

Sadly, many of the modern “worship songs” appeal to the flesh. Their beat stirs the flesh and their delivery often does too. Many such songs are doctrinally shallow or even doctrinally wrong.

- 2) These spiritual songs must teach God’s Word and admonish believers to obey God’s Word. God wants all of our music to fulfil these two purposes. Listening and singing music that teaches and admonishes us will help keep the Word of Christ dwelling richly in our hearts.

d. **We are to sing our music with grace in our hearts to the Lord.**

- 1) Grace is “divine enabling”.
- 2) God may be saying, “The saving grace that you enjoy ought to motivate you to sing in your hearts to me.”
- 3) Or He may also be saying that our singing is not to be about the singer, but a proclamation of God’s grace to the sinner.
- 4) We are to direct the singing of these songs to the Lord and they ought to truly glorify Him.

Conclusion: God wants you and me to have His Word richly dwelling in us. Using all the wisdom that God has given to us in the Bible, we are to teach and admonish one another through singing.

The songs that we sing in each service are to teach us Bible doctrine and to warn us of dangers in the Christian life. Therefore, we must do our best to focus on the words that we sing. Church music has nothing to do with entertainment. It has everything to do with indoctrination and glorifying God.

We must not think that God approves of one style of music for church and permits another style in our personal lives. The context of our verse says nothing about church. In fact, verses 18-21 specifically speak to the family. If the music you listen to in private does not measure up to the guidelines God gave us in this verse, the right thing to do is to ask God to change your music taste.

Song: I sing a new song

God’s Guidelines for Music

13 August 2023 PM – Colossians 3:16 – Col23 – Scott Childs

Introduction: When we view this verse in the context of the chapter, we find that it follows the commands to seek those things which are above and to set our affections on them. Then we must kill the fleshly, sensual members of our sinful nature. In addition, we are to put off social sins like anger and bad language. These we are to replace with spiritual virtues like mercy, kindness, forgiveness and love. God’s peace must umpire in our hearts and we are to be thankful.

To aid in the putting on of spiritual virtues, God commands us to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. At this juncture, the Lord merges His instructions into guidelines for Christian music.

Transition: This evening I want us to examine four aspects of God’s guidelines for Christian music as found in this verse.

The first aspect of God’s guidelines for music is...

1. The Source

a. The word of Christ must indwell us richly.

- 1) If you missed last week’s sermon, I urge you to listen to it and download the notes.
- 2) If you heard it, you may want to hear it again.

b. I find two ways we could take this verse.

- 1) Letting the word of Christ dwell in you richly will result in you singing godly music. Godly music will overflow from a heart that is rich with God’s word.
- 2) We may let the word of Christ dwell in us richly by means of godly music. Godly music will feed our souls. Remember, the first century believers did not own their own Bibles. Scripture songs enabled them to learn and retain God’s word. Though we each have our own Bible, singing Scripture songs will aid us in learning and remembering God’s word as well.

The second aspect of God’s guidelines for music is...

2. The Content

The phrase “**in all wisdom**” can either apply to the phrase before or after it. The original Greek text had no punctuation. However, in

Colossians 1:28, Paul connected it with warning and teaching. In our verse, it also seems to fit best when applied to teaching and admonition.

a. Our music must include all of God's wisdom.

- 1) Wisdom is the God-given ability to make right choices.
- 2) God is the only one who can truly give this kind of wisdom. (Proverbs 2:6) **"For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."**
- 3) The word of Christ, which I believe applies to the whole Bible, is God's revelation of His wisdom to mankind.

b. Our music must reflect all the wisdom of God

- 1) We must use all of the Word of God to evaluate the music we sing or listen to. Personal opinion or taste must not override Biblical wisdom. Remember, God is holy. He opposes all that is profane or ungodly. He is not like the world. In fact, James records, (James 4:4) **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."**
- 2) We must avoid all music that contradicts the wisdom of God. Much of secular music contradicts God's wisdom.
- 3) Our music must be a reflection of God's holy character both in word and in performance.

The third aspect of God's guidelines for music is...

3. The Purpose

a. God wants our music is to teach one another.

- 1) This word means just what you think. It instructs.
- 2) All music (whether it is good or bad) teaches. Our music must clearly teach the wisdom of God. It must teach us the words, character and heart of God.
- 3) Israel sang a song of praise (Exo 15) to the Lord after crossing the Red Sea. They sang another song of praise and reminder just before Moses died (Exo 32). Both of these songs taught about the character of God.
- 4) Not all of our music needs to be quotes from the Bible, but it must not contradict the teachings or principles of the Bible.

- 5) Learning Bible choruses and singing them will teach and reinforce biblical truths in our minds and hearts. It is likely that first century Christians depended on biblical music to help teach them the word of Christ and the wisdom of God since they could not own a Bible.

b. God wants our music is to admonish one another.

- 1) This word means to warn or to put in mind.
- 2) Many times the Bible warns us of consequences if we make foolish sinful choices. Consider these examples.
 - a) (Matthew 7:15) **"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."**
 - b) (Colossians 2:8) **"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."**
 - c) (1 Peter 5:8) **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"**
 - d) (1 John 4:1) **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."**
- 3) Our music must include biblical warnings.

The final aspect of God's guidelines for music is...

4. The Means

a. We are to teach and warn through singing psalms.

- 1) Psalms are literally the Psalms in the Bible, the Jewish songbook. They made up much of the Jewish song book.
- 2) Scripture songs may fall into this category.
- 3) These psalms must teach God's Word and admonish believers to obey God's Word.

b. We are to teach and warn through singing hymns.

- 1) Hymns are songs of praise to God.
- 2) This songs must teach God's Word and admonish believers to obey God's Word.

c. We are to teach and warn through spiritual songs.

- 1) Spiritual songs are songs that stir our spirit not our flesh. They feed us spiritually without rousing us sensually.