

SECULAR MUSIC: Yes & No

I. Defining the term

- A. Dictionary definitions of the word “secular”:
 - “Denoting attitudes, activities or other things that have no religious or spiritual basis”
 - “Secularity is the state of being separate from religion. For instance, eating and bathing may be regarded as examples of secular activities, because there is nothing inherently religious about them.”
 - “Of or relating to worldly things as distinguished from things relating to church and religion; not sacred or religious; temporal; worldly secular music, secular schools.”
- B. Neutral usage
 - Not about God or spiritual things
 - Not created for worship
 - There can be positive or negative secularity.
- C. No real division between secular and sacred for believers.
 - I Corinthians 10:31
 - Colossians 3:17
 - All activities are ‘sacred’ to the believer, but not all activities are ‘sacred’ in nature.

II. The Bible and secular music

- A. The Bible allows for secular music
 1. Relaxation/comfort/refreshment
 - I Samuel 16:14-23 - Saul troubled
 - Job 21:12 - everyday activities
 2. Enjoyment/celebration
 - Matthew 11.17 - music for celebration and mourning
 - Luke 15:25 - prodigal son
- B. Biblical Imperatives
 1. Be holy: I Peter 1:15-16
 2. Shun wickedness: Psalm 101:3; I Thessalonians 5:22
 3. Fill our lives with good, uplifting things: Philippians 4:8
 4. Avoid anything that is anti-Christian: Mark 9:40
 5. Make sure that it is talking about appropriate things: Ephesians 5:4
 6. Have uncompromising standards for music.

What does the music itself say to your spirit?

- How does it make you feel?
- C. How do you determine what a music style communicates?
 1. What do the originators of the style say about it?
 2. What do a broad range of experts/trained musicians say about it?
 3. What kind of effect does it have in your culture or society?
 4. What do truly spiritual/biblical leaders say about it?
 5. What does your own spirit/intuition say about it?

Continued in Lecture 4