

WHAT IS WORSHIP MUSIC?

by Paul S. Jones

TO THE READER: A good learning technique is to answer the following questions BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, you can refine your answers based on your reading. Then, when your group gathers, each can discuss his or her view and you can either affirm or modify what you wrote.

1. How would you define music fit for worship? (5)
2. Was your answer to question 1 based on your personal preference in music or on the Bible? (6)
3. The author tells us all worship music can be divided into three categories. Can you name one of two pieces of music you have used in worship for each category? (7)
Praise –
Prayer –
Proclamation -
4. Can you find a “problem” with the phrase *praise and worship*? (8)
5. Since the book of Psalms is the Spirit inspired “hymn book,” should we not then sing only the Psalms? (8-19)
6. If we are permitted to sing more than the Psalms, what should be the criteria by which we choose what we sing in worship? (8-19)
7. Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17. What does Paul do in verse 17 after all he has said previously? (18-19)

8. Did you ever realize that some of the music we sing are actually prayers? Why do you think we don't typically sing these as prayers? (19-27)

9. What should we be *learning* from the music we sing in church? (For example, read Colossians 3:16.) (27-37)

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class, noting other questions you might have. [By the way, if you do have any other questions about what you read, write them down here so you remember them at class time.]

APPLICATION

1. Go over the three statements made by Dr. Jones in the Conclusion. (37-38). Evaluate the music ministry of your church according to the criteria taught in the booklet. What are the strengths of your church's music ministry and what are the areas needing work? If possible, ask the person responsible for this ministry to attend your study (or perhaps lead the study). Even if no evident change can be brought about in your church, you should now be more focused on what you are singing since you know what you are supposed to do.
2. Consider starting each week's study with the reading or singing of a hymn, paying careful attention to the words, and noting if it is praise, prayer, or a proclamatory hymn. Perhaps alternate each week between a familiar hymn and a new one.

For Further Study

Singing and Making Music, Paul S. Jones. P&R, 2006.
Why Johnny Can't Sing Hymns, T. David Gordon. P&R, 2010.
Contemporary Worship Music, John Frame. P&R, 1997.

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