

THE PLACE OF CHURCH MUSIC AND WORSHIP FROM AFRICAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE ANGLICAN CHURCH FOCUS.

BY

DR T.T. BELLO

IJSER
DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

EKITI STATE UNIVERSITY, ADO-EKITI, NIGERIA.

PHONE NUMBER: 07039 14 0729

E-mail: venttbello@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Music is an art form and cultural activity whose medium is sound. The researcher explained that the music is an act of expression, the researcher explained that music is very important and that it includes common elements such as pitch (which governs melody and harmony). The writer wants to x-ray the idea of how music was originated the author explain that church chat and tentacles are part of church music also explain that indigenous church music to a vital role in church worship mostly in Anglican Church. The researcher also tries to mention some terminologies used in the church in worship during services in the churches like choir, choirmaster, organists and some other terminologies being used during services in the church. He also exposed the importance of music in the church. The theological purpose of church music in warship was also exposed. The role of music and its importance was x-ray.

Keywords: Music, church, indigenous, articles, hymns, chants, choirmaster, anthem

INTRODUCTION

ORIGIN OF CHURCH MUSIC

Music has been the accompaniment of worship from time immemorial, and although inciting reformed churches some kinds of music and musical instruments were condemned as improper, the Christian tradition has from the beginning produced his own hymns, 'spiritual songs' and musical settings of the Eucharist. Groups of Christians in particularly difficult situations have also sought to express and alleviate their sufferance through music, the most notable corpus of composition being the Negro spirituals sung by the black slaves of the American South.

However, since the Renaissance Christianity has also inspired works which by the grandeur of their conception, they are learnt and the demands on their performance stand outside the life of the churches are formed part of the repertory of Western classical music: Bach's St Matthew Passion and B Minor Mass, Handel's Messiah, Verdi's Requiem and Elgar's Dream of Gerontius are just a few obvious examples.

There is no doubt that performances of these works are an element in modern spirituality, and can be profound spiritual experiences for those who hear and attend them.¹

Moreover, precisely because the classical repertoire cannot be neatly compartmentalized into genres, it can also be argued that similarly deep experiences are prompted not only by works which are specifically religious in inspiration and content and contain words which identify them with the Christian tradition, but also by 'absolute' music, like symphonies, and by Operas and other settings of words which have no direct religious content. Karl barth is not the only listening to whom Mozart's music has seems to come from God and speak of God; others have found a similar transcendent dimension in the music of, stay, Beethoven, Wagner or Bruckner.²

This raises important questions for the place of music in spirituality. That de facto it has a place may be hard to dispute; to define that more closely verges on the impossible, not least because of the vagueness of the world music. Even if what limits the question to 'On what basis might one claimed that some music and bring about an encounter with the Divine or the transcendent?. The problems are formidable. Certainly there is an imposing body of testimony by composers, e.g. from Beethoven to Tippett, couched in what can only be called religious terms, to the effect that a writing music they are responding to a drawing on a spiritual world beyond themselves, so that when the resultant musical works are performed the national may be drawn into that response as well.

Messiaen goes even further in relating music to the religious tradition in a creative way.³ But it can be argued complete compellingly, particularly by those who have a professional involvement amazing making music and does know it more thoroughly than often dilettante outsiders, that whatever some composers may think that they may be doing, music is – music; and nothing more. It is therefore illegitimate to impose on music a content and a significance which is extraneous to a strictly musical content.

This difference of viewpoint is likely to remain for a considerable time, simply because there is so little vocabulary or conceptuality for discussing what Hans Keller once called 'the metaphysical problem' of music. When it comes to talking about the meaning of music which goes beyond mostly ecological analysis the

professional is as tongue-tied as they are amateur. To say that, for example, Mahler's Ninth Symphony has no meaning other than what can be said in strictly musical terms, is surely nonsense; to try to put a meaning to words is literally too because confronting with the impossibility of expressing the verbally inexpressible. It is music and says what it does say in that medium ⁴

Perhaps the most constructive approach in this connection is that which sees western tonal music, at least (and that has the closest connection with the Christian tradition of spirituality), as being above all an expression of emotions. In particular the tonal relationships between the different notes of the scale, relationships with various degrees of tension about them, serve to induce a wide and complex range of emotions focusing on the two basic categories of pleasure and pain. Developing phrases incorporating different intervals with over the centuries have proved to have particular emotional associations, composers can create works which make it possible to experience the fundamental impulses which move mankind without the need of ideas and images, words or pictures.

If this approach were accepted, then one could argue, as does its proponent, Deryck Cooke, that spiritual or mystical intuitions could be expressed through the emotional terms of musical language just as, say, the writings of St John of the Cross express his mystical experience in the emotional terms of spoken language. The case is far from being demonstrated, and reactions to it will depend on the picture of the modes of the divine-human encounter which a person has built up in other contexts. But there will always be those who will quite confidently include Schubert's *An die Musik* among the world's great prayers of thanksgiving. ⁵

INTRODUCTION

Music is an art of expression and has been described as a pleasing sound. It is an art for which the African has an inherent burning passion especially in its rhythmic form. It is therefore a potentially powerful drawing force which can be exploited in an African setting. Music is an important fabric of African Church worship and the profound influence on evangelism by the early missionaries is best illustrated by a typical poignant description by Chinua Achebe in "Things Fall Apart"

"It was not the mad logic of the Trinity that captivated him. He did not understand it. It was the poetry (the music) of the new religion something felt in the marrow –

The words of the hymn were like drops of frozen rain melting on the dry plate of the earth”.

What is Church music and how did it start?

It may not be easy to define music thoroughly. In our environment where church music is much more varied, this observation appears more convincing because there are no features that are common to all the forms of music we use for worship. Nevertheless, to discourage unguarded proliferation which may lead to unacceptable standard, it is desirable to describe what we should recognize as Church music. Church music is simply music used for worship and as such should be divine⁷.

Worship is the formal mode of communicating with God usually but not necessarily as a communion. The moods and aspirations at worship vary from the solemnity of meditation and prayer to outright sometimes uninhibited loudness, dancing (jubilation) during praises or exaltations; for example at thanksgiving. This mode of expression happens to be the problems of many present break-away religion groups. The African scene explains to a large extent the nearly irresistible attraction of prayer groups for many lay people⁸.

It is clear that to accommodate these different moods and modes of expression during worship the music necessarily varies too, from the soft, solemn and sublime at prayers, Holy Communion, lamentation and meditation to loud, and cheerful demonstrations during thanksgivings.

Origin of Church Music

We are charge in Psalm 33 verse 2

“Praise the Lord with harp: sing praise unto Him with lute and instrument of ten strings and in psalm 47” clap your hands together all ye people: O sing unto God with voice of melody.”⁹

Church music way mentioned always in the Bible, both in Old Testament and in the New Testament, our Lord Jesus approved of music in worship. At the Last Supper in Matthew Chapter 26 verse 30, we were told that: “When they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olive”

In the book of Revelation Chapter 5 verse 9 – 14 references of music during the worship of God in heaven abound. “... .. they sang a new song the voice of many angles sang with a loud voice at the end of which song, the four beasts said Amen”.¹⁰

The Church Music in its present form

A tremendous reformation of Church music has taken place in this part of the world. The classical church music in the form of hymns, chants, anthems, chorals canticles and verticals introduced by the early missionaries have been retained. These indigenous innovations would have been unthinkable during the time of the early missionaries. An attempt will be made to analyse the effect of this reformation and the effect on Anglican Christian worship and activities¹¹. Even in the traditional form of worship, the music contest underscores the preponderance of music in Anglican Church worship. Some converted from other denominations have been drawn by the melodic and uplifting music of the Anglican Communion and indeed many Anglican Church Members are looking forward to the Sunday service because of the hymns and chants. Anglican Church music in the classical form is rich and has been a tremendous attraction to the outsider and a stimulating experience for the Anglican members.

Hymns

Most church hymns are poetic address in God the Father Christ the Lord and sometimes and sometimes the Holy Ghost. They are in forms of praise or special prayer. The following examples our illustrations:

Praise: Ancient and Modern (A & M 376) “O praise the Lord, Praise Him in the High.....”

Prayer: (A & M 165) “O God our help in ages past our hope for years to come” – (A & M 157) “Come Holy Ghost our souls inspire” (Prayer to the Holy Ghost).

Lamentation: (A & M 113), “O come along with me a while”.

Dedication: e.g. Church or Cathedral (A & M 620). “To this temple where will call thee, come O lord of Hosts today”.

Harvest: (A & M 483) “We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land”.

Although the language is usually scriptural it is not invariably so before, this observation is even truer with our indigenous Church music. While general hymns are used in routine service and often as part of special service. Special hymns are addressed to specific Christian or Church celebrations like Advent, Christmas, learnt, Passiontide, Good Friday, Easter, Whitsun day, Trinity are related to these events. These are in addition order ear specialist education dedicated, for example, to specific saints. A & M 554 “On the Rock of Ages, one foundation of which the living church do rest.....” refers to Saint Peter and “Sing we the praises of the great forerunner.....” A & M 551 to John the Baptist¹².

Hymns are set to stanza (stanza refers to the group of lines which make a verse). A tune written for a given hymn will match other hymns with the same rhythm. This increases the choice of music available for any given him book. The most popular metres are the “common metre” CM or ballad metre – 86.86; “short metre” SM (66.86) and long metre LM (88.88). There are up to 120 varieties for church hymns. The most popular current hymn book is ancient and modern in Yoruba “Iwe Orin mimo”.

On the whole, one can praise the translators of the original English hymns into Yoruba and Bishop Ajayi Crowther was a notable member of this team. Some defects must be recognised as inherent in the process of translation from one language to the other. These hymns are translations, many passages have been magnified when the languages and cultures are not remotely related in the Yoruba to maintain the metre of the original hymns, the meanings have been significantly distorted¹³.

For example, (A & M 352) “Nearer my God to thee” the translation (Ngn sunmo Olorun) is not a literal translation for the translator knows that the nearer would have distorted the metre. This is clearly a good translation that retains both the message and metre. The 3rd line of the 1st verse however which reads En though it be across is translated as “Bo tile se iponju” “Iponju” is not “cross”. Moreover when sung because of the tonal modulation of Yoruba language the meanings of words change when they are not sun gas spoken.

Much improvement is still possible in approximating the translations of many hymns with the original versus, it will be difficult to completely accommodate the errant modulations of Yoruba language to music and it is an achievable in harmony.

CHANTS

Chants which is Psalms of David our sung to music – the chant. The chant is designed to be flexible in order to accommodate Sims which are in prose (and not metred). It is still flexible in order to accommodate necessary to split or “point” the words of the Psalms into groups too much corresponding notes of the chant. It is only by so doing that the choir and congregation can sing with uniformity. Single charts our son to short sands and cut across and double chance to the longest Psalms. For very long psalms and canticles of two or three chants are often used to reflect character changes in the test and to break the monotony of one tune. Te Deum Laudamus for example has three changes of sense and is often sung three chants.

CANTICLES

A canticle is a Bible hymn used in church worship. Originally, it referred to only the Benedict Opera. Benedictus, the Magnificent, Nunc Dimitis and Te Deum Laudamus are now recognised as catechols even though is not from the Bible. Venite and Jubildte Deo are Psalms and by strict definition and not cut canticles. This definition stems from the fact that canticles were synonymous with the Song of Solomon.

The Creed and responses

The Creed and responses have been set to solar music. In this area, there is need to compose original solemn music to the Igbo translation. The English compositions do not match or blend with the vernacular translations. It is gratifying that David Okongwu and others have started to fulfill this role.

Indigenous Church Music

Reformation of church music in this part of the world has been achieved through introduction of indigenous music. No one will deny the impact of this in our worship. They complete and enthused participation by most of the congregation

that they sing in their own tongue. They are expressing settlements in which they understand in their own cultural setting or natural rhythm clapping off hands and as occasions demand – dancing. Many Yoruba courses have been assimilated into Anglican Church music repertoire. Some of them are very melodic moving scriptural works. Their appeal seems to lie in the simplicity of their message and they moving rhythmic melodies performed in familiar African style.

The musical scores and simple lines of two very popular choruses “Alaye yo ma yin O” and “O seun Baba” are reproduced under as illustrations:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) | Alaye yo ma yin O | Only those alive can praise You |
| | Okuko le yin O | Death cannot praise You |
| (2) | O seun Baba | Thank you father |
| | O seun Baba | Thank you father |
| | Olorun mi | My God |
| | O seun Baba | Thank you father |

There are many people who are not enthused by the less inhibited, demonstrative and noisy atmosphere of this form of music and do not find it conducive for meditation or spiritual participation. The question is not whether they are right or wrong and whether they should accommodate the majority – the fact is that all churches should cater for all their flock. This has been achieved by introducing short English Yoruba services conducted in the traditional form with choruses which are inevitably longer and less solemn for the masses.

This practice is advocated for all the churches by the congregation. Youth or Gospel bands have sprung up in many churches. These bands performed during choruses in special services and outside Christian activities especially funerals. These add colour and provide a lead in singing which lift the spirit most notably at work coupons for nearest lunches and other activities.

The gospel bands should be seen as a national progression in this age especially for gathering flock from the tender age. The youth need caution so their music should not be allowed to degenerate into pop without any spiritual ingredients and emphasis.

Music Festivals

Music Festivals are celebrated by choir in both Ekiti and Ekiti-Oke Dioceses. Music festival started originally as Sunday School rallies in the thirties and was made popular by the enthusiasm of the organizers. The Sunday school rallies became known later as “Singing Competition” and in the recent past “Music Festival”. The idea behind these festivals is to improve the standard of singing in churches whether this has been achieved and questioned by many. Choir performance usually classical often by Jegede as well as “our choice” and original indigenous composition. Oftentimes, this competition is commissioned to a professional or semi-professional from another town at exorbitant fees. The desire to win the competition often leads to unacceptable practices defeating the object of the exercise which is to improve the standard of singing in the home church. The original competitions would appear to have served better and if these festivals are to succeed, the organizers should be more vehicles in educating conducting and avoid counterproductive consequences.¹⁴

The Choir Choirmaster and Organists

It is gladdening that the mission saw it fit to train music in the early fifties and thus generated interest and recognition in church music. Now that local institutes of higher learning are now having music departments there had been formal training of church organist and choirmaster

Full-time and Part-time seminars are now being arranged with the music department to train and produce highly professional organists and choirmasters. Such organists and choirmasters should attract a reasonable salary or honoraria particularly in the Cathedrals and big churches. The standard and intellect of choir will improve and encourage an aspect of Anglican worship which has been shown to be a tremendous propelling for the church music.

The Theological Role and Purpose of Music in Church Worship

The people of God sing. After escaping from the Egyptians and crossing the Red Sea, the people of Israel sang in song to the Lord (Exodus 15). Singing was part of Israel's former worship in both Tabernacle and temple (I Chronicles 6:31 – 32, 16:42). The Psalms bear rich testimony that in joy and sorrow, in praise and lament, the faithful raise their voices in song to God. Hymn singing was practiced by Jesus and his disciples (Matthew 26:30). The apostle Paul instructed the

Colossians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts singing Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3: 16 – 17).

Music and song continue to play a vital role in the life of God's people today. Contemporary culture and modern technology bring new possibilities and new challenges to the music ministry of the church people's lives are surrounded with music – television and radio, the background music of video games, the Muzak of shopping malls, CDs, and synthesizers. Yet much of the time music function as “background” rather than as an opportunity for serious listening, much less participation. Outside the church there are few occasions opportunities in North American culture for people to sing together much of the popular music including popular Christian music composed today is for performance other than for participation¹⁵.

The church also has greater access and has shown greater openness to a greater variety of music – from classical hymnody to Christian rock, from European cantatas to South African choruses. Such diversity is to be welcomed and celebrated; it reflects the diversity and richness of God's creation. But greater variety and options in music called for greater discernment and care in planning and implementing the music ministry of the church. The people of God sing; what they sing and how they think are important issues¹⁶.

In order to further the dialogue in the RCA about music and worship, and to encourage healthy and vibrant congregational singing as a vital part of ministry, this paper offers some reflections on the theology and place of music in Christian worship. The paper rises with some suggested guidelines for evaluating and selecting music for the congregations worship.

1. **Music is a gift of God and part of the created order.** From its inception, “when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy” (Job 38:7), do its consummation, when “every creature in heaven and on earth and under the Earth and in the sea and all that is in them” we sing to the Lamb on the throne (Revelation 5:13), creation is musical. “All nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres hi woman music

making participate in the music of creation and reflects the order, beauty, and diversity of God creation.

2. **Of all the musical instruments that may be employed in the praise of God, the human voice has priority.** Other instruments are to be used primary in the service of the singing of God's people. Reformed theologian Karl Barth point out that sing is not an option for the people of God; it is one of the essential ministries of the church:

The Christian church sings. It is not choral Society. It is singing is not a concert. But from inner, material necessity it sings. Singing is the highest form of human expression..... What we can and must say quite confidently is that the church which does not sing is not the church. And where... It does not really sing but sighs and mumbles spasmodically, shamefacedly and with an ill grace, it can be at best only a troubled community which is not sure of its cause and of whose ministry and witnesses there can be no great expectations.... The praise of God which find is concrete culmination in the singing of the community is one of the indispensable forms of the ministry of the church¹⁷.

3. **Singing is a ministry that belongs to all the people of God.** The congregation is always the primary choir. The role of professional or volunteer choirs and musicians is to aid the whole people of God in their worship. While anthems or vocal and instrumental solos may be offered, they do not have to be. Congregational singing, however, is essential. While it is possible to be actively engaged in worship and in prayer while listening to anthem or solo, a diet of worship which does not regularly include ample opportunity for all the members of the congregation to join in song will be impoverished worship, and the life of the church and the faith of its people will suffer.

4. **Of all the arts forms that may be employed in worship, singing is especially corporate.** Indeed, it is the art form most suited to expressing the church's unity in the body of Christ¹⁸. Different voices, different instruments, different parts are blended to offer a single, living, and unified work of beauty. John Calvin recognised the power of congregational singing

and union prayer in helping the church express and experience the unity of the body of Christ. Asserting that “the chief use of the tongue is in public prayer, which are offered in the assembly of the believers, by which it comes about that way to one common voice, and as it were, with the same mouth, we all glorify God together, worshiping him with one spirit and the same faith”¹⁹.

5. **The church’s ministry of sound is for the glory of God.** The principal direction of congregational singing is to the lord (Psalms 96:1). Music is made first of all to the lord and only secondarily to each other. Music should communicate and expressed a sense of all and wonder in the presence of God; it should lead our thoughts towards god rather than the word ourselves. God can be glorified by beautiful sounds and spirits may be uplifted by pleasing Melody, but it is primarily the joining of the sun to a test that gives meaning to Christians’ songs. Not only should but test and tune glorify God and be consistent with each other but the tone must serve the test music is always the servant of the word²⁰. Calvin cautioned that “we should be very careful that our ears peanut more attentive to the melody than our minds to the spiritual meaning of the words such songs as have been composed only for the sweetness and delight of the year I won't be coming to the majesty of the church and cannot put this place God in the highest degree”²¹.
6. **The church’s ministry of song is for the edification of God's people.** Through congregational singing Christian faith is not only expressed to a very real the grey it is formed. Since people tend to remember the theology they sing more than the theology that is preached a congregation repertoire of him is often of critical importance in shaping the first of its people. Here again it is the meaning of the test that is of primary importance. It is through the sense of the words that God's people learn of the nature and character of God and of the Christian Life. Noting that if one prays in a tongue, the “spirit prays, but the “mind is unfruitful”, the Apostle Paul vows, “I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the mind also” 1st Corinthians 14:14 – 15. Christian hymnody contains some of the most tightly packed, concise doctrinal and devotional thoughts of the church²². Through congregational song God's people learn their language about God; God's people learn how

to speak with God. Songs of worship shape faith. It is, therefore, very important that a congregation have a rich “vocabulary of praise”. Simple repetitive music such as praise choruses and Taize chants are very appropriate in worship and can be very effective in moving individuals to prayers. But it is also important for the congregation to know some of the great hymns of faith in order to have a sense that the Christian faith is both relevant and enduring, and to be enriched by the faith of the “great cloud of witnesses”. Hymns, both ancient and modern, which stretched mines increase vocabulary, rehearse the biblical story, and teach of the nature and the mighty acts of God essential for the congregation growth in faith.

7. The emotional power of music rightly employed, is a vital and moving it to worship. Music, quite apart from an associated text, is capable of invoking powerful emotions. Hearts are stirred and field set to happen by a rousing March, while another melody may move people to tears. Calvin recognised the emotional power of music and for that reason included the singing (rather than the saying) of Psalms in the church in Geneva. Such singing “lends dignity and grace to sacred actions and how the greatest value in kindling our hearts to a true zeal and eagerness to pray”²³. Music can indeed “excite piety”, and depending on its mood, move individuals to penitence, thanksgiving, adoration, love, or any one of a host of emotions. Those who love the Lord are encouraged to “sing till we feel our hearts ascending with our tongues”²⁴. It is, therefore, important that the emotional power of music in worship be evocative rather than manipulative, honest rather than manufactured, and that the congregation’s singing along for the full range of emotions in worship.

PURPOSE OF CHURCH WORSHIP

THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH WORSHIP IS TO PROVIDE A WAY AND MEANS FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD TO HAVE COMMUNION WITH GOD

Communion means “*the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts and feelings especially when the exchange his son a mental or spiritual level*”.

Another way to say this is “to help people connect with God” or “engage with God”. Scripture depicts God as intensely relational he strongly desires to have intimacy with his sons and daughters.

The idea of communion reflects God’s nature of love.

Why? Well God has a vision for worship and it is to be together²⁵.

“I will be your God and you will be my people”

This sentiment is moving through the biblical narrative both old and New testament

I will take you as my own people and I will be your God. Exodus 6:7

I will walk among you and you and be your God and you will be my people. Leviticus 26:12

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood a holy nation a people belonging to God that you made the cloud the braces of him who called you out of darkness into wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9²⁶

So, a primary purpose of church worship is to “gather” God's people together to draw near to him as a community of faith that is distinctly Christian [James 4:8 Hebrews 10:25].

THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH WORSHIP IS TO PROVIDE STRUCTURE AND LANGUAGE FOR PEOPLE TO EXPRESS PRAISE AND ADORATION

Worship is a pattern of Revelation and response god reveals mass response therefore, “we can love him because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

When we truly encounter the almighty living God in all his majesty, power, holiness, and glory our response is reference humility, and honour.

We then give him glory through words songs prayer and actions of praise and adoration this is doxology.

The meaning of the synergies to offer praise to God through Psalms hymns and spiritual songs.

Worship is the natural response of human beings to the Divine revelation of God we worship God because he is worthy.

So, a major purpose of church worship is to give God's people a vocabulary of praise and adoration²⁷.

ANOTHER PURPOSE OF CHURCH WORSHIP IS EDIFICATION TO ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER AND BUILD EACH OTHER UP.

Another way to say this is “help God's people connect with one another”.

Worship unite a church at the heart level.

Speak to one another with Psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord Ephesians 5:19.

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up. 1 Thess. 5:11.

Now I ‘d like to suggest something that may be hard to understand but I have you have also experience it as true.

Sometimes “amateur” music encourages people better than “professional”. Maybe it’s because we can relate to it more, I am not sure. But, people can discern the difference between the real thing and the shallow.

I wish every perfectionist worship music critic would seriously consider these blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God Matthew 5:8

The “pure in heart” may sing out of tune, play out of tune, chose cheesy songs, be over the hill, out of style and basically un-hip; but they are the ones who not only see God, they are the ones who reflect God.

On the other hand, the “pure in heart” may also have world-class talent with killer chops, good taste, and be young and good-looking. They reflect God too. The point is, “purity of heart” makes a huge difference.

It is the presence of God that does the heavy lifting in worship not our talent or high-dollar production values. I respect the massive effort it takes to pull up great production, I'm just saying that is not what worship is primarily all about.

So, another purpose of church worship is to encourage God's people to be the real deal and build one another up.²⁸

THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH WORSHIP IS TO HELP CHANGE AND TRANSFORM THE WORSHIPPERS

God is in the transformation business. His spirit changes us from inside out both as individuals and as a community of faith. Worship works hand-in-hand with discipleship. True worship and discipleship will learn to walk in the ways of God and be status of Christ in all we do. When we gather for worship we should have change friend of God who he truly is holy good merciful and loving. Worshipping Him “in spirit and in truth” will affect you to take action as an ambassador for Christ to go into all the world and make disciples. [John 4:24, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Matthew 28:19]

What is the role of music in Church worship?

When we understand the Biblical values undergirding “the purpose of church worship”, then we can properly situate the place of music. The role of music is to serve the larger purposes of worship in the context of Church, music is a means to an end. Music is a valuable tool, a flexible vehicle, and a precious resource to enable people to worship God. Consider these four aspect²⁹.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP CAN HELP PEOPLE COMMUNE WITH GOD

“The nearly nearness of God is my good.” Psalm 73:28.

Music is unique in its tangible and intangible ability to connect deeply with the human soul.

Music is a wonderful and powerful means of communication and expression employed theologically and artfully worship music helps us focus on God. Hopefully without being distracted.

But, a word warning. Worship music is a created thing and the Creator does not dwell in the music. Music is the work of men's hands.

We are not worship “worship”. Especially worship music that is idolatry.

At its best, worship music should be all about God.

MUSIC IN WASHING GIVES US THE VOCABULARY AND ACTIONS TO EXPRESS PRAISE AND WORSHIP TO GOD.

*It is good to praise the lord
and make music to your name, O Most High,
proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,
to the music of the ten stringed lyre guitar
and the melody of the Harp keyboard.* Psalm 92:1 – 3

When the church gathered for worship we engage with God through singing, clapping, bowing, lifting hands, and other biblical actions, often led by music. Other worship actions are accompanied with music in the background.

Music encourages our brothers and sisters when we seeing the truth of God

“Let the message of Christ dwell richly in you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through Psalms hymns and songs from the spirit singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.” Colossians 3:16

Melody and harmony bring us together in a unique way music also unite us physically

The “song book” of a particular church gives those believers a common bond of music that has meaning and a shared history.

In these roles and others music leads and builds up the church community in very practical ways.

by the way the Hebrew word for musical accompaniment is Zammar worship words in my book worship actions and attitudes understanding 10 Hebrew words for praise and worship.

MUSIC BOTH EXPRESSES AND AFFECTS OUR EMOTIONS SO THAT WE CAN GROW CLOSER TO GOD.

In worship, one role of music is to help express emotion. It’s a two-way exchange of feelings.

We can experience the emotions of God two man, such as Jeremiah 31:3.

*“I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with affection, I have drawn you and continued My faithfulness to you.”*³⁰

And we can express our emotions from man to God.

I love you, O LORD, You are my strength.” Psalm 18:1.

Music can be all change or shift or emotional state. In fact just the tonality of the music, major or minor, harmonious or dissonant, can fit your mood. Your mood will impact the openness of your spirit.

Music connects with us at a deeply emotional level

A word of caution. No manipulation and loud music can and does inspire, entertain, inform and motivate but this outcomes are secondary

MUSIC HAS UNITE, ENCOURAGE AND INSPIRE THE BODY OF CHRIST

Think of some of the great anointed songs, old and new that have inspired you and motivated the church. Think of those powerful moments when you truly experience the glorious presence of God in a worship service.

Great music is inspiration now but bear in mind “excellence” in worship music is a wonderful servant but a terrible master. Pursuing the gold that “everything has to be amazing so that we can impress as many people as possible” is a distorted motive³¹. Authentic excellence is simply doing your very best. We honour God when we offer him our very best musical preparation, heart condition and positive spirit, keeping our eyes on Jesus as you serving as best as we can, with our musical abilities.

The purpose of music in church worship is famous. These things may happen for the glory of God but they are not to be our primary aspiration. Music in church should help us be with God, hear from god, bless the Lord and be a blessing to one another.

CONCLUSION

In answering the first question, “what is the purpose of church worship?”, we consider for aspects. First, that church worship is to help the guarded community of God have Communion with God. Second, that corporate worship is to give God's people the language and actions to praise and adore Him. Third, “gathered” worship is to encourage, edify and build up the faith of our brothers and sisters. Finally, that church worship is to change and transform individuals and communities for the glory of God from the inside out.

In answering the question, “what is the role of music in church worship?”, we explored the role of music in serving the purposes of worship. First, music can help people connect with God. Second, music give us the language to express praise and worship to God. Third, music helps unite and encourage the body of Christ. Finally, music both expresses and affects our emotions so that we grow closer to God.

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