

# Themes to be Wary of in Christian Music

- **Overly familiar language** toward God and His Son. God/Jesus as a 'buddy'
  - *'you're the best!', 'cuz you're just so amazing!', 'cuz I just wanna be close to you', 'Me an' J.C.'*
- Overemphasis on the **experiences, feelings, or struggles of the individual**, rather than God. Look for disproportionate use of **personal pronouns**.
- Appealing to God's **unconditional love**, presence, help, rather than appreciating that a proper approach is required before God hears or responds.
  - *'No matter what I can always count on your love', 'You love us way too much', 'You take me as I am'*
- **Overemphasis on Jesus**, with God as an afterthought (cp. **Trinitarianism**).
  - Bulk of songs either directly to Jesus, interchange Jesus/God, or misattribute passages/characteristics, etc.
  - *'My God... shed his blood', 'Jesus my God', etc.*
- **Absence of God's word** as the transforming power in our lives. (cp. *current work of the Holy Spirit*). I.e., entire songs about the need to be changed, renewed, reformed – yet no reference to the mechanism (the word), only God's love and/or Holy Spirit.
- **Sentimentality** – a love of emotion and feeling, particularly the emotions of the individual; often takes form of **romanticism**. A manufacturing of emotion for emotion's sake, rather than the heartfelt response of understanding.
  - *'Hold me close', 'your love washes over me', 'your love completes me', 'Your grace is all I need', 'Only your love saves me', 'Let me lean on you'*
- The **present working of the Holy Spirit** working directly in the life of the believer.
  - *'your spirit moves me/teaches me/lives in me', 'blaze spirit, blaze – set our hearts on fire', 'live in me', 'we feel your presence moving near',*
- **Lyrics either unbiblical**, or else only *vaguely related* to the passages they claim to be based on. This is particularly true of Christian Rock, where only extremely loose connections to Biblical themes can be claimed.
- **Christ's sacrifice / Atonement**
  - **Substitutionary** atonement - *'you died instead/took my place', 'he paid the debt I owe'*
  - Overemphasis on the **individual** – *'you died to save me', 'you loved me so much', 'I can't believe you did it all for me'*
  - **Adoration of the cross** – rather than Christ's perfect life that preceded it. *'When I think of the cross', 'Your blood washed my sins away', 'Were you there when they crucified my Lord?'*
  - Emphasis on **human salvation** and not **God manifestation**. *'You just want to save me', 'You take me just as I am'*
- **Absence of important doctrines** – Christian music is based on a gospel with both false and neglected doctrines. Absence of hymns related to (eg) Israel, God-manifestation, prophecy, deeper understanding of (eg) nature of God, Christ, man, forgiveness, faith-works, righteousness, etc.
- Repetition of simple or shallow themes, often when building an emotional response.
  - *'Thankyou Jesus...', 'Hallelujah...', 'I could sing of your love forever...'*