

# PART FOUR

# MUSIC IN CORPORATE

# WORSHIP

There is a lively discussion today regarding the nature of music in the Church. People stand on each side of the fence proclaiming the truth of their position. On one side stand the traditionalists. They insist that the only music that the Church should be involved in are the hymns that have been passed down through the ages. They declare that the great doctrines of the Bible that are pronounced in these musical works are that which causes them to adore God all the more. On the other side of the controversy are the contemporary advocates who believe that only the praise choruses are adequate vehicles of worship inspiration. They insist that the hymns are too staunch, too wordy and too negligent of the personal element to be worshipful.

Music has been a source of argument for the Church since its foundation. Throughout Church history many musical trends have been followed. A look at these developments will provide a wealth of information in regards to the sources and value of the music that is being discussed among church attendees today. Hopefully within the following pages, the student of the Bible will uncover some answers to the questions that are being posed today. With that information, a suitable and biblical direction for church musical worship can be established.

Other than an investigation into musical styles that produce mantras, this study does not intend to advance one musical style over another. There will be no discussion promoting or discouraging the use of organ music, guitars or drums. The purpose of this study is to investigate the lyrical content and use of music in the Church in order to determine approaches that are theologically correct according to the understanding of Christian worship that has already been presented.

If the student is interested in promoting one style of music over another as that which is appropriate for church, he will be disappointed with this study. However, if he seeks for that which is biblical then many conflicts that exist today in the ever-continuing controversy involving music will be resolved.

## LESSON ONE: Babylonian Music Part 1

### THE SOURCE OF UNGODLY MUSIC

- ◆ **Rev 5:11-12; Luke 2:13-14; Isa 6:1-3** God created angels for the express intention of worshipping Himself.
- ◆ **Ezek 28:12-15** Lucifer was a chief angel. He was a very gifted worshipper.
- ◆ **Ezek 28:13; Isa 14:11** Lucifer embodies all of the musical instrument categories that are used today including percussion, wind and stringed instruments. As an angel of the Lord, Lucifer's music was intended to honor God.
- ◆ **Ezek 28:16-19** This details the fall of Lucifer. In his rebellion, Lucifer turned his attention away from God as he began to become enamored with his own beauty. Just as the proponents of mystic religions do today, Lucifer determined to worship himself.
- ◆ **Isa 14:12-16** As Lucifer became more enamored with himself, he determined that he would lift himself above God. As a result, he was rejected by God.

**Q.** Describe areas in today's society where Lucifer's determination of self worship has been manifested mankind. In what way does man's worship of himself today cause Satan to lift himself above God? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Since the fall Satan has attempted to draw mankind's attention away from God so that they will worship him.
  - ⇒ **Matt 4:8-9** Satan attempted to cajole Jesus, who was God Himself, to worship him.
  - ⇒ **Dan 3:7** Music is a part of Satan's person. Therefore, there is music that emanates from him. Since his fall, Satan has utilized music as a vehicle to inspire the worship of himself.

**Q.** In what ways is music utilized by the world for the worship of Satan? Keep in mind, that music that promotes sin, reviles God or extols ungodly worship practices are that which promotes Satan. \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON TWO: Babylonian Music Part 2

### DEMONIC ACTIVITY IN MUSIC TODAY

- ◆ Repetitive mantra music that is written and performed with the intention of setting a mood so that the worshipper can meditate without distraction. New Age music today is of this nature. It generally is written around nature themes, which is the object of pantheistic affections.
- ◆ The new age writer, R. J. Stewart detailed in *The Spiritual Dimension of Music* that music today is generally moving away from “the undeniably strangling restrictions of European art music” towards the musical understandings of the Celtic Druids and Pythagorean Greeks. In addition, the music of mystic India and Africa have played a prominent role in modern musical development.
  - ⇒ The purpose of this move away from traditional Western music is to shed the shackles imposed by the “male-dominated religion” of the Church.
  - ⇒ The “strong and deliberating rhythms, such as that used in rock music” are extolled as that which can elevate a person into the spiritual world.
  - ⇒ “In religious monastic use worldwide, chants are seeded with powerful inner or spiritual communication. . .” Primal vowel sounds or specially assembled structures based upon metaphysical alphabets are used to produce mantras. “Hence,” writes Stewart, “the brief but glorious insights provided by some types of religious or mystical music, for such music temporarily (within time-limits) raises our imagination and our physical response to modes of energy and consciousness that we cannot normally sustain. In magical arts, this communication is extended to link up various realms, worlds and beings which are traditionally said to exist. . .Such a role, that of a bridge between worlds, may play an important role in the music of the future. . .” The methodology wherein one goes into the “inner and outer worlds” is through the use of “primal patterns” which create mantras for worship use.
  - ⇒ Visualization is utilized to stir the imagination.
  - ⇒ False worship awakens five power centres in the human body. Each power centre represents an element. Satanic music is composed in a manner that will stimulate these five areas of the body so that the worshipper can transcend into a higher state of consciousness. This is called “the illuminated consciousness” and it is considered to be a sign that the “inner Fire” has been attuned to the magical chant. The reference to the five elements is a throwback to the ancient Greek humanistic philosophers.
    - Forehead *Spirit* (new cycle of illuminated consciousness)
    - Throat *Air* (utterance if the primal creative sound)
    - Heart *Fire* (human correspondence to solar energy)
    - Genitals *Water* (human correspondence to lunar energy)

Feet        *Earth* (fundamental starting power and ground of being)

⇒ The Word “is the magical equivalent of the Spirit moving on the face of the Deep, and at first it moves in a dimension that seems, to us, to be without light. It is the Dark Primal Mother.” In the Bible, the Word refers to Jesus. Here, it is used in reference to the mother goddess or Babylon. Words in mystical musical worship are seen as that which emanate from the depths of false gods. “The chanting and resonated humming,” writes Stewart, “may be combined with meditation. . .”

These repetitive words, musical phrases or both, when chanted over-and-over, will bring the mystic worshipper in contact with these spirits.

- ◆ **Rev 18: 21-22** Eventually all apostate worship will be done away with.
- ◆ **Rev 5:9-14; 14:2-4** When that occurs all creation will sing the praises of God in heaven.

**Q.** List some examples of mantra-based music that pervades in society today. How to the proponents of this music use their craft to transcend into the supernatural? What gods are they seeking? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Describe the elements of false musical worship that must be avoided by worshippers in God’s Church. \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON THREE: Music of the Early Church

### MUSIC THAT GLORIFIES THE LORD

- ◆ **Rev 5:10** God has created people for the express purpose of worshipping Him.
- ◆ **Duet 6:13-15** In Old Testament times God set apart the Israelites as a people who would worship Him.
  - ⇒ According to Ralph P. Martin in *Worship in the Early Church*, Synagogue worship contained three elements:
    - \* Praise: According to the Talmud “Man should always first utter praises, and then pray.” The “ruler” summoned the “minister” (**Luke 4:20**) to invite someone to commence the service with a call to worship. The cry began, “Bless ye the Lord, the One who is to be blessed,” and the people responded, “Blessed be the Lord. . .for ever.” the worshippers were invited to think of God and to acknowledge His greatness and blessing.
    - \* Prayers: They came in two forms 1) Emphasizing the nature of God and the fact that He chose Israel 2) Emphasizing the blessings and promises of God.
    - \* Instruction: This followed the prayers. First members of the congregation went forward and read portions of the Law and the prophets. Then the scripture lesson or sermon would be delivered. This pattern can be seen in **Luke 4:21 and Acts 13:15**.
- ◆ In this age, the Church has been set apart to worship God.
  - ⇒ **Duet 6:5** To love God is the highest calling of a believer.
  - ⇒ The Early Church used the synagogue worship structure along with the sacramental in the Upper Room as a template for corporate worship. Praise took the first role in synagogue worship. Hence **I Cor 14:26** states that the head of the list of Christian corporate worship at Corinth, “a psalm” of praise should be sung. Praise is a central element of Christian corporate worship.

**Q.** Since praise is to be the central element of the Christian worship service, music must usher the same. Describe the difference that exists between mystical musical worship and the praise music that is to be utilized by the Church.

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- ⇒ **Acts 20:7-12** describes the most detailed account of an Early Church service that we have on record. It describes the Church meeting on Sunday. It describes the church meeting as that where the teaching of scripture plays a predominant role.
- ⇒ **Eph 1:3-14** Scholars agree that this scripture recites liturgical phrases and terms that were a part of the worship liturgy of the Early Church. It centers on the love of God, the redemption of Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. (**Eph 3:20-21**)

**Q.** Based upon the example of the Early Church, to what degree ought the teachings of Scripture pervade the entire liturgy of the worship service? Should this emphasis be included in the musical life of the Church? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ **Matt 18:19-20** The Early Church assumed that God was in their midst as they gathered together. Therefore Ignatius, the 2nd century bishop and martyr declared, "Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is a universal Church." Hence, the Early Church did not concentrate its ministry efforts on connecting with God. They Church praised, prayed to and spoke of the God Who is There. (**Acts 2:42-47; 3:1, 11; 5:12,42**)

**Q.** Describe how Christians worship the God who is there when they are gathered. How would the worship that recognizes God's presence and the appropriate response that this deserves differ from worship that strives to enter into God's presence? What worship strategies devised by pagan philosophers are unnecessary and harmful to true Christian worship expression? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Early Christians met together for many reasons
  - ⇒ **Acts 1:14, 24** To seek guidance
  - ⇒ **Acts 4:23-31** To seek refuge while under the duress of persecution and hostility. They requested the strengthening grace of the Lord under their circumstances.
  - ⇒ **Acts 12:5** To intercede for others
  - ⇒ **Acts 12:12-17** To worship the Lord and seeking guidance in relation to God's work for the unbelieving world.
  - ⇒ **Acts 20:36; 21:5** To pray

**Q.** Why is it important for Christians to gather together in church? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Describe just how church attendance should play an instrumental role in your life and your interaction with other Christians. What does God use in Christians to facilitate church ministry? (**Rom 12:6-8; I Cor 12; Eph 4:11-13**) How is it that spiritual gifts can be used in church for the edification of the body better than in any other venue? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON FOUR: The Creeds Part 1

- ◆ The Early Church faced dangers from the inside that were as hazardous to the survival of the faith as the persecution from intolerant Rome. Rome was a pluralistic culture wherein just about any religious idea, other than Christianity, was freely expressed. The danger of doctrinal apostasy was intense and, indeed within the church heresies arose that threatened the very makeup of Christian doctrine.
- ◆ The Bible is very specific in regards to sound doctrinal teaching. The terms used by early Christians emphasize the importance of sound doctrinal teaching.
  - ⇒ **Acts 2:42** The apostles teaching
  - ⇒ **Philippians 2:16** The word of life
  - ⇒ **Romans 6:17** The standard of teaching
  - ⇒ **I Tim 4:6** The pattern of sound words
  - ⇒ **II Tim 4:3; Titus 1:9** Sound teaching
- ◆ Good sound doctrinal teaching was essential to the survival of the Christian faith. Within the fold many heretical teachings arose which necessitated a response in order to keep the Christian religion on the path of truth. (**Acts 15:24; Rom 16:17-18; II Cor 11:13-15; I Tim 4:1-2; 6:3-5; II Tim 3:1-9; 4:2-4; II Pet 2:1-3; 3:17; Col 2:2; Heb 13:9 I Jn 2:22-26**) Some prominent heretical sects were:
  - ⇒ The Gnostics were dualists who believed that the physical world was inherently evil while the spiritual world was good. Hence, they taught that Christ did not come in the flesh. Gnosticism contains elements of Judaism, Jewish speculation, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and other Mediterranean and Eastern mystery religions. All varieties of Gnosticism shared an elitist view that some people are capable of knowing (hence the word Gnostic from the Greek word *gnosis* = knowledge) and understanding the *secrets* and those who were unredeemable. Salvation is a matter of knowledge rather than works or faith. Many heresies came from the Gnostic view including The system of Valentinus, The system of Saturnus, The system of Marcion, Manichaeism. **Col 2:9-10**
  - ⇒ The Judaizers taught that the Gentiles needed to conform to the Law, particularly circumcision, to be saved. **Col 2:11-12; Acts 15:1; Gal 2:4-5; 6:12; Tit 1:10-11; I Tim 1:7**
  - ⇒ Ebionites considered Christianity as a sect of Judaism. They believed that Jesus was a mere man of exceptional righteousness and a superior endowment of the Spirit which came upon him at his baptism. Some Ebionites accepted, and some rejected the supernatural conception of Christ. Ebionites were among the Judaizers who



- attempted to impose the law of Moses upon Christians.
- ⇒ Monarchianism was a 2nd and 3rd century Christian heresy which took two forms. In Dynamic Monarchianism, it was held that Christ was a mere man, miraculously conceived, who became the Son of God because of the infinite degree to which he had been filled with wisdom and power.
  - ⇒ Montanus, a 2nd century prophet taught that he himself was the final revelation of the Holy Spirit which Jesus had promised to send. Montanists were strictly and legalistically moral and looked for the imminent second coming of Jesus.
  - ⇒ Arianism: Arius taught in the 4th century that God alone was self-existent and immutable, and therefore the Son must have been a created being. Worship of the Son continued, so that in some sense Arianism was Polytheistic. Arianism was condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD whose creed confirming the Trinity ruled out this heresy from the orthodox faith.
  - ⇒ Appolonarianism: This Christological heresy followed from the concept of a human being consisting of three separate parts: a body, a soul and a spirit. Jesus, taught Appolonarius, had a human body and soul, but his spirit was the divine Logos. He thought of Christ as God clothed in human flesh.
  - ⇒ Pelagianism: Pelagius (5th century) denied the doctrine of Original Sin and taught that humans were creatures of essential goodness and free will. He held that sin was voluntary, not the inevitable consequence of human weakness. Pelagius hoped to encourage higher moral standards among Christians.

**Q.** These cults promoted doctrines that have been transmitted through generation-through-generation to this day. Can you think of cults who hold these religious beliefs today? What dangers do today's cults pose to the Church? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What was the value of sound doctrinal teaching to the Early Church? Is it still important today? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON FIVE: The Creeds Part 2

- ◆ In order to counteract the influence of heresies, the Church enacted creeds upon which each Christian was required to affirm regularly. Some of the creeds that were used are in the Bible are:
  - ⇒ **I Cor 15:3-5; Rom 1:3-4; 4:24-25; 8:34; Phil 2:6-11; I Tim 3:16; I Pet 3:18-22.** These creeds detailed various aspects of the person of Jesus Christ, His mission, his victory over death and his role as Intercessor and Lord of all.
  - ⇒ **I Cor 8:6; I Tim 2:5** These are the binarian creeds that unite the Father and the Son.
  - ⇒ **Matt 28:19; II Cor 1:21; 14:14; I Cor 6:11; 12:4; Gal 3:11-14; 4:4; I Pet 1:2; Heb 10:29.** These are the statements in the Bible that detail the Trinity . Later the Trinitarian creed came out of these Scriptures which read, “Glory to the Father, Glory to the Son, And to Thee, blest Spirit, While all ages run.”
- ◆ The Apostles' Creed dates back to the time of the Apostles. The present form first appeared in the 6th century in the writings of Caesarius of Arles, but prior versions go back to 340 AD in a letter to Pope Julius I and back to a circa 200 document containing the Roman baptismal liturgy. It was originally a baptismal creed summarizing the teachings of the Apostles.

*I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. Note the word “Catholic Church does not refer to the Roman Catholic church but the true body of Christ.*
- ◆ The *Nicene Creed*, also called the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed, is a statement of the orthodox faith of the early Christian church in opposition to certain heresies, especially Arianism. These heresies, which disturbed the church during the fourth century, concerned the doctrine of the trinity and of the person of Christ. This creed began at the Council of Nicea (AD 325).

*We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end. And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and to life in the world to come. Amen.*

**Q.** Creeds were mainly statements of faith intended to define what it is to be a Christian. Is it important for ministries to adopt statements of faith today? Why?

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**Q.** The Early Church utilized creeds, or statements of faith, in order to weed out those who taught heresy and confused the body. How can statements of faith be utilized in conjunction with church membership today? What is the positive value of church membership?

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**Q.** Are churches today who deny the truths that have been detailed in the Bible and summarized in creeds worshippers of Christ? Explain:

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**Q.** According to the Bible and early church history, sound doctrine is absolutely necessary in church worship. What, therefore, is the litmus regarding the lyrical content of music used in church worship?

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## SAINT AUGUSTINE

- ◆ Saint Augustine was the most influential Christian theologian from the ancient world. His writings literally formed all Western Christian thought. However, before he was saved, Augustine belonged to the dualist sect of the Manichees. In his confessions, Augustine explained how he worshipped as a mystical pagan.
  - ⇒ In reflection upon his experiences when he was with the dualistic cult, Saint Augustine recalled in his *Confessions*, "When I thought of You, my mental image was not anything solid and firm; it was not You but a vain phantom. My error was my god." When he was with that mystic cult, Augustine was not concentrating upon the clear and concise attributes of the God who has displayed himself in his creation and His Word. It was the god of his imaginations.
  - ⇒ Augustine recalled that among the dualistic Manichee hymns there was one called "Love Song" to God. Indeed, pagan hymns are filled with emotion and love. But a love song to the undefined god is not the Christian God at all, but a figment of the imagination of Babylon.
- ◆ After his salvation, Augustine's view of the world changed considerably. This change affected the manner in which he worshipped God.
  - ⇒ Augustine realized that dualism is wrong and that there is nothing inherently evil with the things of the world. Hence he wrote in his *Confessions*, "If physical objects give you pleasure, praise God for them and return love to their Maker lest, in the things that please you, displease Him. If souls please you, they are being loved in God; for they are also mutable and acquire stability by being established in Him." Therefore, the world is not something to be despised. It is not something that requires escape. Rather, it is the very thing that generates true Christian praise.
  - ⇒ God, therefore, is not someone to be found in another place and time through the mystical experience that Augustine had now rejected. Rather, God is everywhere present. It is not man who seeks God, but God who seeks man. Hence Augustine attested in his *Confessions*, "Before I called to You, You were there before me."

Of all people, Augustine realized this truth. He was a lost soul, living with a woman whom he had not married and worshipping with pagans. God miraculously plucked him out of that situation and placed his feet upon Christ the Solid Rock. Augustine's response was a lifetime of praise and worship.

**Q.** For Augustine, was worship a pursuit after God or was it a response to the ever-loving God? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Augustine spent the rest of his life ministering as the Bishop of Hippo and arguing against the cult philosophies and practices of his day. This was his response to the grace of the Lord who spared him from his dreadful error. In what way was this an expression of worship of the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON SIX: The Worship Forms (Prayers and Praises) of the New Testament Church

- ◆ **Acts 1:24** God was sought in regards to the Church's decisions.
- ◆ **Acts 4:23-26** Prayers consisted of praise to God for who He is and what He has done. Like Jesus, they utilized the psalms in their liturgy of prayer and praise. (**Luke 23:46**)

**Q.** Based upon the example of the Early Church, to what degree should psalm reading and singing have in the life of today's corporate worship service? Why? \_

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**Acts 13:1-3** Worship of God was a central piece of the Early Church's corporate gatherings. This reflected a worship of Jesus as the early Christians called on Him in devotion and supplication. (**Acts 7:59; II Cor 12:8**)

**Phil 2: 6-11; I Timothy 3:16** These were Christ-hymns that were sung by the Early Church.

**Acts 2:21; 9:14; 22:16; Rom 10:13** Jesus was hailed in worship as One worthy of adoration and surrender. Thus they called on the name of the Lord.

**Q.** Based upon these examples from the Early Church, what role should Jesus and His works have in the corporate worship life of Church today? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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**I Cor 16:22; Rev 22:20** The term "maranatha" was an important part of the Christian invocation as they met. Maranatha is an Aramaic term -- a cry to the Lord in regards to His soon return.

Consider the Charles Wesley's hymn "Lo! He Comes, With Clouds Descending"

*Lo! He comes, with clouds descending, Once for favored sinners slain;  
Thousand, thousand saints attending Swell the triumph of His train;  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! God appears on earth to reign.*

**Q. I Pet 2:11** The Bible describes Christians as aliens in a strange land. The world, for the Christian is a place to sojourn in while he waits for a better place. What place in Christian corporate worship should the expectation of God's return and a life in future glory have? To what degree should corporate Church sing, pray and teach of a better day to come when they are together? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON SEVEN: Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs

- ◆ **I Cor 14:26; Col 3:16; Eph 5:19-20** *Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs* comprised the song liturgy of the Early Church. Their use was for praising God and speaking the Scriptures to each other. Psalms were Christian odes patterned after the Old Testament Psalter. Hymns were longer compositions of which there are some examples in Scripture. Spiritual songs were spontaneous utterings of praise which the Spirit placed on the lips of the worshipper. (**I Cor 24:15**)

Q. What is the value of hymn singing in church? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Q. The praise choruses today resemble “spiritual songs” to a high degree. Many of them are simple utterings of praise that, though they lack doctrinal profundity, carry with them utterings of love for God that spring from the human soul. Generally, they are utilized to encourage spontaneity among the body of believers. Keeping in mind the scriptural guidelines regarding music in church worship, describe a proper context for praise choruses to be used in church services. What value would praise choruses have when used in conjunction with hymns? What is the value of spontaneity? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Q. In order to keep everybody happy, many churches today have adopted a system wherein one Sunday morning service is dedicated to traditional music while another is dedicated to contemporary music. What elements of praise will be missed by the attendees of each perspective service? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- ◆ The music of the Early Church was deeply entrenched in its Jewish heritage. Because the Levites, who were the Temple musicians, were so jealous of their craft, they would pass their music by word of mouth only to their descendants. Therefore, there was nothing written down to depict the music of the Jewish people who, in turn, provided the musical foundation of Christian worship. We do not know what it sounded like.
  - ⇒ Like their Jewish predecessors, the people of the Early Church chanted the Scriptures. Documents from that period of time cite the complaints expressed by church authorities against lectors who paid more attention to their own voices than the meaning of the words they were singing.
  - ⇒ Music was considered holy only concerning its connection with sacred text. So, the chanting of the Psalms seems to have been the particular emphasis of the time. One of the early church fathers, Diodore of Tarsus, indicated that the good influence of Psalm singing was the calming of the carnal desire, banishment of demons, and the healing of wounds. In congregations where there was a strong Jewish heritage, these Psalms were very familiar, and all participated. In other circumstances, the lector alone would recite the Psalm with an occasional amen, Selah, halleluia, or hosanna inserted by the congregation.
- ◆ Jewish influence in the Early church:
  - ⇒ **Ex 15:21; Num 10:35, 21:17; I Sam 18:7; Ez 3:11** Antiphonal singing was used which went back to early Jewish history. The leader would sing and the congregation would respond.
  - ⇒ **James 5:13** Many of the Jewish psalms were intended to be sung in the temple and some of these were carried into Christian worship. (**Ps 24; 68; 84; 95**) Early Christians also composed psalms of their own. In addition, the Church adapted many of the ancient Jewish hymns in their song service and wrote their own hymns as well.
- ◆ The Early Church was especially known for its rejection of instrumental music in religious observances. Flutes, cymbals, horns, bells, and harps had long been used in the "Mystery" cults. The Church was well aware of the cathartic power of this music, so they tended to avoid it.
  - ⇒ Clement of Alexandria condemned them as "instruments of frenzy" along with the superstitious men who played them. He even went as far as to propose the abolition of instruments even in non-religious music.
  - ⇒ However, to the theologian Origen (185-254 AD) the trumpet depicted the Word of God: while the drum portrayed the destruction of lust; and the cymbals illustrated the longing of the soul for Christ. In actuality, instruments were mentioned so frequently in ecclesiastical writings that there is no doubt that they were frequently used to worship the One True God whom they served.

**Q.** Early Christians depended heavily on their heritage as they formulated a liturgy for their church services. The traditions formulated here have become a permanent part of church liturgy. There are many non-traditional churches today that shun the liturgy that has been carried down from early Christianity.

According to the example of the Early Church, is tradition valuable? What portion of church worship liturgy should be founded in tradition? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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◆ Many of the passages in the Gospels became part of the song liturgy of the Early Church.

⇒ **Luke 1:46-45** This is the prayer of Mary and it came to be known as the *Magnificant*.

⇒ **Luke 1:68-79** This was the Psalm of Zachariah and it came to be known as the *Benedictus*.

⇒ **Luke 2:14** Was the praise of the angels at Jesus' birth and it came to be known as *Gloria in Excelsis*.

◆ **Rev 4:8, 11; 11:17-18; 14:7; 15:3-4** The praise contained in the Book of Revelation was adopted into the song liturgy of the Early Church.

**Q.** Based upon the practice of the Early Church, what role should the singing of scripture hold in our worship services today? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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◆ Hymns of the Early Church as detailed in the Bible

⇒ **I Tim 3:16** This hymn tells the story and details the ministry of Jesus Christ

⇒ **Phil 2:6-11** This hymn tells of Jesus humbling Himself to the point of death to be exalted as Lord.

⇒ **Col 1:15-20** This hymn is a description of the divinity of Christ, His position over the Church and what He has done for us.

⇒ **Heb 1:3** This hymn speaks of the divinity of Christ, His act on the cross and His present position in heaven.



**Q.** Based upon these biblical examples, what is the function of hymn singing. What truths are they suppose to convey? Why is the singing of hymns necessary in Christian corporate worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What role did Christ play in the hymn liturgy of the Early Church? What does that tell us today in regards to our song singing in church? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the following praise chorus:

*He is Lord, He is Lord, He is risen from the dead and He is Lord.  
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.*

**Q.** What hymn of the Early Church that has been handed down to us in the Bible does this modern praise chorus refer to? \_\_\_\_\_

Consider the following praise Chorus:

*Thou art worthy, thou art worthy, thou art worthy O Lord.  
to receive glory, glory and honor, glory and honor and power,  
For thou hast created, hast all things created, for Thou hast created all things.  
And for Thy pleasure, they are created, Thou art worthy O Lord.*

**Q.** In what way does this praise chorus reflect the emphasis of the Early church to utilize the praises in the Book of Revelation in corporate praise? (**Rev 4:11**)\_\_\_\_\_

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Some of the early composers of hymns in the early church are well known even though the music itself has been lost. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (d. 366) wrote *The Book of Hymns*, but none of the pieces have come down to us. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan (d. 397) improved on Pointers and made hymn singing very popular in his church. All of his compositions, though simple, clearly stated the great doctrines of Christianity. This music was called Ambrosian Chant and it was antiphonal plain-song arranged to create a stately choral effect. The *Te Deum* has been generally attributed to Ambrose and this great work is filled with the doctrine of Christ:

*We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.  
All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting.  
To Thee all angels cry aloud: the heavens, and the powers therein;  
To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry,  
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;  
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.  
The glorious company of the apostles praise Thee.  
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee.  
The holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee  
The Father of infinite majesty;  
Thine adorable, true and only Son;  
Also the holy Ghost the Comforter.  
Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ,  
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.  
When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver men, Thou didst humble thyself to be born of a virgin.  
When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to  
all believers.  
Thou sitest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father  
We believe that Thou shall come to be our judge.  
We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants,  
Whom Thou hadst redeemed with Thy precious blood.  
Make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.  
O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine heritage.  
Govern them, and lift them up forever.  
Day by day we magnify Thee;  
And we worship Thy name, ever, world without end.  
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.  
O Lord, have mercy on us; have mercy on us.  
O Lord, let Thy mercy be upon us, as our trust is in Thee.  
O Lord, in thee I have trusted; let me never be confounded.*

**Q.** Detail, according to the above hymn from the Early Church, why God is to be worshipped. According to this hymn from the Early Church, when and how is God to be worshipped? What does the content of the hymn communicate to those today who desire to emulate the Early Church in congregational worship? \_

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## LESSON EIGHT: Worship Forms of the Medieval Church Part 1

### LIFE AFTER CONSTANTINE

- ◆ The so-called conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine had a dramatic impact on the Church. For the first time the Church had gained the support of the Roman monarchy. This meant that persecution, for the most part, would end as Christianity became the accepted religion of Rome.
- ◆ This social elevation of the Church did not come without compromise. Constantine worshipped Mithra (the sun god) and did a lot to bring the worship practices of this false god into the church. This was the genesis of centuries of compromise wherein the Church attempted to popularize itself and attract unbelievers to the church by adapting the culture that surrounded it into its church practices. For example, statues of the pagan goddess Isis were re-named and recognized as Mary, the mother of Jesus; religious holidays, such as the celebration of Christ's birth and His resurrection, were re-calendared to conform with pagan holidays; and the governmental system of Rome was adopted by the church. The strategy was to adapt the church to its surrounding culture in order that unbelievers would be more likely to join the church. Eventually, the church became completely Roman in its makeup. No longer were Christians seen as non-conformists. No longer were they persecuted. The church had adapted itself and taken on the culture that surrounded it.
- ◆ The clergy believed that as long as the central doctrines of Christianity were maintained that these cosmetic changes initiated to make the church more attractive to pagans would have no effect on the worship life of the Church. The exact opposite was true. As a result of this new evangelistic strategy, pagan worship practices in their totality were eventually adopted into the church liturgy. According to Alexander Hislop in *Two Babylons*, the following practices came directly from the mystery religions:
  - ⇒ Maryology, or the worship of Mary was actually an extension of the worship of Semiramis, Nimrod's wife.
  - ⇒ The Pope's position came as a replacement of Rome's high priest position (Pontifex Maximus) toward the end of the empire. The pope's mitre was an exact duplicate of the mitre worn by the priests of Dagon the fish god.
  - ⇒ The pagan position of cardinal was instituted.
  - ⇒ A Priesthood was set up along with monks and nuns which directly mirrored its Babylonian counterpart.
  - ⇒ The pagan mass was adopted wherein it was believed Christ was crucified again-and-again.
  - ⇒ When Christians partook in communion it was believed that the actual blood and body of Jesus was consumed.
  - ⇒ Priests offered confessionals, themselves becoming the mediator between God and man like the Babylonian priest.
  - ⇒ The pagan superstition of the worship of relics was instituted wherein it was believed relics from the Bible had magical power.
  - ⇒ The pagan practice of pilgrimages was observed.
  - ⇒ The pagan doctrine of purgatory was adopted.
  - ⇒ Holy days were re-aligned to conform to pagan holidays.
  - ⇒ The use of candles and incense in worship
  - ⇒ The clothing and crowning of idols

### POPE GREGORY THE GREAT

- ◆ Pope Gregory I (540-604) was the most influential pontiff in assimilating the Roman culture into the Church. Hence he did much to bring mysticism into the Church fold. This very popular church leader has been considered one of the most eminent theologians of the Catholic Church. Yet he drew the Church away from the worship practices of the Early Church which lead to the proliferation of mysticism in the Dark Ages..
  - ⇒ After the collapse of the Roman empire, Gregory laid the foundations of the structure

- of the medieval papacy. He became very strong in his position as pontiff.
- ⇒ Being a very capable administrator, Gregory did a lot to fortify the financial wealth of the church. In Gregory, the pope was becoming a political force to be reckoned with.
  - ⇒ Gregory became absorbed in demonology, mysticism, miracles and symbols. Therefore, he turned his back on secular learning to embrace the scholarly endeavors of Saint Benedict(480-543). Seeing the terrible existence of a literal hell, Gregory emphasized the sinfulness of men along with his need to do penance. He gave much attention to the development of the Mass and all the paganism that revolved around the apostate version of the celebration of the Last Supper. In fact, Gregory gave the Roman Canon of the Mass the form that it still has today.
  - ⇒ Gregory gave prominence to the doctrine of purgatory, popularized angelology, and fostered the veneration of the relics and images of the saints.
  - ⇒ Since Gregory was convinced that the manner in which to attract new converts to his cause was to meet the pagans half-way, in honor of the god Tammuz, the festival of the Midsummer-day was added to the Roman calendar. Since the pagan festival of the winter solice had already been adopted as the birthday of Jesus on the 25th of December, it was only natural that the 25th of June, exactly six months prior, be espoused as the birthday of John the Baptist since John was born six months before Jesus. The name of Tammuz (or Nimrod) after he had been slain was "Oannes." The name of John the Baptist that the Roman Church had already adopted was "Joannes." It was a perfect match! To name it the "Festival of Joannes" would lead the Christian to believe they were celebrating the birth of John the Baptist, while it would lead the pagans to believe that it was in fact Oannes they were honoring. So, the Nativity of Saint John was born.

According to Alexander Hislop in *The Two Babylons*, fire plays a foundational role in pagan dogma. In particular, fire to the Babylonian is a primary methodology wherein the worshipper is cleansed from sin. In opposition to this, biblical authority assures us that mankind is cleansed by blood. (**Rom 5:9; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:6-15**) Fire in the Bible represents the judgment of God, whether it relates to the final destruction of the world or the judgment of mankind in the afterlife. (**II Pet 3:7; Mal 3:2-5; I Cor 3:10-15; Jude 7; Rev 20:14**) In keeping with the pagan origins of the Nativity of Saint John, worshippers would dance around fires to symbolize this Babylonian purification rite.

Consider the following gospel song:

*Would you be free from your burden of sin?  
There's power in the blood,  
Power in the blood.  
Would you or evil a victory win? There's wonderful power in the blood.*

*And there is power, power,  
Wonder-working power  
In the precious blood of the Lamb.*

*Would you be free from your passion and pride  
There's power in the blood,  
Come for a cleansing in Calvary's tide  
There's wonderful power in the blood.*

**Q.** In what way does this song contradict the ancient pagan rite of purification through fire? In what way does it reflect the biblical position of purification through blood? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Some praise choruses today speak of purification of the Christian from sin through the fire of the refiner. Is this orthodox? Just because a song utilizes Scripture, is it necessarily scriptural according to orthodox Christian beliefs? What criteria must be used in evaluating the orthodoxy of music whose lyrical content utilizes scriptural phraseology? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** The church today has popularized the concept of adapting to society in order to attract unbelievers to the Church. Based upon the history of the Church, what are the dangers of this practice? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Many contend today that the world has changed and the Church has to move with it in order to survive. They insist that the church must modernize itself in order to continue to see growth in our post-Christian society. Is this how the Early Church evangelized in the pagan Roman world? Is it necessary to conform to the world? What should the Church do when it is confronted with a pagan culture that lives contrary to biblical belief? (**Matt 5:13-15**) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What behavior will attract unbelievers to God? (**Tit 2; 3:1-11**) \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON NINE: Worship Forms of the Medieval Church Part 2

### GREGORIAN CHANT

- ◆ Gregory saw that it was through the institution of the heathen-based rite of the Mass that the main point of contact with the populace should be made. While doing so much to develop the pagan theology that was to become such a large part of the Church of the Dark Ages, he began to refine the art of ritual that was to become so profuse in the centuries to come.
- ◆ This Pope initiated a new type of music into the liturgy of the church in order to attract the masses. This "other worldly music", called Gregorian Chant, became the hallmark of the spacious cathedrals as the modal melodies of the priest reverberated through the vast halls with their beauty and their *simplicity*. The intent of Gregorian Chant was to create an aura of "mystery." They were sung by priests in the "mystery" language, Latin. The congregation, therefore could not understand the words nor did they participate in the singing. Without any meaning in the text for the listener, the monotone melodies of chant created a mood that was intended to represent the other world to give the worshipper a view of the supernatural.
- ◆ Though Pope Gregory (540-604) was not the actual composer of many of these chants, he was the primary editor who selected the many texts and melodies that were to be considered for use in the Roman Church. It was his intention to make this form of music a very instrumental part of the celebration of the Mass, which he endeavored so profoundly to promote. This Gregorian Chant became the very foundation of the musical culture of the Middle Ages.
- ◆ This music was Babylonian in its very structure. The very tonal structure assimilated in these single melody lines, sung by the priests without musical accompaniment, was embodied in scales adopted from the pagan Greek modes (Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, and Mixolydian). The very language that was incorporated was Latin, the "mystery language" of the Middle Ages. These musical pieces went by titles such as Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, to form an instrumental part of the ritual of the Mass. Eventually, this Mass became an occasion for the prolonged musical elaboration of these pagan-based chants.
  - ⇒ According to R. J. Stewart in *The Spiritual Dimension of Music*, the use of chant in the church did not come from the musical chants of the people. Rather, it came from "the ritual use of the great pagan philosophies."
  - ⇒ The Brahmans, priests of the Hindu religion, utilize chant as they conduct their sacrifices. Initially, the sacrifices of this group of priests was carried out as an act of propitiation for sin. Eventually, though, this idea was dropped and the sacrifice itself became the central object of the worship service, rather than the god the sacrifice was supposedly for. Eventually, the gods were said to have celebrated right along with humans during the sacrifice.
  - ⇒ In the same way the Catholic Mass became the central focal point of Catholic worship, in which the death of Jesus was re-enacted again-and again. Within this context, the reality of the over-and-over sacrifice of Jesus was played out in the Eucharist wherein the bread and the wine were seen as turning into the actual body and blood of Jesus to be sacrificed repeatedly. As the Hindu Brahmans administer the sacrifice, so did the Catholic priests alone administer all of the sacraments of the Mass within the context of repetitive Gregorian chant.
- ◆ Chant was most fully developed by the Benedictine monks who were appointed in order to coerce the population of Europe to submit to the rule, and teaching of the Pope. Church musicians were restricted from using the music that was common to the people, nor could they experiment with the basic elements of the liturgy that the Pope had set up. Rather, they were to use only the Gregorian Chant that became a perfect partner with the authoritative, codified liturgical structure that had been prescribed by the pope. This development paralleled the facts that surrounded Nebuchanezzar's statue wherein the worshippers of God were ordered killed if they did not bow before the statue to the sound of the mystical musical drama. (**Daniel 3**)

**Q.** How is the use of music in many contemporary worship services today similar to the use of music in the Middle Ages? Has some of our contemporary worship music been designed to create a aura of mystery with the express intention of leading the worshipper into an experience with the supernatural? Can you think of musical examples that use simplicity and repetitiveness in order to create a heavenly-like atmosphere in the church? In light of the developments in the Middle Age Roman Church, does this leave us with concerns today? Explain: \_\_

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**Q.** Many of the proponents of contemporary worship music pride themselves in their simplicity. They believe that the complexity of traditional music inhibits worship. Would you say that this philosophy is aligned to Early Church worship practices or is it similar to Middle Age worship practices? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Early Christians adopted the Jewish traditions that preceded them in order to develop their worship practices. The Medieval clergy adopted the practices of the world in the formulation of their liturgy. What formula is being generally utilized today? Based upon the apostasy of the Middle Age Roman Church, why is it a mistake to forsake Christian traditions? \_\_\_\_\_

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Because Gregory was a theologian in his own right, it was not his intention to undermine foundational Christian doctrine. Gregory did not abandon hymn writing. In fact, it was said that he was the pope who reminded the church how to sing. One of his hymns, "O Christ, Our King, Creator, Lord" is recorded below:

*O Christ, our King, Creator, Lord,  
Savior of al who trust Thy Word,  
To them who seek Thee ever near,  
Now praises bend thine ear.*

*In thy dear cross a grace is found --  
It flows from every streaming wound --  
Whose pow'r our inbred sin controls,  
Breaks the firm bond and fees our souls.*

*When Thou dost hang upon the tree,  
The quaking earth acknowledged Thee;  
When Thou dists there yield up Thy breath,  
The world grew dark as shades of death.*

*Now in the Father's glory high,  
Great Conqueror, nevermore to die,  
Us by thy mighty pow'r defend,  
And reign through ages without end.*

**Q.** In what way does this hymn depict the doctrines of Christ upon which true praise is founded? \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Q.** Because he incorporated pagan methodologies in the Church, Pope Gregory did more than anybody before him and after him to bring paganism into the Church. Yet, as the preceding hymn attests, he was a profound theologian who clearly understood the message of the Gospel. Many today indicate that utilizing the methodologies of the world does not pose a theological threat to the Church as long as the basic doctrines of Christ are maintained. If this is true, why was Pope Gregory the Great so responsible for paganizing Christianity? Is it enough to profess and teach the right doctrines? Does it matter what methodologies we utilize? Is it important to inspect the message that lies behind the methodologies? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## LESSON TEN: Worship Forms of the Medieval Church Part 3

### MEDIEVAL MYSTICS

*Mysticism, as borrowed from paganism, was the central element of medieval worship. It was no surprise, therefore, that the Middle Ages produced a host of writers who promoted the theme of mysticism in the Church. Following are some examples of the mystics of the Middle Ages:*

- ◆ The Eastern Orthodox Church has a long tradition in mysticism. Much of this tradition was recorded in the *Philokalia*. This work is a collection of texts written between the fourth and fifteenth centuries by spiritual masters of the Orthodox Christian tradition
  - ⇒ St. John of Karpathos, in *Texts for the Monks in India*, wrote, "To anyone among you who is oppressed by a sense of his worthlessness and inability to attain holiness, this is our message: if he attains dispassion he can *see Jesus*, not only in the future, but coming to him here and now with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30)." "If we truly wish to please God and to enjoy the grace of His friendship, we should present to Him an intellect that is stripped bare -- not weighed down with anything that belongs to this present life. . ."
  - ⇒ The *Philokalia* also details, "We should strive to preserve the precious gifts which preserve us from all evil. . . These gifts are the guarding of the intellect with the invocation of Jesus Christ, continuous insight into the heart's depths, stillness of mind unbroken even by thoughts which appear to be good, and *the capacity to be empty of all thought*. . ."
  - ⇒ The Christian mystic teaches that extreme mental discipline is imperative if one is to enter into the supernatural presence of God: "To human beings it seems hard and difficult to still the mind so that it rests from all thoughts. Indeed, to enclose what is bodiless within the limits of the body does **demand toil and struggle**, not only from the uninitiated but also from those experienced in inner immaterial warfare . . . the delighted intellect delights in the light of the Lord when, free from concepts, it enters into the dawn of spiritual knowledge. . . Then the heart is filled with perceptions of infinite and divine realities and **sees the God of gods in its own depths**, so far as this is possible. Astounded, the intellect lovingly glorifies God, the Seer and the Seen, and the Savior of those who contemplate Him in this way."
  - ⇒ Evagrius the Solitary, in *On Prayer* detailed, "When your intellect in its great longing for God gradually withdraws from the flesh and turns away from all thoughts that have their source in your sense-perception memory or soul-body temperament, and when it becomes full of reverence and joy, then you may conclude that you are close to the frontiers of prayer."
  - ⇒ To the mystic, intellectual exercises stand in the way of edification. St. Mark the Ascetic, in Letter to Nicolas the Solitary explained why this is so: ". . . for the soul is carried away captive through its inward assent to the thoughts with which it is constantly and sinfully occupied."

**Q.** According to the Bible, what role does intellectual understanding have to do with being edified? (**I Cor 14:13-17**) \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Volume two of the *Philokalia* concentrates on the writings of St. Maximos the Confessor (580-662) This mystic is most widely known for his opposition to a number of heresies that were being propagated regarding the nature of Christ. As a result of his opposition to heretical teachings, Maximos was tried, condemned, flogged, his tongue was cut out, his hand was cut off, and he was exiled. The Orthodox Church was responsible for his persecution. Later, though it reversed itself and the work of Maximos has been preserved.
  - ⇒ St. Maximos the Confessor wrote in *Four Hundred Texts on Love*: "But once {the intellect} is established in God, it loses form and configuration altogether, for **by contemplating Him who is simple it becomes simple itself and wholly filled with spiritual radiance.** . ."
  - ⇒ St. Maximos the Confessor, in *Four Hundred Texts on Love* again assured his compatriots that one cannot pray unless he is completely detached from the material world: "It is said that the highest state of prayer is reached when the intellect goes beyond the flesh and the world, and while praying is utterly free from matter and form. He who maintains this state has truly attained unceasing prayer."
  - ⇒ St. Maximos the Confessor, in *Various Texts on Theology, the Divine Economy, and Virtue and Vice* wrote, ". . .the human intellect, purified of all material images and occupied or, rather, adorned with the divine principles of the noetic world, is a **heaven itself**. For the perfect have already been initiated **mystically** into contemplative theology: having purified their intellects of every material fantasy and bearing always the stamp of the image of divine beauty in all its fullness, they manifest the divine love present in their hearts."
- ◆ Holy men and women who lived in the deserts of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Arabia during the fourth and fifth century forged Christian monasticism. *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* is a selection of quotations taken from the Apophthegmata Patrum that recounts isolated encounters with these people.
  - ⇒ Abba Cronius wrote, "If the soul is vigilant and withdraws from all distraction and abandons its own will, then the spirit of God invades it and it can conceive because it is free to do so (cf. Jn. 3:3-8)."

**Q.** According to Christian theology is it necessary to free the soul from distraction in order to witness the indwelling of God? (**Eph 3:16-17; Col 1:27**) Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Saint Symeon the New Theologian was a monk who belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church. He lived in the Byzantine Empire from 949 to 1022 AD As abbot of St. Mamas Monastery in Constantinople, St. Symeon to his monks delivered many discourses which have been recorded in *Symeon the New Theologian: The Discourses*. A central theme which runs throughout this work is that Christianity only becomes meaningful when the living Christ is encountered personally.
  - ⇒ In his work *On the Mystical Life* Symeon described the mental exercise that would be necessary to commune with God: ". . .the love of God, like a kind of heavenly dew which is joined with an ineffable light, falls immaterially on the heart in the guise of lightning and takes the form of a shining pearl. . . {This pearl grows daily} in the heart of him who prefers it to everything else, becomes in him a miracle of miracles, both inexpressible in every way and in all respects indescribable, **neither grasped by the mind nor uttered in words**. Ecstatic at the inexpressibility and incomprehensibility of the thing, and fixing his intellect in meditation upon it, *the man goes wholly outside of the world* -- not in his body, but -- in all his perceptions, for the latter also withdraw together with the intellect to what is contemplated within him."

⇒ The Christian mystic believes that he who is the most spiritual is the one who has discovered the way to see God in His glory. "Having been made rich with Him," Symeon wrote, **"they shall see invisibly the inexpressible beauty of God Himself.** They shall hold Him without touching. They shall comprehend incomprehensibly His imageless image, His formless form, His shape without shape which, in sight without seeing and in beauty uncompounded, is ever varied and unchanging. . .What is it that, comprehending, they will see? The simple light of divinity, this is what they will see richly with the eyes of their intellect; this what they will also handle, drawn by irresistible love, with immaterial hands; what they will eat without consuming with the spiritual mouth of their intellect and soul. They will never have enough, never be satiated with the contemplation of that beauty, of that sweetness."

- ◆ The Catholic Church has had a long list of mystics in its fold. Meister Eckhart was a member of the Dominican Order who held senior ecclesiastical and teaching posts all over Europe. He lived between 1260 and 1326 AD. Eckhart continued in the mystical trend to downplay intellectual knowledge. Thus he wrote, ". . .God is in himself so exalted that he is beyond the reach of either knowledge or desire."
- ◆ The Blessed Angela of Foligno was an Italian who lived from 1248 through 1309. Angela held to the typical mystic disdain for knowledge: "The joy of the saints is a joy of incomprehension; they understand that they cannot understand. . .No matter how far the understanding of the soul is able to stretch itself, that is nothing in comparison to what it experiences when it is lifted beyond itself and placed in the bosom of God. Then the soul understands, finds its delight, and rests in the divine goodness; it cannot bring back any report of this, because it is completely beyond what the intelligence can conceive, and beyond words; but in this state the soul swims." "And immediately upon presenting himself to the soul, God likewise discloses himself and expands the soul and gives it gifts and consolations which the soul has never before experienced, and which are far more profound than earlier ones. In this state, the soul is drawn out of all darkness and granted a greater awareness of God than I would have thought possible. This awareness is of such clarity, certitude, and abysmal profundity that there is no heart in the world that can ever in any way understand it or even conceive it. Even my own heart cannot think about it by itself, or ever return to it to understand or even conceive anything about it. This state occurs only when God, as a gift, elevates the soul to himself, for no heart by itself can in any way expand itself to attain it. *Therefore, there is absolutely nothing that can be said about this experience, for no words can be found or invented to express or explain it; no expansion of thought or mind can possibly reach to those things, they are so far beyond everything -- for there is nothing which can explain God.*"

**Q.** According to the testimony of biblical persona, when one experiences the true God, is the event something that can be described in words and understood by the intellect? Do we have biblical descriptions of heaven as a reference point? What should be our point of reference in regards to the claims and descriptions of those who state that they have had a supernatural experiences? (**Is 6; Rev 1:10-18**) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Is heaven, as described by Isaiah and the Apostle John that which comes from the imaginations of the mind, or is it a real place with specific attributes? What are the ramifications of this in regards to the mystical experience of heaven and the supernatural? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ *Revelations of Divine Love* was authored by a female, Saint Julian of Norwich English. She was a mystic who lived from 1342 - 1413 and was canonized by the Catholic Church. Like all mystics, St. Julian believed that the presence that worship is embodied in the act of finding God. "The continual seeking of the soul pleaseth God full greatly: for it may do no more than seek, suffer and trust," the Middle Age mystic wrote. ". . . The seeking. . . pleaseth our Lord, and the finding pleaseth the soul and fulfilleth it with joy. . . It is God's will that we seek Him, to the beholding of Him, for by that He shall shew us Himself of His special grace when He will. And how a soul shall have Him in its beholding, He shall teach Himself: and that is most worship to Him and profit to thyself, and [the soul thus] most receiveth of meekness and virtues with the grace and leading of the Holy Ghost. For a soul that only fasteneth it[self] on to God with very trust, either by seeking or in beholding, it is the most worship that it may do to Him, as to my sight. . ."
- ◆ Nicholas of Cusa lived from 1401 to 1464. He is the author of approximately 25 philosophical and spiritual works. He also served the Roman Catholic Church as a papal advocate before the imperial diets, cardinal-legate to Germany and the Netherlands, bishop at Brixen (in what's now known as Germany) and a papal adviser, vicar-general, and camerarius in Rome. In five different works: *On Learned Ignorance*, *Dialogue on the Hidden God*, *On Seeking God*, *On the Vision of God*, *On the Summit of Contemplation* Cusa delivered the message of mysticism to the Christian world. Cusa wrote. "Through faith we are rapt in simplicity so that, while in a body incorporeally, because in spirit, and in the world not in a worldly manner but celestially, we may incomprehensibly contemplate Christ above all reason and intelligence, in the third heaven {2 Cor 12:2} of the simplest intellectuality."

**Q.** What ideas did the Christian Mystics from the Middle Ages borrow from pagan worship traditions? *See Part One, Lessons Five and Six from this study.* Why should these practices be avoided today? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** In what way do praise songs that emphasize opening our eyes to see the face of Jesus mirror the teachings of the Medieval mystics? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON ELEVEN: Worship forms of the Reformation

*The primary leaders of the Reformation were Martin Luth, John Calvin and Zwingli. The reformers rejected the Babylonian influences in the Roman Church and broke away from the Catholic Church to form Protestantism. All of the mystical elements of Catholicism were ultimately abandoned. The papacy, system of cardinals, priesthood, monks and nuns were dissolved along with the Babylonian-based responsibilities and worship patterns that they embraced. This revolution resulted in dramatic changes in the worship life of the Protestant Church. Music came down to earth as congregations began to sing again in their own language the great truths of God that demanded their attention and inspired their praise. Thus most of the great hymns that are sung today come out of Protestantism. As usual, there was a lot of controversy that arose over music.*

- ◆ Luther retained as much of the worship life of the Roman Church as he felt was biblically possible. This could be seen readily in the music of his church that stressed hymns in congregational singing. Calvin on the other hand emphasized the Psalms. He desired to depart as far as possible from the mystical pagan Church.
  - ⇒ Since the theology of the Reformation came so much from the pen of St. Augustine, many of the leaders adopted the Augustine suspicion of music as a distraction from the essential message of the liturgy. The reformer, Zwingli, had discarded all the visual symbols that were used in the worship of Nimrod and his wife -- including chalices, crosses, and clerical vestments. In like fashion, he forbade the singing of hymns in his church and allowed many fine organs in Switzerland to be destroyed because he could find no authority in Scripture for liturgical music.
  - ⇒ John Calvin, was very restrictive in his musical outlook. Nonetheless he produced the *Geneva Psalter* that was a collection of tunes set to the Psalms.
- ◆ It was in the Reformation that the praise of God in congregational song was re-born. When Martin Luther came on the scene, there began a significant and historical change in the nature of music in the Church. It was an entirely new direction. A vast body of song was produced by Luther and his successors that eventually blossomed into a musical tradition that changed forever the nature of Western music.
  - ⇒ Luther needed a form of music to create a strong and formidable force within his church body. He sought for something that would be unique to his movement. Out of this desire came the Reformation hymn called the chorale. *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* is an example of one of these that were composed by Luther himself.
  - ⇒ But to find more material, he went to the streets to take the music of the people and bring it into the Church. He utilized the musical repertoire of the burghers, and even brought music out of the pub to be sung with new lyrics that would glorify God. So, the secular tune that began with the words, "My heart is all confounded; a tender maid is the cause," became *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*.
  - ⇒ It was the intention of the reformers to pattern the worship life of the Church as closely to the New Testament as possible. Hence, they brought New Testament praise back into the mouths of the people. The chorale, which became the most typical form of Protestant music, was sung by the congregation in unison, while the choir or the organ provided the harmonious accompaniment. In actuality, the congregation became the leaders of praise, while the instruments and choir backed them up. Instead of having independent parts that confused the message, the choral parts were composed to the same rhythm. This form of congregational worship has become so entrenched into our culture, that it has remained as the standard for the congregational singing of the denominational Protestant church to this day.

**Q.** When Martin Luther adopted the music from the culture around him, he did not incorporate the worldly objectives of that music. Doctrinal purity was of the most concern for the reformers, so mystic theology was not allowed among the body of Christ. Therefore, the cultural assimilation of the Lutheran Church was a theological success. Does the church today have the same theological cohesiveness that Luther's church possessed? Why is the Church today more vulnerable to the influence of the doctrines of mysticism? Why is it more probable today than in Luther's time that the use of music from the world will lead the church to apostasy? Are there any parallels between the church today and the Middle Age Church that would cause concern in regards to adoption of musical styles from pagan cultures? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Martin Luther risked his very life in order to champion the Reformation in Germany. In one instance, he was challenged to a debate. The meeting, called the Diet of Worms was, in fact, a trap laid by the Pope to humiliate and then kill Luther. On the way to the debate, while knowing well that there were plots to kill him, Luther was moved by a reading of Psalm 46. He then wrote the most powerful hymn of the German Reformation:

*A mighty fortress is our God, A bulwark never failing;  
Our Helper He amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe --  
His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not His equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He --  
Lord Saboth His name, from age to age the same, and He must win the battle.*

*And though this world with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,  
We will not fear, for God has willed, his truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him --  
His rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure: One little word shall fell him.*

*That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours, Through Him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also --  
The body they may kill; god's truth abideth still: His kingdom is forever.*

**Q.** In what way did Luther adapt **Ps 46** to make it relevant for his fellow Christian believers? What does the hymn say in regards to the nature of Christ and what He does for us? How did the hymn speak to the troubles of his time? Do we as Christians today face similar perils? How relevant is the hymn for us today? \_\_\_\_\_

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### JOHN CALVIN

- ◆ John Calvin made no secret of his deep criticism of Medieval mysticism.. The Medieval Church devised all manner of ways to pursue God in its futile attempt to know Him. "They ought to serve Him with integrity of heart and holiness of life; instead they attempt to gain His favor by frivolous deceit and trivial methods," wrote Calvin. "They feel free to indulge themselves shamefully, because they imagine they can please God with some futile expiation." God, according to Calvin, was not Someone to be uncovered through endless mystical pursuits, as the Roman Church had insisted, but He is the God who is there, and has revealed Himself in every part of His creation.
  - ⇒ "To begin with," Calvin noted, "no one can assess himself without turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves, because it is quite obvious that the gifts we possess cannot possibly spring from ourselves and our very being is sustained by God alone. Further, the blessings which constantly spill over from heaven are like streams leading us to the fountain."
  - ⇒ God has not only revealed Himself in our strengths and blessings, but our weaknesses as well. "Because man is so full of misery and ever since the Fall has exhibited such a catalogue of blatant sin" Calvin continued, "everyone who is stung by the awareness of his own unhappiness gains at least some knowledge of God. . . Our evil ways make us think of all the good things of God."
  - ⇒ Calvin argued that God has revealed Himself in our very minds when he penned, "It is beyond dispute that some awareness of God exists in the human mind by natural instinct, since God Himself has given everyone some idea of Him so that no one can plead ignorance. . . Since complete happiness is knowing God, in order that no one should be prevented from finding that happiness, He has kindly put in our minds the seed of true religion we have already spoken of and has also displayed His perfection in the whole structure of the universe. So He is constantly in our view and we cannot open our eyes without being made to see Him. His nature is incomprehensible, far beyond human thought, but His glory is etched on His creation so brightly, clearly and gloriously, that no one however obtuse and illiterate can plead ignorance as an excuse."
  - ⇒ The problem isn't that God has failed to reveal Himself, it is that man has failed to recognize it. "How few of us," inserted Calvin, "as we look up to the skies or around at the earth, ever think of the Creator! We tend to overlook Him and content ourselves with simply looking at the creation."
  - ⇒ God has even allotted the grace that has enabled man to see him in spite of mankind's total depravity. In that vein Calvin wrote, ". . .the invisible Godhead is indeed shown in creation, but. . .we have no eyes to see until they are enlightened through faith by the inner revelation of God."
  - ⇒ The fact that many fail to see God revealed does not let anyone off the hook for failing to find Him. "Though we are lacking in natural ability which might enable us to rise to

a pure, clear knowledge of God, the heaviness of heart which hinders us gives no room for excuse. We cannot plead ignorance, without being condemned by our own consciences of laziness and ingratitude."

- ◆ Calvin warned that those who fail to recognize the God who is there, and thus set out on various mystical pursuits of God, merely are making God into their own image. "They think it enough to have some sort of religious fervor, however ridiculous, not realizing that true religion must be according to God's will as the perfect measure; that He can never deny Himself and is no mere spirit form to be change around according to individual preference," wrote Calvin in his *Institutes*. ". . .So those who set up false worship merely exalt their own way-out ideas; indeed they would never dare to trifle with God like this, if they had not already shaped Him according to their own childish designs. . .We can only conclude with Lactantius that 'no religion is genuine that is not in accordance with truth.'"
- ◆ Calvin attested that worship was centered around the nature of God. ". . .as soon as we lift our thoughts to God and reflect on His nature and how absolutely perfect He is in righteousness, wisdom and virtue," wrote Calvin, "we realize that this is the standard to which we must conform. . .In just this way, even the qualities in us which seem most admirable are worlds away from God's purity and can never match it." Therefore, holiness of character accompanies the worship of those who recognize the God who is there. "For we cannot say truthfully," continued Calvin, "that God is known where there is no evidence in it in belief or practice."
- ◆ According to Calvin true Christian worship is not accomplished in a vain search after God who is already there. Rather it is born out in a life of obedience to the God who cannot be escaped. So, Calvin wrote, "Although our minds cannot conceive of God without worshipping Him, it is not enough to believe simply that He is the only being everyone ought to worship and adore, unless we are also convinced that He is the source of all goodness, and that we must seek for everything in Him alone. I am trying to say that we must be convinced not only that He created the world, sustains it by His boundless power, governs it by his wisdom, keeps it going by his goodness, rules the human race with justice, puts up with it in His love and shields it with His protection, but also that there is not an atom of light, wisdom or justice, power, integrity or truth to be found anywhere but flowing from Him and generated from Him. . .This awareness of divine perfection is the best way to learn piety from which true religion springs. By 'piety' I mean the blend of reverence and love to God which realizing His blessings inspires."
- ◆ Referring to false worshippers who seek after the god of their own devices, Calvin proceeded, "Those who try to discover what the essence of God is, only lead us astray to fruitless speculation. It is much more in our interest to know what kind of being God is, and what things are in line with His nature."
- ◆ "The man who knows God like this," concluded Calvin, "seeing how He is control of everything, confides in Him as his guardian and protection and throws himself in Him on His faithfulness, realizing that He is the source of all blessing. . .He acknowledges God as Father and Lord, and knows he must have respect for His authority, worship his majesty in everything, try to further His glory and obey His orders, reckoning Him to be a fair Judge, having the right to punish crimes severely, never forgetting the judgment seat. . .So this is pure and true religion: it is confidence in God coupled with genuine fear. This fear comprises willing reverence and true worship as God has commanded. All men give indiscriminate homage to God, but very few truly worship Him. There are plenty of pretentious rituals but little sincerity of heart."

Q. Was Calvin opposed to the mysticism of the Roman church? In what way?           

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**Q.** How did John Calvin's understanding of worship coincide with that which was taught in the Early Church and the biblical understanding that has been revealed in this study? What does that tell us today of the worship life of the Reformation? To what extent should the worship of this era provide a model to us today? \_\_\_\_\_  
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### **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**

- ◆ The music composed by one Lutheran composer became the standard for all of Western music. There is not one student of traditional music theory in our universities who is not thoroughly instructed in the harmonic structure and elements of counterpoint as they were employed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). The fact is, that the harmony of Bach is the basis of everything we know Western music to be. When the Baroque Era of music is mentioned, the one person that comes to mind is Bach. Bach, along with Handel, are pretty much the one statement of this whole era in which the character of Western music was formulated.

Initially, the Baroque era stemmed from a new view of the world. It was a time when man was beginning to question the Aristotelian approach to science that the Roman Church had held tightly to for centuries. Aristotle had postulated that the understanding of the world around men could be calculated within man's own mind. In other words, by merely applying his ability to reason, man could uncover all of the secrets of the universe - even without observing the universe in action.

This led to a vast array of false conclusions that had plagued Europe with misunderstandings regarding the way the world functioned. It was this type of reasoning that led the leaders in Spain to resist the notions of Columbus who said that there was something lying on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean that could be reached by sailing ships. It was the same reasoning that caused the Roman Church to fly in the face of Galileo when he suggested that two falling objects of different size and weight would fall at the same rate of speed or Copernicus who said the sun was not the center of the universe.

But with the re-emergence of the Christian world view, Western man realized that God had created a real world out there that could be observed and understood -- that conclusions could be reached by simply looking out at the world and seeing how it worked. And so, modern science was born.

Initially, science did not see itself as being opposed to the doctrine of God as it seems to be today. As a matter of fact, the most eminent of the early scientists, including Galileo (1564-1642), Newton, and Pascal (1623-1662) were devout Christian men. The cognizance of the fact that God had ordained **laws** to order the universe caused men to search for these particular natural laws in motion. Within that sphere of thinking, the belief began to arise that the key to unlocking understanding of the universe was mathematics. This understanding had a dramatic influence on music.

Bach himself demonstrated the interest that the composers of the Baroque era had regarding the physical properties of the universe. Before his time, all keyboard instruments were tuned precisely to distinct pitches. However, this created a problem. In reality, one could play a piece in the key of "C" on a keyboard that was perfectly tuned, everything would be in tune. However, as one progressed further away from the key of "C", the laws of acoustics would enter in and the keyboard would begin to sound more-and-more out of tune. The key of "F#" was unplayable.

Bach devised a system of tuning called equal tempered tuning wherein no note is perfectly tuned. In contrast, each note is just a little bit out of tune in order that each different chord might share in the disparity. In other words, when one played a "C" chord

in Bach's system, it would sound a little bit out of tune. Likewise an "F#" chord when sounded was just a little bit out of tune as well. But the out-of-tuneness of these chords were not distinguishable to the human ear.

Bach demonstrated his new tuning in the *Well Tuned Clavier*. It was a series of keyboard pieces written in every key to demonstrate the effectiveness of his tuning system. Bach's equal tempered tuning system is still the standard of tuning to this day.

**Q.** In what way was the music of the Reformation written to depict God as revealed in His creation? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Jean Phillippe Rameau (1683-1764) attempted to establish this God-ordered natural **law** uncovered by the scientists in Western music. In studying the overtone series (the actual musical pitches that are sounded when one note is played), along with the newly formed science of acoustics, he came to the conclusion that there were physical properties of order that governed music. It was his intention to utilize the physical properties of sound in order to formulate the composition of musical pieces.

This provided for the death of the ancient Greek modal system that had been based on mystical ideas. **Now** music was seen as something that was in harmony with God's natural **law** in the real world. This new music was to be based on the concrete knowledge that was gathered on how sound is developed in Creation.

The theme of the Baroque period, born out of man's understanding of God's ordered Creation, was to become the dominant factor in all musical composition to come. Therefore, it was during this period that the ancient Greek modes of the chants were abandoned in favor of the major and minor keys.

The music of the Baroque period did not come about by mere chance. The scientists of the Baroque period, while in the act of uncovering the message that undergirded the 19th Psalm, discovered they could gain knowledge of God through observing a creation that declared His glory. It is this gathering of knowledge that had given us the explosion of technology that we enjoy today.

**Q.** Scientists today insist that the Bible is wrong in many areas because it does not coincide with what they want to believe (evolution). They say that the Bible should be interpreted in light of science. Many say that the Bible is not the Word of God because of this belief. Based upon the fact that it was pure Christianity that started the scientific revolution, why is this contention foolish? Should the Christian who believes that the Scripture is God-breathed sway from his position in the face of the claims of our evolutionary scientists today? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** A musical rule of thumb that ushered during this period was rule of three's -- that a musical phrase could not be repeated more than three times. Given that music was diverging from the Medieval mantra, what is the relevance of this rule in regards to Christian worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Bach was deeply rooted in the life and beliefs of the Protestant church. The dedication in his compositions was *solus Deo gloria*, or "To God alone be the glory." He was a true worshipper of God, and all his music was done to the benefit of Him who he served.
  - ⇒ The Western world has never been the same since it heard the music of Bach -- nor will it ever be the same again. There is hardly a person in the world who has not been affected by those years Bach spent in residency as the cantor of the Thomaschule in Leipzig. His music has been heard in virtually every corner of the world. Affirmatively, the Reformation has made its mark on every aspect of Western culture and to one degree or another every culture in the world.

**Q.** Our Christian heritage in the West is deeply entrenched in the musical foundation that was established in the Reformation. Why is it important to maintain the Western musical heritage? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ With the exception of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" "Now thank We All Our God" is the most widely sung in Germany. It was written by Martin Rinkart who pastored in the walled city of Eilenmberg during the Thirty Years War. During that disastrous war between Catholics and German Catholics, Rinkart performed funerals for five thousand residents -- including his wife. This hymn was written during this time.

*Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done, in whom His world rejoices.  
Who, from our mother's arms, hath blessed us on our way.  
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.*

*O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in His grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills, in this world and the next.*

*All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,  
The Son, and Him who reigns with them in highest heaven.  
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;  
For thus it was is now, and shall be evermore. Amen.*

**Q.** How does this hymn demonstrate the praise of God during the worst of times? Why can God be praised even in trials and tribulations? What does hymn say about the worship life of the heroes of the Reformation? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON TWELVE: Reformation English Hymn Singing

### ISSAC WATTS

- ◆ The writer who put England on the hymn-singing map was Issac Watts. During the early years of the eighteenth century Deism and Platonism had captivated the hearts of the religious elite in England. The Psalters (psalm singing hymn books) were losing ground to the singing of original hymns by the poets of England. However, even though this new musical form was rising up, there was a need for a strong man to give unity and point to individual compositions and popularize the new form. Issac Watts rose up to fill this void.
- ◆ Watts wrote great hymns that declared, with original lyrical content, the doctrines most precious to Christians. His work was filled with Calvinistic theology:

*Alas and did my Savior bleed? And did my Sovereign die?  
Would He devote that Sacred Head? For such a work as I?*

*Thy Body slain, sweet Jesus, thine, And bath's in it's own Blood,  
While the firm mark of Wrath Divine His Soul in Anguish stood.*

*Was it for Crimes that I had done He groan'd upon the Tree?  
Amazing Pity! Grace unknown! And love beyond degree.*

*Well might the Sun in darkness hide, And shut His glories in,  
When God the mighty Maker dy'd For man the Creature's Sin.*

*Thus might I hide my blushing Face While Hid dear Cross appears,  
Dissolve my Heart in Thankfulness, And melt my Eyes to Tears.*

*But drops of Grief can ne're repay The depth of Love I owe,  
Here, Lord, I give myself away, 'Tis all that I can do.*

### THE WESLEYS

- ◆ Charles Wesley was the most prolific of the two brothers who began Methodism. The Wesleys wrote hymns that pronounced the gospel in a manner that could certainly be hailed by any orthodox Christian.

*Plenteous grace with Thee is found, Grace to cover all my sin;  
Let the healing streams abound; Make and keep me pure within.  
Thou of life the fountain art, Freely let me take of Thee;  
Spring thou up within my heart; Rise to all eternity.*

- ◆ Songs such as *Rock of Ages* by Augustus Montague Toplady and *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* by Edward Perronet came out of this movement. The period from Watts to the Methodist revival represent the high point of hymn singing in the English church. There has been no time in the history of the English language that the pure doctrines of the New Testament have been sung so profoundly and eloquently in congregational hymn singing.

**Q.** Compare the two hymns above with Ambrose's *Te Deum*. In what way was early English hymn singing similar to that of the Early Church? In what ways did the English composers carry on with Reformation worship traditions? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON THIRTEEN :The Romantic period

*During the 19th century romanticism came on the scene. In music, it was Beethoven who initiated the dramatic shift. Romanticism emphasized the emotions of the artists and, therefore, man. Likewise, romanticism emphasized nature and glorified it. This introduced the West to the worship of nature, or pantheism.*

- ◆ Music was influenced by the philosophies of Utopian Socialists such as John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx, the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and the non morality of Neitzche who eventually proclaimed that "God is dead."
- ◆ In music there came to be an emphasis on individual feeling; an escape to the remote, mysterious, and unattainable; a glorification of youthful imagination; a contempt for the discipline of tradition; and a self-esteem in national sentiment.
- ◆ Mysticism began to take center stage. Many romantics to sought escape from reality into another time or place. The far-off land with strange people became attractive. As shown in the writings of Sir Walter Scott, the Middle Ages began to be glorified. To this was added the popularity of the philosophy of idealism that taught that reality was only that which the mind perceived. Idealism and the Catholic religious revival fed the mystical process.
- ◆ As a result of the philosophies of men such as Rousseau, Romanticism began to glorify nature. The romantic sought to become one with nature. Nature became the object of mystery and reverence.
- ◆ In music there was a renewed interest in the subconscious and the supernatural. Yet most of the compositions were not directly inspired by the liturgy of the Church. Rather they expressed general humanistic values and emphasized the composers' own inner spiritual aspirations.
- ◆ Keshwick's "Higher Life" movement, which B. B. Warfield characterized as "Protestant mysticism" in *Perfectionism* played a major role in the Church. The God and Christ outside of us (the Reformation emphasis) was replaced with God and the Christ within the individual's heart (the medieval and Gnostic emphasis).
- ◆ As a result of this change, Music of the church began to be more focused on the needs of people rather than the person of God. During the romantic period, there was a dramatic shift from the classic hymns to hymns that emphasized emotional appeal  
Therefore, the song, "When I'm With Him", details, *When I'm with Him. . . .When I'm with Him. . . .The Fairest pleasures of the world grow dim; . . .and in my heart I feel the thrill of Glory, When I'm with Him, when I'm with Him.*
- ◆ The standard for Romantic Hymns became the writer's own experience. Victory, perfect peace, perfect joy and perfect surrender became the popular themes of the day.

**Q.** What were the characteristics of Romanticism that lead the Western Church away from its Reformation worship foundations to that which reflected the beliefs promoted by the mystics? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** In what way did the Romantic period lead Christian music away from the proclamation of the person of God? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** It is said by many today that traditional hymns are too impersonal for worship; that they concentrate too much on God while ignoring the needs of mankind. Where did this view originate? Is it a traditional Christian position regarding worship? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Why can every faithful and obedient Christian who has a knowledge of Jesus according to the instruction of the Bible say that he/she has personal relationship with Him? Why is this active and living knowledge of God all the Christian needs to possess in order to have fellowship with Him? (**II Tim 2:12; Tit 1:1-3; Heb 8:11-12; I Jn 2:4-5, 3:18-20; 4:6-9; II Pet 1:5-9**) Why should the Church emphasize the person of God if it wants to encourage fellowship with God? (**Ps 145:18, Jn 15:5-10; I Cor 1:9; I Jn 1:6-7, 2:6, 3:6; II Jn 9**) \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON FOURTEEN: The Rise of Theological Humanism

*The eventual degradation of English hymn writing was the result of two forces at work. First, there was a slow transition away from the proclamation of the doctrine of Christ's atoning work on the cross and other great doctrines of the Bible. Then came the movement away from the production of profound poetry and music. Both of these manifestations resulted, just as in the example of the Catholic Church in ancient Rome, from the church's attempt to adapt to the culture of its time.*

- ◆ The French Revolution had a tremendous impact upon the Church in the 18th century. A storm burst out in 1789, and for eight years thereafter new, radical theories emerged in England as the events in France were hailed as inaugurating a new day in the history of man. Humanism was now taking center stage along with the industrial revolution and the Romantic Movement. Humanists put man, rather than God, at the center of their philosophy. Society began to reflect less on the doctrines of Christ and more on the needs of humanity, including parliamentary reform, prison improvement and the abolition of slavery.
- ◆ The French influence denounced patriotism for one's country to pronounce the concept of the New World Order wherein people should consider themselves citizens of the world rather than of any particular country. Preachers utilized the parable of the Good Samaritan in order to prove this point biblically. There emerged the concept of establishing the eternal kingdom on earth. The mystic and revolutionist William Blake, therefore said:

*I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.*

- ◆ The humanistic desire to care for the oppressed and the poor changed the nature of hymn singing. This desire was translated into the church through the production of missionary projects. As a result of this trend, hymn singing diverged from its primary focus on the proclamation of Christ's work on the cross to the need to reach out into all the world in order to tell the gospel story. Hymn singing became more hopefully romantically with less doctrinal proclamations.
- ◆ Reginald Heber was one of these poets. Though he was the writer of the famous hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" he came under the influence of humanism and thus did much to secularize church music as he drifted into imagery and loose structure.
- ◆ On the tail of the missionary evangelical trend was the Oxford Movement. These astute men from that famous university strove to convince England that it needed to return to Catholic mystic traditions. The men from Oxford were opposed to the "lawless novelty" of the Evangelicals and determined that the hymn was not to be so much evangelical as Catholic. According to Benjamin Brawley in *History of the English Hymn*, "Now. . .there was a revival of mysticism; more than one poet yearned for the other world; and in art an outlet was found in Pre-Raphaelitism." The Oxford Movement established a place for the liturgical hymn in Protestant worship. These were hymns that concentrated on the other world and connecting with Jesus. As Frederick William Faber wrote:

*O Paradise, O Paradise!  
Who doth not crave for rest?  
Who would not seek the happy land  
Where they that loved are Blest?*

**Q.** In what way does this hymn reflect the objectives of mysticism? \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Q.** What effect did the advent of humanism have on hymn singing in the English Church? In what way did humanism inspire the proliferation of mysticism in church worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ On the heels of this movement was the Unitarian Influence. Unitarians were a small but powerful group because they harbored some of the greatest minds of the times such as Milton, Locke, Newton, H.W. Longfellow, Holmes and Emerson. The Unitarians followed in the footsteps of Arius who was denounced by the Church at the Council of Nicaea (325 AD) because he maintained that Christ was a created being. This anti-Trinitarian philosophy died out for a thousand years until it was revived by the Italian theologian Socinus (1539-1604). Unitarians followed in the same path to break from the evangelism of Wesley; denying the fall of man, the total depravity of human nature, the Trinity and the vicarious atonement of Christ. This religious philosophy eventually evolved into the New Age movement. The Unitarian hymns, obviously reflected their theology. For example, one hymn by Sarah Flower Adams "Nearer, My God, to Thee" detailed the desire that is so common among new agers today who strive after getting closer to God:

*Nearer, my God, to thee,  
Nearer to Thee!  
E'en though it be a cross  
That raiseth me;  
Still all my song shall be,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to thee.*

**Q.** The Unitarian Church provided a seed for the development of the New Age Movement in America. While considering the above-cited hymn, in what way did the worship style of this movement reflect the worship objectives of ancient mysticism? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON FIFTEEN : The Late-Nineteenth Apostasy

*At the close of the nineteenth century the theories of Herbert Spencer and Rousseau were taking over both continents. As a result of these philosophies, religion became enamored with the overwhelming desire to give, as Dr. Edward Howard Griggs put it, ". . .every man and woman, together with ourselves, all opportunity and help in striving for life, happiness, culture, intelligence, helpfulness -- all ends of life that are worth seeking." This social gospel, which overcame the Church, did not leave much room for the exclusive orthodox doctrines of Christianity -- which represented salvation as a narrow road which few would travel and benefit from.*

- ◆ As a result of this trend, hymns were written specifically to promote a general notion of God that all faiths could relate to. As early as 1864 in America, Longfellow and Johnson released *Hymns of the Spirit*, which attempted to cultivate a free and universal religion, one completely untrammelled by the bounds of historical Christianity. Though even the Unitarians were not willing to go that far, all denominations felt the need of a broader social vision.
  - ⇒ The proclamation of Christian doctrine in the hymns was the tragic victim. George Matheson criticized traditional doctrinal hymns when he wrote, "To my mind they have one great defect; they lack humanitarianism. There is any amount of doctrine in the Trinity, Baptism, Atonement, or the Christian life as such, but what of the secular life - - the infirmary, the hospital, the home of refuge? I don't think our hymns will ever be what they ought to be, until we get them inspired by a sense of the enthusiasm of, and for, humanity."
- ◆ As a result of this humanistic sentiment, Jesus became more the Son of Man than the Son of God. The needs of man became more important than the attributes and work of God. For example one hymn by Dr. Washington Gladden wrote:

*O Master, let me walk with Thee  
In lowly paths of service free;  
Tell me Thy secret; help me bear  
The strain of toil, the fret of care.*

**Q.** In what way does this hymn beckon the worshiper into the mysteries of God? How did it divert the attention of worshippers away from God and His nature? Just because a song is a hymn and it is published in a hymn book, is it necessarily appropriate for Christian worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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In the late 19th century the presence of God was actively sought out through song. In an example by Elizabeth Wilson and Helen Thoburn we see that God was described in general terms rather than through specific doctrinal decrees. This practice leaves the song acceptable to many diverse Christian and non-Christian faiths. Wilson and Thoburn's "Father of Lights, in Whom There is No Shadow" reads:

*Father of Lights, in whom there is no shadow,  
Giver of every good and perfect gift!  
With one accord we seek Thy holy presence,  
Gladly our hearts to Thee in praise we lift.*

**Q.** In what way does this hymn reflect the attitude of the mystery religions in their pursuit after God? What doctrinal compromises were made during this era as the Church attempted to reach out to the world? How did these efforts parallel those of the Medieval Church? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the lyrics from these two hymns:

*O merciful, gracious father, in whose hand rests the life of the whole world,  
O lord, thy divinity is full of awe, like the far-off heaven and the broad ocean.*

*Though knowest their transgressions: the declaration of the wicked thou dost cast aside.*

*Everyone, whoever he may be, is in thy care.*

*Thou directest their judgments, the imprisoned dost thou liberate.*

*Thou hearest O (God), petition, prayer, and appeal.*

*Humility, prostration, petitioning, and reverence.*

*With loud voice the unfortunate one cries to thee.*

*The weak, the exhausted, the oppressed, the lowly,*

*Mother, wife, maid appeal to thee.*

*He who is removed from his family, he that dwelleth far from his city.*

**Q.** to what extent is the doctrine of God missing in these hymns? What do these hymns emphasize? Are they suitable for Christian worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ In *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis contended that traditional Christian that facilitate the proclamation of doctrine are at the very heart of keeping one's heart with God. "That is why daily prayers and religious reading and church-going are necessary parts of the Christian life," he explained. **"We have to be continually reminded of what we believe."**

**Q.** The words in the above-cited hymns were taken from ancient Chaldean hymns which were sung to the Babylonian gods Nannar and Shamash. Why, therefore, is it important to include Christian doctrine in church music? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON SIXTEEN : THE NINETEENTH CENTURY EVANGELICALS

- ◆ While faced with the rising threat of humanism in the Church, the nineteenth century evangelicals strove after Orthodox Christianity. The emphasis of this movement shifted from England to the United States and produced many orthodox hymns. One, written by Charlotte Elliott, has become the favorite of the greatest evangelist of the 20th century, Billy Graham:

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bidd'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come!*

- ◆ Out of the popular culture of the 19th century came the gospel songs that, though simple in nature, still carried in their lyrics the doctrines of Christ. One of the most prolific writers of the time was Fanny Crosby and her orthodoxy was genuine and pure:

*Some day the silver cord will break,  
And I no more as now shall sing;  
But oh what joy when I shall wake  
Within the palace of the King!  
And I shall see Him face to face,  
And tell the story -- Saved by Grace.*

- ◆ Notice in these lyrics the emphasis that the experience of actually seeing the person of Jesus is something reserved for a future time when Christians are in glory. This is the message of all Christian orthodox hymns and is opposed to the mystical desires of others, such as the Unitarians and New Agers, who express a longing to see God supernaturally, face to face in the here and now. Fanny Crosby was blind. However, she could see that simple truth of Scripture and could distinguish doctrinal purity from the fantasies of those who thought they could peer into a world that is reserved for the future when we will dwell with Christ forever in heaven.

**Q.** The gospel songs utilized music from the popular culture of the 19th century in order to relate with the common person. While considering the two hymns mentioned above, what lyrical characteristics did these gospel song possess that made certain that the dogmas of the world did not come along with the musical style? How was this approach to the use of music similar to that which was taken by Martin Luther during the Reformation? How was it different than the utilized by Pope Gregory the Great and the humanistic worship that was spreading throughout the Church at the time? Is it appropriate for the Church to incorporate musical styles that relate to people in the world? What precautions must be taken when that is done? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Though the doctrines of God remained in their content, the gospel songs were much more simple in nature than the earlier hymns. Consider the entire text of the following praise chorus: "Jesus I Love You, Yes I do!" What was the danger inherent in this trend towards simplicity? \_\_\_\_\_

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## **CHARLES SPURGEON**

*Charles Spurgeon was a late 19th-century Baptist preacher in England who took issue with the doctrines of the modernists, existentialists and mystics of his time. He called the Church back to its roots. Thus Spurgeon wrote in *The Soul Winner*, "If they will be faithful reporters of Christ's message, He will make them 'fishers of men.' But you know the boastful method nowadays, is this: 'I am not going to preach this old, old Gospel, this musty Puritan doctrine. I will sit down in my study, and burn the midnight oil, and invent a new theory; then I will come out with my brand new thought, and blaze away with it.'"*

- ◆ Spurgeon disagreed with the mystical formula of pursuing God. Thus he asserted the omnipresent God:

In a sermon that was recorded in the book *12 Sermons on Praise*, Charles Spurgeon made reference to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on what is now called Palm Sunday. As Jesus entered into that great city on the back of a donkey, the people joyously proclaimed, "*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!*" (Luke 19:38 niv)

"The burden of their song was," asserted Spurgeon, ". . . Christ *present in their midst*. . . This was the source and centre of their mirth -- the King riding upon a colt of the foal of an ass -- the King triumphant. They could not but be glad when He revealed Himself."

This example demonstrates the essence of Christian worship. It is encompassed in a joyous response to the reality of God come to earth to meet the needs of man. It is a song of gratitude to the God who is there -- for who He is and what He has done. Therefore, Spurgeon continued, "When we extol Christ, we desire to bless the infinite majesty that gave Christ to us. Thanks be unto the Father for His unspeakable gift."

Consequently, worship does not involve a trip up to heaven. Rather it is the song of praise unto God as He has been revealed on earth. Because Christian worship glorifies man's Creator, praise ascends to the very throne of the Creator. Therefore, Spurgeon explained, "A grateful man here below, when his heart is all on fire with sacred love, warms heaven itself."

The Psalms proclaim: *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; and with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. (Ps 89:1-2 kjv)*

In reference to this psalm, Charles Spurgeon delineated, "Two sorts of songs we ought to keep on, even if the present appears to yield us no theme for sonnets: the song of the past for what God has done, and the song of the future for the grace we have not tasted yet -- the covenant blessings held in the pierced hand, safe and sure against the time to come."

- ◆ "Blind praise is not fit for the all-seeing God," assured Spurgeon. "God forbade of old the bringing of blind sacrifices to His altar. Our praise ought to have brain as well as a tongue. We ought to know who the God is whom we praise; hence David says, 'I will bless *thy name*';

by which he means thy character, thy deeds, thy revealed attributes."

- ◆ "It seems, then, dear friends that David *studied the character and doings of God*, and thus praised Him. Knowledge should lead our song. The more we know of God the more acceptably we bless Him through Jesus Christ."
- ◆ *I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever. (Ps 145:1-2 kjv)*

**Q.** In what way did Spurgeon's understanding of worship reflect the message of the psalms and the hymns of the Early Church along with the clear teaching of Scripture? \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ "What real work there is in the regeneration of his people," Spurgeon proclaimed. "That is no fiction. Mercy is built, and the blessings that you and I have received have not mocked us; they have not been the dream of fanatics, nor the fancy of enthusiasts. God has done a real work for you and for me, as we can bear testimony, and as we do bear testimony at this hour."
- ◆ "Heaven," detailed Spurgeon, "is everywhere to the heart that lives in God."

**Q.** What opinion did Spurgeon have regarding the notion that man must ascend to heaven through the mystical experience in order to see God? John Calvin taught that those who attempt to find God through the mystical formulas merely make up a God according to their own imaginations. Did Spurgeon agree? According to Spurgeon, what does a Christian proclaim as he/she praises God? \_

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- ◆ It is because we worship the God who is there, as He is revealed in all that we come in contact with every day, that worship is not something that is to be reserved for a mystical experience at church. "It is a mistake," assured Charles Spurgeon, as recorded in the book *12 Sermons on Praise*, "to suppose that Sunday is the only day to praise God in. Praise Him on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, everyday, everywhere. All places are holy to holy people, and all engagements holy to holy men, if they do them with holy motives, lifting up their hearts to God; and whether a man swings the blacksmith's hammer, or lays his hand upon the ploughtail, that is true worship which is done unto the Lord and not unto men. . . .If any man lived after a holy sort, though he never preached a sermon or even sung a hymn, he would have praised God; and the more conscientiously he acted, the more thoroughly would he have done so. . . .as a rule, though there may be exceptions, you shall tell whether a man's heart beats truly to God, by the work he does for God." **I Cor 10:31**
- ◆ "Our praises," insisted Spurgeon, "ought to stand, like ranks of messengers, waiting to hear what God's will is; for this is to praise Him. Furthermore, true praise lies in the actual doing of the divine will. . . .Praises may be looked upon as servants who delights to obey their master's bidding."

**Q.** According to Spurgeon when and where should God be worshipped? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the chorus” Bless the Lord, O My Soul”:

*Bless the Lord, O my Soul, bless the Lord.  
And let all that is within me bless His holy Name, bless the Lord O my Soul.  
And forget not all His benefits, bless the Lord*

**Q.** In what way does this song reflect the teaching of Spurgeon on praise?  
**(Psalm 103)** \_\_\_\_\_

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“How Great Thou Art” was written in 1866 by the Swedish pastor Carl Boberg. He was caught in a thunderstorm that gave way to a green countryside filled with sunlight. He was so inspired by the spectacle that he was caught up in praise to God. The infamous hymn came out of that experience.

*O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, Thy power throughout the universe displayed.  
Then sings my soul, My Savior, god to Thee, How great thou art! How great Thou Art!*

*When through the woods and forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.  
Then sings my soul, My Savior, god to Thee, How great thou art! How great Thou Art!*

*And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, He bled and died to take away my sin.  
Then sings my soul, My Savior, god to Thee, How great thou art! How great Thou Art!*

*When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, My Savior, god to Thee, How great thou art! How great Thou Art!*

**Q.** In what way does this hymn demonstrate the proper Christian response to the revelation of God. How does it support Spurgeon’s declarations of true praise in a world that was quickly adapting to the mystical worship strategy? According to the hymn, when will we see Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON SEVENTEEN: The Great Pursuit

### THE SHIFT TO EASTERN THOUGHT

- ◆ The whole idea of mysticism was centered around the notion of apprehending God. Sixteenth century mystics, such as Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross went as far as to define the mystic experience of God into three parts. According to W. Corduan in *The Dictionary of Christianity in America*, these mystics attempted to point men to the "way of **illumination** -- the recognition of relationship to God; the way of purgation -- the necessary cathartic preparation; and the way of union -- **oneness of the soul with Christ.**" So the mystics endeavored to seek out the person of God Himself through "mystery".
- ◆ Mysticism, according to Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli in their *Handbook of Christian Apologetics*, proposes a completely different world view than the Western Judeo-Christian base. While affirming that Christianity rests upon the Jewish truth-base and world view, the writers noted some essential differences between the Jewish word-view and Eastern mysticism.
  - ⇒ Judaism is an esoteric (or public) religion of collective observance of a public law (the Torah) and the belief in a public book (the Scriptures). In contrast, Eastern mysticism teaches a esoteric (or private), individual experience that cannot be communicated in words. The Christian world-view, therefore, is a public faith that can be verified and explained based upon the revealed biblical text. Eastern mysticism, on the other hand, is private and personal and involves experiences that cannot be delineated in words.
  - ⇒ The Jewish tradition holds that God made Himself known publicly in deeds and words in divinely inspired writings. The mystic believes that God is unknowable, except wordlessly in mystical experiences.
  - ⇒ The Jewish thinker understands that God is the active initiator of the relationship between God and man. Religion for the Jewish and Christian believer is not our search for God, but God's search for us. That is why only Judaism, Christianity and Muslimism picture God in terms of the aggressive male image. The tower of Babel proves that our search for God is doomed to failure. However, Babel provided the genesis of the mysticism of the East. Therefore, Eastern worshippers view God as passive. God is someone who must be pursued. That is why Eastern Babylonian-based religions picture God as asexual or bisexual.
- ◆ Mysticism began to gain greater influence as the non-Christian writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson began to influence American religious thought. Emerson was a part of the New England Transcendentalist movement who helped open the West up to the mysticism of the East. He introduced these Babylonian "mysteries" to America while completely rejecting Calvinism in his experiment with Orientalism. Therefore, Emerson was a key player in the rise of the New Age movement in America. The impact of his writings have been particularly profound among Catholics.
- ◆ Then, in the '60s and '70s, the mysticism from the East began to cast its spell on Protestant Evangelical America as well. The appeal of the East began to resurrect mysticism as a major influence in modern American Christian thought. On the whole, mystical movements tend to de-emphasize Scripture for the sake of inner knowledge.

### A. W. TOZER

*Aiden Wilson Tozer (1897-1963) was a self-educated minister and prolific writer who became one of the most influential Evangelicals in the mid-twentieth century. Tozer demonstrated a remarkable interest in the writings of the Church fathers and the mystics of the Church and therefore lead Evangelicals that direction. This evangelical pastor in Chicago took issue with the fact that his contemporaries believed that once they found God through Jesus Christ that they no longer needed to seek Him out. Tozer's book, **The Pursuit of God**, written in 1948, took issue with the traditional Evangelical view. In this work, Tozer strove to enkindle the hearts of Christians everywhere to go on seeking God for as long as they live.*

- ◆ A. W. Tozer was particularly interested in the mystical writings of Nicholas of Cusa (1401-

1464). Tozer referred to Nicholas of Cusa in his most widely-read book, *The Pursuit of God* (1948), in which he proclaimed, "I should like to say more about this old man of God. He is not much known today anywhere among Christian believers, and among Fundamentalists he is not known at all. I feel that we would gain much from a little acquaintance with men of his spiritual flavor and the school of Christian thought which they represent. Christian literature, to be accepted and approved by the Evangelical leaders of our times, must follow very closely the same kind of thought, a kind of 'party line' from which it is scarcely safe to depart." Tozer was indicating that the Protestant Church should not limit itself to its traditional forms of worship, but open itself to the mystical traditions as well.

- ◆ While criticizing the traditional idea that contends that once God has entered into the believer's life there is nothing else to look for, Tozer was calling on evangelicals to enter into a pursuit of God.
  - ⇒ John Calvin, in his *Institutes* contended with this mystical tradition and warned of the dangers that existed in assuming this postulate: "Vanity and pride are always present when men seek for God. Instead of rising above themselves as they ought to, they measure Him by their own worldly folly and instead of a solid investigation, they go away and humour their curiosity with useless guesswork. So they do not think of God in His true character, but imagine Him to be like their own random ideas. Once this yawning chasm opens up, they cannot make a move without rushing headlong to destruction. With this idea of God, nothing they attempt to give Him by way of worship or obedience is of any value in his sight, because it is not Him they worship, but a transient figment of their own imagination."
  - ⇒ "Where have those who fled from your face gone?" asked Saint Augustine in his *Confessions*. "Where can they get beyond the reach of Your discovery? (**Ps 138**). But they have fled that they should not see You, though You see them, and so in their blindness they stumble over You (**Rom 11:7-11**); for You do not desert anything You have made (**Wisd 11:25**). The unjust stumble over You and are justly chastised. Endeavoring to withdraw themselves from Your gentleness, they stumble on Your equity and fall into Your anger. They evidently do not know You are everywhere. No space circumscribes You. You alone are always present even to those who have taken themselves far from You."

**Q.** A.W. Tozer contended with the traditional understandings of worship that ushered out of the Reformation. He taught that there is a difference between the omnipresence of God and God manifest. According to traditional understandings of man's relationship with God, is this true? Who pursues who? How difficult is it to find God? What are the dangers of setting out to pursue God?

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- ◆ Tozer de-emphasized traditional American religious practices, such as Bible study, prayer, Christian service and church attendance for the sake of his all-encompassing pursuit of God. "I do not want to leave the impression that the ordinary means of grace have no value. They most assuredly have. Private prayer should be practiced by every Christian. Long periods of Bible meditation will purify our gaze and direct it; church attendance will enlarge our outlook and increase our love for others. Service and work activity; are all good and should be engaged in by every Christian. But at the bottom of all these things, giving meaning to them, will be the inward habit of beholding God."
- ◆ Thus, according to Tozer, the point of all Christian practices are to propagate the mystical experience. "When the habit of inwardly gazing Godward becomes fixed within us we shall be



ushered unto a **new level of spiritual life** more in keeping with the promises of God and the mood of the New Testament," wrote Tozer. "The triune God will be our dwelling place even while our feet walk the low road of simple duty here among men. We will have found life's *summum bonum* indeed."

- ◆ Tozer determined that it was necessary for Christians to see the face of God if they were to see their faith revitalized. Faith to Tozer was not *being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see* as detailed in the Book of Hebrews. (Heb 11:1) Rather Tozer insisted that ". . .faith is not a once-done act, but a continuous gaze of the heart at the Triune God."

**Q.** According to Tozer, in order for the Christian to live the Christian life to the fullest, he must have personal mystical experiences with God. How does this philosophy contradict biblical ideas concerning walking by faith? (**Heb 11**) How is Tozer's position similar to that of Doubting Thomas? (**Jn 20:24-28**) \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ **II Cor 4:3-6** According to the Bible, the glory of God is not something that is discovered through an outward gaze. The glory of God is in the hearts of believers. It is because the mystic lacks this that he cannot see the truth of the Gospel. Yet the very existence of the glory of God in the believer opens his eyes to truth. It is internal, rather than external, and hence, the glory of God is always there with the Christian. This is where the face of Jesus shines.
- ◆ **II Cor 4:16-18** God lives inside the believer. Though the body of a Christian is wasting away, he has an eternal hope. Therefore, the Bible admonishes him to set his eyes on that which is eternal, that which he cannot see. (**Matt 6:19-24, 33**) According to this excerpt from II Corinthians, man cannot literally see into the supernatural. Therefore, any attempt to do so would represent the expression of the imagination as Calvin talked about. The just shall live by faith. (**Rom 1:17**) Faith is living for God in spite of the fact that there is so much that cannot be seen. (**II Cor 5:6-7**) As long as the Christian remains in his body, he cannot behold Jesus face-to-face. (**Rev 22:4**)
- ◆ **Heb 12:2** What does it mean to "fix our eyes on Jesus?" This cannot mean to literally see God because no one can look at God and live. (**Ex 33:20**) The description in Hebrews describes the exercise of faith. The previous chapter described faith as belief in the unseen. It also detailed Jesus in definitive terms rather than that which comes from the imaginations of men. The knowledge of God comes from the revelation of God in the Scriptures and through His creation.

- ◆ **I Cor 13:9-12** This knowledge is in part. One day there will be a face-to-face meeting in the afterlife when God will be fully known.

**Q.** Are the traditional Christian disciplines of prayer, Bible study, observing His creation and the fellowship of believers according to the guidance of His Holy Spirit sufficient vehicles knowing God while Christian sojourn on earth? Is there any more than that? \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider the following quotes from A. W. Tozer's *Pursuit of God*.

- ⇒ "I want deliberately to encourage this mighty longing after God. The lack of it has brought us to our present low estate. The stiff and wooden quality about our religious lives is a result of our lack of holy desire. Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth. Acute desire must be present or there will be no manifestation of Christ to His people. He waits to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us He waits so long, so very long, in vain."
- ⇒ "Self is the opaque veil that hides the Face of God from us. It can be removed only in spiritual experience, never by mere instruction."
- ⇒ "We must shift our interest from the seen to the unseen. For the great unseen Reality is God. 'He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' (Heb 11:6)"
- ⇒ "Believing, then is directing the heart's attention to Jesus. It is lifting the mind to 'behold the Lamb of God,' and never ceasing that beholding for the rest of our lives. At first this may be difficult, but it becomes easier as we look steadily at His wondrous Person, quietly and without strain. Distractions may hinder, but once the heart is committed to Him, after each brief excursion away from Him the attention will return again and rest upon Him. . ."
- ⇒ "While we are looking at God we do not see ourselves--blessed riddance. The man who has struggled to purify himself and has had nothing but repeated failures will experience real relief when he stops tinkering with his soul and looks away to the perfect One. While he looks at Christ the very things he has so long been trying to do will be getting done within him. It will be God working in him to will and to do. . ."
- ⇒ "When we lift our inward eyes to gaze upon God we are sure to meet friendly eyes gazing back at us, for it is written that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout all the earth. The sweet language of experience is 'Thou God seest me.' When the eyes of the soul looking out meet the eyes of God looking in, heaven has begun right here on this earth. . ."
- ⇒ "Many have found the secret of which I speak and, without giving much thought to what is going on within them, constantly practice this habit of inwardly gazing upon God. They know that something inside their hearts sees God. Even when they are compelled to withdraw their conscious attention in order to engage in earthly affairs, there is within them a secret communion always going on. Let their attention but be released for a moment from necessary business and it flies at once to God again."

**Q.** What comparison is there between these thoughts and the proclamations of the mystics from the Middle Ages? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Some choruses today speak of turning our eyes on Jesus while looking into His face in order to witness His glory and know Him better. In what way do they reflect the mysticism of A. W. Tozer? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Other choruses fail to adequately define God in their lyrical content. The hymns of the Early Church and those that came out of the Reformation proposed definitive reasons to praise God. In what way do praise choruses that only contain general statements regarding God without specific reference to attributes represent a divergence from this standard? How do they call the worshipper to praise the undefined God? What is the danger of this practice? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q** Tozer wrote that the “internal gaze” into the supernatural was the vehicle to knowing God and attaining true spirituality. Understanding that this gaze requires the use of the imagination in visualizing God, in what way do some modern praise choruses facilitate that end? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON EIGHTEEN: The Sixties Revolution

- ◆ It was in the '60s that the complete pantheistic scheme of things was brought to the an entire generation within the context of popular Western music. One cannot underestimate the profound influence of the music group, *The Beatles* had upon modern Western thought. Because of their influence, when *The Beatles* went to India, rock music was transformed forever. *The Beatles* gained much more than musical insight from their Indian mentors. As George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord" attests, they were introduced to the god of the Hindus, Krishna. This is the god whom Harrison addressed saying, "I really want to know you."

Hare Krishna is a popular name for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Founded in 1965, the popular name of this organization was derived from the *mantra* Hare Krishna (O Lord Krishna) chanted by the members of the group. The *mantra* is utilized in Hinduism and Buddhism as a mystical symbol used in ritual and meditation. The *mantras* are repetitively chanted because they are believed to have a deep affinity with particular deities. As they are chanted, the *mantras* bring the mediator into a state of trace which allows him to separate himself from the physical world to escape to the world of the soul. Hence we see the reason underlying the repetitive nature of Harrison's song, *My Sweet Lord*. The composition was asserted as a worship chorus which put *mantra* into music i.e. "*Hare Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.*"

In India, Krishna represents the love of God for man. Regarding the worship sacraments of the Hindu, Krishna is said to "participate in" his devotees as much as they participate in him. "*Bhakti*" is the word denoted in India to designate devotional worship. It is also used in regards to sexual love and sexual union. Therefore, the worship of Krishna is focused around intimacy and closeness, which thus is a one-on one meeting between the individual and his god.

In the same manner, many contemporary worshippers today sing "I really want to know you" to God, and usher constant repetitive phrases in order to subdue the distractions that inhibit their concentration upon God. And with the same redundancy contained in Harrison's song, much of the contemporary worship liturgy today ascends upon Tozer's pursuit of God, reaching up into the heavens in hopes of finding refuge and solace in a confused world. In many cases, the priority of intimacy has replaced the necessity of sound doctrine.

- ◆ *The Beatles* introduced the rock culture to the ministry of the yoga.

The yogin experiences the nature of God, not through the written word, but by liberating himself from the cause and effect world of time and space to transcend to the world of the soul. In so doing, he detaches himself from his unrighteous deeds which were committed in the temporal world by his temporal body, to meet his god on a new level of existence quite apart from the world or his body. While in this spiritual state, because of the love of Krishna, he can freely worship knowing that his trespasses have been left behind. It is in this detached state that the yogin can end his pursuit of God by experiencing oneness and intimacy with his creator-savior.

The Hindu writings state in this regard, "For him who sees all things in me and me in all things, I am not lost nor is he lost to me. The Yogin who participates in (*bhajati* -- loves, is devoted to) me who am present in all contingent beings, who, grounded in unity, is yet engaged in all manner of occupations, abides in me."

The Hindu devotee sees worship to God as an experience of connecting with Him; being one with Him. Worship to the Hindu does not consist of daily acts of righteous and holy living, based upon obedience and committed by people as they live their lives on earth. Worship to the Hindu is an other-world experience were the devotee has the opportunity to see God's face, as Tozer puts it.

"Indifferent to all creatures," writes the Hindu sacred texts, "he receives supreme devotion to me. Through devotion to me he comes to know me, who and how great I am in my very essence. Then knowing me in my essence he forthwith enters me. Though he be ever engaged in my works (*karma*), relying on me, he reaches the eternal, undying state of my grace."

"Whoever loves me beyond measure," God is represented as saying, "him will I love beyond measure (in return). Unable to bear separation from him, I cause him to possess me. This is my true promise: you will come to me."

So, the pursuit of God, to the Hindu, ends when man and God are united through the worship sacrament of liberation. It is by focusing on Him that realization of who He is becomes a reality. The "mystery" of God is uncovered through the worship experience, which, in turn, involves a separation from this world.

- ◆ Aldous Huxley introduced the rock culture to drug worship which is so important to Hinduism.

Aldous Huxley acquainted the Western world to the Hindu drug *soma* in his book *Brave New World*. A non-conformist himself, Huxley personified the counterculture that was merging with the rock and roll media of the '60s. So influential was Huxley that the drug-based rock group *The Doors* found their name on Huxley's book *The Doors of Perception* which described the use of mescaline to induce visionary states of the mind. Though the leader of the band, Jim Morrison, suffered an untimely death on July 3, 1971 and thus began the beginning of the end for *The Doors*, the group's impact was so significant that it has been depicted as a group ahead of its time.

Huxley's vision was communicated to the '60s generation through the teachings of Timothy Leary. Founding the League for Spiritual Discovery, while declaring "Turn on, tune in and drop out," Leary promoted the cup of wine held in Babylon's hand through efforts to legalize LSD and Marijuana as religious sacraments. **(Rev 17:4)**

During the '60s, Leary was popularized by the Moody Blues in their song "Legend of a Mind". In that song, the lyrics proclaimed "Timothy Leary's dead. Oh, no no no. .he's outside looking in.

- ◆ The Beatles brought the drug culture and Eastern Mysticism together.

*The Beatles* eventually became bored with their fame and traveled off to India to learn of the religion of the mystics. From the Maharishi yoga and Ravi Shankar, they uncovered the "mysteries" of love, peace, meditation, drug use and the Hindu religion that supported them. It would not be long before they communicated their findings to the Western world.

With Hinduism in their back pockets, *The Beatles* determined to bring to the West a little help from their friends. With the emergence of *Sergeant Peppers Lonely Hearts Club Band*, inspired by Frank Zappa's album *Freak Out*, *The Beatles* revolutionized the rock world forever. This masterpiece carried with it the central message of the escape that can be found in drug experimentation. This is a concept that the Hindus had already immersed themselves into. For centuries, the drug *soma* had represented to them the way to liberate themselves. *Soma*, in a real sense, was the third part of their unholy trinity. It was their Holy Spirit, which not only afforded them escape, but empowered their gods to perform mighty acts and defeat their enemies.

From the San Francisco Bay area emerged the *Jefferson Airplane* and the *Grateful Dead* who produced psychedelic rock which promoted the use of LSD in particular. In 1967, the hippie revue *Hair* celebrated the ideals of the age, which included youth, love and drug use. In 1969, the rock movement culminated at Woodstock as 500,000 hippies paraded free love, nudity and the drug culture before the whole nation.

All the while, the '60s generation investigated the religions of the East. Oriental philosophies, such as yoga, Zen and Tibetan Buddhism and the Chinese I Ching (Book of Changes) were studied and practiced. Then there were those who followed after more Westernized Babylonian traditions which utilized astrology, tarot, palmistry and witchcraft. Therefore, as a result of the multitude of factors, the '60s generation became completely Hinduized.

**Q.** In what way did the '60s counterculture draw the West into the worship dogmas of Eastern Mysticism? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What is the appropriate Christian response to the developments of the '60s? (Jn 15:19; Eph 5:11; Rom 16:17-18; Rev 18:4-8) \_\_\_\_\_

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“The Solid Rock” was written by William B. Bradbury.

*My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness,  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

*when darkness veils His lovely face I rest on His unchanging grace,  
though every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

*His oath, his covenant, his blood, support me in the whelming flood,  
When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

*When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found;  
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

**Q.** In what way is this gospel song relevant in Christian worship today as it is faced with the rising tide that has come out of the '60s revolution? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON NINETEEN: The Counter Culture Church

- ◆ The Church learns to assimilate its culture.

The church growth philosophy of Donald McGavaran that centers around the adoption of cultural mores in the Church has become entrenched in Christian thought. Ironically, it was while McGavaran was a missionary in India that he determined that the only way that mass evangelism could be attained is through the technique wherein the Church conforms to the cultural and spiritual mores of the society that surrounds it. With this thought, Babylon had been handed access to the Church in a manner that completely paralleled the way in which she invaded the Roman Church.

Therefore, the Jesus Movement emerged on the religious landscape as a counter-culture religious system that would appeal to the new bohemian (or hippie) that emerged on the American scene. The hippies had come in the long tradition of Rousseau's Noble Savage -- the nonconformist who rebels against civilization by returning to the pure state of undeveloped native cultures. The Jesus Movement adopted a non-conventional form of liturgy that purposely avoided the traditions that had been followed by the historical church. Therefore, just like their counterculture counterparts in the secular world, the Jesus People held anti-intellectual and anti-cultural views of the world. In the same manner that their counterculture counterparts learned to mistrust government and American History, the Jesus people rejected traditions from Church History to proclaim themselves, in their nonconformity, as the true "New Testament Church". Just as the secular counterculture rebelled against society, through word and deed, the individualistic Jesus People diverted from mainstream religion.

The flower children were characterized by idealism, long hair and rock music. All of this was readily accepted into this new unconventional church. Tie dye shirts, halter tops replaced white long-sleeved shirts ties and dresses. Rock music replaced hymns as an expression of the young people's frustration with traditional religious forms. The hippie notion of "hang loose" as opposed to "up tight" was translated into a care about nothing attitude which was labeled as being "lead by the Spirit." Anyone who applied effort and work to his Christianity was considered to be "striving after the flesh."

In particular, the hippie, because he had adopted the Hindu disposition to the material world, learned to despise it. That is why he sought out after truth through the pure world of the soul that can be found through drug experimentation. The hippies became cynical about the prospects of effecting change within "the system". As a result, they drifted into the Aquarian Age motif, which idealized a social utopianism. In the same manner, among the Jesus People, there came to be a strong desire to look at the world as corrupt beyond repair, and therefore something that was not worthy of Christian attention. The belief in the imminent return of Christ provided the Jesus Freaks with an escape rather than a hope. But the entrance into the soul world was something that was not so easy to wait for. As drug experimentation became the hallmark of the hippie generation, so the Jesus people began to experiment with a new form of worship that was completely foreign to Protestantism's Reformation roots.

The secular counterculture placed a great value on subjectivity rather than objectivity; experience rather than knowable absolute truth. Many in the Jesus Movement paralleled this by its emphasis upon experience at the expense of the Augustinian-Calvinistic worship traditions which had buttressed the country and religion they had learned to distrust.

The Jesus People movement ushered symbols and slogans that reflected the influence of the secular counterculture that surrounded it. Bumper stickers proclaiming "Have a nice forever!" and "One Way" became the rage. One could hardly go down the San Diego Freeway through Orange county with a "fish" on his car without seeing a passing car with a person inside displaying a finger pointing upward.

Planning and structure was replaced with spontaneity. Fads replaced conventions. Religious services were underpinned by informality. The Jesus Movement provided an alternative community for the hippie who wanted to be saved, but still hold onto the rebellious culture that created him.

- ◆ Therefore these individuals who were saved during the Jesus Movement were not induced to

conformity to traditional standards. Instead, they were freely invited to bring their music and culture with them into the Christian fold and thus introduce the Church to the tradition of Babylon. They had learned in their concert circuits how to individualize and enter into a world built upon the foundation of their own imaginations. They had utilized the repetitive drum of the music to free their spirits from the world that they despised. Songs like "Hey Jude", "I Want You, She's So Heavy" and "Revelation Number Nine" contained within their structure redundant choruses repeated over-and-over to create a dream-state which enabled the drug user to gain the fullest of the experience.

Now that the counterculturalists became Christians, they proclaimed they were getting "high on God." The Holy Spirit, in their minds replaced *soma* as they gathered together under the tutelage of the same repetitive musical structure that had buttressed their escapism before they met the Lord. The expression of truth accompanied by understanding and commitment was not the point of their worship. They sought, as they had before, to enter into their own personal world, far away from the world, to meet with God within the context of their own imaginations and individual expression.

When they claimed that they were getting "high on the Holy Spirit," they were again affirming the function of the third part of the Babylonian unholy trinity. The Hindus see the Holy Spirit, in the form of *soma*, as being the door of escape. It was placed into the Babylonian worship service to facilitate their pursuit of God. It was their methodology for attaining entrance into His presence.

- ◆ Like the Hindu, many contemporary worshippers seek an experience with the supernatural. They pursue a spiritualized form of worship, which directly parallels the desire of the yoga. This is in sharp contrast to traditional hymn singing where worshippers declare the great truths of Scripture in a manner that appeals to the conscious mind as a corporate expression of truth and dedication. But the yoga sees eternity as a state of sleep or a dream state, just modern Christian worshippers disengage their minds in worship to concentrate on sensations and feelings which give them the impression of God.

"The meaning (of yoga) most meaningful to the West," wrote R.C. Zaehner in *Hinduism*, "is the physical, mental, and psychic technique practiced in India by followers of the major philosophical schools either for purely spiritual purposes or in order to produce maximal physical, mental, and spiritual well-being." Yoga is "the total isolation of the individual monad which is the soul both from all other souls and from the whole domain of nature." The purpose of yoga is to release the soul from the physical and psychological complex of the natural world which he believes he is unnaturally attached. The goal of yoga, therefore is isolation of man-from-man and man-from-nature. It is an individualistic escapist proposition that brings the Hindu worshipper into an isolated state. He seeks a replication of eternal life (*moksha*) completely separated from the physical world. Thus, according to *Religious Movements in Contemporary America* ". . . The Guru is the transparent *via media* or representative of God." The Hindu worship leader supposes to disappear as he acts as a channel to the presence of God.

- ◆ In the same manner, the modern worshipper, in his pursuit of God, is very individualistic in his expression, seeking primarily after personal experience based on the notion that the cares of the world are something to be escaped rather than to be faced with an attitude of thanksgiving and praise. Utilizing the notion that we are not of his world (**Jn 15:19**) the counter-culture worshipper believes that his habitation here is an unnatural state, and therefore he desires nothing other than to "be with Jesus." He flies off to an imaginary world within his own mind, rather than finding God in the world that He created. He sees the natural as being unnatural, which is exactly the opposite of the command that he subdue the world that has been created for man's enjoyment. (**Gen 9:1-3**)

The goal of much of our worship today is approaching the throne of God. It is imagined that as the worshipper casts himself in introspection that he will be drawn into the presence of God in the heavenlies through some sort of spiritual phenomena. What is being forgotten that it is the heavens that declare the glory of God (**Ps 19:1**), and the meeting place between man and God is right where man lives in the physical world.



Consider the following praise chorus:

*Where could I go from Your Spirit?  
How could I hide from your eyes?  
Why would I wander away from You?  
Knowing that You are so wise?*

*If I take the wings of the morning,  
And dwell in the depths of the sea,  
Even the darkness hides nothing from You,  
And with Your hand You will lead me.*

*For You did knit me together,  
Even before I was born.  
I will confess You and praise You,  
You are my wonderful Lord.*

**Q.** In what way does this praise chorus contradict the spirit of the '60s theology of worship as it was manifested in the Church? How does it accurately reflect the traditional Christian view of the omnipresent Lord and how He is, thus worshipped? (**Ps 139:7-14**) Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What considerations should be used regarding the use of contemporary music in Christian worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** What is it like in the afterlife? Does it involve the physical realm? Is it the product of mankind's imaginations? (**Jn 20:24-29; Rev 20:11-15; Rev 21,22**) Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Of what value is worship that is designed to inspire the imagination in regards to heavenly things? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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- ◆ Saint Augustine wrote in his book *Confessions*, "How shall I call upon my God, my God and Lord? Surely when I call on Him, I am calling on Him to come into me. But what place is there in me where my God can enter into me? 'God made the heaven and earth' (**Gen 1:1**). Where may He come into me? Lord, my God, is there room in me which can contain You? Can heaven and earth, which You have made and in which you have made me, contain You? I also have being. So why do I request You to come to me when, unless You are within me, I would have no being at all? I am not now possessed by Hades; yet even there are You (**Ps 138:8**): for 'even if I were to go down to Hades, You would be present'. Accordingly, my God, I would have no being, I would not have any existence, unless You were in me. Or rather, I would have no being if I were not in You 'of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things' (**Rom 11:36**). Even so, Lord, even so. How can I call on You to come if I am already in You? Or where can You come so as to be in me? Can I move outside heaven and earth so that God may come to me from there? For God has said 'I fill heaven and earth' (**Jer 23:24**).
- ◆ "Who will enable me to find rest in You?" Augustine continued. "Who will grant me that You may come to my heart and intoxicate it, so that I forget my evils and embrace my only one and only good, Yourself? What are You to me? Have mercy so that I may find the words. What am I to You that You command me to love You, and that, if I fail to love You, You are angry with me and threaten me with vast miseries? If I do not love You, is that but a little misery? What a wretch I am! In Your mercies, Lord God, tell me what You are to me. 'Say to my soul, I am your salvation' (**Ps 34:3**) Speak to me so that I may hear. See the ears of my heart are before you, Lord. Open them and 'say to my soul, I am your salvation.' After that utterance I will run and lay hold on You. Do not hide Your face from me (cf. **Ps 26:9**). Lest I die, let me die so that I may see it."

**Q.** According to the teachings of the Early Church, does man ascend to God or does God come to man? How, then, should we sing to God? \_\_\_\_\_

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"The pride of simplicity," wrote Leonard Payton, the music director at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Yuba city, Ca., "has been bubbling up in all aspects of the visible church. However, this trend has affected worship music more than any other trend in church life.. We disdain our hymnals because they presumably speak to the head and not to the heart. . .We replace those hymnals with songs which can be performed with the eyes closed. We reduce our lyric vocabulary to a bare minimum, and take special care not to touch anyone's hot buttons with language which might sound too doctrinal."

**Q.** Why has doctrinal hymn-singing come into disfavor in the Modern Church? Why is it a dangerous position to ignore the great hymns of the past? \_\_\_\_\_

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C.S. Lewis described ineffective prayer in *The Screwtape Letters*. While admonishing his fellow demon ,Wormwood, regarding how to take the life out of a believer's prayer life, Lewis' main character, Screwtape detailed that the Christian "may be persuaded to aim at something entirely spontaneous, inward, informal, and unregularized; and what this will actually mean to a beginner will be an effort to produce in himself a vaguely devotional mood in which real concentration of will and intelligence have no part."

**Q.** Is it necessary to discard the singing of doctrinal hymns in favor of praise choruses? Is it necessary to disregard praise choruses that provide the singer with sound biblical doctrine? In what way can praise choruses be utilized today so as not to undermine the essentials of true Christian worship? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** How can praise choruses and hymns be utilized together in order to provide the doctrine necessary in praise and the emotion that must flow from the singer upon hearing that doctrine? \_\_\_\_\_

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## LESSON TWENTY: Exercises in praise

Compare examples of the old and the new below:

### THE OLD RUGGED CROSS

*On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross  
The emblem of suffering and shame;  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

*So I'll cherish that old rugged cross,  
Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
And exchange it some day for a crown.*

*To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,  
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
Then He'll call me some day to my home far away,  
Where His glory forever I'll share.*

### NAILS

*The nails in Your hands,  
The nails in Your feet,  
They tell me how much you love me.  
The thorns in you brow,  
They tell me how,  
you bore so much shame to love me.  
And when the heavens pass away,  
All Your scars will remain,  
And forever they will say  
Just how much you love me,  
And I want to say forever my love,  
forever my heart, forever my life is Yours.*

**Q.** How do both of these songs reflect the historical and scriptural view of worship of God for what He has done? What act of God do both songs point to?

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William Featherstorm wrote the lyrics to “My Jesus, I Love Thee” when he was just sixteen-year-old. The song spoke of a day when he would sing with a glittering crown on his head before the Lord “in mansions of glory.” Featherstone went home to be with the Lord a few years later when he was only twenty-seven year old.

*My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine. - For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;  
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou: If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus is now.*

*I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me and purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;  
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow: If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

*I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death, and Praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath;  
and say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow, "If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus 'tis now."*

*In mansions of glory and endless delight, I'll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright;  
I'll sing with the glittering crown on thy brow, "If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now."*

**Q.** What doctrines of Christ are contained in this song? Can good doctrine and emotional passion for the Lord work hand-in-hand? Is it necessary to diverge from sound scriptural teaching on worship in order to move the hearts of people in this age? Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Q.** Is the writing of good praise songs limited only to those who have spent years of theological study? What can even the youngest Christian utilize as a resource to construct scriptural and profound praise songs that are worthy of the church's attention? \_\_\_\_\_

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"Holy, Holy, Holy" was written by Reginald Herber to the tune called "Nicaea." This hymn was named after the Nicene Creed that affirmed the doctrine of the Trinity. The words to the hymn affirm this creed. It has been used in conjunction with the popular praise chorus "We Exalt Thee" represented on the last two lines of the text below. Notice how, when viewed alone, the lyrics to "We Exalt Thee" are un-definitive in regards to the God of the Bible. Yet, when combined with the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" and its allusion to the worship of Jesus in heaven, the lyrics "for Thou O Lord art high above all the earth" contain real meaning. The music of "We Exalt Thee" contains a powerful emotional appeal, and when used as a chorus to this great hymn provide the worshipper with an opportunity to respond with enthusiastic praise to these great doctrinal statements.

*Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee:  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty! God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!*

*Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee, Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.*

*Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see.  
Only thou art holy - there is none beside Thee, perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.*

*Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!*

*For Thou O Lord art high above all the earth, Thou art exalted far above all Gods.  
We exalt thee, O Lord.*

**Exercise:** Think about how the old and the new can be utilized together in the Church today to the mutual benefit of all generations within a scriptural context. Both new and old can be applied in a manner that will bring about thunderous praise in our congregations without sacrificing Christian orthodoxy. The hymns that seem so old to people in our age can be presented in a manner that appeals to our contemporaries in order to retain the great doctrinal statements that they contain while moving hearts to praise based upon those proclamations. When they are not used as mantras, the praise choruses that do not defy Christian teaching can be utilized as spiritual songs, thus giving congregations to spontaneously respond to these great truths with enthusiasm. The praise choruses that tend to be un-definitive can be given definition when placed in the context of sound doctrine. New music can be written that parallels the doctrinal profundity of traditional hymns in a manner that our modern generation enjoys. Old hymns can be placed in new musical contexts.

Compose below combinations of hymns, gospel songs and praise choruses in a manner that accomplishes this end. Utilize songs that your congregation is familiar with. If your congregation knows little of the hymns, insert them slowly. If they are not familiar with praise choruses, do the same. Add some appropriate scripture readings including the psalms and praise statements based upon what you constructed in “The Articulate Worshipper” portion of Part Two of this study to add definition to the presentation.

Then, try it out in church and see what happens! Teach the leadership and congregation about the nature of worship. See if they respond with praise as you give them the room to do so while the doctrines of God are presented in a living way. Put some time into the effort, for nothing good comes easily. In the end, you will be happy that you took the time to provide for scriptural praise!

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## CONCLUSION

Indeed, there is a vast amount of material today, both traditional and contemporary, that glorifies the Lord in a manner that is consistent with the Bible and historical orthodox Christian worship understandings that were clearly founded upon the Scriptures. Music did not end in the '60s. Neither did it begin with the counter-culture church. As this study contends, that which glorifies God within the context of orthodox Christianity is worthy of the attention of the Church whether it is old or new. (**Psalm 69:30**) The unity of the body of Christ glorifies the Lord. (**Rom 15:5-6**) Contentions over scriptural music does not. (**I Tim 2:8**)

Those churches in America who have submitted themselves to scriptural and historical authority need not argue over music. There is a wealth of music available, both traditional and contemporary, that is suitable for lifting up the praises of the Lord in church in a manner that is relevant to our society today.

There is no need to incorporate the methodologies of the mystics in order to generate emotional responses in church along with a sense of excitement. Mantras do not need to be a part of church music to touch the heart of people today. Lyrical content that calls people into a supernatural experience that necessarily involves the use of the imagination does not need to be used in order to put together a contemporary service. (**Rom 1:21; II Cor 10:5**) Likewise, it is not essential to bury ones head in the past thus ignoring the scriptural music that is being written today which has a place in Christian worship. There has been a lot of music written in the 20th century that reflects good biblical theology and it should be used.

Likewise, it is unnecessary to abandon the hymns whose lyrical content are just as much or more relevant today than they have ever been. It should be considered a mistake to ignore and obliterate ones Christian heritage. We do not live in a vacuum. There is a wealth of material from the past that, not only speaks to the Church today, but keeps the body of Christ on track as it is faced with an every-increasing eastern mystical culture. To disrespect the council of the past is a failure to honor one's parents, which not only a sin, but a terrible mistake that can only bring disastrous consequences. (**Ex 20:12; Eph 6:1-3**)

There is a time and a place for everything under the sun. (**Ecc 3:1-8**) There certainly is room enough in the church service to enjoy all the music that is founded upon solid scriptural principles. The congregation that has the integrity and courage to follow the scriptural model of worship will be the church body which pleases God in its worship and receives the blessing that well-directed conviction produces.

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. Col 3:1*

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