

## The End Time Issue of...

# Contemporary Christian Music

“Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:10).



**Pastor Bob Kirkland**

### **Question Number 1 - Am I Willing To Do God's Work God's Way?**

#### **I Might Be Wrong!**

When I served as the pastor and president of FaithWay Baptist College of Canada, I taught the students that, concerning issues of controversy, (especially in what we call grey areas,) that they need to be honestly able to say “*I might be wrong.*”

#### **Is This A Grey Area?**

Is it unscriptural to use any CCM materials in our ministries? They have some songs with lyrics that are not unscriptural and if we orchestrate these songs so that the music is right, *is it acceptable* for us to use them? Our goal should be to prove “...*what is acceptable unto the Lord.*” (Ephesians 5:10). Perhaps you have an opinion (“a decision reached without facts”) about this subject. **Is there any chance that your opinion is not acceptable with the Lord?**



**“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left.”**  
(Proverbs 4:27)

#### **Good Men Going Different Directions**

Our most recent issue is concerning CCM songs and the people who promote them. Concerning this issue, Paul Chappell and David Cloud are heading in different directions. Should I choose sides based on my preconceived opinion of who is right, or is this a wakeup call for me to take a fresh look at this important issue?

#### **Every Action Has A Reaction**

Years ago, I saw an example of *actions and reactions*. The floor of a room was covered with mousetraps that were loaded and ready to go off. They were not loaded with cheese, they were loaded with pingpong balls. One pingpong ball was thrown into the room and soon we had a very vivid example of an *action* and its' *reactions*. How shall we react to this latest issue? Will we be **b o u n c i n g** around like pingpong balls or will we earnestly pray about having a correct position before the Lord concerning music?



Ask yourself, is it my responsibility to straighten out the one I think is wrong, or is it a time to determine what God is trying to teach me? This recent issue has caused me to reexamine my position on music. Am I too strict? Is my position really “...acceptable with the Lord?”

**Question # 2 - Did God give me commands concerning what to do in the work of the Lord without giving me the way I am to do it?**

No, He also gave many instructions concerning the way things must be done. The phrase “the way” is found in the Bible 340 times. For example, the first three chapters of Ephesians deals with our *position* in Christ and the last three chapters deal with our *path*.

**Walk Worthy & Be Agreed?**

Ephesians chapter four begins with the words, “*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.*”

The Bible also says, “*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*” (Amos 3:3). It is important to notice it says “be agreed.” In other words



someone has to change their position on something so that they can “be” agreed.

**Is The Issue Music Or Separation?**

- **Ephesians 5:11** says, “...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”
- **Revelation 18:4** says, “*be not partakers*” with the end-time apostate religion. The Greek word fellowship (sygkoinōneō) in Ephesians 5:11 is translated “partakers” in Revelation 18:4.
- **Romans 16:17** says, “*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*”

- **First Timothy 6:3-5** commands us - “*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness...from such withdraw thyself.*”
- **Ephesians 5:7** commands, “*Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*”
- **Second Timothy 3:5** speaks of those who have “...a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”

**Do These Verses Apply To The Promoters of CCM?**

The verses above plainly command us not to be “*partakers*” with, “...*unfruitful works of darkness.*” Concerning those who have “...a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: We are commanded to, “*from such turn away.*” Below are some examples of CCM songs. We could list many more; however, the ones below are now being widely accepted in fundamental Baptist churches.

**“Hallelujah to the Lamb”** by Don Moen  
Don Moen thinks God is the author of the weird charismatic “laughing revival.”

**“In Christ Alone”** by Hillsong United  
Was performed for Catholic Youth Day and Pope Benedict.

**“Majesty, Worship His Majesty”** by Jack Hayford

A Pentecostal Kingdom Now anthem; - Hayford says God told him not to preach against the Roman Catholic church.

**“Great Is the Lord” and “How Majestic Is Your Name”** by M. W. Smith.

Michael W. Smith has been “slain in the Spirit” and “laughed uncontrollably, “rolling on the floor...Hyperventilating.”

**“Faithful Men”** by Twila Paris  
Twila Paris works with the Roman Catholic Kathy Troccoli and with ecumenist Robert Webber, who promotes unity between evangelicals and Catholics.

**“In Christ Alone”** by Michael English  
Michael English spent the 1990s and early 2000s committing adultery with another man’s wife, bar hopping, dating a stripper, and undergoing “rehab” for drug addiction.

**“Songs by Steven Curtis Chapman”**

*Chapman is the most honored “high energy Christian rocker” of the 1990s who says he doesn’t preach “fire and brimstone” and describes God as “Lord of the Dance.”*

**“A Prayer for a Friend”** by Casting Crowns

*A “Grammy and Dove Award winning Christian Rock Band.”*

**“Songs by Geron Davis”**

*“Jesus Only” Pentecostal who denies the Trinity.*

**“I Will Rise”** by Chris Tomlin

*Tomlin is a member of an emerging church that seeks to build the kingdom in this present world.*

**“Songs by Graham Kendrick”**

*Kendrick is a charismatic founder of the radically ecumenical Jesus March that includes Catholics and Mormons.*

It seems obvious to me that I should not be “partakers” with these people.

## But Separation Is Only Part of The Command

If I am going to be taking my responsibility as a pastor, to *separate* from them is not enough. I am commanded to, “...reprove them.” (Ephesians 5:11) Both the Old and New Testament give many examples of this command being fulfilled by prophets and pastors.

## Can We Reprove Them And Get Their Approval To Use Their Material At The Same Time?



We know that all of the CCM materials are the property of those who hold the copyright. No pastor can use their songs without their permission.

Is it acceptable with the Lord to rebuke them and then enter into an agreement with them to use their material? **It is not only not acceptable it is beyond common sense.**

*“Them that sin rebuke before all,  
that others also may fear.”*

(First Timothy 5:20)

## A CCM Song With A Beautiful Message

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” by Stuart Townend is a beautiful song. Perhaps many have used it without knowing Townend is a Christian rocker who is a member of the charismatic Church of Christ the King, in Brighton, U.K. He is radically ecumenical in philosophy, working to bring charismatic, Protestant, and Roman Catholics together. He supports the demonic, fleshly charismatic mysticism such as spirit slaying, holy laughter, and shaking.

Townend’s goal in writing what he calls “hymn-like” contemporary songs is ecumenism. He said, “*How Deep the Father’s Love was the first hymn-like song I had written; before that point I had only written modern worship songs in a more contemporary style... This melody just kinda popped out of my head one day... It had a kind of classic hymn-like element to it. I thought I should just tell the story of Christ on the cross, but tell it perhaps from the point of view of what it cost the Father to give the Son... There is a lot of talk about the wrath of God and is that right to think that the Father’s wrath was poured out on Christ, and I think that is right to say that. But that is not to say that God is a vengeful God...*” (Townend should read Psalm 149:7- Isaiah 34:8 - Jeremiah. 46:10; Micah 5:15 - Nahum 1:2. God is a revengeful God.).

Concerning “How Deep the Father’s Love For Us” Townend continued, “*It’s quite useful not only in the more modern contemporary churches, but in traditional churches as well because of the style. And I’m kind of excited about that; I am excited about the fact that you can write something that actually feeds the broader church rather than just particular musical pockets of the church. That’s something that motivates me and probably why I’ve thought more and more about writing hymns is, I would like to try and feed the whole church and not just part of it*” (Stuart Townend, “Mission: Worship, The Story Behind the Song”). In his blog Townend says “*I don’t go home at the end of a busy day and put on a hymns album! So I don’t think of hymns as where I’m at*

*musically at all!"* **The truth is Stuart Townend is a religious rock & roller, who wants to bring the CCM into the "traditional churches."**

**The issue is not his music.** The question is, am I willing to follow the Lord in the area of Bible separation or will I sacrifice the doctrine of separation to have my people sing some songs that give them an emotional, warm and fuzzy feeling?

*"Complicity with error will take from the best of men the power to enter any successful protest against it." - C. H. Spurgeon*

### **Question Number 3 - Am I Willing To Go Against The Current To Do Things God's Way?**

**A.W. Tozer once said,** *"There is a great decision that every church has to make...Every pastor has to face it and keep renewing his decision on his knees before God.*

*Every church member, every evangelist, every Christian has to make this decision. The decision is this: Shall we modify the truth in doctrine or practice to gain more adherents? Or shall we preserve the truth in doctrine and practice and take the consequences?"*



**Tozer continued,** *"A commitment to preserving the truth and practice of the church is what separates me from a great many people...This is my conviction, long held and deeply confirmed by a knowledge of the fact that modern gospel churches, almost without exception, have decided to modify the truth and practice a little in order to have more adherents and get along*

*better.* (He said that in the 1950's. What would he be saying about today's compromise?)

**Tozer continued,** *"I for one shall ever seek to never modify the truth in doctrine and practice for any reason. (I emphasize the word "practice" because I believe that such is the place where we generally go astray first.) I for one shall ever seek to always preserve the truth in doctrine and practice and take the consequences...the hatred, the persecution of this present, evil world, and the disinterest and departure of worldly believers."* (Quoted from Rut, Rot or Revival: The Condition of the Church, 165-167)

## **Conclusion**

We began this material suggesting we might have a pre-conceived opinion about what is acceptable with the Lord concerning this issue. An opinion is *"a view formed without facts or knowledge."* Christians are to make informed decisions based on Scripture.

### **What saith the Scriptures?**

**Ephesians 5:11-** *"...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."*

We need not discuss if CCM songs are acceptable if we tone-down the music. We are commanded to separate from them and rebuke them. The solution to this issue is clearly presented in God's Word.

The Word of God commands us saying, *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."*

*"Christianity today is so entangled with this present world that millions never guess how radically they have missed the New Testament pattern."*

A. W. Tozer



Pastors who allow CCM music to infiltrate God's local churches are wrong!

## Why Didn't Brother David Cloud Handle It Privately?

How he handled it is not the issue. It never ceases to amaze me how the devil will get our attention off the real issue by attempting to find fault with the person who raised the issue.

Why didn't Paul the apostle sit down privately with Peter when Peter was doctrinally wrong?

(Galatians Chapter 2). Peter was confronted publicly and God made sure the account was recorded in the Scriptures for our example. The problem was not how Paul handled the issue. The problem was Peter's compromise.

I have been a Christian for over fifty-five years. During that time I have talked with several leaders about issues that I felt were important. I was *thanked* and *assured* the issues would be taken care of. **On every occasion nothing was done.** On one occasion, I talked with a very well known fundamental leader who agreed with me on everything concerning the issues we discussed. When we parted he said, "*Brother Kirkland, this conversation never took place.*"

**Regarding issues,** it has been my experience that personal conversations with fundamental Baptist leaders of large churches are a waste of time. (Please do not show your Scriptural ignorance by quoting Matthew 18 to me at this point).

## Silence Always Gives Consent

Peter's compromise was public and Paul publicly "*...withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*" (Galatians 2:11).

Peter was in an influential position and he was influencing others to follow him in his compromise. Paul the Apostle did not look the other way because Peter was his friend. Truth demands that influential leaders need to be publicly confronted when things are done that are not "*...acceptable unto the Lord.*"

## A Final Word On Actions & Reactions

Proverbs 13:10 says, "*Only by pride cometh contention...*" The Apostle Peter did not get contentious because of what Paul did. In Acts chapter fifteen at the council meeting at Jerusalem, Peter defended Paul on the very issue Paul had openly confronted him about.

Peter later referred to Paul as, "*...our beloved brother Paul*" referring also "*...to the wisdom given unto him.*" (Second Peter 3:15).

The prophet Samuel said "*God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you...*" (First Samuel 12:23).

**Let us not sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for Paul Chappell and David Cloud.** They are doing a great work for the Lord. We have prayed for both of them everyday in our Christian school since this issue surfaced and we will continue to do so.

**Are we friends?** Proverbs 27:6 says, "*Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*" Our real friends are those who love us, and the cause of Christ enough to rebuke us openly, or otherwise.

