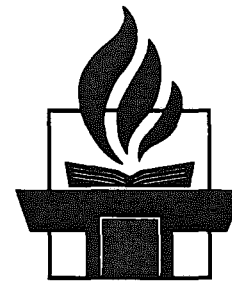


Reformation
& Revival



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When I hear anyone talk of culture, I reach for my revolver.
Hermann Goering

We cannot afford to be indifferent about culture any more than we can afford to be indifferent about the toxicity of the water we drink or the air we breathe.

Ken Myers

We all know what happens to us when we absentmindedly turn on the radio and this knowledge seems to relieve us of reflecting upon what it is. The phenomenon becomes a dictum that must be accepted as unalterable so to speak, a datum whose sheer obstinate existence proves its right.

T. W. Adorno

I have noticed that what's right in art is usually right in practice.

Dorothy Sayers

Announcement

The Bible and Music: An Important Announcement

In the world of Bible-believing Christians, music has achieved unprecedented service in the late twentieth century, both as a catalyst to corporate worship and as a means of outreach. It occurs to very few in the leadership of Christianity that music's very power, its ability to transcend words and lift the spirit with sheer sound, is at once a blessing and a potential menace to the cause of Christ. Paralleling the larger culture's seeming addiction to various forms of popular music, the church has in recent years absorbed pop culture—and its musical forms—into the fabric of worship, evangelism, and personal meditation. The cult of the individual rises above the unity of the body in countless local churches as music rises out of the realm of “handmaiden” or “vehicle” and takes on the spectre of icon, idol, or center of attention.

Suddenly, here at the end of the twentieth century, many of us find ourselves out of step with this cult-like obsession with sound and its raw power to move emotions. We are aware of its presence in varied forms as never before, some of which are refreshingly appropriate to informal gatherings. But we are increasingly aware of the noxious fumes of worldliness and its trappings—raw entertainment in the name of evangelical outreach, trivial songs whose words do not conform to biblical truth, elevation of emotional ecstasy above the experience of truth/spirit-balanced corporate worship, and crass commercialism exhibited by “bands” and “groups” who hawk their wares as “ministries” in the vestibules of the churches.

As a result of these trends, and in response to a felt need at every level as I have traveled to various churches, I propose a national symposium on music, “The Bible and Music,” to be convened in the near future. It will serve to answer the following questions:

1) What possible uses could God have intended for the music He created?

2) What is the Christian's responsibility, in music and other arts, for discernment?

3) How and when should music be used in the body of Christ?

4) What criteria, if any, does the Bible offer for the enjoyment of music?

5) In corporate worship, what implications does the Reformed regulative principle have for frequency, style, and medium of hymns and other songs?

6) If we are to "redeem" our culture, what part does our composition and display of excellent music have to play in that process?

If you have an interest in this symposium, your response is essential. Please write or call me at the address/phone number below and enter your suggestions and ideas for such a gathering, possibly within the next two years at a central location. Thank you for your interest.

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