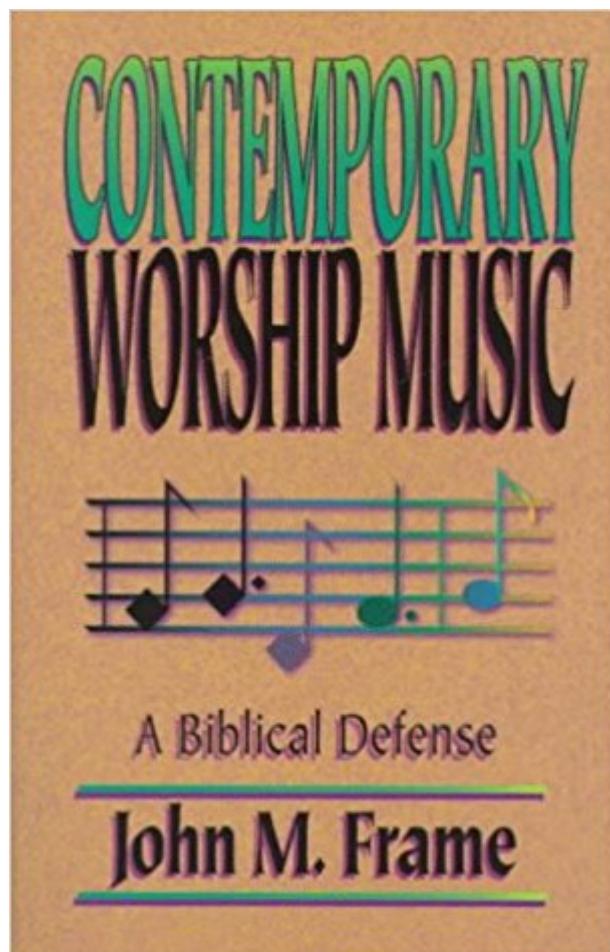


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Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defense



Synopsis

Contemporary Christian music has an increasing yet controversial influence on church worship today. This book discusses the topic from a biblical viewpoint and makes a case for using contemporary music in worship -- with theological integrity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How does a Presbyterian, committed to the confessional standards of Presbyterianism and the regulative principle of worship, defend the use of modern contemporary worship music (CWM)? To find out, read this book. It became clear in reading this book there is a deeper more fundamental issue driving John Frame's discussion of the issues and controversy that surrounds CWM. At different points in the book he clearly states such is the case, and in the 2nd appendix at the end of the book, he specifically articulates that fundamental concern. In that appendix Frame calls for approaching issues from a basis in Biblical theology. This is to be in contrast with appeals to confessional systematic and historical theology that makes theological tradition equal to Scripture, and refuses to weigh those traditions against the Reformation principle of Sola Scriptura. I confess to a certain sympathy with that principle, though I'm not ready to say that I would necessarily come to the same conclusions as Frame has regarding the issues of CWM. That sympathy comes from personally witnessing the systematic or historical theological approach used in preaching or teaching, and coming away with the feeling that my conscience was not carried in the way or to the degree I thought it should be if such indeed was the Word of God. My Evangelical friends will not

have their conscience carried by my appeals to a confession they are not familiar with or do not agree with. Scripture alone is what will ultimately carry their conscience. In browsing some of the reviews of this book found on the WWW, I find that Frame's critics tend to not meet him on the basis of Scripture, but on the basis of historical theology or tradition.

Frame's work is both a relic and a roadmap in the debate on worship that still smolders in certain circles of Christendom to this day. Frame's work is a relic in the sense that it views the scene of the worship wars from the perspective of the mid 90's. Although the span of time that separates this review from the writing is relatively short, the strides that have been made in contemporary worship have been great. Frame looked out at the burgeoning contemporary worship of his day with some weaknesses and challenges, and pronounces that it is worthy for the worship of God. At times the writer struggles with the evidence as to the repetitiveness or shallowness of the music, and finds creative answers to these critiques. The author struggles with the connection of contemporary worship to the burgeoning "church growth" movement of his day by attempting to find a balance on the issues at hand (e.g. pragmatism). Arguments such as these have, thankfully, faded into the past as contemporary worship has moved from its infancy into maturity. Frame's work also serves as a roadmap. One of his most insightful contributions in the work is his critique of contemporary worship. His valuable points made at the end of chapter 10 (126-127) have, whether wittingly or unwittingly, served as a roadmap for contemporary worship over the last decade. It has become more "thoughtful" with better texts and melodies (e.g. Townend and Getty). It has broadened and deepened its doctrinal content. It is being used less as entertainment and more as worship. Its defenders are fairer to those who still retain traditional worship. In these and many other ways, contemporary worship has thankfully reached a much more mature state in the manners laid out in this work.

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