

Music and Spirituality

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Augustana Academy for Seniors

Wednesday, January 19, 2005 - 10:45

I once heard a speech pedagogue say that you should start a presentation with a story. Here's mine.

A college student challenged a senior citizen, saying it was impossible for their generation to understand his generation. "You grew up in a different world," the student said. "Today we have television, jet planes, space travel, nuclear energy, computers...." Taking advantage of a pause in the student's litany, the geezer said, "You're right. We didn't have those things when we were young; so, we invented them! What are you doing for the next generation?"

Of course, we all know that our young people today are doing a lot for the next generation.

I hope all of you realize that I am here under a certain amount of duress. After hearing the speakers at the sessions of the Academy so far this year, and all of last year, I can't help but wonder why I'm here. The power of the speakers has been unbelievable and their command of the topics presented was indeed special. Even when I was faculty member here at Augie for almost three decades I held those speakers on a very high pedestal. I guess that is why Anne called this session "A Change of Pace," because that's what it's going to be. That doesn't mean that we think it is less important, rather, I will attempt to approach it from the premise that it is a very illusive concept and probably as problematic as any of the subjects examined previously.

Anyway, with the help of Anne I would like to explore with you that illusive topic of Music and Spirituality. Spirituality - quality or state of being spiritual. And music, well, you all know what

that is. But does music contribute to spirituality? The problem, it seems to me, has to do with perception and the historical road to the 21st Century. A major component of spirituality is Worship, or as the author of “The Purpose Driven Life” states: “anything that you do that brings pleasure to God is an act of worship.” I certainly don’t agree with everything that Rick Warren states in his book, far from it. But he does make a strong case for a number of 21st century problems, or should I say ‘challenges.’ So then, how do we approach worship?

Those of us here in Sioux Falls know what this challenge is all about. For a number of years the concept of “praise bands” and “contemporary” worship has surfaced at the center of a huge debate. I would first like to express my feelings about the word “contemporary” as it applies to many of the bands used in worship services. To me, contemporary means living or occurring at the same time. Bach was a contemporary of Handel. They lived at the same time in history. With that in mind, any service could be called a “contemporary” service. I really can’t give you an answer yet.

The problem as I see it is that we have pigeon holed our definition of worship into a 60 minute expression of our so called “inner feelings.” We sense that music with a beat is “praise music,” but praise of what? As all of you know, for many years I have felt that it is O.K. to have music with guitars, drums and brass in the church service. This dates back to the late 1960's. As long as it is understood that we are trying to please God with all of our being we are at least on the same page.

I really feel that we have to get over the idea that we worship to please ourselves; we worship to please God and historically God has accepted our praise in a number of different ways. Let’s look at the historical perspective of worship. First of all, you will all agree with me that my perspective has to do with the use of brass music and the swing and jazz style in the worship service. This causes

a little bit of a problem because there are people who believe that you can't have sacred music without words. They believe that words are what make it sacred, music and the words together. I had a good friend from my graduate school days who was the choir conductor at Bethel College in St. Paul. He was very vehement about this idea and we had many heated discussions on the topic. I will have to admit that it is one way to worship God, but not the only way. Let's also say that we are going to look at music only as it applies to the post Christ era, this will leave the Old Testament Psalms out of our discussion.

Let's start with a personal example (I will have a lot of these so please bear with me and forgive me if any seem inappropriate). There is a title of a "Christmas" selection that the brass choir played at Christmas Vespers called, "The Road to Bethlehem." The only relationship of this piece to anything religious was the title. We played it in rehearsal and everybody clapped. The choirs, the orchestra, the varsity band, everybody. But it riled some people at that first performance and I was called and we visited about it. So then we played a different selection in that spot of the service at each of the following Vespers services. Pastor Pete, who was our campus pastor at that time and a narrator for the Vespers service, made the comment, "That road to Bethlehem has certainly taken a lot of different routes." Even with this little bit of controversy may we not ask, "Was this music spiritual?" I will have to admit that later when we performed the selection I explained my interpretation of the piece which really defeated the whole idea of the individual defining their own spirituality. Mary and Joseph were on this long trip to Bethlehem to register. The trip was hard on Mary and it got more and more tiresome as they approached the city. You can just imagine Joseph's dismay when they couldn't find a place to stay. All this emotion is in the music. But, unless I told the audience, they might have had an entirely different feeling about the piece. Was this music

spiritual? Was I right in “helping it along?”

Let’s look at the way this all got started. Please understand that what I’m presenting is a very simplified version of what really happened. For the first 1,000 years or so musical worship really didn’t get going because we had no mass communication or even a way of putting down music on paper. It was all just developing. The first type of music used in worship services, historically, was the chant; music sung by an all male clergy trained and accustomed to singing in this monophonic style and dedicated to the study and performance of “worship” music using very strict rules of interpretation and performance. This Gregorian Chant was carried down through centuries of development. It was not sacred music for the lay person. It was only understood by the trained clergy and, of course, only performed by them. The congregation just listened.. As time went on a second part was added; again using very strict rules of composition. Eventually more and more parts were added until as many as 52 individual parts were used in one composition, hardly something that could be called worshipful for the general congregation. It became and still is music for the performer, really concert music. There is no question that this was great music. The stress was on the horizontal line, each of which was a masterpiece of construction. The culmination of this style of music was in the sixteenth century which is often referred to as the “golden age of the human voice.”

Another observation. Many of you are familiar with the Blue Cloud Abbey in Summit, SD. A few of you might have experienced a mass held at St. John’s University in Collegeville, MN. And finally, Phyl and I attended an Elderhostel week at the Monastery of the Ascension in Jerome, Idaho. All three of these places still use the old style of chant, although not necessarily Gregorian Chant. They have moved into the 21st century (an aspect of change that will come up later) but at the same

time are trying to keep something from the old. They are adapting to change. Blue Cloud Abbey encourages the monks and priests to sing with gusto, but they don't always have the know how to do so. They do have the know how for what the chant is all about. Interestingly they invite outsiders to participate in the Eucharist. The Monastery of the Ascension is about the same. They have a small number of priests assigned there that struggle with the style of the chant but not the purpose. St. John's University, as Ann can attest to, has the best approach. They still do the vespers service with the priests walking slowly into the cubicle reserved for them. They have more priests and so the thrill of hearing them enter, chanting in the old style, is really very exciting, and authentic. I hope they never lose this way of presenting that special service.

During the development of polyphonic vocal music, instruments did come into play. However, they did not have their own body of literature. They had no music except maybe the melodies from the pubs and streets, which, I guess, was appropriate for instrumentalists. In other words, it was secular music. And so what happened was that instruments were often used in place of a vocal line. If a person was missing from a performance, either in church or at a person's home, someone just picked up any instrument, a recorder, stringed instrument, slide trombone, but not the trumpet because at that time the trumpet could only play notes of the harmonic series (valves had not been invented), and played the part without any consideration of the timbre that resulted. They played the vocal music and just transcribed the parts for instruments. As time went on they saw the possibilities of using instruments alone in the church. But, they wanted their own body of literature.

Finally, in the year 1597, a man by the name of Giovanni Gabrieli came on the scene at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice, Italy, and introduced a whole new concept, antiphonal music. He was the modernist of his time. He not only introduced the antiphonal style, he asked for specific

instruments to be used and he asked the performers to play the music using loud and soft dynamics. What a radical idea. But this too was music for the performer, music to accompany the service, music to enlighten the listener. It was not, necessarily, to please God but to please the performer and lay person. So, we have performance for the performer and music for the worship service going on at the same time. I will have to admit that the physical setup of St. Mark's Cathedral facilitated a lot of Gabrieli's ideas. The cathedral was built in the shape of a Greek cross. The balcony provided space for two organs, two choirs and, of course, two conductors. Obviously the clergy and congregation was ready for Gabrieli's ideas. They wanted change. And change they got. This was still performance but it did enhance the worship experience of the congregation. If you play the role of a tourist at St. Mark's Cathedral, and there are many, many who do each day, they have lay people moving around the crowd telling the visitors that the Cathedral is still a house of God and that it should be treated as such. Many people do not understand this and are really quite rude and boisterous. That's very difficult for me to understand because St. Mark's was my shrine. It's a place where all brass players should be required to visit at least once in their lifetime.

Many years ago, when Columbia Records wanted to do a documentary on 33-1/3 recordings of music at St. Mark's Cathedral, it all had to be done at night, when the church was empty. They were grueling sessions because equipment and musicians had to be moved in each evening so that the recording session could be carried out. It took a long time to finish the project but it is still one of the prize recordings in the Columbia library.

The next form used in the worship service was the chorale and the man who developed the form to its highest point was Johann Sebastian Bach. Most Protestants are familiar with this form as it became the epitome of Luther's musical doctrine, the involvement of the congregation in the

worship service and the use of the chorale or hymn tune in major compositions like the cantata. So again, we have music for the lay person, the congregation, and, a more sophisticated music for the performer. To satisfy the music for the lay person it had to be simple with words that the people knew and understood. Often Bach improvised at the organ on a hymn tune that was being taught to the congregation that particular day. He was brilliant, always keeping the melody in the background where the people heard it but didn't know it was even taking place. The music, in its basic, raw form, had to be homophonic, a simple repeating melody with basic chords to support the melody, a vertical approach instead of the earlier horizontal approach. And they loved it. And Bach loved it too making it the backbone of much of his music; as in the cantatas that he wrote, one for every Sunday of the church year for at least five years.

Another personal reflection. An example of the hymn tune style is the Lenten hymn, "Come Sweet Death." Most people are familiar with the Bach harmonization of this hymn. Many have sung it and the non-singers certainly recognize it. Before I came to Augustana I taught at St. Cloud State University. I played in a brass quintet there too. We had an arrangement of "Come Sweet Death" that was not very traditional. It was not the Bach harmonization. It had very "modern" and unusual harmonization, but we liked it. After the first performance, the wife of a faculty member came up to me and asked, "How can you be that sacrilegious?" That was almost 45 years ago. I should have known then that I would always have controversy following me. Could we ask again, "Was that presentation spiritual?"

Many years later, while on tour with the Augustana Brass Choir in Europe we heard of the death of Arden Foss, the well known first band director of the Lincoln High School Band. We played the full brass choir arrangement of the hymn tune "Come Sweet Death," that we had played

at Vespers, of all places, in a very “modern” arrangement that still is a part of the repertoire of the Augustana Brass Choir. It, too, was from the library of Mark Freeh. I case I haven’t mentioned it, Mark Freeh’s background was as a performer in the New York Staff Band of the Salvation Army, a devout Salvationist, and a composer and arranger who really understands the brass instrument family. He has been an ardent backer of the brass music program here at Augustana. My relationship with him started one morning at about 2:00AM when he called me from New York to ask if I had written a letter to a particular record company asking about his arrangements. I had purchased a recording of the Manhattan Brass Choir called “Praise to the Living God” with soloists Clark Terry on trumpet and Urbie Greene on trombone and with Mark conducting. This recording was done to be sold at the Luther League conventions in Dallas and Seattle. They were all sold out at the Dallas site so that none of the recordings were available at the Seattle site. We later had Clark Terry at Augustana as the soloist at our first annual “Jazz on the Upper Great Plains” Festival. The record company had gone bankrupt and it wasn’t until a year after that he received my letter and then called. That call lasted from 2:00AM until 4:00AM. In 1977 I finally met Mark in New York when the brass choir played their at the New York Brass Conference. He is quite a character and firmly rooted in the brass band tradition. I still keep in e-mail contact with him regularly and also, occasionally, by phone.

Back to our short history lesson. From this point on sacred music became very complex again, employing voices, instruments, soloists, and really becoming concert music, hardly a worshipful situation, and yet, it was worship to many people, the innovators.. This was a problem for the next century and a half. As we look back on history we see that music changed from a 90% sacred, 10% secular output to a 90% secular and maybe 10% sacred as far as compositional output

is concerned. At this point I would also like to mention that music history (and I expect global history) started gaining speed. I expect that music, like technology and knowledge, generally, has advanced by leaps and bounds, the great movements appeared in half the time (the first 600 years with everything basically the same, then 300 with many new changes, then 150, then 75 and now at almost 25 years and less). Witness a new hymnal every 25-30 years, I think there is another in the planning stage right now. It's also true in business. Paul van Bockern, an Augie grad, and one of the owners of Minerva's Restaurant here in Sioux Falls, says that you have to remodel every seven years in order to keep your customer base. We cringe at, but also want, change.

Back to our types of worship music. I'm sorry about all my digressions but the experiences are important to our discussion.

It was bound to happen. Concert music and worship music went their own ways. It is interesting to see what happened in the worship field. The beginning of the 20th century was still very conservative and predictable. The hymn tune hung in there as the main staple of the worship service. But the one constant, change, kept working its way into the service. Composers wrote compositions that just had a minor relationship to the worship service; witness David Uber's "Liturgy for Brass Choir." It was exciting music, really meant more for the concert hall, but it does work for prelude or postlude music at a church worship service. Finally, a rhythm section was added to the instrumentation of the brass choir. The bass guitar was probably the biggest change. With the addition of the bass the compositions started to swing. Even the chorale took on a different feel.

I remember the first time we played a Stan Kenton arrangement, again at Christmas Vespers. During the rehearsal, the students, and the choirs again applauded. They loved it. But there was a deep concern from many people. If I remember correctly this was the year following our complex,

little road to Bethlehem. Was this the right kind of music for Vespers? Stan Kenton himself once wrote, “In a modern world, tradition will continue to have meaning only if it adheres to the contemporary demands made upon it. The long established music of the people will cease to commence unless it is geared to the throb and pulsation of life as we know it today and now. The modern religious songs are attempts to meet this need.”

This gave meaning to the worship life of the students. But then we have to remember that the late ‘60's and early ‘70's were the times of the student rebellions. They wanted everything to have meaning for themselves, individually, personally. College students have always been and always will be a pretty self centered part of our society. But how else were they supposed to feel their place in society? It was their time. It is interesting to note that The Lutheran Magazine found that college of fine arts students were most likely to express a high level of religious commitment. These students said they found religion helpful, trusted in a Higher Power, felt loved by God, or followed religious teachings in their everyday lives. Of course the study also found that fine arts and humanities students reported the highest levels of spiritual distress - defined as questioning ones beliefs; feeling unsettled about religious and spiritual matters, struggling to understand evil, suffering and death; feeling angry with God, or feeling disillusioned with their religious upbringing. I guess I feel that their interest in the music with a swing beat was a reflection of this kind of soul searching.

Another personal example, Mark Freeh’s arrangement of “The Lord’s Prayer.” This one was very personal because it meant so much to me. So much in fact that we used it as an unlisted, final encore piece on many years of our traditional spring concert programs. The selection used the Mallotte melody that we are all so familiar with. However, Freeh didn’t use just piano, he used the

entire brass choir with bass guitar and drums. The arrangement used a nice slow beat in the background and built up to this huge climax and then settle down to a final chord that had four trumpets only playing a modern chord using “wow wow” mutes. Freeh told me years later that the number just arranged itself. It was one of the easiest arrangements he ever did and, ironically, the Augustana Brass Choir was the only ensemble that ever played it. When we played the arrangement the first time a lady from Canton who is now a good friend and whose daughter played first trumpet in the brass choir said, “That simply is not right. It is sacrilegious to use it that way.”

Back to the forms. Composers of the twentieth century wrote full blown anthems for brass choir, soloists and congregation (the many works of John Rutter and John Hotchkis bear this out). Everybody got involved. Was this worshipful music? Did God approve? Were we indeed just making ourselves happy or were we making God happy? Finally, we had works with a full blown big band rhythmic feel. Duke Ellington was a very religious person, as was Mahalia Jackson. Jazz and swing were the only kind of expression they knew and understood. And so The Duke wrote religious music for his dance orchestra and Mahalia Jackson sang it. Her rendition of the 23rd psalm is still powerful today. Duke Ellington had asked her to bring her Bible to his apartment. When she arrived he asked her to improvise the psalm on the spot with just piano as a background. She didn't need her Bible for this. Did God approve? Was He pleased?

That brings us up to the current “fad?,” the praise band or whatever you would like to call it. Most congregations just simply call it, “the band.” It is a concept that has broken apart some congregations. It has caused some very strong and decisive feelings, divisive feelings. It was suppose to be the answer to many of the concerns expressed by the advocates of a more “contemporary” worship style. And yet, they suffer from many of the things that they were trying

to “fix,” to get away from: singing the same songs over and over again (like traditionalists sing familiar hymns), many of the forms are repetitious (as are the hymn tunes), simplistic words (hymns were thought to be dull and irrelevant), always the sound of the band (as opposed to the sound of the organ), etc., etc. Does God look down and say, this divisiveness is good? Does he feel that we are working hard at pleasing Him? Is it bringing pleasure to God? If you really want to analyze the movement you will have to say that a lot of the music is for the performer. The ‘inflections’ that the solo singers use are hard for the lay person to understand and they certainly can’t be put down in print; its almost improvisorial. The ‘song book’ is really for the trained singer, not the lay person. Many of the songs have been rote learned by the congregation, as were the hymn tunes. And yet, “they” wanted the music to be easier. We have had people leave the church, change churches, not speak to “the others (them),” or, at the least, talk about the others behind their backs.

If you will permit me I would like to mention some examples from my personal life and our larger community experience that give credence to all types and styles of music in all types of situations.

First of all, worship is the formal part of our praising God. Obviously, this needs to be carried on into the week. Our concern during this session has been the formal, congregational Sunday worship.

1. Those of you who have visited those huge, beautiful cathedrals in Europe or here in the United States, know how awesome it can be. Those builders were building to the glory of God. And then when you hear those mighty pipe organs play in those venues, wow, it is something special. The combination of the venue, the music (choirs, organ and brass), the art work, the stained glass windows, etc. can evoke a mood that can’t be duplicated in any other situation. Can this evoke a

spiritual experience?

2. A number of years ago, the Netherlands held an outdoor mass in connection with a celebration of their freedom that was gained after America liberated them during World War II. It was a very special occasion. They invited the Augustana Brass Choir to be a part of that celebration. The mass included soloists, choirs, and brass that also involved the congregation. You could feel the electricity in the air. Can such a setting provide a spiritual experience?

3. A number of years ago, Steve Wohlfeil brought Farisani, the South African activist, to our campus. The choir sang Paul Riggio's "Disappearing Children" with the composer conducting. The power of that work was something to behold. We had a packed chapel even though the event wasn't highly advertised. Were the people anticipating something special, something spiritual?

4. The angelic boys choirs in England, New Zealand and Australia have a long tradition of excellent singing. The sound is almost unreal, an out-of-this-world impression. What does this do for the listener?

5. The polka masses of Father Frank Perkovich, from Gilbert on the Iron Range of Northern Minnesota, started their own revolution. Father Perkovich has given his congregation, and many others around the Midwest, and right to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, a service that is built around the music that they know and understand; and yes, that they take into the dance halls with them. Father Frank believes that "harps and pipe organs have put more people in limbo than sin and the Reformation." He says accordions give us a better shot at redemption by ushering us on a pilgrimage of joy. He tried to explain that to the attendants at St. Peter's years ago when they detained him and the accordions at the door. The encounter made him uneasy because it was not far from the burial vaults of the martyrs. He was on his way with his musicians from the Iron Range

for a special performance of his polka mass, authorized by the pope himself. He is the only Catholic priest required to show his ID card at the door to St. Peter's Basilica. Is this polka mass wrong? With people who only know this kind of music, can't they have a spiritual experience? Father Frank believes that polka music is fun and innocent. When you are playing it you are saying that one's belief does not have to be gloomy and fearful. What do you think?

6. During one of our European travels with the Brass Choir, it was a Sunday morning so we asked the bus driver to stop in some isolated spot on a country road and there we held our own improvised worship service. The students sang many hymns and even the selections that the choir had sung in their spring concert. The power of this was unbelievable to the bus driver. Our surroundings and the sincerity of the people gathered there certainly created the right atmosphere for a spiritual experience. Sorry, now I'm beginning to answer the questions too.

7. On a similar brass choir, European tour that included Poland, we happened by this beautiful church that was conducting a midday service. The priest led a packed church in singing (they had no organ). We asked if we could watch and our guide said, yes, but she wasn't allowed to go into the church. Even though we couldn't understand what was happening in the service you could feel the deep concern and focused purpose of those Polish people. Was it possible that the congregation inside that church were having a spiritual experience?

8. While on sabbatical leave in Germany for seven months in 1972, we regularly attended services in the evangelische kircke in the small dorf of Lauffen on the Neckar. We couldn't understand a lot but the service was meaningful to us. There was something about the history of this congregation, the venue, the organ and the general atmosphere that made the service special. Were we truly worshipping? Is it possible to have a spiritual experience under these conditions? (Phyl

finally got to the point where she didn't bow her head for the announcements).

9. This past October, while attending a jazz festival in Sun Valley, Idaho, we attended a very interesting church service. The festival has a long history in the area and people are used to unusual approaches to music. During the service a small combo played and sang hymn tunes and original tunes, all with a jazz feel. But there were words with the music, and the jazz feeling. It was interesting to watch the reaction of the congregation. Interestingly, the pastor gave one of the best sermons that I have heard in a long, long time. At what point does a situation like this cease to become novel, and, if at all, provide a spiritual setting?

Finally, number 10. Paul Manz is a church musician and organist par excellence - I've never met him or heard him play but his musical contributions to the liturgy and church service music is legendary. His improvisational playing is legendary. His ability to communicate with his listeners is legendary. Can his listeners have a spiritual experience or do they become too wrapped up in the technical aspects of his playing? Can they divorce his playing ability and technical showmanship from the music? He certainly must have a mesmerizing effect on his listeners.

The Augustana Brass Choir has a long standing custom of playing at the home congregation of the seniors in the group. I talked to the congregation and gave some of the history that we have talked about here today. By the time the brass choir members became seniors they could all have given my talk by memory because they had heard it so many times. I am just sorry that the video of one of those performances, as a matter of fact our last such visit in Northwood, Iowa, and the only one that I have, was not of a good enough quality to play for you today.

Well, I'm sure I have confused all of you by just giving personal examples and not answering any of our earlier questions. The only questions that I have asked over and over are, is this concert

music or is it liturgical music? Is it music for the trained performer or is it for the lay person, the congregation? And, can either be spiritual? Can it be answered at all? Is it all so personal that it can't have an exact answer? Does music have to have words to be spiritual?

This is partly on purpose because, you see, there is another basic question that needs to be asked and I certainly invite your response to this one. That question is, can you have a spiritual experience listening to concert music, concert instrumental music? This is all so personal but it does beg the question. What moves one person to tears can completely bore another. How then do we get answers? Going back to my original premise, will our actions please God?

I personally like and appreciate all styles of worship music, yes, even the polka mass of Father Perkovitch. I naturally have a preference that is a result of my upbringing, my early background and the experiences I have had while teaching, mostly here at Augustana. I'm sure this is true of all of us. If we get right down to it my feelings (and maybe even yours) about all this might be a little bit eclectic because I've gone through a lot of changes in my career and these changes have influenced my thinking and my response to these basic questions. However, one of my main concerns is that our young people will not learn the heritage of our church and so won't understand what these changes are that are taking place. This is also a concern of my good friend Art Olsen who has often talked about this dilemma. My feeling in all of this is that you don't have to like the "modern" ideas. You don't even have to participate in the experience. But I do think that you should let those who feel good in the experience, do it. It has brought many people back into the church and isn't that a start? Even complete families are back in the church today because of this radical movement. With many congregations the church fathers are obviously being more practical. Yes, a large percentage of people in the "contemporary" service are young people, young families,

families with little extra money at the end of the month. And so the church budget takes it on the chin. In essence, the older people in the congregation are supporting this new revolutionary trend. At a recent “blended” service, I heard an older person say, “and that stuff is suppose to be music.” And yet, I’ve also seen many older people at the “contemporary” service and enjoying it.

So, what should we deduct from our dilemma as we look at it historically and in light of the 21st century. First of all, **change is inevitable**. We just can’t get away from it, and, many people indeed do not want to get away from it, some revel in it. When that new hymn book comes out, study it, evaluate it, accept it, but don’t prejudge it.

Secondly, **we are all different** and thank goodness for that. If the recent election hasn’t taught us anything else it should have taught us that we need to learn to get along or we’re all going to go down the tube together. Naturally we all need to have our opinions and ideas and to be able to have a forum to express them. But don’t do it in an atmosphere of hate, like so many people do today. The Christian community especially is in a dangerous position right now. All over the world, from Canada to Europe and yes, I must say, even in the Scandinavian countries, we are losing ground. The Norwegian who spoke on campus recently said that the Norwegians believe in God but don’t depend on Him. Now I’m really digressing. Sorry. So for heavens sake, let’s try to get along in our churches. Let’s accept our differences, learn to understand them and hopefully then, bring us back to a solid worship posture, one where God can say, “Yes, I am pleased with what my people are doing.” Kahlil Gibran once wrote, “There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward. Through the hands of such as these, God speaks, and from behind their eyes, he smiles upon the earth.” Let’s hope that we all can give with such joy and that, that joy can take place in a worship service.

Thirdly, and this is a subject of another complete study, **many people just want solitude**; they don't necessarily want a big music production. Phyl and I attended a Sunday service at a huge big Baptist church in Dallas a few Winters ago. In front they had a huge choir, a seventy piece orchestra, pipe organ, two grand pianos, two people running the sound board and TV screens around the periphery. This was a production, a production that was done well. It's easy to get all involved in the service as a production. But some people, at the least, want and need some time for retrospection, some silence, especially in the church service. Richard Foster in his book, "Celebration of Discipline" says we all need 30 minutes of quiet, every day. We need to be cognizant of the needs of all of our people. We need to worship as the body of Christ, not as individuals doing our own thing. Hopefully we can all arrive at a point where we can recognize the need to help each other grow in our praise and worship of our God. Then, I know, God will be pleased.

Thank you.