

CCM, *Hillsong*, and the Organized Assault on True Christian Worship

by Jeremy James



Statue in Jerusalem of King David holding a harp.

The wolves have never been as well trained or as skillful as they are today. As Christians we often forget this, preferring instead to imagine a bright and better future where more and more people 'accept' Jesus. The modern wolves have undergone extensive plastic surgery to conceal their sharp teeth, while their claws are hidden beneath immaculate manicures. They are consummate actors whose skills have been refined to the point where it is virtually impossible in many cases – without close inspection – to tell the true shepherd from an imposter.

The Bible also warns of the hireling, the shepherd who serves only out of duty and has no real love for the flock. A shepherd is there to guard the flock and to sound a loud warning if he sees the wolf approaching. But if he is short-sighted, he won't see the wolf, and if he doesn't recognize the types of disguise that the wolves are using, he certainly won't bark. Isaiah described them as follows:

"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant."

(Isaiah 56:10-12)

How many pastors today are shepherds in the true Biblical sense?

Again and again the Word of God points to what is probably the single most important role of the pastor, namely to discern and root out false teachings. He is pre-eminently a man who stands on the wall and watches continually for anything that might harm the flock. He must also foster the spiritual health of his congregation by ensuring that the Word of God is kept constantly before them and that their praise and worship is Biblically sound.

Alas, we are faced today with a long-running program to undermine and destroy the church – a program that aims both to inject false teachings into the church and to corrupt true Christian worship – and yet only a tiny proportion of our pastors are sounding the alarm! What is more, the few who are speaking out are being dismissed as troublemakers (or worse) by the complacent majority.

This long-running program includes CCM – Contemporary Christian Music.

We examined the nature of CCM in an earlier paper: *Choral Chaos: How CCM is Undermining and Destroying True Christian Worship*. We now propose to look more closely at the failures that have allowed this scourge to sweep through the church and inflict enormous spiritual damage, despite the oversight of Bible-believing pastors.



A Hillsong rock concert disguised as 'worship'.

The question that pastors never seem to ask

We need to ask a very basic question, a question which seemingly very few pastors seem to ask: What kind of music is pleasing to God? The answer is very simple, especially to anyone who has studied the book of Leviticus: The music that is pleasing to God is music that speaks to the Father about His Son.

Christian worship music must exalt our Saviour and all that he has done. When we worship the Father we must praise and exalt His Son. There is absolutely no other way to approach our Father.

So why don't CCM songs do this? Why do they dwell so much on the individual and his or her feelings? True worship has nothing to do with how we feel. Neither is it concerned in the least with our tiny lives or any goal or ambition we may have.

This may surprise anyone immersed in CCM since he has been taught to believe that worship should 'do' something for him. At minimum, he or she expects to feel better, whether during or after the service. But such an expectation is no different from that of a laborer who comes calling for his wages.

True Christian worship is unlike any other human activity. It is not found anywhere else on earth and has no parallel in paganism or heathen religion. Only a born-again believer can know what it means to participate in true worship. This is why the styles and modes of secular music have no role whatever in deciding the content or expression of Christian worship.



Hostility to Christianity

We live in a civilization that is hostile to Christianity. Its music resonates with this hostility and carries with it the same confusion and darkness that pervades the hearts of unregenerate men. CCM ignores this fundamental truth. It tries instead to treat Christian worship music as a genre in its own right and make it appear 'legitimate' before an unbelieving world. But Christian worship music is not a *genre*! It has nothing whatever to do with the world or the standards of the world. It is not even music as the world defines music.

Christians are greatly mistaken when they ape the ways of modern civilization and try to use music to worship God in the same way that fallen men use it to honor and worship their idols.

"This is my beloved son..."

We need to have a clear understanding of what God hears when He hears true Christian worship. In our study of the Tabernacle (January 2016), we noted the astounding love that the Father has for the Son and the Son for the Father:

It is this incredible love that brought us into existence in the first place – since the Father gave the saints to His Son before the foundation of the world – but it is also the same love that redeemed us completely from corruption and death.

This is why, when we pray to our Father, we must always do so in the name of His Son. Remember, it is with His Son that He is "well pleased." The traditional translation of Matthew 3:17 and 17:5 – "**This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased**" – may not disclose fully the fact that the original Greek word, *eudokeo*, connotes not just great satisfaction but actual pleasure. The Father was both greatly pleased with the work of His Son and took great pleasure in it.

There is absolutely nothing we can do to give pleasure of any kind to God. Of ourselves, we cannot please Him. But when we approach Him in the name of His Son, all is transformed. Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, we can reflect the glory of Christ in our prayers and in our worship. And that is what our Father sees and hears when we do this!

H A Ironside crystallized all of this when he said, "It is of inestimable value to the soul to dwell upon God's estimate of His Son" (*The Levitical Offerings*). He went on to note that there is nothing that any man can bring to God that will give Him joy unless it speaks in some way of His blessed Son and his work on Calvary. We commune with God only when our soul enters into His thoughts concerning Jesus.

CCM is based on an entirely different premise. The individual and his experiences – not Christ and his work – provide the principal platform for CCM. Naturally there are exceptions to this, but on the whole CCM is concerned mainly with the individual.

This in turn has concealed a far deeper problem with CCM, a problem which pastors and believers do not even seem to recognize. With a few possible exceptions, CCM songs are private property. They were not composed purely and simply to honor and worship the LORD. Their authors retain ownership of their output, just like any other commercial product, and have the right to collect royalties from their future use. In short, something that is meant to be holy – set aside exclusively for God – is being exploited and used for another purpose.

Counterfeit worship

Through his cunning exploitation of CCM the Enemy has succeeded in spreading a counterfeit form of Christian worship throughout the world. Large numbers of Christians seem to have forgotten that a song that has been written, at least in part, to advance the personal ambitions of the person who wrote it is not acceptable before the LORD. No matter how pleasing it may be in the ears of many, it is not a pure, free-will offering to God!

Why do so many Christians fail to see this? There is a bewildering blindness in the church today, where pastors are confusing what rightfully belongs to God with what actually belongs to man. Such tainted offerings are not Biblical.

The priests in the time of Malachi thought they could do the same. They saw no harm in offering imperfect sacrifices to the LORD:

"And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts."

(Malachi 1:8)

It was more profitable to offer defective animals rather than healthy ones.



Understanding sacrifice from God's point of view

In this age of grace, the church has forgotten the importance of sacrifice. The sacrifice that God wants is the sacrifice of praise:

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."

(Hebrews 13:15)

The same emphasis may be found in the Old Testament:

"The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD."

(Jeremiah 33:11)

The LORD expects our very best – pure offerings from a pure heart. So why do we go to Him with the incentivised artefacts of CCM? Why do we depend on an industry to manufacture – at a price – the very words and melodies that we use to express our love for God? It is simply insane. Worse still, it is blasphemous.

If in doubt, read on.

Gideon

The Bible gives two outstanding examples, both in the book of Judges, that highlight the importance which the LORD attaches to human worship.

In the first the Angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon. As many commentators have noted, the Angel of the LORD is Christ in his Pre-incarnate form. The Messiah assured Gideon that he would save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. At this point Gideon made an unusual request:

**"If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee."
(Judges 6:17-18)**

Let's pause here for a moment. A fallen man has just asked the Second Person of the holy Trinity to remain where he was until he returned with his "present" or offering! And how did the Pre-incarnate Christ reply? –

"I will tarry until thou come again."

As John Gill remarked, this was "a wonderful instance of divine condescension."

Gideon then went and prepared a kid goat, boiling it in water, as well as unleavened cakes baked from an ephah of flour. This must have taken two hours or more. During all this time the Lord was graciously waiting.

The Word of God then describes what happened when Gideon finally returned:

**Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out [on the rock] the broth [in which the kid was prepared].
And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes.
Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight."
(Judges 6:20-21)**

What a truly remarkable scene! The Angel of the LORD, the pre-incarnate Christ, pointed to the rock – which symbolized himself – and accepted the offering made by Gideon after the pattern of the Mosaic law. What is more, he did so in a miraculous manner, sending the fire himself. Gideon had expected the rock to serve as a table where his guest would eat. Instead it was turned by God Himself into an altar of sacrifice.

Gideon was not sure, when the angel first appeared to him, whether or not he was a man. He knew that the person who spoke to him may possibly have come from God. This is why he asked for confirmation of some kind ("**then shew me a sign**"). When he went and prepared a meal for his unexpected guest, he made sure it met the standard of a sacrificial offering acceptable to God.

We could talk at length about this episode, but there are two profound spiritual principles that we need to consider. Firstly, the impoverished Gideon did not hesitate to give the very best of what he had. Secondly, the Lord graciously agreed to wait while Gideon prepared his offering. Joshua asked the sun and the moon to tarry while he carried out his mission, but Gideon went even further and asked God to do so. If the celestial miracles in the book of Joshua speak loudly of the LORD's commitment to the righteous remnant of Israel, then his gracious response to Gideon's request is a startling declaration of His delight in human worship – provided it satisfies His holy standard.

The kid offered by Gideon was neither lame nor blind and his cakes were baked without leaven. We know this for certain since God Himself sent the fire that consumed the offering.

Manoah

We find a similar episode in the life of Samson's parents.

"And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day."

(Judges 13:9-10)

Manoah's wife ran excitedly from the Angel of God to find her husband. As she departed she probably said something like, *Please hold on and I'll be back in a moment with my husband*. The Word of God records the following exchange when the couple returned:

"And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the LORD."

(Judges 13:15-16)

As we can see, the Angel of the LORD – the Pre-incarnate Christ – was again willing to wait and remain where he was while fallen humanity went and prepared a humble offering "**unto the LORD.**" And again we see how graciously the offering was received:

**"So Manoah took a kid with a grain offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground."
(Judges 13:19-20)**



***The Sacrifice of Manoah*
by Salomon de Bray**

Professing Christians today have taken their understanding of 'worship' from sources other than the Bible, or mixed the Biblical view with human opinion and practice. Few seem to take the Bible as their starting point and fewer still are willing to study and apply the Biblical pattern to all aspects of worship. The episodes from the book of Judges show that man must come before the LORD using only the path that God Himself has provided. If he does this, then the LORD will take great delight in his offering, but if, like Cain, he takes a different route, then the LORD will not hear him.

**Christ said:
"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."
(Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13)**

CCLI

As an offering to God, CCM is both lame and blind. Its songs have been written in part for commercial purposes. To sing them legally one must obtain a license or copyright approval. In the US a special organization, *Christian Copyright Licensing International* (CCLI), has been set up to manage this process. Incredibly it controls the "copying" of over 300,000 worship songs and represents over 3,000 publishers and song owners.

Over 160,000 churches across North America are registered with CCLI. According to the CCLI website, "A copyright is an exclusive right given to an author of an original created work. It is an asset, a legal interest, protected by law. Included in the exclusive rights given to a copyright owner is the right to copy the work into any form, including digital, print, and recordings." If a small ministry, having less than a hundred regular attendees, wants to sing any of the 300,000 worship songs covered by CCLI, it must pay \$124 annually for the privilege.



These songs are not free-will offerings to God, but straightforward commercial products. While the charge for singing them is comparatively modest, it nonetheless disqualifies them from ever being used for Christian worship in accordance with Biblical standards.

Christ occasionally expressed his anger at the hypocrisy and venality of the Pharisees, but none equalled the occasions when he overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the Temple. He even fashioned a scourge of small cords to whip the perpetrators:

**"Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."
(Mark 11:17)**

We CANNOT mix mammon and worship. This ought to be obvious, and yet Satan has tricked 160,000 churches across North America into doing just that.

The Gospel of John records a further detail:

**"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."
(John 2:16)**

Churches that are paying a license fee for the right to worship are offending the LORD. They have made our Father's house a house of merchandise. They should **stop doing this** and use only songs that are in the public domain or, if covered by copyright, songs that allow for unrestricted universal usage. [Copyright in itself is Biblically okay since it protects a work from corruption and misappropriation.]

Our offerings to the LORD should be undivided, whole and entire. They should not be offered in part to the LORD and in part to the prince of this world.

Why don't true Christians see this? What a terrible blindness now afflicts the professing church! It is tragic to realize that the majority of congregations are content, not only to worship with songs that are frequently shallow, irreverent, ecumenical and doctrinally confusing but which, in addition, are legally the property of a commercial, profit-making industry.

Good hymns

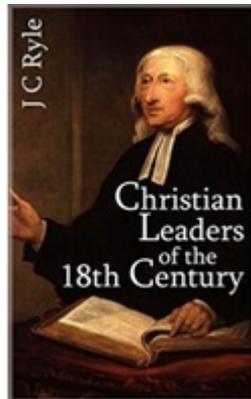
Few Christians seem to know what it is like to participate in truly scriptural worship and praise. Most are familiar only with the types of songs produced by the likes of Hillsong, the Australian ministry whose song archive has by stealth become the staple of many western churches.

In his book, *The Christian Leaders of England in the Eighteenth Century*, J C Ryle made the following observation about the importance and character of good hymns:

"Good hymns are an immense blessing to the Church of Christ. I believe the last day alone will show the world the real amount of good they have done. They suit all, both rich and poor. There is an elevating, stirring, soothing, spiritualizing, effect about a thoroughly good hymn, which nothing else can produce. It sticks in men's memories when texts are forgotten..."

He went on to say that a truly good hymn will succeed in combining "truth, poetry, life, warmth, fire, depth, solemnity, and unction..."

In Ryle's day (he died in 1900), hymn-writing was seen almost universally as a way of honoring God and serving the body of Christ. Today, however, it is seen primarily as a way of advancing one's career in music, of becoming a recognized performer, and producing commercially successful albums. There is little or no discernible difference between the attitude and ambitions of those who write so-called Christian music and those who write other kinds of music.



How can true Christians, who love the LORD, stand before Him in worship and sing the phony, sentimental music produced by Hillsong and similar ministries? And how can they bring themselves to offer to the LORD something which the writers of the songs did not bother to offer? Invariably the songs were written, not for the body of Christ at all, but for personal gain and the ecumenical, one-world church that Hillsong and similar ministries are working to create.

Hillsong is little more than a money-making racket which shamelessly churns out vain and polluted counterfeits in the guise of true Biblical offerings to God:

**"I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts,
neither will I accept an offering at your hand."**

(Malachi 1:10)

Referring to the false priestly service of Hophni and Phinehas, the Word of God said:

**"Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD:
for men abhorred the offering of the LORD."**

(1 Samuel 2:17)

There is no doubt that a great many true believers are singing these songs with a sincere heart and would be horrified to think that what they are doing is not pleasing to God. But we cannot avoid the issue. The Word of God tells us what is pleasing to Him, and unless we are obedient to His Word, we cannot please Him. We have no excuse: **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."** This lack comes, not from any deficiency in God's Word, but from the deliberate neglect of the many plain statements in Scripture regarding acceptable prayer and worship.

The Deliberate Corruption of Christian Hymns

From Satan's point of view, a good Christian hymn is a very dangerous thing indeed. When a group of believers come together and praise God in a truly spiritual way, they bring bountiful blessings into the world. When a tired and weary believer sets aside his earthly concerns and opens his heart to God, stepping for a few precious moments into the presence of the Almighty, he is placing an immense strain on the Satanic world system.

The Enemy HATES true Christian praise and worship. Therefore he wants, not only to replace true Christian hymns with sickly counterfeits, but to go even further and render the most powerful traditional hymns unusable. This is why the 'Christian' music industry has been busy producing modernised or 'reimagined' versions of old hymns. As a result many of our greatest hymns are heard only in their modern 'reimagined' form, where the subtle beauty of the original has been erased.

Young people today are being cheated of the opportunity to sing traditional hymns in a congregational setting. Most of them have no idea that a priceless treasure has been kept hidden from them and a tawdry bag of baubles displayed in its place.

CCM is *performance* rather than *worship*

The corrupting effect of CCM is enhanced by the medium used to disseminate it. Since there are no hymnals or hymn sheets, the recording *is* the music, the MP3 *is* the song. The performer and the recording have taken the place of congregational singing.

Wonderful hymns like *Amazing Grace* or *It Is Well with My Soul* can be understood and appreciated only by singing them in a congregational setting. That is what they were written for and where their spiritual power lies.

The loss is immense. Entertainment has taken the place of worship. The Enemy has deprived young believers of the extraordinary spiritual refreshment and renewal that can be found in true Christian worship. Instead they have been tricked into accepting the 'exciting' world of Hillsong, with its vocal displays, flashing lights and acoustic novelties, to the point where it is impossible to distinguish between the Hillsong 'experience' and a conventional rock concert.

The current generation of young Christians are not being protected by their pastors and older believers. How can they be expected to discern the dangers posed by Hillsong when their own leaders have succumbed to its siren call?

Weapons directed against Christian worship

The CCM revolution has been carried along by the seductive style of popular music, including the instruments which typify that style – electric guitars and acoustic drums. The first enables the production of sounds effects that are not found anywhere else in the natural world, while the second pulsates with an insistent beat that dominates and controls the melodic line. Both stimulate a neurological response that excites rather than soothes our emotions, and which, in the hands of a trained performer, can have a very sensual effect.



Even though they are completely alien to the traditions of Christian music, these instruments are now a major component of CCM. This helps to explain why CCM has secured such a strong hold over our young people. When the beat dominates the melody – as in pop, rock and CCM – it also dominates the lyrics. So, even if the lyrics are edifying, they will be absorbed by our mind in the same way that a pop song is absorbed.

This is why it is possible in CCM to repeatedly sing the same set of words over and over again! The emotional content of the lyrics overwhelms their semantic content, to the point where the meaning of the song is no longer important, just the sound. When this happens the music becomes rhythmic or meditative, in stark contrast to the songs of the Bible. This explains why CCM can sometimes sound like a Buddhist chant or one of the long, meaningless solos heard at rock concerts.

This kind of insane repetition is never found in true Christian worship. Since traditional hymn-singing is guided by the melodic line rather than the rhythm, it continues to focus clearly on the lyrics and their meaning.

When admirers of CCM encourage one another to let go of their minds and flow with the sound, they are greatly deceived. Only music that is sober and edifying can have any spiritual value. Senseless repetition will suck the meaning out of a song and leave one's mind in a blank or vacant state. The individual is then receptive to impressions which have no Biblical foundation. In a large gathering, where the performance continues over several hours in a darkened auditorium, this effect is greatly amplified and the risk of supernatural deception is very real.

Sadly, most admirers of CCM seem to be ignorant of the physiological effects of music. They foolishly refuse to believe that music can be used to harm an individual. Both communist Russia and communist China banned rock music for decades because the authorities in both countries knew that rock promotes a rebellious, sexually aggressive attitude in young people. The combined effect of a strident beat (produced by the acoustic drums) and the unnatural, discordant chords (produced by the electric guitars) worked like a drug on the emotional centers in the brain.

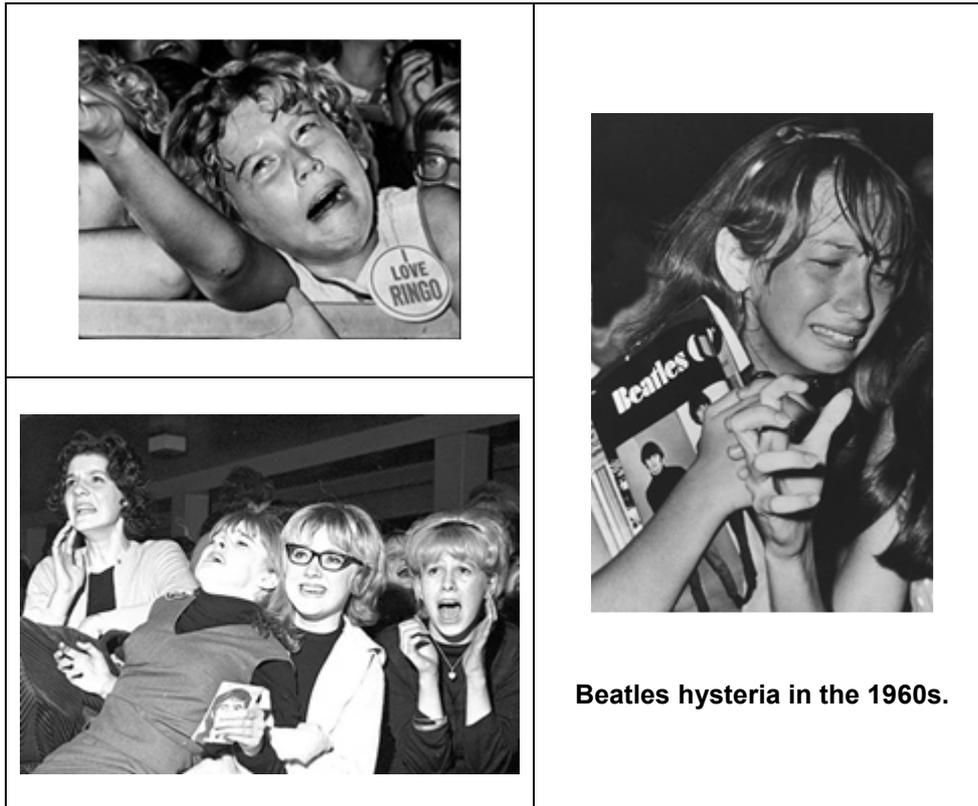
British Intelligence discovered this in the course of its research into social programming in the 1950s and used it to create the 'rock' revolution of the 1960s. Large groups of people, especially girls, could be made hysterical by this style of music. One only has to look at footage of fans mobbing the *Beatles* and the *Rolling Stones* in the 1960s to see how powerful this 'drug' could be. The same effect cannot be observed today because children are exposed to this sound from an earlier age and are already programmed to accept it by the time they enter their teens, at which stage they are vulnerable to a more insidious brand of acoustic programming.

The enemies of Christianity have succeeded in infiltrating these divisive instruments – the electric guitar and the acoustic drum – into so-called Christian worship. In doing so they have turned worship into entertainment. This was done very gradually at first, so the change was not too noticeable. Today, however, their impact is obvious.

Hillsong is built on the sand of CCM

Hillsong, the highly influential Australian ministry, is built on the shifting sands of CCM. Founded by the confessed child rapist, Frank Houston, in the 1990s, it has since grown into an international network of mega-churches.

Alas there is nothing remotely edifying about this church. The 'Jesus' of Hillsong is not the Jesus of Scripture but a disturbing facsimile, little more than a cool dude who likes to chill out with his friends. Some would say that this borders on blasphemy – and they're right. No one who loves the LORD could bear to see His Son portrayed in this fashion. As a Christian of 8 years – I was saved in 2008 at age 52 – I am horrified by the extent to which Biblical Christianity is mocked and defiled by Hillsong. And I am deeply saddened by the fact that thousands of young people are being lured into this wicked deception and may never come to a saving faith in Christ.



Hillsong glories in its own importance. According to its mission statement its goal is:

"To reach and influence the world by building a large Christ-centered, Bible-based church, changing mindsets and empowering people to lead and impact in every sphere of life."

[Official Hillsong Mission Statement]

By redefining Christian worship in accordance with its CCM philosophy, Hillsong aims to absorb other Christian churches into a worldwide mega-church with real political and social influence. The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is pursuing a very similar goal. Presumably the architects of the coming One World Religion will bring both of these cults together in due course, with Hillsong providing the 'worship' (entertainment) and NAR the 'theology' (manifesto).

Hillsong is already part-way down the NAR road, with its strong emphasis on universalism (everyone will be saved eventually), indifference to homosexuality, its emphasis on prosperity, its rejection of doctrinal distinctions that impede church growth, a gospel that is so pared down that it is virtually meaningless, and the blind conviction that a worldwide ecumenical church will bring in the Kingdom on behalf of Christ.

The use of music for demonic purposes

Satan is preparing the world for the arrival and acceptance of the Antichrist. Born-again Christians should never lose sight of this!

In order to succeed he needs a unified world religion. The Antichrist, when he arrives, will not have time to set about building such a religion. Neither will he have time to bring all nations under a One World governmental structure. All of this will need to be accomplished, or nearly so, before he arrives on the scene.

The drive to create a One World religion is powered by the supernatural energy of fallen angels. Many Christians seem to have no idea that Satan is working to quench and reshape what is left of true Biblical Christianity. In order to do this he must weaken and replace Christian worship with his own brand of music and counterfeit worship.

There is another reason for this. The Word of God teaches that demons cannot tolerate godly music:

**"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."
(1 Samuel 16:23)**

As a man of God, David was playing music in the royal court that was pleasing to God. And music that is pleasing to God is repulsive to demons. Christians need to pause and think about this since it reveals why Satan is determined, come what may, to inveigle CCM into every church and ministry.

The music that is most pleasing to demons is hard rock and heavy metal. Many rock stars have attested to this, often boasting that a supernatural presence enters and empowers them when they perform on stage. However he doesn't need to introduce hard rock into the church in order to undermine and destroy godly Christian music. He only needs to infect it with notes and words, syncopations and rhythms, of his own choosing. A few drops of poison are all that it takes. Once a godly traditional hymn is polluted in this way, it no longer speaks of Jesus. And if it no longer speaks of Jesus and his work, then it cannot possibly be pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

The Dark Spirit of Hillsong

Even a newly saved Christian, with little grounding in the Word of God, should have enough discernment and common sense to see that Hillsong is a cynical perversion of true Christianity. For example

- it teaches a glitzy, superficial gospel that can save no-one
- it shamelessly distorts the Biblical picture of Jesus
- it puts entertainment in the place of worship
- it puts sound bites and slogans in the place of preaching
- it uses a darkened auditorium as a counterfeit church
- it uses a master of ceremonies instead of a preacher
- it replaces congregational singing with passive listening
- it uses rhythm, repetition and laser lighting to create a musical 'experience'
- it earns an estimated \$100 million annually, making its owners immensely rich

- it emphasizes prosperity and worldly success
- it teaches dominionism and universalism
- it is linked doctrinally to a known cult – the New Apostolic Reformation
- it emphasizes ecumenism and the creation of a unified world church
- it ignores homosexuality
- it teaches that Allah (Baal) is the God of the Bible.

The dark spirit of Hillsong should also be evident from its bizarre and often blasphemous performances, many of which have been condemned on the Internet by concerned Christians. Here are just a few examples:



The occult 'Eye of Horus' is displayed in a vivid animation at the close of the Hillsong women's conference in London, 2016.



A Hillsong youth leader appears on stage as the 'Naked Cowboy' at the Hillsong women's conference in New York, 2016.



A Hillsong pastor appears on stage as 'Austin Powers' at the Hillsong women's conference in London, 2016. Brian Houston's wife, Bobbie, is standing next to him.



A ghoulish dance scene from the Hillsong 'service' at Easter in London, 2016. The video of this event on YouTube is truly macabre. The sinister sound effects that accompany this performance are like those heard in a horror movie.

The following photos are from an elaborate 'Christmas Carols' performance by Hillsong in 2015. It mocks the lovely carol, *Silent Night*, by staging it in a sleazy cabaret setting and having saucy soubrettes and their patrons sing it in a lascivious manner while performing an erotic dance routine.





There are discernible occult motifs here and there throughout the routine, such as the horizontal 'levitation' in the photo above. One of their moves even depicts an important principle in the occult – *As Above, So Below*:



The spirit of Hillsong is the spirit of darkness. There is not the slightest doubt that this counterfeit church is firmly in the grip of Satan and that its leaders are witting participants in a carefully designed plan to subvert traditional Christian worship.

CONCLUSION

We have shown that Satan is using two distinct methods to undermine and destroy true Christian worship.

The first is the pollution of worship by linking it to commercial gain, where composers and others extract royalties and license fees from a song which was supposedly written for the glory of God. Since the song is spiritually polluted it should never be used by any congregation of true believers. Christians who do this are effectively bribing the prince of this world to let them worship God! They have abandoned the sphere of Christian worship and entered the domain of commerce and entertainment. Such tainted 'offerings' are not acceptable to an awesomely holy God:

"And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

(John 2:15-16)

The second is CCM, which is tolerant of virtually any style and mode of musical expression except traditional hymn-singing. Hillsong and similar ministries are designed to exploit and promote CCM in an institutional setting, thereby attracting an ever-growing army of false converts to its phony brand of worship.

Why do pastors allow this? Because most of them are hirelings who are largely indifferent to the harm that CCM and CCLI are doing. And why do most professing Christians allow this? Because they have little or no interest in worshipping God the way He intended. The Word of God gives very clear instructions as to how He should be worshipped, but they never bother to study them. They prefer instead to worship in a way that is pleasing to themselves.

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For further information visit www.zephaniah.eu

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