

Music and Worship

Jack Harris, Contributing Editor



Music and I have never met. When I was a young preacher father, my children would say to me after the church service, "Dad, when you are up front and trying to sing, don't stand so close to the microphone, it's awful."

One day when I was in college a friend suggested that she thought I had a good speaking voice and that maybe with lessons, I might be able to sing better.

The accompanist struck the cord and I sounded my very best... she stopped playing and broke into a fit of laughter. After another try or two she handed me the music and suggested that I practice at home with my wife. Again, my wife at the piano, me standing behind her in my very best form. I opened my mouth. The notes came forth and my wife broke into laughter right there in front of me and even the baby! End of voice lessons and the beginning of my hope for a musical talent when I get to heaven.

Music is one of the most powerful communicators in the world. Every language, every culture, every religion, every generation, and every event of any substantial circumstance is enhanced by and with music.

Music unites people. It thrills people. It brings peace and security. It brings out the best in people. But isn't it strange? Music also divides people. Music that pleases some, irritates others. Homes are often divided by music. Churches are split over music.

I remember a church that had a wealthy member. The church needed an organ, so he bought it and gave it to

the church. But he kept the key! One Sabbath during Sabbath School, he didn't like the organist playing so loud. So he marched up to the organ, slammed the lid down and locked it. He refused to give the key to the church. Everyone was angry and asked what to do. I said, "Either he gives the organ and the key to the church or he takes out the organ." He took the organ and the key. He died a few weeks later but the church never got the organ.

What makes music good or bad?

1. Does music depend solely on one's taste? Is everyone on their own when it comes to music?
2. Is music amoral, with no moral positiveness or negativeness?
3. Is it only words that make music righteous or evil? What part, if any, does body language play?
4. Does that mean that music from any and every culture, generation, and country would be acceptable in the house of the Lord and in our homes?
5. Is all music, minus the words a positive influence on the participants and the listener?
6. What part, if any, does volume and beat have on the listener and the participants?
7. What instruments are acceptable in the house of the Lord? Who decides? Is there any word from the Lord on the subject of music? A few samples:

Ephesians 5:19 "Start singing and praising God and you'll not only encourage yourself but others as well." Clear Word. Colossians 3:16,17 "May

Reflections
A Revue for Members of the NAD Retirement Plans of the SDA Church.

the message of Christ in all its richness fill your hearts... by the singing of hymns and gospel melodies... In everything you do, in speech or in action, do unto the name of the Lord Jesus." Clear Word. 1 Corinthians 14:15 "When I sing, I sing not only with my heart, but also with my mind. I want to use words that people can understand so I can inspire them to pray and sing." Clear Word.

The messenger of the Lord was not silent, many comments were made by her:

1. "Music should have beauty, pathos, and power." Evangelism p 505
2. "Music was made to serve a Holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which is pure and noble."

Guiding Principles For The Young, p 10
3. "Anything strange and eccentric in singing detracts from the seriousness and sacredness of a religious service." Selected Messages, Vol. 3, p 333

4 "The Lord's messengers are not to follow the ways of the world. They are not to depend on worldly singers and theatrical display." Evangelism p 508

5. Satan will make music a snare by the way it is conducted." Selected Messages, Vol. 2, p 36

The subject is inexhaustible and opinions, convictions are wide and wild. I just wanted to stir up your pure minds. Did I succeed?

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NEWS NOTES

FROM MORT



Contributing Reporter: Mort Juberg

Camaguey Cuba ~ More than 1,000 people participated in the dedication of the new church sanctuary in Camaguey. Included in the group were Communist party members, city officials and a Catholic Church bishop.

Darmstadt, Germany ~ Church members in Germany are planning to hand out three million invitations to study the Bible. This is part of the global effort by the world church to distribute one billion similar invitations before mid-2004.

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia ~ Out of 2.5 million there are only 400 Adventists in the country. Young people from Australia will work in eight towns in a project called "Mission Mongolia."

Silver Spring, Md ~ The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has sentenced former Adventist administrator Elizaphan Ntakirutimana to 10 years in prison. His son Gerard, received a prison sentence of 25 years. Both were accused of genocide and crimes against humanity in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Source: Adventist News Network

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April 2003

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