

Week of November 10, 2019: Music as Common Ground

Discussion Questions Set #1

“... speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord ...” (Ephesians 5:19)

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly 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)

“Music ... will help dissolve your perplexities and purify your character and sensibilities, and in time of care and sorrow, will keep a fountain of joy alive in you.” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

In sermon, we discussed the reality that music is deeply interwoven into much of our spiritual experiences. In fact, it would seem that we are all “musical” to some degree – almost as if we were created this way. Scripture is also full of examples of song as a response to God’s mighty actions on behalf of His people.

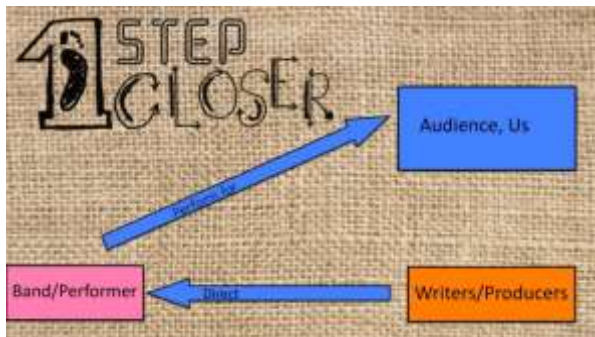
- 1) Why do you think music and song are such a part of our spirituality?
- 2) Do you have a song – a sort of “theme song” - that speaks deeply to you about the truth of the gospel or your experience of faith?
- 3) Note that both above passages instruct us to sing or make music “from the heart”. Why do you think Paul encourages music from the heart?

Discussion Questions Set #2

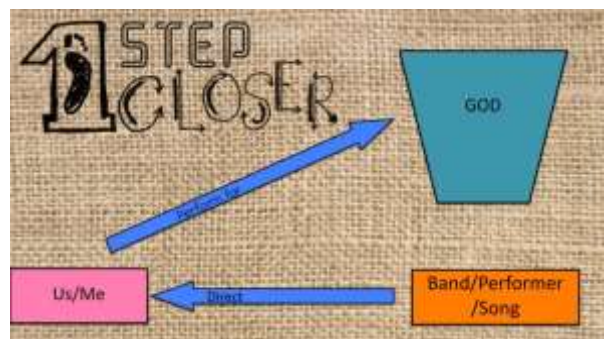
In sermon, we were presented with a diagram that revealed to us the different audience dynamics between “secular” music and worship music.

- 1) Why is it important that we recognize the differences in these two diagrams?
- 2) What might happen if we approach worship music in a “secular” music way? Vice versa?
- 3) Have you ever considered these differences before? What issues might the differences in approach cause for us in using music as common ground in evangelism?

Audience Dynamic for “Secular” Music



Audience Dynamic for Worship Music





Discussion Questions Set #3

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he." (John 4:1-26)

In sermon, we discussed a helpful pattern emerging from this text that we might use to guide our evangelism. Coming from John 4, we learned that effective evangelism utilizes the following steps:

- A. Ignoring the social taboo, the things that set us apart, and finding common ground
 - B. Getting to a relational level
 - C. Boldly telling the truth
- 1) What words or ideas from the above passage stood out to you? How might these ideas impact your own efforts at evangelism?
 - 2) Is there anything specific about Jesus' approach to evangelism in John 4 that challenges or inspires you?
 - 3) Do you think music is a good issue of common ground with those not yet following Jesus? What other areas of common ground might be important for us to explore?
 - 4) Of the above three steps, which is the most difficult for you? Why?