"OUR NEW SONG"

(God-Honoring Christian Music)

INTRODUCTION: Psalm 104:33-34

Music is commanded (Deuteronomy 31:19).
Music is unforgettable (Deuteronomy 31:21).

A. Characteristics of Our New Song

The new believer's song is:

1. Derived from God
   "And He hath put. . ."

2. Distinct from the world
   "a new song in my mouth. . ."

3. Directed toward God
   "even praise unto our God. . ."

4. Displayed in public view
   "many shall see it. . ."

5. Designed to attract others to salvation
   "and fear, and shall trust in the LORD"

B. Characteristics of God-honoring Music

1. The music must have **UNITY**

(II Chronicles 5:13a - *"It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD..."*)

[Chaos, disorder, and confusion are not elements of God-honoring music (I Corinthians 14:33, 40 - *"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints...Let all things be done decently and in order."*)]

2. The music should be aimed at <u>PRAISING</u> God

(II Chronicles 5:13b - *"It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in <u>praising</u> and <u>thanking</u> the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and <u>praised</u> the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever; that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD."*) (Psalm 7:17 - *"I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.";* 18:49; 21:13; 27:6; 47:6-7; 68:4, 32; 150)

Christian music is a medium of <u>worship</u> (SEE: Rev. 5:8-12).

3. The music should be <u>JOYFUL</u>

(Psalm 98:4 - *"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise and rejoice, and sing praise."*; I Chronicles 15:16).

(Psalm 100:1-2 - *"Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands, serve the LORD with gladness, come before his presence with singing.")*

4. The music should be properly <u>ORDERED</u> and <u>BALANCED</u>

Melody	**Spirit**
Harmony	**Mind**
Rhythm	**Body**

Melody should be pre-eminent (Ephesians 5:19 - *"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."*).

5. The music's message should <u>CLEAR</u> not vague

(Psalm 40:3 - *"And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD."*).

"*Many shall see it sand fear, and shall trust in the Lord"* (Our message in song should be clear enough that someone listening could understand, be convicted, and converted through the message).
SEE: I Corinthians 14:7-11, 15-16
--Who are you singing to or about? (the nebulous "Him" or "You"?) Say the name of "Jesus" (EX: Debby Boone: "You Light Up My Life")

--Hit the notes: No scooping or sliding on notes
--The message should not be clouded by the music.

6. The music should <u>REFRESH</u> the <u>SPIRIT</u>

(I Samuel 16:23 - *"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."*; II Chronicles 20:21; Acts 16:25-30)

"Refreshed" -	Physically	(Body)
"Made Whole" -	Emotionally	(Mind)
"Evil Spirit departed" -	Spiritually	(Spirit)

One way to drive away evil spirits is with Christ honoring, soothing to the soul Christian music. One way to attract evil spirits is to play the "Jungle Beats"

a. Music primarily appeals to your <u>emotions</u>
b. We have various emotions (both good and sinful)
c. Music has the power to stimulate good or bad emotions
d. Therefore, not all music is good, wholesome, and edifying

7. The music should be <u>DOCTRINALLY SOUND</u>

(Colossians 3:16 - *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*)

It's easy to sing words we would never say (too often we don't pay careful attention to the message we sing. Why? We pay more attention to following the melody and hitting the notes).

a. It should teach
b. It should admonish - confront the mind/the thinking
   --psalms - the book of Psalms
   --hymns - a song of praise to celebrate (a sacred song)
   --spiritual songs - God centered; Holy Spirit directed; (Not Worldly)

8. The music should be sung or played from the HEART

(Colossians 3:16b - *"singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"*; Ephesians 5:19- *"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."*)

We need to mean what we sing.

9. The music we sing or listen to should be based on STANDARDS (Philippians 4:8), **not tastes** (preferences, likes or dislikes) (Jeremiah 17:9)

Philippians 4:8 - *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."*

Many have as a standard, "It makes me feel good"; "It moves me" or "I like it" We should ask, "I like this music, but what do I like about it? What is being appealed to? What likes it?"

Does God have a standard? Yes, and the closer we get to Him, the more we will know where He draws the line.

10. Musicians should be:

GODLY (Psalm 33:1, 3 - *"Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright. Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise.")*

EX: Any Grant - nude on the beaches of Africa;
Sandy Patty - divorcing her husband

SKILLED (I Chronicles 15:22 - *"And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful"*; II Chronicles 34:12 - *"And the men did the work faithfully. Their overseers were Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to supervise. Others of the Levites, all of whom were skillful with instruments of music..."*)

WELL-ORGANIZED (I Chronicles 15:22 - *"And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song; he instructed about the song, because he was skillful"*

and **SPIRIT-CONTROLLED** (Ephesians 5:18-19 - *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart tot he Lord;"*; I Corinthians 14:15 - *"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."*)

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   [Chaos, disorder, and confusion are not elements of God-honoring music (I Corinthians 14:33, 40)]

2. The music should be aimed at _____ God (II Chronicles 5:13b) (Psalm 7:17; 18:49; 21:13; 27:6; 47:6-7; 68:4, 32; 150)

   Christian music is a medium of worship (Rev. 5:8-12).

3. The music should be _____ (Psalm 98:4; I Chronicles 15:16).

4. The music should be properly _____ and _____

Melody	**Spirit**
Harmony	**Mind**
Rhythm	**Body**

Melody should be pre-eminent (Ephesians 5:19).

5. The music's message should _____ not vague (Psalm 40:3).

6. The music should _____ the _____ (I Samuel 16:23; II Chronicles 20:21; Acts 16:25-30)

   a. Music primarily appeals to your emotions
   b. We have various emotions (both good and sinful)
   c. Music has the power to stimulate good or bad emotions
   d. Therefore, not all music is good, wholesome, and edifying

7. The music should be _____ SOUND (Colossians 3:16)

   a. It should _____
   b. It should _____

8. The music should be sung or played from the _____ (Colossians 3:16b; Ephesians 5:19)

9. The music we sing or listen to should be based on _ (Philippians 4:8), not _____ (Jeremiah 17:9)

10. Musicians should be:

    _____ (II Chronicles 34:30-32; Psalm 33:1, 3)
    _____ (I Chronicles 15:22; II Chronicles 34:12)

WELL-_____ (I Chronicles 15:22)
and _____-CONTROLLED (Ephesians 5:18-19; I Cor. 14:15)

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b. It should admonish

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"Questions to Ask About Music"

INTRODUCTION:

In Christian circles, a new teaching emerged in the mid-1960's which says that music is neutral (or "amoral"); only the words matter.

Music is a language which crosses all and is understood by all cultures and ages (young and old).

Music is a language (it has grammar, syntax, etc.). Being such, it can communicate a good or bad message, just as language can.

Music is a moral issue. A musical note by itself is amoral, just as a letter of the alphabet by itself is amoral. However, when combined, a message is produced which will communicate a thought or emotion which influences the morality of the one who hears or sees it.

Proofs that music affects people:

--"Music Therapy" is being prescribed by doctors who treat mental and psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety.

--"Mood music" is used in restaurants, stores, medical offices, drama, TV, and films to create a desired feeling within the listener.

--Studies have been conducted which show that unborn children in the womb, animals, and even plants can be affected and stimulated (for good or bad) by various styles of music.

Music (apart from the words) has an ability to manipulate emotions (both positively and negatively).

Wrong music can produce:

Nervousness (loud chaotic heavy metal rock)
Sensuality ("breathy" vocalization)
Lethargy (pure repetition of beat in Rap)

Good music can produce:

Calmness of spirit
Heart-felt worship of God
Joy

An important music maxim:

1. Music can influence any emotion

2. People have good and bad emotions (love, joy, peace/anger, depression, anxiety)

3. Therefore, music can be good or bad (depending on which emotions it stimulates)

Have your spiritual radar in working order when it comes to music.

Paul said: *"I will sing with the spirit; I will sing with the understanding also"* (I Cor. 14:16).

We need discerning ears.

Test what you hear (I Thes. 5:21-22).

1. Does the music glorify God? Or the musician?

I Cor. 10:31 - *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"*

John 3:30 - *"He must increase, but I must decrease"*

(Sacred music was never intended by God to be an end in itself nor a means of entertainment, but a vehicle of worshipping and glorifying God and His truth)

Sacred music is not mainly for the purpose of evangelism or entertainment, but is a vehicle of worship, praise, edification, and the teaching of doctrine (Exod. 15:1, 2, 21, 21; I Chron. 15:27, 28; 16:9, 23; II Chron. 20:21, 22; Ps. 95:2; 105:2; Acts 16:25; Eph. 5:18, 19; Col. 3:16).

2. Is the music sensual?

Rom. 13:14 - *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."*

(Does it move the flesh or the spirit?)

3. Is the music worldly?

I John 2:15-17 - *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."*

(BDM Letter, Vol. 2 #8, Oct. 93)

4. Is the music worthy of God's dignity?

Psalm 7:17 - *"I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high."*

(Does it fit [suit] the holy character of God and His Word?)

--Does the music violate any of His attributes?
--Songs that are "drippy": or "trite" do not exalt God's surpassing greatness

(In song, we should praise His power [Ps. 21:13]; His holiness [Ps. 30:4]; His righteousness [Ps. 51:14]; His mercy [Ps. 59:16]; His name [Ps. 61:8, 66:2]; His works and ways [Rev. 15:3])

Is the music's character or style consistent with the message it claims to convey?

5. Is the music associated with someone who has a known unchristian reputation?

Ephes. 5:11 - *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."*

(Ex: Elvis Presley singing Gospel songs)
Listening to an acceptable song written and sung by a well-known but disobedient Christian could be

a first step in listening to his other music and being influenced by him.

6. Does the music (melody, harmony, and rhythm) match the text of the song?

(The music should support the Scripture or truth being sung)
(You can't sing "Holy, Holy, Holy" to a disco beat)

"The perception of the message is greatly colored by the vehicle which carries it" (Danny Sweatt).

7. What message does the music communicate without the words?

Does the music "sound like war"? (Exod. 32:17-20) The music Moses and Joshua heard Israel singing (during their idolatry and wild dancing) was not sounds of contentment, satisfaction, peace, serenity, joyfulness, and worship. Rather, what was communicated was discontentment, rebellion, unrest, confusion, defiance, and a lack of reverence for God (Garlock & Woetzel)

Does it promote: holy separation or hellish sensuality? Clarity and conviction or confusion and compromise? Peace and joy or anxiety and depression? Salt and light or worldly darkness?

8. Is the music good and wholesome?

Phil. 4:8 - *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things"*

Eph. 2:10 - *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works..."*

9. Is the music acceptable to God?

Eph. 5:10 - *"Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord"*

(Could it be sung in His presence in Heaven? Would Jesus listen to it?)

Note: Is clapping acceptable? -- (Psalm 47:1 - *"O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph." cp.* Ps. 98:8; Is. 55:12)

Is hand-raising acceptable -- (Ps. 63:4 - *"Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name." cp.* Ps. 134:2; I Tim. 2:8)

Is something bad just because it is new? (contemporary?) (Is. 42:10 - *"Sing unto the LORD a new song..."* Rev. 5:9 - *"And they sung a new song..." cp.* 14:3)

10. Would the music cause others to stumble?

Rom. 14:13, 21 - *"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way...It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."*

11. Does the music edify me or others?

I Cor. 10:23 - *"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."*

Rom. 15:2 - *"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification"*

Excessively loud music will permanently damage your ears.

David Lipscomb, a former professor of audiology at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, tested over one thousand incoming freshman and discovered that sic of every ten had hearing loss typical of the elderly. Rock music is one cause. The noise level in a rock-concert hall can easily exceed 120 decibels, roughly the level of an air-raid siren (Lowell Ponte, "Readers Digest", March 1989, p. 122).

12. What physical response will this music produce?

[If one was to dance to this music, what type of dance would he do?]

[What type of physical behavior would the music bring out?]

[What emotion(s) would this music stimulate?]

13. Is the music <u>well-written</u>?

(Is the music doctrinally correct? Theologically sound?)

The sacred music's <u>words</u> must square with the Word (sacred Scripture). We must never <u>twist</u> a truth of Scripture to make it fit a melody line.

There was a day when Christian songs were written by pastors and those who were theologically trained. Nowadays, much of it is by marketing experts, ex-junkies, rock bands who can't make it in the world, theologically-illiterate believers.

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INTRODUCTION:

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<u>Test</u> what you hear (I Thes. 5:21-22).

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(I Cor. 10:31; John 3:30)

(Sacred music was never intended by God to be an end in itself nor a means of entertainment, but a vehicle of worshipping and glorifying God and His truth)

2. Is the music _____?
(Rom. 13:14)

(Does it move the flesh or the spirit?)

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8. Is the music _____ and _____?
(Phil. 4:8; Eph. 2:10)

9. Is the music _____ to God?
(Eph. 5:10)

(Could it be sung in His presence in Heaven? Would Jesus listen to it?)

Note: Is clapping acceptable? -- (Psalm 47:1; Ps. 98:8; Is. 55:12)

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"He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease"

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"We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus

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"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

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Christian music is a medium of <u>worship</u>

(SEE: Rev. 5:8-12).

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"Refreshed" - Physically (Body)
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LORD, O ye righteous; for praise is comely for the upright. Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise.")

SKILLED (I Chronicles 15:22 - *"And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful"*;
II Chronicles 34:12 - *"...all of whom were skillful with instruments of music..."*)

WELL-ORGANIZED (I Chronicles 15:22 - *"And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song; he instructed about the song, because he was skillful"*

and **SPIRIT-CONTROLLED** (Ephesians 5:18-19 - *"...be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart tot he Lord;"*;
I Corinthians 14:15 - *"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."*)