

Vanity of Vanities or Song of Songs?
Music Education in Submission to Biblical Authority

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Introduction

The second chorus of a beloved gospel hymn reads, “Christ without, all is vain! / Christ within, all is gain.”³ Without Him, life at best is the vanity of vanities with nothing new under the sun. In fact, everything under the sun is vanity. It does not last; it has no eternal worth. According to Ecclesiastes our human life is filled with travail and is but chasing the wind (1:14).⁴ In God’s sovereign arrangement of the Bible, however, Ecclesiastes is immediately followed by Song of Songs. Both were written by Solomon and together express the gamut of human experience. One represents the failure of the old creation as a result of the fall; the other pre-figures Christ and the church as the victorious accomplishment of Christ in the new creation.⁵ The former describes a life of emptiness and futility; the latter reveals a wonderful life of reality and meaning through the loving union of Solomon and the Shulamite. Without Christ, man’s life has no song, no meaning, no lasting joy. With Christ, however, as our regenerated new life within (I Pet. 1:3), our life is a continual song of songs, full of meaning, full of potential, full of the life that is the very Christ Himself.

¹ The idea for this juxtaposition is not my own. “No matter how good, excellent, marvelous, and wonderful a thing may be, as long as it is of the old creation, it is part of the vanity of vanities under the sun. Only the new creation, which is in the heavens and not ‘under the sun,’ is not vanity but is reality. . . . Song of Songs stresses that Christ is the song of songs, the satisfaction of satisfactions to human life, which is versus the vanity of vanities of all things under the sun” (Ecc. 1:2, footnote 2, RV).

² Special thanks to Dr. Joshua Kira for reviewing this essay and providing very helpful feedback.

³ J. Calvin Bushey and Compilers. *Hymns* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1980), 1138.

⁴ For further on this thought, see John Nelson Darby, *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, v.2 (Winschoten, Netherlands: H. L. Heijkoop, 1970), 255-274. On Ecclesiastes in particular, “Every effort to be happy in possessing the earth, in whatever way it may be, ends in nothing. There is a canker-worm at the root. The greater the capacity of enjoyment, the deeper and wider is the experience of disappointment and vexation of spirit” (255).

⁵ Darby on Song of Songs in particular, “It is only when His people are fully established in grace that everything in them will be beauty and perfection, and that they will recognize that they belong entirely to Christ, and at the same time that they will entirely possess his affection” (268). See also Witness Lee, *Life Study of Psalms Pt. 2, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1996). On Christ and His flock in particular, “In Song of Songs 1:4b-8 we see that fellowshiping with Christ results in entering into the church life. The church life is indicated by another figure—the flock (vv. 7-8), which signifies the church as a collection of many believers” (6). Also see Watchman Nee, *Song of Songs*, Tr. Elizabeth K. Mei and Daniel Smith (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1966).

It is very telling that the highest peak of human-Christian experience would be described as music, as the “Song of Songs.” Throughout the Bible, song is often present in the most poignant of human experiences: David’s psalms, Jeremiah’s lamentations, the Song of Moses, the Song of Miriam, the Song of Simeon, and the new song of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders (Rev. 5:9). King Solomon wrote 1,005 songs (I Kings 4:32), and Song of Songs was his best. This book reveals a growing romance between Christ and his Bride, the church. As a member of His church, I am part of this romance. Since the day I was saved, Christ has drawn me into a deeper and deeper relationship with Him. Today, after more than fifty years, I can say that to know Him, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings (Phil. 3:10) has been my principal aim since I met Him. I can truly say that “I have found the One of peerless worth, / My heart does sing for joy; /And I must sing, for Christ I have: /Oh, what a Christ have I!”⁶ Christ is my Song of Songs.

I found Christ as my personal Savior when I was nineteen years old at a large state university in California, in the midst of the Hippie movement, Vietnam war protests, and the British Invasion of rock music. By His great mercy, God plucked me out of the vanity of these pursuits and called me (II Tim 1:9). My salvation as a college student resulted in a life-long calling to disciple college students. Once I married, my husband and I began opening our home to local college students for weekly dinner-Bible studies, and that has continued almost uninterrupted for nearly fifty years (our golden anniversary will be July 2021). This calling led me furthermore to pursue advanced degrees in order to secure a teaching position at a university, so that I could be even more influential in students’ lives. I began my teaching career at a large secular university in California, but when I began working at Cedarville University, I realized the potential of Christian higher education. Whereas prayer, ministry, and fellowship had been only a fraction of my *weekly* schedule at my former institution, at Cedarville these opportunities became a much larger percentage of my *daily* routine. I see the value of Christian higher education and am grateful to be part of it.

⁶ May Chenevix-Trench and Compilers, *Hymns* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1980), 537.

Based upon the direction of the Faculty Handbook (FHB 3.7.3), the Biblical Integration Paper Didactic/Guidance, and resources found on the Center for Biblical Integration website, I have divided my integration paper into five sections that correspond respectively to my Christian worldview (1. *Knowing God, Knowing Man, Knowing Creation*), the correlation between assumed philosophies of music and biblical authority (2. *Musicology in Submission to Biblical Authority*), my personal commitment to Christian higher education (3. *A Commitment to Christian Higher Education?*), the relationship between faith and practice in my personal teaching philosophy (4. *Teaching Philosophy: God, Education, and Character*), and the methods and means for communicating these beliefs in the classroom (5. *The Song of Songs in the Classroom*).

1. Knowing God, Knowing Man, Knowing Creation

Knowing God

The Bible specifically charges us to know Him. Unless God made it possible for us to know Him, however, there would be no way to carry out this command. Thankfully, God provided two levels, or means, of knowing: general revelation and special revelation. General revelation refers to “the knowledge of God’s existence, character, and moral law that comes through creation to all humanity.”⁷ The heavens declare God’s glory (Ps. 19:1) and His name is majestic on the earth (Ps. 8:1). Paul tells us in Romans (1:19-20) that because God has clearly revealed Himself through creation, man is without excuse. However, general revelation is not enough to save man from his fallen state (Rom. 3:24-25). For this, special revelation is required. This is “God’s manifestation of Himself at particular times and places through particular events.”⁸ This also requires that man receive and believe the special revelation of the person and work of Christ (Jn. 1:12, Rom. 10:9-10). Thus, knowing God by special revelation results in the change of our eternal destiny from death to life.

⁷ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 1243.

⁸ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Biblical Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 936.

Seeing that special revelation is required for man's salvation, where should we look? Undoubtedly, the Bible, Scripture, as God's Word is the source of this revelation. John 1:1 makes the relationship between God and His Word very clear. Not only was the Word in the beginning with God, the Word was God. According to Jeremy Kimble, "Scripture is to be understood as the revelation of God, inspired by God, and thus, based on His own character, inerrant, infallible, and authoritative for us. The Bible is necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God's will."⁹ Thus, Scripture, and exclusively Scripture, is the source of God's special revelation to man.

Both Jeremiah (Jer. 31:34) and the writer of Hebrews (Heb. 8:11) emphatically proclaim that all people will know Him, from the least to the great. This New Testament verse uses two Greek words for "know." One is *ginosko*, referring to the objective outward knowledge, and the other is *oida*, a progressive knowing, both inward and subjective. To know the Lord we need both the objective and the subjective knowledge.¹⁰ Without these proper knowings, we cannot have the special revelation of God that leads to salvation. In contrast to this, there is a knowing that is not salvific, such as the demons' declaration in Mark 5:7 that Jesus is the Son of the Most High God. What the demons know of God does not sanctify nor does it free.

To know God is to know truth, the absolute truth embodied in the Word of God. I am sanctified in this truth (Jn. 17:17) and this truth has made me free objectively, and is making me free subjectively (Jn. 8:32). In contrast to a prevailing secular thought that despises Christian thought as being narrow and restrictive, the Bible tells us that knowing the truth of God sanctifies us, frees us, and affords us a

⁹ Jeremy Kimble, "Doctrinal Formulation for a Comprehensive Worldview: An Integration Paper," 12.

<https://www.cedarville.edu/academic-schools-and-departments/center-for-biblical-integration/resources>

¹⁰ Heb. 8:11, Footnote 1: "In this verse two Greek words are used for *know*: the first is *ginosko*, which signifies the outward, objective knowledge; the second is *oida*, which refers to the inward, subjective consciousness. In Jn. 8:55 the Lord Jesus told the Pharisees that they did not know (*ginosko*) God the Father (even in the outward, objective knowledge), and that He did know (*oida*) the Father (in the inward, subjective consciousness). Both words are used in I Jn. 2:29," (RV), 766.

worldview that comes from a transcendent position in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). Thus, the truth with this kind of power is only found in the special revelation of Scripture.

Paul prayed two prayers in Ephesians that have become my prayers. In the first, he asked that God would grant him a spirit of wisdom and revelation that he might fully know Him (Eph. 1:17). In the second he prayed that the believers would be able to comprehend with other believers all the dimensions of God (Eph. 3:18-19). He later expressed the desire that the believers would all arrive at the full knowledge of the Son of God (Eph. 4:13). Because of the gift of Scripture, this is possible.

Knowing God and Man

Man is clearly portrayed in Genesis as the centerpiece of His creation, the culmination of the literal six days of creation (Gen 1:31), His very own image made in His own kind and (Gen. 1:27) charged to have dominion over all the earth (Gen. 1:28). As the only one of God's creations molded in *Imago Dei*, man is imbued with the virtues and attributes that correspond to God Himself. Although imperfect and fallen, man can love; man has a degree of patience, longsuffering, creativity, rational thought; man can worship for only he has eternity in his heart (Ecc. 3:11).

Thus, we can say that man is a vessel meant to contain God (Rom 9:23-24; II Cor. 4:7). In this sense, God is the content. Even Blaise Pascal noted, "This infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, God himself."¹¹ There is something within man that only God can fill. Because of the fall of man, however, God's intention was challenged by man's disobedience and his turn to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The result was sin and death (Rom. 6:23). So God sent his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to be incarnated in the flesh, live a perfect human life as the God-man, suffer crucifixion on the cross to redeem us from the fall, conquer death by His resurrection, and take His place at the right hand of the throne of God in ascension. As the last Adam who became a life-giving

¹¹ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées and Other Writings*, ed. Anthony Levi, tr. Honor Levi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 52.

Spirit (I Cor. 15:45b), Christ breathed the Spirit into His disciples (Jn. 20:22) so that they could be His continuation and multiplication as the many members of His Body. By this, His invisible presence remained with the disciples and with everyone who subsequently opened his heart to receive Christ as Redeemer, Savior, and Eternal Life. When I personally accepted Him in 1969, I experienced this, with all the aspects of His person and work included in His living now in me (Rom. 8:10, Gal. 2:20, II Cor. 13:5, Gal. 4:19, Col. 1:27, Jn. 14:20). I am joined to Him in spirit, and my identity is in Him (Col. 3:3). This is to know God, to know man, and the living, organic relationship between them (Jn. 15: 5).

The book of Song of Songs illustrates the closeness of this relationship by typifying the love of a king, Solomon, for a common girl, the Shulamite. The pursuer and the pursued. The lover and the beloved. This book especially shows the lifelong process of sanctification (I Cor. 1:30),¹² transformation (Rom. 12:2), and conformation (Rom. 8:29), which is the future—the lifelong adventure—of a believer’s growth in the Lord. From a horse in Pharaoh’s chariots (SS. 1:9)—strong in nature, enslaved in the world—to someone completely leaning on her Lord (SS. 8:5), the believer becomes fully identified with Christ.

Knowing God, Man, and Creation

Zechariah 12:1 shows us the relationship of God, man, and creation in their co-existence in the old creation. God the Creator stretched forth the universe and laid the foundation of the earth as an act of creation, and then He formed the spirit of man within him. He put man in the center of His creation. Man might then know God by general revelation through His handiwork in the old creation. However, general revelation was not sufficient to save man from his fallen condition. Only special revelation that would come by Christ’s coming in the flesh in incarnation as the Word of God who tabernacles among man, could save man (Jn. 1:14). Only Christ who dwelt in the bosom of the Father could reveal the

¹² Of particular help here is Marcus Peter Johnson, *One with Christ: An Evangelical Theology of Salvation* (Wheaton, IL: 2013). God “has given us, and is giving us, everything we truly need, and he has done so by uniting us to Jesus Christ, who is our ‘righteousness and *sanctification* and redemption’ (I Cor. 1:30). To be in union with Christ is to experience *all* that he is to us in the utter fullness of his saving person” (117-118).

invisible God to man (Jn. 1:18). This is special revelation, and this revelation, when received by man, is salvific (Jn. 1:12).

Psalm 8 reveals that in the setting of His creation, God placed man, and gave him a pre-eminent place in His remembrance. Wherever man looks—up to heaven or down at the earth—creation points him to his own importance as *imago Dei*. With the help of Paul in his epistle to the Philippians, we understand that the Man who was made a little lower than the angels yet crowned with glory and honor is Christ Himself. “All creation gives the setting-- /Heaven and earth are for His plan; / And in time we’re merely travelers-- / For eternity we’re meant.”¹³

The culmination of God’s work in creation is His new creation, and that has everything to do with our salvation in Christ and our identity in Christ. As a person in Christ, I am now a new creation (II Cor. 5:17). Not only as an individual am I a new creation, but together with other believers as the church, I am new. The church is God’s masterpiece, his poem (*poiema*), created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10). Although the old creation will grow old and will perish, according to the writer of Hebrews (Heb. 1:10-12), everyone in Christ has an eternal, unchanging, perfect destiny that will consummate in the New Jerusalem under a new heaven and on a new earth (Rev. 21: 1-2).

2. Musicology in Submission to Biblical Authority

My particular field of study within Music is Musicology. I am primarily responsible for the music history courses required for all music majors and by our specialized accreditor, NASM. In this field there are a number of assumed beliefs and philosophies which must be challenged or proven by Scripture if the educator in Christian higher education is to adequately equip young professional musicians to live in the world and not of the world.

¹³ *Hymns 1081-1348* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 2002), 438-439.

Reject

The Sacralization of Music

By the nineteenth century in Europe, a number of events and philosophies competed with the stability of Christianity. Reformation movements from the sixteenth century onward splintered the previous unified front of authority of the Roman Catholic organization. Following the reformation, ensuing wars of religion pitted Lutherans, Calvinists, French Huguenots, and Anglicans against Catholics, and in some situations, against themselves. Puritans stood against Anglicans. Politics became involved, as The Thirty Years War devastated the German lands. Spain and England took their battle to the open seas. Some denominations came into conflict with growing moves in nationalism. As a result of upheavals like these, Europeans began to lose trust in the church. Identities rooted unquestionably in the Church began to lose their power. In spite of this shake-up, man's inherent sense of eternity in his heart compelled him to worship. But what? In the nineteenth century, which is considered by some as *the* century of music in Europe, classical music and concert life offered an attractive alternative to Christian worship.

Additionally, ideals of Romanticism elevated art almost to the level of religion. Especially concerning instrumental music, some believed that it had the power to transport man to a spiritual realm in a way that language could not do. Beethoven's music was seen as the epitome of great music such that it might even serve as the oracle of God. A prominent music journalist of the time, E. T. A. Hoffmann, argued that just as Orpheus was able to open the gates of Hades with his magical lyre, so "music discloses to man an unknown realm, a world that has nothing in common with the external sensual world that surrounds him, a world in which he leaves behind him all definite feelings to surrender himself to an inexpressible longing."¹⁴ Obvious parallels emerged. The composer became regarded as a god. His scores were sacred and could not be altered, even by one note. Musicians and scholars began to regard the score not as a recipe but rather as an authoritative work worthy of exegesis. Performers of these "great" works became the priests who communicated messages from gods; the intermediary

¹⁴ E. T. A. Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music," tr. Oliver Strunk, in *Source Readings in Music History*, rev. ed., ed. Oliver Strunk (NY: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998), 1193.

between composer and listener. This thought led to the widespread devaluation of the practice of improvisation and even today, music majors are trained to reproduce with precision the composer's intention. The concert hall became the church, and eventually the reverent silence of the church's congregation became an expected practice in the concert hall. This overall phenomenon became known as the sacralization of music.¹⁵ No one capitalized on this philosophy more than the German composer Richard Wagner. He went so far as to build his own concert hall at Bayreuth, Germany, a "temple" in which only his own works could be performed and only he could be worshipped.

From the Bible we learn that music is not an object of worship. Nothing else and no one else besides God can be worshipped. The first and second commandments make this very clear (Exo. 20:3-4). Music can certainly be used to aid in worship, and there are a number of excellent examples in the Bible and throughout history that confirm this. The right appropriation of music is to lead us to worship, adore, commune with, and pray to the one and only God as revealed in the Bible.

In the same way that music should never be elevated as an object of worship, music should never be elevated to the level of scriptural authority. When the legend of Pope Gregory's "divinely inspired" Gregorian chant spread throughout Christianity during the seventh century, the result was an imposition of the authority from Rome, nearly on an equal plane with the authority of Scripture. In the centuries following, painstaking efforts were taken to maintain the integrity of the tunes of the liturgical chant. Today this is largely recognized as an example of propaganda in an attempt to standardize Christian worship in the midst of political instability.¹⁶ Thus, the elevation of music, or anything else, such as icons or relics, to the level of the authority of Scripture, must be rejected.

¹⁵ Richard Taruskin and Christopher H. Gibbs, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, College Ed. (NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 470-471.

¹⁶ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 10th ed. (NY: W. W. Norton, 2019), 28.

Musical Talent Racially Determined

With the rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century, music became an important signifier of race. Collections of folk music as a means to identify nationalistic characteristics rose to nearly the same level of prominence as categorization by language. Classical composers who identified with a particular nationality attained a “hero” status. In particular, movements in German nationalism emphasized a common blood (*Blut*), soil (*Boden*), cultural past, and language. Bach and Beethoven were exalted as supreme masters of German music. At times, they were even praised as examples of Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*. In contrast to this, and occurring simultaneously, was the equal and opposite move to exclude all who were not of German stock. The primary focus of this counter-move was the Jewish population in German-speaking lands. Just as music was an important factor in determining race, Jewish music was attacked as inferior, being produced by those who at best could only copy, not create. The principal proponent of this idea was, again, Richard Wagner. Wagner was well-known for his anti-Semitism and took opportunity to denounce and humiliate the music of Jewish composers. In his famous essay, *Das Judentum in der Musik* (Judaism in Music), he claims that the problem with Jewish music is its source in a people who are incapable as artistic creators. “The Jew. . . is incapable of enouncing himself to us artistically. . . and least of all through his singing.”¹⁷ Ideas of racial purity and superiority, held by Richard Wagner and unabashedly promoted in some of his operas, were espoused by Adolph Hitler in the twentieth century. Hitler accommodated both the superiority of German blood and the inferiority of the Jews. Hitler furthermore knew the power of music to sway people, and commodified Bach’s, Beethoven’s, and Wagner’s music to promote German greatness.¹⁸

The idea of musical talent being racially determined must be rejected. There is no hint in the Bible that certain people were privileged or talented because of nationality or race. Although Cain’s son Jubal was called the inventor of musical instruments (Gen. 4:21), it does not imply race. Along with the inventions

¹⁷ Albert Goldman and Evert Sprinchorn, compilers, *Wagner on Music and Drama: A Compendium of Wagner’s Prose Works*, tr. H. Ashton Ellis (NY: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1964), 52.

¹⁸ Sandra Yang, “Sound Tracks: The Migration of European Composers during World War II,” in *Dimensions of International Migration*, ed. Päivi Hoikkala and Dorothy D. Wills (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 143.

of Cain's other two sons, weapons and tools for agriculture, musical instruments are evident in almost every civilization on Earth throughout history. All three co-exist as instruments for protection, survival, and pleasure. As the children of Israel traveled out of the bondage in Egypt, the musical training and function of priests related to both war (Jericho) and temple worship also does not imply race; rather, the assigned function of the priesthood went to the sons of Levi. In the New Testament, clearly race is abolished in the creation of the one new man (Eph. 2:15). As members of this new man, all believers, both Jews and Gentiles are charged to create music in praise and worship to God (Eph. 5:19; Col 3:16). Although we recognize that some individuals are endowed with special talents in music-making, and we encourage the development of those gifts, we can never say that musical talent is determined by race.

Redeem

The Associative Power of Music

While music is not a language, most people agree that music does convey associative extra-musical meaning. Some even believe that music has affective powers, such as the ability to develop a person's character, or to alter one's mood. Aristotle's observations about music's effect on the soul, which we call the Doctrine of Imitation, or Ethos, led him to conclude, "From these considerations therefore it is plain that music has the power of producing a certain effect on the ethos of the soul, and if it has the power to do this, it is clear that the young must be directed to music and must be educated in it."¹⁹ A similar theory arose in the seventeenth century, as Enlightenment thinkers sought to rationalize human emotions. Descartes's *Passions of the Soul* had a great influence on many composers, who believed that music had the power to sway the emotions, and ultimately to heal an overbalance of one or another basic emotion. Among composers and others, this became known as the Doctrine of the Affections. Composers sought to portray one emotion in one piece of music, using key, melody, rhythm, meter, harmony, and tempo to accomplish this. For example, major keys became associated with happiness and minor keys with sorrow. A repeated chromatically descending bass line signaled lament. Eventually

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Politics*, tr. Harris Rackham, in *Source Readings in Music History*, rev. ed., ed. Oliver Strunk (NY: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998), 29.

ideas like this led to the field of Music Therapy, based on the ability of music not only to balance, but to heal.

The Bible gives us some examples to support these ideas. The familiar story of David playing the lyre for King Saul to divert his unstable moods is probably the strongest example of music's power to sway the soul, for the record tells us that David was successful in calming the King with his music (1 Sam. 16:23). On the negative side, when the children of Israel made the golden calf and worshipped it, singing marked their worship along with dance (Exo. 32:18). The music emboldened them in their corporate sin against the Lord.

One can be too prescriptive, however, reading more into the power of music than Scripture allows. Although many references to music, musical instruments, and singing are found throughout the Bible, there is no musical notation in the Word of God, and there is no prescription for how the music should sound. There are named songs, such as the Song of Miriam, the Song of Moses, the Song of the Lamb; there are three books that we can say are very much related to music: Psalms, Song of Songs, and Lamentations; and there is definite instruction with examples of music in the early church. But we don't know exactly how they should sound, and this apparently deliberate silence on God's part has led to many challenges for music in the church.

Especially in the realm of music for worship, debates have abounded from nearly the beginning of Christianity until today. Church fathers have taken positions ranging from a complete distrust of any music at all in worship to today's Worship Wars that push the limits of appropriate worship music as far as "Scream-o." Reformers such as John Calvin and Martin Luther held radically different theological ideas regarding music for worship. Calvin's metrical psalmody is thus radically different in style from Luther's hymns. Who is right and who is wrong? We have to submit to biblical authority, and not say more than Scripture says.

Over the years I have maintained an ongoing challenge to my Music History students, asking them to consider what elements or styles of music can be identified as suitable for worship. We have encountered debates in the medieval church regarding polyphony, harmony, melody, and rhythm. An argument over whether or not two voices should sing in any harmonic interval other than octaves or perfect fifths seems to us remote, tame, and almost unbelievable when compared with the debates surrounding contemporary worship music in the twenty-first century.

Debates in the Renaissance era concerning rules of dissonance and clarity of text declamation reveal that although a much broader spectrum of musical possibilities was permitted in the church by this time, controversy still existed. Following this era, debates about the appropriateness of musical instruments in worship rose to the forefront. When those conflicts abated, the argument concerned what *types* of instruments were suitable. Fast forward to today, we still experience sharp and often heated debates surrounding the question of what constitutes appropriate worship music.

In applying the debates such as we find throughout history, my students realize that the current and ongoing discussion about appropriate music for worship is not new. In one particular in-class activity, we tried to decide what is and what is not appropriate music for worship. We found it to be nearly impossible to draw definitive lines. We realized that perhaps we need to approach the issue from an entirely different perspective, which led us to re-examine St. Augustine's thoughts.

As recorded in his *Confessions*, Augustine realized very early that while music has the potential to draw a person to worship in spirit (John 4:24), it has an equal potential to distract the listener to mind the things of the flesh (Rom. 8:5).

Thus I waver between the peril of pleasure and the benefit of my experience; but I am inclined, while not maintaining an irrevocable position, to endorse the custom of singing in church so that weaker souls might rise to a state of devotion by indulging the ears. Yet when it

happens that I am moved more by the song than by what is sung, I confess to sinning grievously.²⁰

Augustine understood the controversy over music in worship to reside not in the music itself, but rather within the souls of the worshippers. He considered an excessive attraction to the music to be a sin, but a 'beneficent effort' to turn the heart God-ward through the music to be worthy. For him, it appears that the responsibility lies within the heart: a mind set on the spirit or a mind set on the flesh (Rom. 8:6).

A memorable guest performer to our campus put this into words for us. In a percussion master class, Dr. Lennard Moses told us that there is not any single particular style of music that can guarantee a state of worship or give glory to God. It is absolutely a matter of the heart, both for the performer and for the listener.

In summary, we can agree both from Scripture and our experience that music does have associative powers. However, we cannot agree with prescriptives and debates about appropriate music that go beyond the limits of the Word of God. We can agree with Augustine that music should turn the heart toward God. This works very well in individual, devotional settings, as the believer freely sings and psalms with his heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:19; Col 3:16). In corporate settings, however, issues arise because music that leads one believer to worship may actually cause another believer to stumble (Rom. 14:13, 20-21). Both the Ephesians (5:19) and Colossians (3:16) musical mandates, however, have a corporate aspect. The practice of singing should be of one with another. How shall we solve this? I think the answer is found in these verses, in our inward condition before the Lord. "With grace" causes us to give allowance for other believers and not judge their musical practices. "To the Lord" puts our focus where it should be—on Him—whether that is in an individual or a corporate setting.

²⁰ Augustine, *Confessions X*, xxxiii, tr. James McKinnon, in *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. by Oliver Strunk, rev. ed. (NY: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998), 133.

The Music of the Spheres

This section deals with music that can and cannot be heard. If we can't hear it, does it even exist? Plato wrote of a "music of the spheres," by which he meant the unheard music produced by the revolutions of the planets.²¹ Although no one has ever heard this music with human ears, the idea has appeared in many works of literature such as Shakespeare's *Tempest* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It is related to God's created world through hymns of praise such as this familiar one: "This is my father's world, / And to my listening ears / All nature sings, and round me rings / the music of the spheres."²²

Does Scripture tell us of heavenly music that human ears have not heard? Job. 38:7 speaks of the morning stars singing because of the beautiful creation God made. The heavenly scene in Revelation 5 says that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders sing a new song for the freshly slain Lamb of God (Rev. 5:8-9). John heard this through special revelation, but under the general situation of revelation, we don't really hear this. Scripture tells us that the entire Triune God is involved with song. God the Father sings in Zephaniah 3:17 (NKJV), God the Son sings in the midst of the church (Heb. 2:12), and God the Spirit sings in the spirit-filled believers (Eph. 5:18-19). We might say that we can hear the Father sing in His created world, although not literally. We can say, however, that when the believers are gathered as the church, Hebrews and Psalms tell us that the Son sings in the midst. The Spirit sings in the psalming and hymning of the believers' hearts to the Lord. I believe that this can be heard through the human voices of the believers, yet it is the Son and the Spirit singing, for we are joined to Him as one spirit (I Cor. 6:17). If the Spirit can intercede in our praying (Rom. 8:26), surely He can sing in our singing.

Plato was not a believer, but we can understand his search for comprehending the universe. For him, music was akin to mathematical ratios and balance (that he likely learned from Pythagoras). In that sense, we can say that mathematical and scientific discoveries since Plato's time have proven that he

²¹ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 10th ed. (NY: W. W. Norton, 2019), 29.

²² Franklin L. Sheppard and Maltbie D. Babcock, *The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration*, ed. Tom Fettke (Waco, TX: Word Music, 1986), no. 58.

was right in noticing an order to the universe. The universe was created by an omniscient and omnipotent God who set the heavenly bodies in motion in perfect balance and order (Gen. 1:14-18; Psa. 104:19; 136:7-9; Job 38:31-33). I agree with this understanding of the “music of the spheres.”

More than 100 years prior to Plato, Pythagoras proved that music is made up of ratios that produce intervals in music. Plucked string lengths in ratios of 1:2 will produce tones at the octave. Lengths at 2:3 will produce a perfect fifth; lengths at 3:4 a perfect fourth. The relationship between astronomy and music was seen to be so close, that the Quadrivium in the traditional seven Liberal Arts included Music with Astronomy, Arithmetic, and Geometry, rather than with the Trivium of the language arts: Logic, Grammar, and Rhetoric. Another music theorist and philosopher writing around the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, Boethius, also wrote of these relationships, this time including the comparison of music with the human body. Scripture agrees with this for we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psa. 139:14). Boethius called the heavenly order (i.e. “music of the spheres”) *musica mundana*, the bodily order *musica humana*, and the actual music that we hear and think of as music, *musica instrumentalis*. The common thread of these three *musicæ* is a perfect balance and order that causes each part to work together to create a beautiful whole. Scripture tells us that only God the Intelligent Designer could do such detailed, fine work and hold everything together. Boethius couldn’t tell us how, but Scripture does tell us how this can be so. God upholds all things by the Word of His power (Heb. 1:3). All things subsist, cohere in Him (Col. 1:17). The entire universe was framed by the Word of God (Heb. 11:3). These great minds knew part of the picture, but Scripture completes it for us.

Accept

Orpheus as the Old Song

Orpheus represents the power of music in the old creation. For Greek culture, music was a way to hear from the gods. Christopher Partridge in his book, *The Lyre of Orpheus*, notes that when Horace refers to

Orpheus as the “interpreter of gods,” he elevates music to a divine revelation. Partridge concludes that, in ancient thought, “Orpheus represents the confluence of music, emotion, and the sacred.”²³

Everything in the old creation produced by the fall, including the invention of musical instruments by Jubal (Gen. 4:21), is at best a shadow of the reality in Christ (Col. 2:17). This includes the belief that music holds magical powers, as portrayed in the myth of Orpheus. During the first centuries of the church, the worldly culture was thick with Greek philosophy and religion. Greek mythology was understood to show the relationship of gods and man. In the midst of this culture, Paul made a connection to prove that the unknown god to which the Athenians prayed was the One and Only true God, Jesus Christ (Acts 17:22-31). Clement of Alexandria, in like manner, proved that the Greek pantheon is inferior to Christian faith and recommends that men turn from idol worship to the worship of Christ as the One true God. In his *Protreptikos* of ca. 200, he compares Orpheus’s powers of music with the power of Christ as the Word of God. Just as the writer of the book of Hebrews argues for the superiority of Christ, Clement argues that the Old Song of Orpheus is inferior to Christ as the New Song.

Orpheus, a demigod of the Greek pantheon, was able to tame wild animals with music, symbolized by his “magical” lyre. Clement points out that while this is truly supernatural, the Christ that he proposes to those people steeped in Greek culture is superior to him:

Very different from the mythical singer is the one I now propose to you:
He comes and instantly dissolves the bonds of bitter slavery to the demon tyrants
And with the kind and humane rule of piety
He leads back to heaven those who have been thrown down upon the earth.
He alone has truly tamed the hardest of animals to subdue—man.²⁴

²³ Christopher Partridge, *The Lyre of Orpheus: Popular Music, the Sacred, and the Profane* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1.

²⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *Selections from the Protreptikos: An Essay and Translation by Thomas Merton* (London: Christmas, 1962), 16.

Christ as the New Song

Orpheus could only tame wild animals, but Christ is able to subdue man. Furthermore, the story of Orpheus losing his bride on his wedding day to a snake's bite draws many parallels with the biblical account of the fall and redemption of man. When Euridice died, Orpheus pursued her into death and was able to unlock the gates of Hades by the playing of his lyre. He wanted to bring her back to the land of the living. In the end he failed, and Euridice slipped back into the realm of death forever. We know that Christ entered the realm of death in His crucifixion, and rose from the dead on the third day (Luke 24:7,46; 9:22). He not only entered by His own power, He resurrected and took the keys of death and Hades with Him (Rev. 1:18). Death could not hold Him. Furthermore, in His resurrection He gave us eternal life (I Pet. 1:3), changing our destiny from a life under the authority of darkness to the kingdom of the Son of God's love (Col. 1:12-13). Orpheus, representing the Old Song, was incomplete, imperfect, and impotent in changing death into life. Christ as the New Song is complete, perfect, and omnipotent and has already conquered the realm of death through his redemptive work on the cross and victory in resurrection. This comparison by Clement of Alexandria is an acceptable analogy in showing the superiority of Christ as the New Song in the new creation over the Old Song in the old creation. In the broadest sense, the lyre of Orpheus represents who he is and what he can do. In the same manner, Christ as the New Song represents the entire scope of His person and His work. He is God the Father's delight, the effulgence of His glory and the express image of His substance (Heb. 1:3). Christ is the Father's Song of Songs and my personal Song of Songs as well.

3. A Commitment to Christian Higher Education?

In all honesty I cannot say that I am committed to Christian higher education. What I can say is that I am committed to take every opportunity, in season and out of season, to proclaim Christ and to disciple young believers into a growing, deeper relationship with Him. The environment of Christian higher education such as found at Cedarville does afford exponentially more opportunities for discipleship than perhaps anywhere else except a church setting. The freedom to explore the integration of my area of specialization with the authority of Scripture is something that I value and something I find a worthwhile

endeavor. So in that sense, my commitment is there, along with the commitment to do the best job I can possibly do with the abilities that God has given me and the love that I have for students.

Timothy tells us that all Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching and instruction in righteousness in order for the man of God to be “fully equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16-17). Can we apply this narrowly to our discipline, and if so, what does this mean for the discipline of music? “Fully equipped” implies a period of rigorous study and training in a skill. In the Old Testament, musical training was taken very seriously, especially when it came to war and to the service of the Temple. The trumpeters at Jericho had to follow specific instructions and be able to carry out those directions precisely at the right moment and in fine coordination with the other musicians. This implies a discipline based upon a period of training and in full subjection to authority. Additionally, only priests were chosen to blow the trumpets, implying that musical training was included in some of the priestly duties. This surely was considered a holy service to God and the music was an offering to Him. Furthermore, the trumpeters went ahead of the Ark of Jehovah. They carried out this duty for seven days without failing in their music service. Surely God used this to defeat Jericho and give entrance to the children of Israel’s conquering of the Good Land.

In Nehemiah 12 at the dedication of the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem, musicians were gathered “in order to hold the dedication with rejoicing and thanksgiving and singing with cymbals, harps, and lyres” (Neh. 12:27, RV). The sons of singers also came (28), indicating a musical training that was passed on in families, just like the law of God was taught. Furthermore, these singers were related in a larger way to those with similar skills, for they had built villages for themselves just outside of Jerusalem (29). This consideration surely must have been with the Levitical service in view. They were trained and ready to serve. For this dedication even the musical instruments of David were brought forward and played (36). Considering how the children of Israel had been carried into Babylonian captivity some seventy years before that and the House of God had been made desolate, the story of those who valued the musical instruments and kept them for all those years must surely be a marvelous one! In these days of dedication, the singers were provided for with portions of food (47) so that they could carry out their

service of rejoicing and thanksgiving. It was a time of recovery of music to its original purpose. “For [as] in the days of David and Asaph, long ago, there were leaders of the singers, and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God” (Neh. 12:46, RV). These examples and others throughout the Old and New Testaments reveal that well trained excellence in musicianship always occurred in relationship to worship.

On the contrary, several negative examples of music show us that music that is not created and performed for His glory is related to the fall of man. When Cain was cast out from the presence of Jehovah, one of his descendants, Jubal, became the father “of all those who play the lyre and pipe” (Gen. 4:21). This speaks of man’s need to amuse himself once he had left God’s presence and God was no longer His joy and satisfaction. This music was void of God. In the early church, St. Ambrose denounced the development of this line as pagan music and warned the early Christians not to let any trace of it into the church.²⁵ In the well known scene (Mark 6:14-29) in which Salome danced, Herod’s lust was stirred up by the moves she made to the accompanying music; so much so, that he gave her whatever she asked. This example of music shows its power in tempting the flesh of man to sin even more. Music as mere amusement or for stirring up the lust of the flesh are misappropriations of God’s purpose in giving man the ability to create music and musical instruments. This is not our goal in the Department of Music and Worship. Our mission statement asserts that “Bach’s famous phrase *Soli Deo Gloria* (for the glory of God alone) is more than a slogan — it is the mission that drives all we do. We truly believe that our music and worship degree programs honor the Master Creator through our shared creativity.”²⁶

²⁵ Calvin R. Stapert, *A New Song for an Old World: Musical Thought in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 103.

²⁶ Department of Music and Worship, Cedarville University, website <http://www.cedarville.edu/Academics/Music-and-Worship.aspx> (Accessed May 26, 2020).

4. Teaching Philosophy: God, Education, and Character

In terms of literal definition, vanity means vain; of no (lasting) value, use, or profit; empty; worthless.

There are two verses in Ecclesiastes that provide a glimmer of reality; a way out of an existence destined to vanity, leading man to conclude, even after years of study, work, and success to “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die” (Ecc. 8:15). Ecc. 3:11 reminds us that God has put a longing for reality, for eternity, in man’s heart. Ecc. 12:1 is a call to remember our Creator while we are young. This is the clue to my teaching philosophy and the cue to my emphasis on the 1000 days of my students’ time at Cedarville.

The Bible commands us to train up a child in the way he should go (Prov. 22:6). Believers throughout the centuries have taken these words to heart, applying biblical truth as the core of their philosophy of parenting. My husband and I built our family life on this rock. As we raised our five children we sought the biblical knowledge that would help us carry out our holy stewardship. Much of my personal pursuit of scriptural knowledge, therefore, has been intricately woven with the issues of training youth. That foundational submission to biblical authority followed me into my teaching career, which began in earnest after the children were well on their way to adulthood.

From my pursuit of truth in both my domestic and my professional stewardship, I can delineate three areas that most importantly affect a child’s development: God, education, and character.²⁷ Without an accurate knowledge of God as revealed in Scripture, a rigorous education as the foundation for apprehending all the dimensions of Christ (Eph. 3:18), and the development of a proper character, the extent of a person’s usefulness in service to the Master is limited. I believe that our role as educators is to cooperate with the skilled Potter (Rom. 9:21) and the wise Master Builder (I Cor. 3:10) in developing the vessels of honor that will glorify God and be useful to Him. The Greek word for masterpiece in Eph. 2:10 is *poiema*, a word specifically referring to a work of art.²⁸ God is producing us, the believers who

²⁷ Witness Lee, *God, Education, and Character* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 2001).

²⁸ Eph. 2:10, Footnote 1, (RV).

have been regenerated with His life, and in whom His life is growing unto maturity, as His Body to be the multiplied (Gen. 1:26) and magnified (Phil. 1:20) expression of His son, Jesus Christ. This truly is a masterpiece, a glory to God, and a shame to God's enemy.

King Solomon prayed for one thing: wisdom. Proverbs tells us that the fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge (Pro. 1:7). Man's own wisdom is vanity and darkness at its best. God, however, is a lamp and a light (Psa. 119:105). Every king had to write out a personal copy of the law. The king was required to read it all the days of his life, implying he had to integrate his faith—i.e. his knowledge from the Word of God—into every aspect of his personal and public life and to pass it on to his children.

Drawing from II Timothy, this thought continues that children should be taught an adequate knowledge of God through Scripture. Paul pointed to Timothy's spiritual development, which he attributed directly to his education in the Scriptures from his youth (II Tim 3:15-17). I believe that much of the preparation by his grandmother Lois and mother Eunice equipped him to be the useful companion and fellow worker that he was to Paul.

What does it mean to prepare the character? Education trains the mind and gives musicians the technical ability to realize their art, but character is related to the person him/herself. Musical training is an excellent means to develop life-long habits of diligence, patience, practice, responsibility, longsuffering, compassion, love, and many other qualities that belong to a person of high character. The hours of training to perfect a musical passage can never be replaced by a casual, lazy, unprepared performance whether or not the notes are all correct. Preparing for a studio lesson prepares us to meet the Lord. Without saying anything, the professor knows how much time of preparation went into the lesson. It is impossible to hide a lack of preparation. This is a huge life matter for all believers. How shall we meet the Lord? If we have given adequate attention to all of the experiences afforded to us by parents, professors, and Providence, we can develop the habits that will characterize the man of God. Musical training affords us an opportunity to develop as persons of integrity. Having weekly private music lessons, students must be accountable for their own practice schedules. Since my office is next to

the music majors' student lounge, I observe students sitting and studying all day long. Why are they seemingly "hanging out" in the lounge? It is because they are taking a break from practicing. Their studio professors are careful to guard the students from physical damage as they practice, so they prescribe breaks in the daily practice schedule. Some students average six hours a day of practice on their instrument; they need to break up that time. In the lounge, students are not usually idle; they are working on other assignments. I believe that this kind of rigor, which may be unique to the discipline of music, affords wonderful opportunities to train the character of these musicians. How much more will the development of good habits be useful to their future service to God.

In the Old Testament, the ark and the boards of the tabernacle were built of acacia wood overlaid with gold (Exo. 25:10-11; 26:15,29). In typology acacia wood signifies the humanity of Christ, whereas the gold signifies His divinity. "Christ's humanity was strong in character and high in standard. No other person in history has had a humanity as strong in character and high in standard as that of the Lord Jesus."²⁹ Unlike our fallen humanity, Christ's humanity was sinless and perfect. In order to express Him, we need to have both His humanity and His divinity worked into us. As we receive Him and He grows in us, our humanity has to pass through the cross first, and then be resurrected to express Him. Whatever we are naturally needs to die and then to be made alive in the power of His resurrection. The development of our character, therefore, can be used once it passes through death and resurrection. I believe our job as educators is to steward the character development of those under us, so that they can be used by God in the most effective way and to the best of the abilities that God has given them.

I have had a number of experiences as an educator in dealing with character. I give several lessons on plagiarism in order to impress students with the importance of respecting the intellectual property of others. I use music history to show that in the medieval and Renaissance eras, copying others' music was an act of honor and respect, but at some point this attitude changed. Copying others' music now is regarded as plagiarism and many lawsuits have arisen as a result. The current issues involving Internet

²⁹ Witness Lee, *Life Study of Exodus*, v.3 (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1987), 988.

downloading of copyrighted music illustrates the pandemic effects of the fallen state of human character. These issues provide many “teachable moments” with students. In the past I had one student who questioned whether or not we as Christians could watch video clips online without knowing whether or not they violated copyright law. This led me to check with librarians, colleagues, and the Center for Teaching and Learning in order to find out an exact answer. I felt that I needed to be as proper and exact in my knowledge of fair use on the Internet as this student was in questioning this according to her conscience.

In conclusion, as I continue to teach in the Department of Music and Worship, I am more strongly convinced that the Lord has put me in this position for a purpose, His great commission. I am grateful for the opportunity to teach at Cedarville University, where I can work with students in developing both their human character and their spiritual life as they grow into maturity. I am committed to this work for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

5. The Song of Songs in the Classroom

A rigorous training in music offers much for the preparation of the man of God. It trains the mind in its attention to fine detail, to the need for memorization, to the coordination of the hands, the voice, and the ear, and to its ability to articulate aural phenomena with intelligence and discretion. In musicology in particular, this training includes the ability to verbalize abstract aural phenomena and create a precise language that captures its essence as much as words possibly can. This training in articulating the abstract helps to train the mind of the man of God as he is called upon to cut “straight the word of the truth” (II Tim. 2:15, RV).

No matter what emphasis the music major at Cedarville has—performance, education, composition, pedagogy, or theory—all require a rigorous discipline of performance practice, ensemble participation, and scholarly study. Students in their college years should consider their studies as their service, or stewardship, to God. Just as Moses and Paul were prepared for a life of service to God partly through

their educational foundation, so students must give much attention to their education. After such training in music, students will be able to interpret and execute their music to the extent that they can respond to gospel, worship, and other spiritual situations with great effectiveness. Musical training helps both the performer and the listener aspire to excellence.

One of my students shared with me the struggle she went through as she prepared her senior recital. The Lord used the high level of achievement required of this recital to gain more ground in her and allow her to grow in Him in a way that a life of ease could not do. The struggles with articulation, with intonation, and with the perfection required of public performance forced this student to go the Lord in prayer many, many times. Each time she came to the Lord, He perfected her a little bit more, until one day she was able to fully trust Him and to perform her recital unto Him.

I had another experience with a student as I encouraged him not only to finish, but to finish well, his research project in music history. Many times he came to me and said that he just couldn't do it, but after encouraging fellowship and prayer, he eventually conquered the project and completed it. At times I was tempted to give him "a break" and lessen the requirement, but inside, I knew that he needed to pass through this struggle and learn to aspire to the excellent education that Cedarville University embraces. By keeping the high standards of our discipline, I believe that we serve the Lord well and afford an opportunity for the growth of God's children.

As illustrated by the above two examples, musical training is a vehicle for the pursuit of excellence as encouraged by Paul in Phil. 4:8. This excellence is not like the worldly view of excellence, but an excellence obtained through personal pursuit of the worthy attributes and virtues of God. According to Harold Best, "The bedrock of excellence does not consist simply. . .in being number one, being in the top ten percent, winning first place, accolades, prizes, awards, the select few being the excellent. Rather, it

lies in the exercise of far different but wonderful and extraordinary things: truth, purity, rightness, loveliness, honor, and admirableness.”³⁰

In my music history courses, I pursue these things in several ways. In preparing for a lesson, I provide students with “focus questions” that allow them to dig beyond the surface of the text and think about the historical and cultural context of the current musical topic. I believe this affords students the opportunity to make connections with various sources in history, primary as well as secondary, and to be able to analyze them separately and then synthesize them into a more accurate picture of the historical situation. This involves critical thinking and develops the skills that will enable students to discern between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and admirable and shoddy scholarship.

In musical analyses, I require attention to detail in students’ homework. I spend one class period per week going over these assignments, allowing students to self-correct, to question, and to re-learn any difficult areas. I use musical analyses also to point out problems in faithful transcriptions of a composer’s intent, the value and drawbacks of working with primary sources, and the understanding of what we can and cannot learn from a work of music in notation.

In my semester-long historical research project, I require students to submit at least three drafts of various stages of their papers, along with meticulous citations and bibliography. Academic integrity and thorough scholarship are the goals of this process, along with preparing students to present knowledge accurately and skillfully. I believe these tasks and skills are part of the rigor that belongs to the stewardship of being a student in training to serve God. The more I teach in this way, the more I am convicted by the Lord to keep a high standard as my service to these students and to Him.

In at least two other areas musical training serves to prepare a believer. One area is geographical. In Global Music students learn the musical idioms and values of other cultures. They learn how to

³⁰ Harold M. Best, *Music through the Eyes of Faith* (NY: Harper Collins, 1993), 109.

understand other peoples' beliefs through understanding their music. Western tonal music, for example, is strongly based in a system that has a clear beginning, middle, and end. There are musical means for 'pushing' the music forward in its progress through alternations of dissonance and consonance. This reflects the Christian belief in eternity past, a period of time with its divinely ordained dispensations, the coming Millennium, and eternity future. In contrast to this, music of India tends to be more circular, having no clear beginning or end. This reflects the religious beliefs of reincarnation and the cycle of life. Although some may argue that this circularity reflects the Christian view of the eternity of God, and I would partly agree with that, yet the melodies and rhythms so characteristic of Indian music draw us to associate the music with the Hindu culture through the meta-messages that they evoke. However, this is a good example that helps us realize that God has put eternity in man's heart, whether he is willing to acknowledge that or not. Understanding values and beliefs by understanding a people's music will better prepare students to seek meaningful ways to engage people of other cultures for Christ. Just as Paul used the Athenian polytheistic society to bring the gospel to the Greeks through the proclaiming of Jesus Christ as their "unknown God," we need to use the breadth of our knowledge to gain the world for Him.

The other area of musical training that is useful to the believer is the historical line. Understanding a breadth of styles as well as the various thoughts and values about sacred music helps a believer to appreciate music not just as a matter of taste but to understand its place in the context of history. History also teaches us about debates on what kinds of music were acceptable or not acceptable for Christian service. Understanding those debates helps the believer with contemporary worship choices. These tensions show us that nearly every musical element from intervals to performing forces has caused points of contention in the Christian church. In many cases issues about music have deepened the divide among believers. The Calvinists' strict, bare, metrical psalms versus the Lutherans' more elaborate sacred cantatas add emphasis to the difference in opinions about the role of music in the church. Educated believers will understand the debates and be able to move beyond that which divides and maintain a clear view of the oneness of the Body of Christ (Col. 3:11). Education brings us out of our pettiness and narrowness.

Additionally, beyond the debates, a universe of music appreciation awaits the believers, to aid in devotion, to enrich corporate worship, and to further the truth of the gospel through song. Robert Elmore, in a contribution to Leland Ryken's *The Christian Imagination*, notes that music is one of the lovely and pure things that we are charged to think upon in Phil. 4:8. "Music is the Christian art par excellence."³¹ His prescription for the dearth of musical knowledge among evangelical Christians today is to listen to good music in a focused way until one learns to love the best. This is part of our musical education: learning to love the best music from the past, in the present, and across geographical boundaries. All the more we need to think on these things. C. S. Lewis shares a similar view, prescribing an approach of "receiving" music rather than just "using" it.³² As part of a strong musical education that will make keen "receivers" of great music, students must learn to listen to all the musical elements in their complexities: melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, texture, and form. These are among the excellent things in music that we must receive.

Concluding Remarks

When I sat in the Trustees' interview at my initial hire, the final question from a Trustee was something like this: when I get to the end of my career, how do I hope that students will remember me? I had never thought about such a question; however, my answer came quickly and I believe it was the Lord who supplied the answer. I said without hesitation that I hoped that I would be a person found in Christ. As another beloved hymn says, "Not I, but Christ be honored, loved, exalted, / Not I but Christ be seen, be known and heard."³³ I pray as Paul did, that in nothing I would be ashamed but that in everything Christ will be magnified (Phil 1:20), and that one day I can honestly say, "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). His is a life full of meaning and reality. He is my Song of Songs.

³¹ Robert Elmore, "The Place of Music in Christian Life," in Leland Ryken, *The Christian Imagination* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), 429.

³² C. S. Lewis, "How the Few and the Many Use Music," in Leland Ryken, *The Christian Imagination* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), 438.

³³ A. B. Simpson and Mrs. A. A. Whiddington, *Hymns* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1980), 624.

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