

WHAT MAKES MUSIC SO POWERFUL?

LESSON 3: THREE PARTS OF MUSIC



Intertwined into the makeup of music is so much science and so much more. The numerous studies many articles that follow have uncovered all manner of fascinating connections, measurable formulas, and unexplainable results. Science has observed that music is powerful, but it has been unable to explain why?

THE WHOLE PACKAGE MATTERS

RHYTHM AND BEAT

In the final Psalm it is not with words that we are called to praise the Lord, but with sounds.

Psalms 150 ~ 1 Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. 2 Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. 3 Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. 4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. 5 Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. 6 Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

Before Miriam began her song, dancing had already begun! Rhythm and beat combined with words to glorify God.

Exodus 15:20-21 ~ 20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. 21 And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

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David's dancing and shouting and trumpet blasts expressed his gladness of heart and gratitude towards God.

2 Samuel 6:12-15 ~ 12 And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obbedom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obbedom into the city of David with gladness. 13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. 14 And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

LYRICS

But words also matter. In each of these examples it was the message within the song that powerfully moves our spirits.

2 Samuel 23:1-2 ~ 1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2 The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

Psalms 42:1-2 ~ To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah. 1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Lamentations 3:21-26 ~ 21 This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. 22 It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. 24 The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. 25 The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. 26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

Revelation 15:3-4 ~ 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.

MELODY, HARMONY, AND MUSICAL EXCELLENCE

Both in his written words and instrumentation, David was *skilled* and *sweet*.

The musician is judged not only by his knowledge of the elements of music, nor simply in how well he can combine these. But can he or she through both the *composition* and *execution* of the music move us?

2 Samuel 23:1-2 ~ 1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2 The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

1 Samuel 16:14-23 ~ 14 But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. 15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. 16 Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp...

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THE MANY PARTS OF US

There is much theological debate about how many parts make up people. Common explanations of our makeup is that we are...

- two parts – material and spiritual
- three parts – body, soul, and spirit
- three parts – intellect (mind), emotion (heart), and will (soul)
- three parts – mental, physical, spiritual

The scripture often speaks about the many parts of man:

Matthew 22:37-40 ~ 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Mark 12:29-31 ~ 29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. 31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. [cf. Luke 10:26-28]

Hebrews 4:12 ~ For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

These passages do not directly address music, but they do indicate something about how we are made, and I believe that music speaks to these aspects of our nature:

RHYTHM AND BEAT CERTAINLY AFFECT OUR BODIES

LYRICS EASILY COMMUNICATE WITH OUR MINDS

BUT MELODY, HARMONY, AND MUSICAL EXCELLENCE?

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The following text mentions several aspects of our music: mental understanding, spiritual sincerity, and theological integrity.

Ephesians 5:17-21 ~ 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. 18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; 21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Music is so powerful because it is a language that communicates with our entire person.