

Praise and worship in music

Music is influential and provides us with quite a range of experiences. Music can't be neutral; it affects the listener in both conscious and unconscious ways. Music is all about us, and used to manipulate our thinking by advertisers. TV and cinema depend on music for impact, it's hard to imagine TV being like theatre and totally dependent on speaking voices alone. Music has the capacity to influence us emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually. Occult groups use music, military groups have martial music to build a willingness to face battle, sports teams use music to pump up the motivation to play hard, and some pop groups use music to excite sensuality and sexuality. These are occasions where the gift of music, given to us by God, is used for specific purposes, some of which are not honouring Him.

The stars sing and the wind produces sound. It is speculated that wind over reeds on rivers produced the flute de pan sound which led to the invention of the instrument. The birds and other animals sing, the cricket produces its sound and like the cicada adds a background to the music of nature.

In Hebrew times the Bible lists the instruments which were played to accompany worship. David's harp playing achieved what prayer and medication couldn't for the disturbed King Saul. This is an early recording of music therapy.

Through medieval times a capella chanting of scripture resonated in splendid ways through churches, cathedrals and abbeys. This was music designed to promote adoration. J S Bach and Handel developed sacred music to whole new levels. It was God honouring and uplifting. The effect was joyous at times and assisted the growth of faith. The hymns written by Martin Luther were composed to provide an alternative to the pub songs sung by his parishioners. "Why should the devil have all the good music?" his is reputed to have asked.

General William Booth scandalized the conservative Victorian churches of his day by bringing drums into worship services accompanied by loud brass bands. The alternative of the time was choral singing accompanied by organ music.

The 1960s saw Catholic and Protestant churches beginning to fill with converted hippies and pop music entered the worship services and a wide pan aroma of other music styles. "Christian music" is a big business and it outsells classical music in downloads and CD sales worldwide. All secular and contemporary genres are now to be found in Christian music. Upbeat rhythmical music is prominent in a lot of the new worship music typified by groups like Hillsong. This music is making us accustomed to higher volume levels.

Worship is the activity of glorifying God in His presence with our voices, responding with our hearts and spirit. It is the highest and most noble activity of which people are capable. Responding to God in worship can only come out of having a relationship with Him and knowing the Lord through personal revelation. Only God is to be worshiped in song and music, (Ex 20:1-3).

Activities

1. Research and draw ancient Hebrew worship instruments
2. How do cultures that are non western worship God, what are the differences?
3. Read about the Salvation Army and how they used their bands for assertive outreach into red light areas and the gin parlors of the UK. Explain how worship music was used in ancient Hebrew times as an act of aggression before the armies marched into conflict. Reflect on the similarity with how the Salvation Army grew and advanced into zones of vice transforming them.
4. Take a look at the Contemporary Christian Music charts. What genre of music is dominant in the current top 10?
5. How is praise different to worship?
6. Explain your ideal of a worship service. What elements help to advance you into the presence of God?

References

[hillsongmusic.com/](https://www.hillsongmusic.com/)

Hillsong worship music

www.vineyardmusic.com

Vineyard worship music

www.salvoaudio.com

Salvation Army music

www.ccmagazine.com

Contemporary Christian Music

[Christian Songs | Billboard.com](https://www.billboard.com/charts/christian-songs)

www.billboard.com/charts/christian-songs

Sales charts

www.musicfromisrael.com

Music from Israel

There are many youtube video sites showing a wide variety of worship experiences.

www.beaconmedia.com.au