

Music in the Home: Satan's Music Structure

II Corinthians 2:11 “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

In “The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll” on page 14, Charlie Gillett quotes famous music star Bill Haley as saying, “I felt that if I could take a... tune and drop the first and third beats and accentuate the second and fourth, and add a beat the listeners could clap to as well as dance this would be what they were after.”

Satan always gets an advantage over God's people when they become ignorant of his devices. We are not supposed to be. Paul in our text assumes the average believer won't be. With the Word of God outside of us and the Spirit of God inside of us working together, we can “try the spirits whether they are of God.” (I Jn. 4:1) Satan's devices include deception and distortion both of which he uses when it comes to music. We'll notice Satan's deception more fully in upcoming articles dealing with CCM and most of Southern Gospel. For now, let's focus on Satan's distortion of music.

Previously in “Tri-part God, Man, and Music”, we noticed that God created and organized music with 3 main parts: melody, harmony, and rhythm. In good, godly music, melody is prominent, harmony the ornament, and rhythm the assistant. **In wrong, worldly music, Satan has distorted God's music to make rhythm the dictator, melody to be dormant, and harmony to be in disagreement and at odds with the melody.** One of the most obvious ways to discern Satan's distortion is the dictating beat of the drums or rhythmic guitar.

We started this article with a quote from the wicked musician Bill Haley. He revealed how man has changed music's rhythm. **The proper God-ordained method is to accentuate the first beat of a measure and the third beat of a measure.** (Study basic music theory if you want to learn more about measures, time signatures, etc....) When you see a song leader in church wave his hands, there is a purpose to it. A trained song leader/choir director/orchestral conductor is waving his hands to the proper rhythm of a song as determined by the time signature written on the sheet music. (You can look at the top left corner of sheet music/hymn to see a time signature: 3/4, 4/4, etc...) However, **Satan has distorted the natural rhythm to an unnatural accent on the second and last beat of a measure.** This is called by different terms like **back beat**, **syncopation**, or **anapestic beat**. (Don't just skim these words. Study these terms more fully if needed. II Tim. 2:15) The now dead pop star, Chuck Berry, stated, “I dig that rock and roll music; it has a back beat; you can't lose it.” **Since nearly all rock, country, pop, easy listening, rap, etc... has its roots in rock'n roll, nearly all secular music today uses Satan's distorted syncopation.** If the majority or entirety of a song skips the first and last beats, you have a syncopated song contrary to God's universal rhythm. **Even a lot of recent classical music written for Hollywood movies is written with an anapestic rhythm.**

The other parts to music, melody and harmony, have also been distorted according to Satan's devices. **A lot of music today uses different styles like discordant chords or jazz notes or atonality.** (Don't just skim these words. Study these terms more fully if needed. II Tim. 2:15) These practices distort the natural feel of chords. **Even teachers of these methods will mention that jazz chords, etc... don't sound natural or feel natural at first.**

I can attest in my own life as a musician that once the body becomes acclimated to hearing and playing these chords and rhythms, it is really difficult to go back to God's ordained method of music. **Syncopation messed up my timing as a song leader. I and many believers become so adjusted to discordant chords that when we hear God's music like old-fashioned hymns we don't like singing them!** This is probably why many believers choose the back beat and discordant chords of CCM and present-day Southern Gospel. **Even most youth today do not hear proper chords and rhythms because their piano books, instrument lessons, and music teachers continue to teach syncopation, jazz chords, etc....** Now, praise the Lord, by His grace, He has enabled my music tastes to change to godly music, but without God, it seemed impossible to change. God can change yours as well. This is an extremely important matter that you need to make time to study.