

Music in the Home: CCM, Southern Gospel, and Separation

II Corinthians 6:14 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”

Here's what a secular reporter in The Birmingham News wrote after watching one of CCM legend's Michael W. Smith's concerts: "If you weren't familiar with Michael W. Smith's standing in the world of contemporary Christian music, you might attend one of his concerts and come out none the wiser." (The Birmingham News, Feb. 12, 1993 p. 5) In other words, the reporter was saying that a CCM concert was no different than a secular concert. Friend, that is not right.

God makes it plain from our text that His children are not to join or unite with the lost. Christ doesn't fellowship with Satan. Light is different from darkness. God's music and musicians are not to be anywhere near or like Satan's trash. Believers are to be different and separate.

CCM and much of Southern Gospel makes no bones about being similar to the world's music and musicians. Their rhythm dictates their music and is syncopated just like the world's rhythm. Their musical chords are jazzy and discordant just like the world's. Their sensual or rebellious clothing is just like the world's. Their likes are just like the world's. For example, when CCM artists like Amy Grant, Point of Grace, Steve Camp, Jars of Clay, DC Talk, Phil Keaggy, Ashley Cleveland, etc... were asked what music they listen to the answers were always unsaved, worldly pop stars, country and rock bands. (The exact quotes are too long for me to list here.) Proverbs 4:23 warns us to protect our heart because whatever is allowed in will come out. “You are what you eat.” So that means that most CCM and Southern Gospel artists truly are no different from the world that they digest and emulate. Actually many CCM and Southern Gospel artists perform on the same stage as unsaved, secular artists. For instance, Andrae' Crouch who performed both for CCM and Southern Gospel groups also sang and led choirs for Michael Jackson, Madonna, Elton John, and Stevie Wonder among many others. And to think that his songs (“The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power”, “My Tribute/To God Be The Glory”, “Soon And Very Soon”) are still song in most independent, Baptist churches!

Most CCM and Southern Gospel singers attend and support various religions that are unbiblical. Michael Card (“El Shaddai”, “Heal Our Land”) performed with and endorsed well-known CCM Catholic John Michael Talbot. In fact, one of Michael Card's own songs from his album “Present Reality” is entitled “Meditation #2 – The Eucharist” (a known Catholic-only term and practice). Most Southern Gospel groups

are Pentecostal/Holiness/Church of God and believe the unbiblical practice of tongues, being slain in the spirit, etc.... A number of CCM artists like Steven Curtis Chapman (“His Strength Is Perfect”, “Be Still and Know”, “Cinderella”, “I Will Be Here”) and Michael W. Smith (“Friends Are Friends Forever”, “Above All”, “Our God Is An Awesome God”) are Pentecostal as well. Actually, Charisma Magazine reported in their April 2000 edition on pg. 55: “At a Full Gospel Business Men’s meeting he was 'slain in the spirit' for 15 minutes and 'laughed all the way home.’” At another time, M. W. Smith felt “a bolt of electricity go through my body from the top of my head to my toes--wham!” He also started laughing uncontrollably--“rolling on the floor,” “hyperventilating”--on that occasion.

Believers are not to be “unequally yoked together with unbelievers”, but CCM artist Steve Green (“People Need The Lord”; “Broken and Spilled Out”, “Find Us Faithful”, “God and God Alone”) has been a big supporter of all religions coming together. His song “Let The Walls Come Down” was written for this purpose, and Green also performed for and supported “Promise Keepers”.

Another obvious indication that CCM and Southern Gospel are not separate from the world is the business itself. Having and making money is not wrong, but the issue here is how the world saw the popularity in the GMA (Gospel Music Association) and took it over. A fundamental Baptist preacher, David Cloud, states, “Contemporary Christian Music is big business today, a half billion dollar a year industry. The CCM industry sold nearly 50 million albums in 2001, raking in more money than the jazz and classical segments of the music business. Revenues from sales of CCM have tripled since the mid-80s. One-quarter of the sales in Christian bookstores are from music. This eventually caught the attention of the world, and most of the major CCM producers and distributors are now owned by secular corporations.” World magazine reported that “secular media companies ... swallowed up more than 90 percent of Christian recording labels in the 1990s.” Word Entertainment is now owned by Warner Music/AOL Time Warner, and Sparrow Records is now owned by EMI Group that owns 70 secular music companies and 1500 secular music artists. Dear reader, that *is* being unequally yoked with unbelievers, and that *is not* coming out from among the world and being separate.

Stan Moser, former head of Word Records (the man responsible for signing Amy Grant) and CEO of Star Song Records, was one of the pioneers and most important executives in the GMA. After 26 years, Stan Moser walked away from the GMA in November 1995. In an article on the GMA in Christianity Today on May 20, 1996, titled "We Have Created a Monster" on pg. 27, Mr. Moser admits: "But to be candid, I look at the majority of the music I hear today (referring to the monsters called CCM and Southern Gospel) and think it's virtually meaningless."