

# ON CREATION 2010 – “Contemporary Christian Music Sways Youth to Worldly Lifestyles, Doctrinal Confusion and New Age Spirituality”

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**LTRP Note:** We believe the following commentary is thought-provoking and useful in further understanding the methods of the new spirituality. Keep in mind that a growing number of Christian musicians are becoming involved in the contemplative emerging movement.

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**A Commentary**

Maybe you've noticed the difference on some of the Christian radio stations – how that songs lifting up Jesus Christ are blended with many others that sometimes make you scratch your head and wonder: “What are they actually saying?” or “Is that biblical?” or “This sounds a lot like ... [insert name of secular band here].”

Vague and indistinguishable lyrics are sometimes yelled (or whined, or moaned) amidst raw electric guitar chords, emotional electronica, and mind-numbing freight train drum beats moving at break-neck speeds. Other times young men and women rap and hip-hop their way into frenzy. Some sing ballads about their doubt and confusion to the tune of sorrowful violins and piano solos, synthesized to be as hauntingly sad as possible. Once in a while words like “forgiveness,” “justice,” “peace,” “save,” “love” and “God” show up. Much of the time, it's hard to tell if it's a Christian singing or not; hence some songs have been granted play-time on secular radio rotations too.

Given the power that music has, especially (but not limited to) the youth, could it be that this is one of the most powerful “tools” used to propagate the deceptions of the emergent, seeker-sensitive, and New Age movements? Movements, which often claim Christ, but deny the Word? It only stands to reason that “another Jesus” would demand its own worship, being a tool to edify an erroneous faith. Is this it?

With the (almost indistinguishable) similarities between much of this music and the world's music, as well as the questionable convictions behind the lyrics, questions must be asked. Millions of listeners and listener's dollars are actively purchasing, supporting, and giving over their minds to this music.

Not long ago I opened my mailbox and found a large, multi-page newspaper advertisement for an event called “[Creation 2010](#).” I still get mailings like this from my former years as a very naïve, “all-is-well if it has the word ‘Christian’ attached to it” years. I signed my name and address on all kinds of ministry lists, attended mega conferences (featuring surprise guests like U2, and Rick Warren). I donated to what I thought were “missions,” and even participated in leadership groups. Now I know better.

Years later, the advertisements and invitations still trickle in from these and other sources (apparently they thought it was okay to pass around my information). But I'm not upset. Getting these kinds of mailings lets me know what's going on “out there” in this world so full of traps and deceptions. It also reminds me that many are still taking part, some for the very first time, as I once did not that long ago.

Creation 2010 boasts as being the nation's largest Christian Music Festivals. It has on the surface, an innocent mission. “To worship the creator,” promote Jesus Christ, and minister to young people through music, camping, teaching, fellowship, and baptism. We do need all of that! But is it all that it seems?

Amidst schedules, photographs, seminars, and advertisements for humanitarian causes (fighting AIDS, hunger, and aiding the third world), we find that the event is also featuring big names in the Christian music industry. Groups like [Toby Mac](#), Newsboys, Casting Crowns, and [contemplative promoting] David Crowder are all joining in, marking this as a *major* Christian event, which will draw enormous crowds.

In addition to the big names, there are many included on the schedule that I've never heard of (which isn't saying much; I'm not exactly "in the loop"). Bands like Family Force 5, Tenth Avenue North, Skillet, Thousand Foot Krutch, Red, Downhere, Remedy Drive, Reilly, Abandon, Kari Jobe, KJ-52, Chris & Conrad, John Mark McMillan, Francesca Battistelli, Israel Houghton, Unhindered, Sons of Day, December Radio, and Carlos Whittaker.

On the "Side Stage" there will be bands like The Classic Crime, Oh Sleeper, Sleeping Giant, Brian "Head" Welch, Superchick, Group 1 Crew, House of Heroes, R-Swift, The Letter Black, Secret & Whisper, Seabird, Thi'sl, B. Reith, Jason, Young Joshua, We As Human.

Intrigued, I took the time to read the pamphlet's summaries posted for the "Main Stage" artists. Some of them seemed fairly benign. But a few really jumped out. Tenth Avenue North, for example, claimed to have "all come from church backgrounds and families, **and therefore**, are not satisfied saying the **same old things** in the **same old ways**" (emphasis mine). "What they're hoping for with the music they are making is to not just entertain people. They want people to **encounter** faith. They desire to be [sic] cut to the heart and be honest, genuine, and faithful to what **they** believe is truth."

I see three things happening here. First, these individuals are telling people that being raised in a Christian home automatically equates to stagnancy and an un-genuine faith. Second, they are attempting to make music to help people "encounter" faith. Is this different from "having" it, as the Bible says?

While it's no secret that much of the organized Christian church in America is lukewarm at best, and totally apostatized at worst, I think it's obvious that the faux spirituality of dry denominationalism is what's really wrong. However, the simple remedy to unbelief, is belief, which happens as the *Holy Spirit* draws us ([1 Corinthians 2:10-11](#)), and not anything else. *Especially* not anything that forsakes the "old way!" Is that, I wonder, what they mean when they qualify the concept of "truth" with the statement "what they believe to be." (As if there could be more than one version!)

That might be presumptuous to infer. But maybe not. Reading further, I found that the same idea expressed by Tenth Avenue North, regarding Christianity's "problem," is shared by Sons of Day, a Ukrainian band who came to the US in 1992. They found that "In this country Americans are unresponsive to the Gospel if it is told from the same perspective all the time." (What perspective they're talking about I'm still not *exactly* sure. If it's the perspective of the Bible and that of a believer, then I don't see a problem, except that the hearts of many Americans have hardened.)

Family Force 5 seeks to remedy the problem of people being "turned off" by the Gospel, by using elements of rap, post-hardcore, alternative rock, punk rock, and **club oriented** crunk, electropunk, electronica and nu mental, with "positive, **party lyrics** in their music..." (emphasis mine) to draw in the crowds. Very "post-modern" don't you think?

Sons of Day says: "We want to make music that is for God, but at the same time, we want to make music that people enjoy and that they're not turned off by." Switchfoot takes this a step further by boldly stating that "Calling us 'Christian rock' tends to be a box that closes some people out. Music has always opened my mind – and that's what we want."

I realize that these little snippets are just that, little snippets. But, it's not without its context. Looking directly at the fruit of world-oriented "Christian" bands, especially ones that scream a lot, you know these aren't innocuous

statements. They mean what they say. People walk away from expensive concerts as if they would from a secular one: the *same* as they were before... except maybe partially deaf. So where is the theology behind this coming from?

If you'll notice, a common thread among the statements issued to "summarize" these bands' makeup and mission, seems to be a desire to "shatter" the perverted ideas surrounding what being a "Christian" is all about, and present the Gospel in a "new way." They proclaim to desire to renew and revitalize the church. This is very tricky because, as I said earlier, the church is in desperate need of renewal. The question is: is that what's being accomplished? Are people coming to the Cross?

Many of these bands are attempting to bring Jesus in "by the back door," by choosing not to mention His name, but singing about forgiveness in general. This kind of method, however, will only *feed* the distortions of today, and increase the confusion.

Whereas the Holy Spirit brings clarity (the opposite of confusion), seeker-sensitive methods that avoid confrontation at all cost, only bring haze. Common sense and the Word of God would tell you that! Clearly, the Gospel doesn't belong in the shadows of the background, nor should it be relegating it to a mere "suggestion" that is buried underneath much noise and personal "thoughts" in lyric form. This only invites perversion. Christians must come to grips with this reality. Even while the "premise" might be valid (these "Christian rock" bands claim to be using the music to reach the lost), it is those same methods they are employing to "mend" the spiritual disconnect that are causing grave problems.

As a sterling example, [Switchfoot](#) never shares a clear biblical Gospel message in their music. Instead of giving their talents to the Lord to become instruments of righteousness, they have created their own "version" of serving the Lord. It is simple. When the "seeker" doesn't receive the uncompromised Word of God, how can he or she come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? In fact, the watering down "in His name" only makes it that much easier for people be led off in the wrong direction, *away* from Jesus, (all the while thinking that they are coming *to* Him in some way). This, dear readers, is the most dangerous place of all.

By making statements about inclusiveness and "open-mindedness," Switchfoot is ambiguous enough to appeal to some professing Christians *and* non-Christians. It jives with pluralists who like the idea of God, but hate the idea of Jesus being the "only way." At the same time, it appeals to the confused Christian who thinks that hiding Jesus Christ and conforming to the world's "norms" are the best ways to reach the world. For Switchfoot, this position is the "best of both worlds"... for the pocketbook anyway.

To be frank, what many of these bands really seem to want, is to be able to claim Christianity, whilst still being in and of the world. Much of the modern "Christian" music industry is evidencing rudiments of the world as the foundation, rather than the Rock of all ages. In attempting to bring a "new spin" on what it means to be Christian, artists have spun themselves right into false doctrine, and in so-doing became part of the problem.

Some artists don't realize exactly what they're doing. Some may be new believers or perhaps are unsure of what they actually believe (and no wonder in this environment)! Being thus, it would be easy to get up in the greater movements that call themselves "Christian."

Young people are particularly vulnerable to deception, thinking that its "right" simply because it is popular, has a snazzy looking Christian veneer, or everyone they know (including their parents, and *church leadership*) is involved. We learn, after all, by seeing and hearing, and this music is marketed toward the youth. Creation 2010 appears to be geared even for very young children, with puppet shows and other acts as well.

One young artist, Francesca Battistelli, who is also scheduled to perform on the fourth and last day of Creation 2010, states part of her mission as bringing "something authentic to the scene that even non-Christians could

listen to.” Again, the same thing is echoed over and over. Bring the world into your music, and the world will accept the bits of truth that might be in it.

If I could talk to Francesca, I’d lovingly tell her that the unconverted *can* listen to anything. But what they *like* to listen to is much different from what they *need* to listen to. We ourselves don’t have the power to convert a soul. No “non-threatening” lyric, catchy melody or “fashionable” cover art is going to affect any change.

The truth is, God doesn’t need “entertainment” to draw people to Himself! If people wanted to go to a club, they’d go to a club. If people wanted to hang in a coffee house and tickle their ears, they can. But Christians shouldn’t be the ones on stage doing the tickling!

Scripture shows the music is spiritual. Jesus said, “**But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.**” ([John 4:23-24](#))

Christians gifted in music need to know that their music is, by its very nature, spiritual. Before the first note ever leaves a singer’s lips, there is a spirit behind it, *producing* it. What you must be able to do as a Christian, in order to affect any “change” for Christ, is to discern when you are entertaining *the spirits in the world*, or if you are worshiping “in spirit and truth,” through the power of the Holy Spirit. The difference is vast. God the Holy Spirit is the *only One* who can move people to conviction through you. The world *needs* the Holy Spirit, not its own, and not your own.

Music that evokes booty shaking, head banging, or, as December Radio put it “an adrenalin-fueled rock spectacle,” neither glorifies God nor is pleasing to Him, and nor can it touch the heart of a dying soul in need of the blood of Jesus Christ. Again, you *don’t get saved* under the influence of the spirits in this world. It’s God’s Spirit alone, and He is sufficient to do the Work.

Worldly music and worldly messages (which *imitate* the world) don’t offer the world anything different than what they can get anywhere. Yet, that’s exactly where much of the Christian music industry (and many “churches” too) have tried to recreate. They’ve gone in the seeker-sensitive direction, with staggeringly disastrous results!

To be blunt, the world doesn’t need any more of what its already got. Satanic and self-glorifying songs are prevalent enough. They don’t need Christians to become “like that,” and water-down the message either. What they desperately need is the same old Gospel the apostles preached, in the same way that God anointed from the beginning, from people who aren’t afraid to stand for it even at the risk of appearing “uncool” or “unfashionable” according to the Hollywood standard. Why should we take our cues from Hollywood anyway?

This issue is really quite simple. We are to avoid even *the appearance* of evil ([1 Thessalonians 5:22](#)). We are to glorify God, not ourselves ([Galatians 6:14](#)). We are to live by the Word of God ([Luke 4:4](#)), separated unto Him ([2 Corinthians 6:17](#)), casting off the “old man,” and living as the new ([Romans 6:6-11](#), [Colossians 3:9-10](#)).

By trying to play chameleon, many of these contemporary “Christian” bands are influencing young people in the wrong direction, even in some cases, into the clutches of the emergent church. Take Carlos “Ios” Whittaker for example.

His profile reads: “Carlos Whittaker is an artist, pastor, thinker, experience architect and Web 2.0 junkie. His passion for leading the church into a relational worship experience every Sunday was his heart’s goal. Recently, Carlos signed with Integrity Music to pursue a recording career and to continue to disturb the Church as a whole. Carlos lives to ignite a movement of authenticity among all generations of Christians that morphs the face of the evangelical church into a place of being real with yourself.”

Suspecting that this man may be part of the emergent movement, I decided to do some research and find out just where he was coming from, and what exactly he is attempting to “morph” the church into.

I came upon his blog, where quotes from New Age “theologian” Thomas Merton and emergent leader Rick Warren surfaced in page after page. Interviews with (and dreams of) Mark Driscoll, another young emergent founder, pepper the blog. Whittaker acts as a “minister” by opening up each entry to discussion, where he spurs conversation among readers, injecting his subtle emergent theology... where doors are *many* and “rules” are *malleable*.

Whittaker, a long-time close friend of Rick Warren’s, even took part in blogging for an unadvertised by-invitation-only “stealth leaders conference” at Saddleback Church, where leaders came together from all corners to discuss “ministry” and further their plots to engineer “world transformation,” (no doubt via with emphasis on the P.E.A.C.E. plan). Whittaker is obviously no stranger to social engineering, the social gospel, Christian psychology, and the confusion that is emergent “Christianity.”

I listened to samples of his songs online and heard nothing out of the ordinary. If I were listening to this five years ago I might have even liked it. But knowing better than to passively allow the spirit of the music do whatever it wanted with my emotions, I listened to it with a discerning ear of detached observation, as one should when approaching “New Age” contemporary Christian music. That’s when I realized something.

Were it not for the hypnotic beat (which has been a tool of Satan for ages) and the swells of the diatonic chord progression (which are designed to keep the listener in a perpetual state of suspense, and sometimes even induce a drug-like euphoria...), the song wouldn’t really be anything at all. Words are repeated, they are vague, and the message could be interpreted many ways. But here’s where the danger lies. Young people probably won’t know exactly what is going on theologically, just by listening to songs like “Rain it Down,” “Jesus Saves” and “We Will Worship You.” Elements of truth are used in the deception occurring behind the music.

To most professing Christians today, emergent worship music might *sound good*, but look a little deeper into the people behind them, and you’ll find a very different story... one where the Word isn’t really the ultimate authority, and where drug abuse, smoking, swearing, rebellion, participation in paganism, and even homosexuality aren’t necessarily sins. Where doctrinal error is not exposed but created, and what has been dubbed the “post modern worldview” becomes the new view of “the church.” All religions lead to God, so they say. But while claiming Christ with their lips, they have made themselves their own gods. And young people are diving in and worshipping with men and women who believe this new faith.

Creation 2010 might be a noble concept, and some leaders and participants will, no doubt, approach it with innocence in a right attitude and heart. Some children may indeed hear the Gospel from people with genuine faith, and some may give their hearts to the Lord. However, mixed and mingled with things deemed “acceptable” are also things which are not, and it so happens that many of them are on stage.

The spiritual *end* of the emergent church is death to the things of God, its fruits, and even to His mighty salvation. This is not something that can be ignored or shrugged off. We can’t keep silent. The source of the spirit of deception knows that in order to achieve the goal, it must all go down tastelessly silently, and undetected, so that once it’s in the body it can accomplish its ultimate end.

So it seems that the greatest danger to the church is actually *in* the church. Now, more than ever before, we need to speak up. Ridding with what appears to have a semblance of truth is a spirit that is false. A wolf in sheep’s clothing. Even in this much-loved music. This is why every voice counts. Especially yours. Souls depend on it.

“Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.” (1 John 4:1)

“But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” (*John 4:23-24*)

“Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” (*John 14:6*)

“And Jesus Christ was revealed as God's Son by his baptism in water and by shedding his blood on the cross\*—not by water only, but by water and blood. And the Spirit, who is truth, confirms it with his testimony.” (*1 John 5:6*)

“Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him,” (*Ephesians 4:21*)

“You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord's Table and at the table of demons, too.” (*1 Corinthians 10:21*)

“This false teaching is like a little yeast that spreads through the whole batch of dough!” (*Galatians 5:9*)

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