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## MUSIC IN WORSHIP

by Allen Webster

In praise of music the poets of the ages have produced some of their greatest lines. Shakespeare called it "the food of love." Carlyle designated it, "the speech of angels." William Congreve wrote, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast, to soften rocks, or bend the knotted oak."

Music is universally appreciated. One cannot go beyond its realm. It is found in every culture and on every page of history. One does not read far into the Bible before finding music (Gen. 4:21). The longest book of the Bible is a collection of songs (Psalms). Today, music wields a mighty influence upon the daily life of average citizens. Thus, we see the wisdom of God in including it in New Testament worship.

All that the New Testament says about music in the worship of the church can be read in ten minutes. There are nine verses in the entire New Testament on this subject (Mt. 26:30 [cf. Mk. 14:26], Acts 16:25, Rm. 15:9, I Cor. 14:15, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, Heb. 2:12, 13:15, Jas. 5:13). (Please take time to read them now.) Since we now live under the Gospel (New Testament) (Col. 2:14), these verses constitute our guide for music in worship. Let us analyze what they teach.

First, Christians are commanded to sing. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15). Therefore, singing is not an optional part of worship. This eliminates just listening "because I cannot sing well anyway."

Second, Christians are told what to sing - "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." A psalm is "a sacred or pious song." It might be the story of man's deliverance, or commemoration of mercies received. Often the early church sang the psalms of the Old Testament. "Hymns" are songs of "direct praise and glory addressed to Deity." A song is a general term for words put to a melody. Here it is modified with the adjective,

"spiritual." All the songs sung in worship should be scriptural and spiritual.

Third, Christians are told how to sing. "...I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Corinthians 14:15). Christians should always concentrate on the words being sung and mean what they say ("spirit" means with the proper attitude). Christians should not sing a song that they do not understand.

Fourth, Christians are told when to sing. "...in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb. 2:12). This is a direct reference to the nation of Israel assembled in Jerusalem for worship. But the application for today is congregational singing. When the church meets for worship, Christians should praise God, teach and admonish one another (Colossians 3:16). But this is not the only time Christians can sing. "...Is any merry? Let him sing psalms" (James 5:13). Any time a Christian feels like singing a spiritual song, he may and should.

Fifth, Christians are told why to sing. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25). The primary purpose of singing is, thus, to praise God. Additional purposes include teaching others the truth and admonishing them to obey it (Col. 3:16).

In overview fashion, this is what the New Testament teaches about music in worship. If all people will practice what these verses teach without adding to them or taking from them, God will be well pleased.

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*Education is worthless unless the Bible is made the preeminent textbook and Christ the teacher.*

*A chapter a day helps to keep the devil away.*

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE DEVIL

by Kenneth Bray

There is a spirit being who is evil in nature and is committed to the spiritual downfall of the human family. He is the devil (that is his nature); he is Satan (that is his name). He is responsible for every sin from the time of Adam down to our present age. Obviously anyone concerned about his spiritual welfare will want to know more about this being. Here are the three basic facts that God's word reveals to us regarding Satan:

1. **HE IS DECEPTIVE.** The deceptive nature of Satan is revealed in statements such as these: "the snare of the devil" (I Tim. 3:7), "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (James 1:14), and "the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). His basic technique is this: he calls good evil and evil good (Isa. 5:20). He encourages people to do wrong in spite of terrible consequences, and he discourages people from doing good regardless of the blessings. Therefore, Paul gives this wise admonition: "Be not deceived" (I Cor. 6:9, 10).

2. **HE IS DETERMINED.** People often become weary in their work, and when obstacles arise, they give up. Satan is not that way. He has great determination. Time does not deter him - he has been at this deceptive work since the days of Adam and Eve, and he will continue until the end. People do not deter him - he has tested every accountable person since the beginning. No one is too rich or too poor; too educated or too ignorant, or too evil or too godly. He actively seeks out those whom he may devour (I Pet. 5:8).

3. **HE IS DEFEATABLE.** In spite of the fact that he is deceptive and determined, he is not all powerful. He can be overcome. When temptations arise, God is faithful to give us a way of escape (I Cor. 10:13). When you put on the whole armor of God, you are thereby able to "stand" against the wicked one (Eph. 6:11). There are three Biblical methods of defeating Satan:

(Continued on page 2)

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Eddy Gilpin . . . . . EDITOR

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**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE DEVIL**

(Continued from page 1)

- a. One must be aware of his devices (II Cor. 2:11). He has certain ways of ruining people; we can know what to expect (I John 2:15-17).
- b. One must stay on guard (Matt. 26:41). Satan will attack when we least expect it. "Watch and pray" is still good advice.
- c. One must resist (James 4:7). Those who "give in" or "give up" or "give out" easily will certainly be wrecked by Satan. When one resists, however, the only course left for Satan is to flee.

Whether we like it or not, we are involved in a fight, a battle. This battle is with a shrewd adversary, the devil. He is cunning and experienced. Yet, with God's help (Phil. 4:13) the child of God can be victorious over the world.

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

2229 Lyndon Avenue  
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*People will take your example far more seriously than they will your advice.*

*The worst danger that confronts the younger generation is the example set by the older generation.*

*The frightening thing about heredity and environment is that we parents provide both.*

*Example is not the main thing in influencing others; it is the only thing.*

**THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN**

by Eddy Gilpin

The Bible clearly reveals that the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). It also reveals that oftentimes the effects of sin reach much further than just to the individual who commits it. Entire nations were effected in the days of old whenever a single individual sinned. Such an instance is the subject of this study. Joshua 7 reveals the account of the sin of Achan. Having crossed the Jordan and complied with God's instructions, Israel had captured the city of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-21). However, unknown to Joshua, Achan had sinned during the overthrow of that city by taking articles as spoils of war for himself. This, God had forbidden (Josh. 6:18). After the overthrow of Jericho, Israel proceeded to the settlement of Ai. Finding it to be a relatively small encampment, Joshua proceeded to send only a small army to capture its inhabitants (Josh. 7:1-3). However, when Israel's force of 3,000 men engaged the army of Ai, they were soundly defeated and turned back (Josh. 7:4). Petitioning God, Joshua found out the reason for their defeat. Namely, there was sin in the camp of the Israelites in the person of Achan. Not only was that sin detrimental to Achan, but also to the entire nation of Israel as 36 men were lost in the heat of battle that day (Josh. 7:5). Here, then, is a case which should serve as an example to the church, the Israel of God, today. Notice some things that were lost by the nation of Israel because of the sin of one man. Then, compare that to the same situation in the church today when there is "sin in the camp."

First, Israel lost men because of sin in their midst. Today, sin among members of the church costs her men as well. Hypocritical members of the church have turned away many individuals from what might have become profitable service for the Savior. Untold are the cases in which individuals have pointed an accusing finger at some lukewarm member as the reason for their not attending services. While it is the case that such an excuse does not suffice for their neglect, it is also true that many will face eternity having used such as an excuse. On the other hand, if Achan had not committed this trespass against God, not a single individual would have been lost from Israel's number. In like manner, if prevalent public sins among members of the church today were eradicated, just think of the individuals which might be saved as a result.

Second, Israel no doubt lost prestige because of the sin of Achan. The fame of

Israel had spread as God had brought them out of Egypt, miraculously sent them through the Red Sea, given them victory over Og and Sihon and parted the waters of the Jordan to give them passage (Josh. 2:9-11). Now, however, these people had suddenly failed in their attempts to conquer. Doubtless the example of strength for which Israel previously stood had now suffered in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land. Likewise, prevailing sin among God's people today results in the loss of prestige and exemplification. The reputation of the body of Christ in many places has been greatly reduced by scandal among its members. How then can such a body be a "light set upon a hill"? As leaders in the church allow such sins as adultery, unfaithfulness in attendance, false teaching and other ungodly practices to continue, how can the influence of the church be what it should?

Third, Israel lost precious time because of the sin of Achan. Time had to be spent in finding the cause of the problem, regrouping and fighting the inhabitants of Ai once again. Think how much more efficiently that time could have been used had not Achan been so selfish. In like manner, think of the time being wasted by elderships, preachers and others in pampering sullen members whose "feelings have been hurt" into returning to the fold. Think of the valuable time that could be spent in reaching those who have yet to be taught which is being wasted in attempt after attempt to get apathetic members to be more faithful to their Lord. Time is a valuable commodity over which we are only stewards. Once it is used, it cannot be retrieved. Today, "the Israel of God" is wasting far too much time in coaxing fledgling members content on "sitting on the stool of do nothing and whittling on the stick of do less." Such valuable time could and should be used in carrying the gospel to those who need it so badly.

Sin carries its own price tag. Its consequences are often much greater than meets the eye. Indifferent member, why not return to the fold of safety? Why not rededicate your life in service to Him so that men, influence and time need no longer be lost in securing your return?

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*Burdens keep our feet on the ground.*

**KINDNESS**

I have wept in the night  
For the shortness of sight  
That to somebody's need I was blind;

But I never have yet  
Felt a tinge of regret  
For being a little too kind.

**SMOKING-NON-SMOKING**

by Sam Griffith

At one time, preachers, while expounding on the sins of the flesh, would include smoking. Now, if a preacher mentions it, he could be fired. Puff, puff, puff that cigarette; smoke, smoke, smoke until you smoke yourself to death. So goes the song. When such scriptures as I Cor. 6:19 is mentioned, some Christians (?) will quickly reply, but what about obesity? Let us put the scriptures aside for a moment and consider what is being reported by the medical authorities. More than 300,000 Americans die prematurely each year from diseases caused by their smoking; diseases such as lung cancer, emphysema and coronary artery disease. According to the February 15, 1986 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, **CIGARETTES** cause more premature deaths each year than: AIDS, COCAINE, HEROIN, BOOZE, FIRES, AUTO ACCIDENTS, HOMICIDES AND SUICIDES **COMBINED!** Nicotine, a psychoactive drug found in cigarette smoke, reaches the brain of a smoker within six seconds of being inhaled - this is twice as fast as mainlining heroin. Lung cancer is expected to surpass breast cancer as the No. 1 killer of women. For every pack of cigarettes a woman smokes during pregnancy, it takes away from the weight of the unborn child. Airlines, motels, restaurants, public meeting halls (and the list goes on) are saying "No" to smoking. What about "Us," the Church. I have seen in my time, leaders of the church, light up inside the meeting house. Maybe some need to go back and read Brother Tom Medlock's tract, "What Smoking Has Done For Me," published in 1966. Or perhaps the "Cornbread" habit printed in Jack Exum's book of Fables for Today. A brief excerpt reads: "There was as man who had the 'Cornbread' habit. He just had to have a piece of cornbread every twenty or thirty minutes! Every morning as soon as he got out of bed, the first thing he thought of was his cornbread. He would even eat a piece before he got dressed and sometimes he would even wake up in the middle of the night just to have a piece of cornbread. Crumbs got all over everything. After breakfast, he ate another piece of cornbread; and then strange as it seems, he would put about 20 pieces of cornbread in his pocket so he would have some every few minutes during the day. When he went to church, the last thing he did before he entered the church building was to stand on the curb and eat another hunk of cornbread. Then he would throw the crust and the sack on the sidewalk and go in. Between Bible study and worship ser-

vice, he would go outside and have a piece of cornbread. After the final "Amen" he joined the other cornbread-eaters on the sidewalk and boy, did the crumbs fly! 'Poor Man.' He really was a slave to cornbread." I recall one preacher, whose name would be recognized by all, was asked, "Would smoking send you to Hell?" His reply was, "No, but it will make you smell like you have been there and come back." Can you see Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee with a cancer stick dangling from his lips? The final question: Will the ATTENDANT AT THE PEARLY GATE say, "SMOKING OR NON-SMOKING?"

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**SERVING CHRIST IN THE GOLDEN YEARS**

by Bill Brandstatter

We live in a highly technological society. As a result, more people are living longer than ever before. The ways to prolong life increase almost yearly. The consequences of this are mixed. Some folks resent growing old, others resent old folks. Some societies shun the elderly. Others enable the golden agers to be productive well past "retirement age." Because of the large amount of elderly here in the United States, there has been a shift in some areas from youth to the elderly. More nursing homes are going up in some areas than playgrounds. A large elderly population may affect business, politics, and public opinion. In an age that is so youth-centered, we need divine directives to assist in the cultivation of the proper attitudes toward the retirement years.

There is a place in God's kingdom for the aged. The business world may consider a person too old at 65, but not God. He has always used senior citizens to accomplish great works. Moses did his greatest work between 80 and 120. John wrote the book of Revelation when he was near 100. Anna the prophetess was still serving God in the temple at the young age of 84 (Luke 2:36-38). If you are a senior citizen, you are needed in the church today. Every congregation desperately needs the help of golden disciples. A senior citizen often has more time to devote than do the younger folks who must meet certain job and family schedules. The wisdom that younger folks have not yet gained can be found often in the over 60 group. Because of life's experiences, an older Christian is often able to understand the needs of certain people better. The downfall of Rehoboam occurred primarily because

he "forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him," (1 Kings 12:13). A person who has obeyed the gospel early in life and has remained faithful over the years has knowledge in the Bible that can't be replaced. Older women are needed to "teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, to be obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed," (Titus 2:4,5). Older men who meet the qualifications are needed in the position of elders. These men can assist young men in the same fashion as the older women, to learn the responsibility of being an adult, and a parent.

There is glory, beauty, and dignity in advanced years. Such qualities in old age do not come by accident. Nor are they the result of it. A graceful old age is the yield of a well-cultivated, properly growth, and nurtured Christian life.

206 N. Hancock  
Ironton, Mo.

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- Keep your record clean - heaven's bookkeeper makes no mistakes.
- Every person needs a partnership with God.
- We multiply happiness by dividing it.

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## A BAD EXAMPLE

He whipped his boy for lying,  
And his cheeks were flaming red,  
And of course there's no denying  
There was truth in what he said...

That a liar's always hated,  
But the little fellow knew'  
That his father often stated  
Many things that were untrue.

He caught the youngster cheating  
And he sent him up to bed,  
And it's useless now repeating  
All the bitter things he said.

He Talked of honor loudly,  
As a lesson to be learned,  
And forgot he'd boasted proudly  
Of the cunning tricks he'd turned.

He heard the youngster swearing,  
And he punished him again...  
He'd have no boy so daring'  
As to utter words profane.

Yet the youngster could have told him,  
Poor, misguided little elf,  
That it seemed unfair to scold him  
When he's often cursed, himself.

All in vain is splendid preaching,  
And the noble things we say,  
All our talk is wasted teaching  
If we do not lead the way.

We can never, by reviewing  
All the sermons on the shelves,  
Keep the younger hands from doing  
What we often do ourselves.

— Author Unknown

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## No Security In High Walls

In ancient China, the rulers wanted protection from the barbaric tribes to the north, so they built the great Chinese Wall. It was so high they felt sure no army could climb over it, and so thick that nothing could break it down.

During the first century of the wall's existence, China was invaded by the barbarians several times. But not once did the armies scale the wall or break it down. They simply bribed the gatekeepers and marched right through the massive wall.

Instead of building walls of stone, the Chinese should have been teaching virtues like honesty and integrity.

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- The world is what it is because we individually are what we are.
- Keep trying – it is usually the last key on the ring that opens the lock.

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

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