

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Clay Morris

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Jon Barry Cory Easley
Hayden Ellis Cole Meador

Prayers

Dee Minter Randy Ellis

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Clay Morris

Song Leader

Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper

Hayden Ellis Cole Meador

Prayers

Rodney Ellis Wendell Mobley

WEDNESDAY

Announcements

Gerald Eaton

Song Leader

Cory Easley

Prayers

Jack Calvert Hayden Ellis

Invitation

Bryan Garlock

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Deacons

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17

Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30

Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16;
1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10

Think On These Things

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God, Music, and Me

Russ Bowman

When I heard the news recently that Aretha Franklin had passed away, I was reminded of a couple of her performances that I particularly enjoy. Her rendition of "Respect" has to be one of the greatest recordings ever, and her performance of "Think" from "The Blues Brothers" is classic. Perhaps such praise might seem strange from a country boy who loves George Jones, Merle Haggard, and Bob Wills, but then my musical tastes have always been a bit eclectic. I grew up surrounded by music. My dad and his brothers performed professionally in the 1950s; my mom and her sisters were good musicians and singers in their own right. Our family sang gospel music driving down the road. We listened to big band stuff; Sinatra and Streisand; 50's rock and roll. When I finally got old enough to have my own radio, it was generally tuned to classic rock from the 60s and 70s, or old twangy country. My dad hated it. Just like I hate the amusical junk that my kids listen to. I

suppose such typifies the generation gap. But I still enjoy music, of almost every kind (I'm listening to classical as I write this).

Music is powerful, and God's attention to such attests to that power. The tabernacle/temple worship of the Mosaic covenant included music (**1 Chron.16,23-28**). The collection of Psalms records the song book of Israel, by which they conveyed the praise and instruction of God from generation to generation. And the NT admonitions regarding music in worship continue that practice of praise and instruction (**Eph.5.18-20; Col.3.15-17**). Music stirs the emotions; inspires us with energy; makes thoughts more memorable (try humming "Jesus Loves Me" without the words popping into your mind). Without a doubt, God expects us to employ music in our work and worship (**1 Cor.14.15; Jas.5.13**).

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Lahron McJunkins, Maxine Burnham, and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Linda Martin is scheduled for surgery in Little Rock on Tuesday. Please keep her in your prayers.

Also, **Cathy Monaghan** and **Beth Ellen Rowland** have had some health issues this past week.

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There has long been a debate among the general “christian” world about the specifics of music in worship, most notably regarding the use of mechanical instruments in worship. Personally, I can find no authority in the NT for the use of such. In fact, I believe that mechanical instruments defy the very purpose of music in the NT. It is the words that are important in the aforementioned passages. Music is a tool for instruction, particularly in **1 Cor.14.15, Eph.5.19, and Col.3.16.** The playing of an instrument simply does not accomplish the direction given in those passages. And that doesn’t begin to discuss the clear trend toward music in worship as pure entertainment. It’s no secret that numerous professional artists have used

“church performance” as a stepping stone to their musical careers, and even the most casual observation must admit that modern worship in most “christian” churches is entertainment centered. Such an evolution is not new, and is almost guaranteed when music in worship is no longer focused upon instruction. When the music becomes more important than the words, performance is inevitable.

With that thought in mind, I’d like to offer an observation or two, with accompanying admonition. It’s not my intention to stir up any grand issue or foment animosity. But it seems to me that the climate of musical entertainment in the general religious world is having some influence even upon those who hold fast to the biblical example of a cappella music.

It is easy to fall into a performance/entertainment mentality even in the absence of mechanical instruments. Increasingly, I hear songs used in worship that are so complicated musically that there is no way to be able to sing the music and still know what is being said by everyone involved. Granted, some of these songs are beautiful when properly performed, but when I’m so consumed with trying to get right the thirty-second notes in the tenor descant that I cannot hear or understand what the altos are saying (not to mention the lead or the bass), then am I really teaching and admonishing? One might argue that when we practice enough, we can learn the songs and focus on the words. Without a doubt, such is true. But I still wonder sometimes if we are choosing songs based upon their sentiment or upon our enjoyment of singing them. And there is an aspect of singing that is truly enjoyable, nor do I propose that

such is wrong. Unless, of course, the performance of the music is more important than the thought of the song. In evidence of this danger, consider the growing popularity of singings among conservative churches of Christ, even while attendance and support of gospel meetings is waning. For many of us, it’s much more fun to sing than to listen to preaching. That should prompt some reflection on our part. It is not unusual, after this observation, that someone takes offense and sarcastically suggests that I would prefer Gregorian chants. I’m suggesting nothing of the kind – merely that we can get so caught up in the singing that we forget the reason God wants us to sing – so that we might “*let the word of Christ dwell in you richly*” (**Col.3.16**) and “*understand what the will of the Lord is*” (**Eph.5.17**). We don’t have to have a band for our music to become more about performance and entertainment than about education.

In that same vein, those who lead should exercise the same caution about their work. A preacher who is serious about his work must be wary of the temptation of performance. As with any rhetoric or oratory, preaching can devolve into performance. Such is true of song leading as well. Those blessed with the ability to direct the singing in public worship would do well to be cautious that their efforts do not become so dramatic, exaggerated, and animated that the leading borders upon performance. Our role is not to draw attention to ourselves and our ability to lead, but to the praise of God and appreciation of His word. In **1 Cor.14.15**, when Paul addresses praying and singing “*with the*

spirit...and understanding”, it is the perversion of such gifts that he is decrying. When we fail of edification, we fail of the proper use of our abilities (**1 Cor.14.1-5,26**). In the present environment of dramatic and sensational worship, some caution seems justified.

Please do not misunderstand my concerns. As a preacher, I have great appreciation for good singing. It’s difficult to teach when the song service has drug out like a funeral dirge. On the other hand, singing that is enthusiastic can make preaching so much easier. There is an element of singing that stirs us. My own suspicion is that such a truth is part of God’s purpose in using music to teach. But like most things, we can easily overemphasize some things to the detriment of others. When we follow the lead of the world around us, and the musical aspect of our worship is more appealing to our senses than it is enhancing to our understanding, then we have perverted God’s worship just as if we had rolled in a piano, drum set, or steel guitar. No matter how good it sounds or how well we perform it, when we fail of God’s ends we are no longer worshipping. We might as well bring in Aretha.

Via focusmagazine.org

Proverbs 10:29 The way of Jehovah is a stronghold to the upright; But it is a destruction to the workers of iniquity.