

Ephesians Series

Lesson #241

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Dean Bible Ministries

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Worship and the World
Ephesians 5:18–21; Colossians 3:16



EPHESIANS

THE WEALTH, WALK
& WARFARE
OF THE BELIEVER

What are Our Assumptions?

Summary:

- **The Scripture is our sole authority on worship.**
- **God and God alone defines worship.**
- **But how do we evaluate music? Is that not a matter of personal taste? Or culture? (Subtext: good and bad music, art, literature, poetry, etc. are relative to culture and personal taste.) Is this true?**

**What the Bible Teaches
About**

**The Immensity
of God**



What the Bible Teaches About

The Holiness of God



What We Have Learned

- 1. Eph. 5:18/Col. 3:16 both list hymn singing *first* in the list of results of a life filled with the Word of God by means of the Holy Spirit.**
- 2. One primary purpose of hymn singing is to teach one another and admonish/correct one another.**
- 3. Other purposes:**
 - to express our joy for God's work in our lives (defense, Psa. 5:11, 63:7; His grace to us, Psa. 13:6, 59:16; remembering His works, Psa. 30:4)**
 - to declare His name among His people, Psa. 9:11**
 - to remind us of what God has done for us and challenge us to live in light of His purposes and grace.**

What We Have Learned

- 4. Singing is not about evangelism, making non-Christians comfortable, attracting people to a local church.**
- 5. Singing is not about how it makes us feel, but about describing and declaring who God is and what He has done.**
- 6. Hymns, both music and words, must be evaluated according to some standard.**

But because we are free consumers of cultural commodities—because the system of popular culture neither establishes canons nor conveys taboos—we can choose whatever truth we want. Living within the system of popular culture, we find it more plausible that truth about the nature of things is private, not public, and ultimately purely subjective.

Ken Myers

All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture

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- 6. Hymns, both music and words, must be evaluated according to some standard.**
- 7. The music should support lyrics that help us transcend the here and now to focus on the eternal, transcendent, unchanging, eternal God.**

**What the Bible Teaches
About**

Worldview and Beauty



From what source do our ideas of beauty derive?

Are there external, objective standards for beauty, for “good” art, “bad” art; “good” music, “bad” music?

CULTURE

“We live in complex patterns of need, of opportunity, and of sin, and the inference we really ought to draw from Scripture is often the most difficult to see, because of the complexity and sin in our lives. This is why we need teachers and the fellowship of the saints.”

~Myers, Ken. *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture* (p. 53). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

CULTURE

“What sort of being is a culture? It’s not a person. It’s not even an institution, like the church or the state or the family. It is instead a dynamic pattern, an ever-changing matrix of objects, artifacts, sounds, institutions, philosophies, fashions, enthusiasms, myths, prejudices, relationships, attitudes, tastes, rituals, habits, colors, and loves, all embodied in individual people, in groups and collectives and associations of people (many of whom do not know they are associated), in books, in buildings, in the use of time and space, in wars, in jokes, and in food.”

~Myers, Ken. *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians and Popular Culture* (p. 53). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

God's Transcendent Values

Php. 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Php. 4:9, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”

true, noble (honorable), just, pure, lovely, good report (commendable), virtue (moral excellence), praiseworthy

Folk culture

also “transcendent, multigenerational, significant, communal, yet more accessible than classical/high culture.”

... folk culture shares many of its qualities.

John 17:13, “But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

John 17:14, “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

John 17:15, “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

John 17:16, “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

- 1. Both *in* the world and *of* the world.**
Believers who are not separated from the world, but are also strongly influenced by the culture around them.
- 2. *Not* of the world and *not* in the world.**
These physically try to separate from the culture and avoid anything that is similar to the culture. Separatists, ascetics, mystics; i.e., monks, Amish, small sects.
- 3. *Of* the world, but not *in* the world.**
Christian groups setting up alternative or parallel social activities (Christian movies, music, art, sports, entertainment) that mirror and imitate the world's forms but replace pagan words with biblical words.
- 4. *In* the world, but NOT *of* the world.**
What we should be, removing and not validating worldly based practices and content, but staying within the culture.

Christian Responses to “the World” System

- 1. Both in the world and of the world.
The fleshly believer, apostates, who think, act, talk, live with the values of their culture.**
- 2. Not of the world and not in the world
Separatists, monastics, ascetics, mystics**
- 3. Those of the world, but not in the world
Imitate the world, but live in a “Christian” bubble, a parallel universe**
- 4. Correct: Not of the world, but in the world: The challenge to the believer.**

What is “the World”?

“This system embraces the whole sphere of human life with its institutions, ideals, and projects.”

~L. S. Chafer

“It is instead a dynamic pattern, an ever-changing matrix of objects, artifacts, sounds, institutions, philosophies, fashions, enthusiasms, myths, prejudices, relationships, attitudes, tastes, rituals, habits, colors, and loves, all embodied in individual people, in groups and collectives and associations of people (many of whom do not know they are associated), in books, in buildings, in the use of time and space, in wars, in jokes, and in food.”

~Ken Myers, *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes.*

RD: All of the philosophies, worldviews, opinions, values, religions, and thought forms that are opposed in any way to the pure truth of the Bible.

κόσμος (*kosmos*)

Denotes order, generally. Later takes on the idea of the regulation of life in society.

In the New Testament it can refer to the earth, the inhabited world, but also the fallen, corrupt sinful cultures that are shaped by human rebellion against God.

Col. 2:8, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Col. 2:20, “Therefore, if you died [separated] with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—”

Gal. 4:3, “Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.”

1 John 2:15, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2:16, “For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

1 John 2:17, “And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

John 17:13, “But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

John 17:14, “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

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John 17:17, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

Rom. 12:2, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

1 Cor. 1:20, “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

1 Cor. 1:21, “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”

1 Cor. 3:19, “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ‘He catches the wise in their own craftiness’;”

1 Cor. 2:12, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit [human spirit—regeneration] who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.”

Php. 2:15, “that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,”

James 3:14, “But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

James 3:15, “This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.”

James 4:4, “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

Php. 1:10, “that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,”

Php. 4:8, “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”

Examples of Evaluation of Music

Three Contemporary Hymns

“The extent to which the principle of ‘of the world, but not in the world’ operates is illustrated by a ‘Music Comparison Chart’ in the book *Contemporary Christian Music*, by Paul Baker. In addition to columns that classify the musical style of the artists in question (Techno-pop, Rockabilly/ Nostalgic Rock, Reggae, etc.), Baker includes a column headed ‘Sounds Like . . .’ So we learn, for example, that Scott Wesley Brown sounds like Barry Manilow, or T-Bone Burnett sounds like Bob Dylan, John Lennon, and/ or Roger McGuinn. Jamie Owens-Collins sounds like Olivia Newton-John and/ or Juice Newton (but not, we assume, like Wayne Newton). Noel Paul Stookey sounds like (surprise) Peter, Paul and Mary. ‘The main thing to remember in using the chart is what it suggests,’ explains Baker. ‘If you like (or liked) artist “A” in secular music, then there’s a good chance you’ll like some of the music of “B” in Christian music.’ A small percentage of artists on Baker’s chart are marked with an asterisk, which means that ‘an artist has developed his or her own recognizable sound, often with no direct parallel among the better known secular artists.’ ”

~Myers, Ken.

Critic 3

One of my big objections to the current contemporary Christian music culture is not only the style of compositions of songs, but style of vocal delivery which emulates pop music singing styles that strive to sound grungy and sexually provocative. It amounts to aural pornography. To my ear, all of Chris Tomlin's singing is guilty of this. And many church praise team leaders and singers do the same.

Critic 2 (two people)

[We] sat down at the piano and my son nailed it. The music is 100 percent mid-90's family-friendly film scores. Forrest Gump. Mrs. Doubtfire. Angels in the Outfield. Alan Silvestri. There is a nostalgic quality that borders on the naive and simplistic, as opposed to complexity OR simplicity, both of which are elegant. The Scott Townend one is just a reworking of How Can I Keep from Singing with other words. The Getty texts are pretty icky and while they speak of God, are still kind of "all about me."

The reason they appeal is they take people back to a time (pre-9/11) when they felt safe and hopeful. Even in a dumb-as-dirt Forrest Gump sort of way.

These guys ... this music, it's the same stuff.

James Horner (Land Before Time)

Alan Silvestri (Forrest Gump)

Randy Eddleman (Angels in the Outfield)

James Newton Howard

Michael Arnold Kamen (Band of Brothers)

And honestly ... I can kinda sing "We are the World" with one of the Getty "hymns"... that's Lionel Richie.

1. “My Heart is Filled with Thankfulness” by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty

**Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace
And gave me life again.
Who crushed my curse of sinfulness,
And clothed me with His light,
And wrote His law of righteousness
With power upon my heart.**

**My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who walks beside;
Who floods my weaknesses with strength
And causes fears to fly;
Whose every promise is enough
For every step I take,
Sustaining me with arms of love
And crowning me with grace.**

**My heart is filled with thankfulness
To Him who reigns above;
Whose wisdom is my perfect peace,
Whose every thought is love.
For every day I have on earth
Is given by the King.
So I will give my life, my all,
To love and follow Him.**

Psa. 75:1, “We give thanks to You, O God, we give thanks! For Your wondrous works declare that Your name is near.

Psa. 75:2, “ ‘When I choose the proper time, I will judge uprightly.

Psa. 75:3, “ ‘The earth and all its inhabitants are dissolved; I set up its pillars firmly. Selah

Psa. 75:4, “ ‘I said to the boastful, “Do not deal boastfully,” and to the wicked, “Do not lift up the horn.

Psa. 75:5, “ ‘ “Do not lift up your horn on high; Do not speak with a stiff neck.’ ”

Psa. 75:6, “For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south.

Psa. 75:7, “But God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another.

Psa. 75:8, “For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; It is fully mixed, and He pours it out; Surely its dregs shall all the wicked of the earth drain and drink down.

Psa. 75:9, “But I will declare forever, I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

Psa. 75:10, “All the horns of the wicked I will also cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.”

RD

1. Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace

And gave me life again.

- **The first line leaves me confused and uncertain as to his meaning,**
- **The second line: what does again mean? I was born spiritually dead, I have never had the life that he writes is given again.**

1 Sing *Me* or *I* is used 5 ✕ in first verse, 3 ✕ second verse, 5 ✕ in second verse

And wrote His law of righteousness

With power upon my heart.

Heb. 8:10, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

**Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom His world rejoices;
Who, from our mother's arms, has 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.^[1]**

[1] Morgan, Robert J. 2010. *Near to the Heart of God: Meditations on 366 Best-Loved Hymns*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell.

Psa. 30:1, “I will extol You, O LORD, for You have lifted me up, and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

Psa. 30:2, “O LORD my God, I cried out to You, and You healed me.

Psa. 30:3, “O LORD, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.”

The first person singular describes the psalmist’s conditions, NOT a focus on his emotions.

Psa. 30:4, “Sing praise to the LORD, you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.

Psa. 30:5, “For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.

Psa. 30:6, “Now in my prosperity I said, ‘I shall never be moved.’

Psa. 30:7, “LORD, by Your favor You have made my mountain stand strong; You hid Your face, and I was troubled.”

Song 2—In Christ Alone

[Verse 1]

**In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all
Here, in the love of Christ, I stand.**

[Verse 2]

**In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross, as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin, on Him, was laid
Here, in the death of Christ, I live.**

[Instrumental Break]

[Verse 3]

**There in the ground, His body lay
Light of the world, by darkness, slain
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave, He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.**