

Guiding Principles for Music in Worship

Those who select music for the distinctive purposes of this Church must exercise a high degree of discrimination in its choice and in its use. In their endeavors to meet these ideals, more than human wisdom is needed. Turning then to revelation for guidance, the following general principles are revealed:

The music should:

1. Bring glory to God and assist us in acceptably worshiping Him (1 Cor 10:31).
2. Ennoble, uplift, and purify the Christian's thoughts (Phil 4:8; Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 594).
3. Effectively influence the Christian in the development of Christ's character in his life and in that of others (MS 57, 1906).
4. Have a text (words, lyric, message] which is in harmony with the scriptural teachings of the Church (Review and Herald. June 6, 1912).
5. Reveal a compatibility between the message conveyed by the words and the music, avoiding a mixture of the sacred and the profane.
6. Shun theatricality and prideful display (Evangelism, p. 137; Review and Herald, November 30, 1900).
7. Give precedence to the message of the text, which should not be overpowered by accompanying musical elements (Gospel Workers, pp. 357-358).
8. Maintain a judicious balance of the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual elements (Review and Herald, November 14, 1899).
9. Never compromise high principles of dignity and excellence in efforts to reach people just where they are (Testimonies for the Church, 9:143; Evangelism, p. 137).
10. Be appropriate for the occasion, the setting, and the audience for which it is intended (Evangelism, pp. 507-508).