-16
Luke	15: 25

7. MUSIC IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus as his followers followed the Jewish tradition with its belief in the value of music and song. Hence only a few references (Matthew 26: 30)

Paul classifies the music of the early Christian community as "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs". (Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16).

- Examine these two contexts. What can be concluded about the meaning of music for the early Christian community from these verses?

8. CHURCH MUSIC AND SINGING TODAY

Dr. Lindsay Terry, Musical Director of the Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, states:

“Music is the spiritual thermostat of a church - being both the regulator and reflector of the temperature.

A thermostat incorporates a thermometer which simply tells the temperature (heat level) in a room.

Secondly, a thermostat regulates the furnace, hence the music in a church can motivate people to Christ and evangelism.”

In today's Church we sing hymns and choruses.

A hymn can do the following:

- (a) Tell a story
- (b) Give a testimony
- (c) A prayer
- (d) Teach
- (e) Praise
- (f) Express
- (g) Warm
- (h) Anticipate
- (i) Assure
- (j) Comfort
- (k) Prepare
- (l) Invite
- (m) Express gratitude
- (n) Strengthen

Points to ponder:

- (i) Do we fully understand what we sing about?
- (ii) Do we sing 'joyfully' as the Bible teaches.

Church music is constantly changing but the primary purpose remains the same - - To give praise to God Who is worthy of praise'.