





Art, Music, and Politics

Foreword	ii
Worldview Tree Introduction	2
I. A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW IN THE ARTS	4
Art	4
Music	11
Literature	14
II. A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW IN POLITICS	19
Civil Government	19
Christian Involvement	25
GLOSSARY	32
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES	33



Foreword

Foundations for Living is a ten-unit elective for high school students, providing the biblical basis and historical development of the Christian worldview. Fundamental truths and principles from the Bible are used to apply the Christian worldview to a range of contemporary issues from family life to art, music, and politics.

Gathering all of a student's education into a unified whole, this course assists contemporary teenagers in recognizing the value of Christian truth. As teenagers discern the differences between Christian and non-Christian worldviews, they will be better equipped for their new adventures in life beyond high school.

Foundations for Living contains the following units. The specific unit you will be studying next is highlighted below.

Unit 1 – What Is a Biblical Worldview?

Unit 2 – Presuppositions

Unit 3 – The Doctrines of the Bible

Unit 4 – God's Creation

Unit 5 – The Family

Unit 6 – The Bible and Marriage

Unit 7 – Dating to Matrimony

Unit 8 – Christian Education

Unit 9 – Art, Music, and Politics

Unit 10 – Putting It All Together

NOTE: All vocabulary words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in the text. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given in the Glossary.

Author:

Douglas B. Mills, Th.M., Ph.D.

Editors:

Maynard C. Mostrom, B.A., M.Div, S.T.M.

Peggy L. Warwick, B.A.

Jennifer L. Davis, B.S.

Art Director:

Greg L. Osborne, A.A.

Illustrator:

David M. Rabbitte, A.A.

Layout and Graphics:

Kyle R. Bennett, A.S.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

All trademarks and/or service marks referenced in this material are the property of their respective owners. Alpha Omega Publications, Inc. makes no claim of ownership to any trademarks and/or service marks other than their own and their affiliates', and makes no claim of affiliation to any companies whose trademarks may be listed in this material, other than their own.

Cover: Earth photo courtesy of NASA

Images of Martin Luther, Isaac Watts, and John Bunyan courtesy of Christian Theological Seminary

Art, Music, and Politics

This unit is divided into two major parts. The first focuses on the fine arts—music, art, and literature. This is a topic with which everyone is involved to some degree. At this point in your life, you are developing many of your own tastes and interests. You may have already noticed that some of your preferences are different from those of your parents and others that are older than you. You are probably also aware that music and art vary from culture to culture. Such differences range from subtle to extreme. Subtle differences exist between certain styles of music within our culture, while extreme differences exist between western music and art and music and art from other parts of the world. Is personal taste the only guide we have for developing our own preferences? Is there a guide for determining good art and music from bad, in the moral sense of those words? Does the Bible address this subject?

The second part of this unit discusses politics. All people on earth are affected by the politics of their own country, as well as those of other countries in the world. Our laws, rights, freedoms, economy, and our entire culture are affected by the politics of our nation. In the United States, elected officials most often determine such matters.

Some of you may already be of legal voting age. Others soon will be. What is our part in the political process of our culture? When we go to the polls to vote, how do we know which candidate to select? How do we know if our government officials are doing a good job? When we read the newspaper or watch a news broadcast informing us of recent political activities, how do we know if they are good or bad? Does Scripture address such issues?

In previous units, you learned that the Bible addresses every area of life. When one has a biblical worldview, she/he views the arts and politics according to what Scripture teaches. This is difficult for many, including Christians, because these two topics seem so “worldly.” Many people believe that religion, art, and politics are three totally distinct issues. They believe that it is possible to have certain religious principles but that these principles have nothing to do with the arts or with politics. However, quite the opposite is true. People of similar religious convictions tend to have similar opinions about art and politics. This does not mean they will have the same taste in art and music, or that they will necessarily vote for the same candidate, but their reasoning concerning the arts and politics will be very similar.

The Worldviews Presented in this Unit



Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC®.

When you complete this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

- Recognize the effects of art on society.
- Appraise art according to scriptural guidelines.
- Learn what Scripture says about our political responsibilities.
- Determine how we can be most effective politically.

The Worldview Tree

Before you read your first section, we would like to introduce you to the “Worldview Tree,” a recurring visual metaphor that will unify and explain the entire curriculum. It teaches that our actions do not occur randomly; rather, they are the natural results of our beliefs and presuppositions. Therefore, what we believe and think truly does make a difference! This is how it works (see the opposite page for the chart).

The Worldview Tree illustrates how a **culture** develops within a particular **civilization**. This process begins in the soil with **presuppositions**, which move up a root system into the trunk of the tree. Once above ground, the **worldview** affects one’s perspectives on life and directs one’s choices. These choices manifest themselves in a variety of activities, which are repeated over time as an ongoing **heritage**, passed from one generation to the next.

There are four successive steps that lead to a developed culture. The first step is **believing**, followed by **thinking** (or, in the case of Postmodernism, **feeling**). The process moves to **seeing**, and this leads through choices to **doing**. These steps of human progress illustrate how internal ideas lead to external actions.

Each time a Worldview Tree is displayed, its structure remains essentially the same, while its content follows the information in each unit and is represented by the **roots** (boxes in the lower portion of the ground) and the **fruit** (which are located on or near the tree). This content demonstrates how a variety of topics all follow a similar path of development from foundational beliefs (roots) to behavior (fruit).

There are two basic worldviews, God’s and Man’s. **God’s Worldview** is depicted with bright green leaves and healthy red fruit. **Man’s Worldview** is depicted with dull brown leaves and decaying purple fruit. Within **Man’s Worldview**, there are two variations: a single tree represents a single worldview and multiple trees represent a plurality of sub-worldviews (as with Postmodernism, which will begin in Unit 4). Each Worldview Tree asks a thought-provoking question and provides space for your answer.

Historically, these two worldviews (God’s and Man’s) developed over four periods of time as depicted in the pullout chart and provide a picture of the ongoing differences between the Christian and non-Christian perspectives on the origin, history and destiny of humanity.

WORLDVIEW TREE LOCATIONS

Contemporary Christianity	30
Postmodernism	31

Believing



**THINKING
FEELING**

Civilization: Locations that display worldviews

Fruit: Resulting behavior



Culture: Activities that express a worldview

Roots: Foundational beliefs

Worldview: A comprehensive view of life

Presuppositions: Beliefs that develop a worldview

▶ **Seeing = Doing**

I. A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW IN THE ARTS

Art

What is Art? Rather than continuing to use the phrase *art and music*, we will use only the word *art* or the phrase *the arts*. Our use of this word will include fine arts (painting, sculpture, etc.), entertainment arts (**literature**, movies, television, etc.), and music (lyrics, instruments, rhythms, etc). **Art**, as used in this unit, is the skillful and systematic arrangement or adaptation of means for the attainment of some end; the embodiment of thoughts in sensuous forms, as in pictures, statues, music, or speech.

An **artist** is one who is skilled in art or who makes a profession of any of the arts. Artists include persons such as painters, sculptors, actors, writers, poets, musicians, and singers. In their profession or skill, they produce works of art that often stimulate our senses. Some of their works may be considered beautiful, some excitable, and some tragic.

Art has the ability to move us emotionally in many directions. Art is seen and heard all around us. It is used to entertain and to promote. Whether art is good or bad is often difficult to determine because it has much to do with the preferences of the beholder. In other words, one person may think a painting or piece of music is good while another believes it is not.

In order to understand the biblical view of art, we must consider its purpose—what is an artist’s intent, and what is the reason the art is enjoyed? We must also consider the nature of art. We must go beyond the simple fact that art is something to look at or listen to, and examine why we look and listen, as well as what thoughts or emotions are aroused by the art.

In essence, art is a reflection or a symbol. A painting or a sculpture is a reflection of what it represents. In other words, a painting of a mountain range is not actually the mountain range, rather its representation. A piece of music is not a mood, but rather a reflection of the musician’s mood or an attempt of the musician to create a mood. A piece of literature is not reality, but rather a representation of reality or, in fiction, the imagination and fabrication of a situation that does not really exist. Works of art, whether paintings, sculptures, songs, or literature, are representations or symbols.

These representations affect us because they bring to mind a particular reality. A song is not peace, anger, or love, but it can cause us to feel peaceful, angry, or loving. Visual arts cause us to recall places we have been or places we would like to go. Whether fiction or non-fiction, pieces of literature tell stories of events. We read the story and picture the events in our minds. The stories arouse opinions and emotions. Again, works of art are symbols or representations.



It is important to distinguish between symbol and reality

You will recall from previous units that man was created in the “image and likeness” of God. We also are representations of God. We are not gods, but we are to display or reflect something of what God is like. You will also recall that according to the first chapter of Romans, nature reflects some of the attributes of God. Nature is not God; however, by looking at nature, we see something of what God is like. In this way, art is similar—it provides an idea of what the real thing is like. It represents something real, whether an emotion, a scene, or a story. It is not the real thing, but it represents the real thing.

As humans, our “image and likeness” has been blemished by sin. Unless we have been redeemed by

Christ, we are poor representations of God. In order to represent God, we must be born again, and we must be Christ-like. It is only then that we properly reflect the attributes of God.

As with man and nature, art should also reflect God's attributes. Whether music, literature, or visual art, its purpose is to demonstrate God's attributes. Art should remind people of God or draw people closer to God. Sadly, today's art often tends to do the opposite.

Let us consider some biblical principles that can be directly related to works of art:

1 Corinthians 10:31: *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."* This verse is a guide for both the artist and the person hearing or looking at the work of art. The question we must ask ourselves is, "Does this glorify God?" For the artist, this means considering whether the work would honor God. Does it remind people of God's attributes, does it portray God in a proper sense, does it draw people closer to God or distract them from God? For the artist, as well as the one perceiving the art, a valid question would be, "Would God be pleased with this?"

1 Corinthians 14:40: *"Let all things be done decently and in order."* Two matters are dealt with in this verse, decency and order. Decency is defined as propriety of conduct, speech, manners; proper; respectable; moderate. In regard to art, we must determine whether or not the work is indeed decent. As you have learned, we have a standard for determining decency. Our standard is the Word of God. It is important that we understand that our standard is not popular consent. Throughout the history of God's people, we see that the world's standard is rarely in line with Scripture. As we create art or view art, we must critique it according to its decency.

The second point taken from this verse concerns **order**. Order is methodical and harmonious arrangement; in accordance with rule; apt and appropriate. God created the universe with order. One of the amazing aspects of nature—one in which we see the attributes of God—is its beautiful order. When we look closely at the days of creation, we see that even the sequence of creation was in a preconceived order. Whatever was created could not have functioned or existed unless it was preceded by what was formerly created; whatever was created on a particular day was necessary for the survival and proper functioning of what was created on subsequent days.

For example, in Genesis 1:6–20 God created land and sea (He divided the water from the land). Next, He created plants, which must have land and water. Only after land, water, and plants, did God create birds and fish, which needed the previously created things. Nothing God does is disorderly. Everything has a plan and purpose and fits together accordingly. The planets are arranged in just the right place. Day and night come and go as planned by God. The seasons change. All of God's creation speaks of His harmonious arrangement.

Art, whether visual art, literature, or music, is to be created in a manner that exemplifies and supports the orderliness of God. God is never chaotic; man should not be either. When we create a symbol or a reflection through art, it should also be orderly. To do otherwise is to distort God's creation. Concerning art, we must ask ourselves, "Does this piece, or this style, reflect the beauty and order of God's creation or does it distort it? Does it promote order or chaos?"

Philippians 4:8: *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."*

Art stimulates the mind. It causes our thoughts to linger on its subject. When Scripture uses the word *sin*, it does so in reference to three types: sins of the mind, sins of the mouth, and sins of the body. In other words, we sin by thought, word, and deed.

Why would God be concerned with our thoughts? Does it not seem that as long as we do not say or do anything wrong, we are not actually sinning? The answer to that question is an emphatic "no!" All actions are preceded by thoughts—we think of something, then we do or say it.

In order to better understand this principle, consider the well-known sins of King David. David committed two heinous sins, adultery and murder. He saw a woman who was married to another man, and he wanted her as his own. However, notice in the following verses what led David to commit adultery and murder.

2 Samuel 11:2–4: *"And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and*

the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified.”

These verses tell of David’s adultery with Bathsheba. Notice that the sin of adultery was preceded by what David saw and the thoughts that resulted. David saw Bathsheba bathing, considered her very beautiful, and began to make plans to enter into an adulterous affair with her. Though the sin of adultery is emphasized, it began with what he saw and thought. Had David turned away instead of lingering on what he saw, he may have avoided the adulterous affair and the consequences that resulted from it.

2 Samuel 11:14–17: *“And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die. And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a*

place where he knew that valiant men were. And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.”

Here is the account of David’s next great sin—murder. In order to have Bathsheba as his wife, King David had her husband, Uriah, sent into battle to be killed. Though David did not kill Uriah with his own hand, he knew that sending him into the thick of battle would result in his death. These two very serious sins would continue to trouble this great king of Israel for the rest of his life. Both began with what David saw and the thoughts that were stimulated by what he saw.

Art stimulates our thoughts. This is not necessarily a bad thing. After all, it is God who created us with minds and the ability to reason, and even to imagine. However, Philippians 4:8 reminds us of what should occupy our thoughts. It is clear that as Christians we are to avoid thoughts that would displease God. It is also obvious from King David’s story that to subject our eyes and minds to that which does not honor God will certainly lead toward sinful actions.



Answer true or false for the following statements.

- 1.1 _____ The religious convictions of people affect their convictions concerning art and music.
- 1.2 _____ Art is used to entertain and promote.
- 1.3 _____ Art is a reflection or a symbol.
- 1.4 _____ Art is not able to influence opinions or arouse emotions.
- 1.5 _____ All works of art glorify God.
- 1.6 _____ Whether or not something is decent depends on the opinion of the individual.
- 1.7 _____ All works of art demonstrate the order of God’s creation.
- 1.8 _____ God’s creation speaks of His harmonious arrangement.
- 1.9 _____ What we think is not as important as what we say or do.
- 1.10 _____ All actions are preceded by thoughts.
- 1.11 _____ King David’s sin was preceded by what he saw and thought.
- 1.12 _____ King David killed Uriah with his own sword.
- 1.13 _____ As Christians, it is dangerous to think.



Christian art is a vehicle to communicate biblical ideas and events

What we have said thus far seems to emphasize the negative aspects of art. Although it is true that much of today's art could not be considered works that please God, it is also true that there are many beautiful works of music, art, and literature being created today. Sadly, these are competing with many other pieces that could be called anything but beautiful. The latter is a relatively new trend in western culture. This is due to the influence of secular humanism and other non-Christian beliefs.

This has not always been the case, however. As a matter of fact, Christians created many of our great pieces of art. These composers, artists, and writers created works with the express purpose of glorifying God.

The history of art for the purpose of expressing one's love and awe of God, as well as drawing others closer to God, can be traced back to Old Testament times. Though the second commandment disallowed the creation of a graven image of God, many artistic symbols were created for the purpose of worship.

God is a Spirit who cannot be duplicated by a work of art; nevertheless the prohibition against attempting this did not detract from the creation of artistic symbols that reminded people of the works and attributes of God. Some of these symbols were also reminders of God's presence in worship. Such symbols—especially those commanded by God to be placed in the Tabernacle—are described in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Read the following excerpt from Exodus 25:

And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in the four corners thereof; and

two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. And thou shalt make staves of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them. The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

The symbols mentioned by this passage were beautiful pieces of art constructed by skillful artisans. They were to be used in the context of worship and represented God's presence with His people.

Over the years, other symbols began to be used to communicate God's presence. These included the table for offering the bread, the lampstand, the cloths, and the veil used in the Tabernacle. One could even consider the vestments worn by the priests as beautiful works of art, all created according to God's instructions and used in the context of worship.

With the advent of Christ, the Church recognized Him as the true image of God. God, who could not be represented or depicted by any piece of art, had actually been among them. Yet we have today great pieces of art even from Christ's time and as a direct result of His person and ministry.

We have the greatest literary work ever created—the Bible. As you know, the Bible is certainly more than a work of literature; it is the very revelation of God Himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the fact remains that it is also the greatest and most beautiful literary work that has ever existed. This is because the writers were each inspired by God and most clearly portrayed God and all His glory.

Many pieces of art from various periods of church history are also in existence today. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. **Church architecture** – Various styles of architecture have been used in the construction of churches throughout the world. These differ depending on the culture wherein they were built, as well as when they were constructed. Churches are often designed using a variety of symbols representing God and various biblical themes. Some churches are constructed in the form of a cross. Some are built with high spires, representing God's people reaching up toward Him. Others are constructed using large, round domes, to represent God reaching down and embracing His people.



Church buildings reflect their religion and culture

2. **Mosaics** – These complex works of art have been created to represent various aspects of the life and ministry of Christ, the beauty of God's creation, and many other themes which would glorify God.

3. Various other forms of art which celebrate God and His works include:

- glass, gold, and silver sculpture, and
- ivory carvings and jewelry
- stained glass windows
- wood and stone carvings
- decorative alters, pulpits, and other church furnishings
- elaborate candles
- beautiful tapestries
- decorated books, including the binding as well as ornate typographies.

Much of what could be considered standards of great art are pieces depicting biblical characters and themes. For hundreds of years, works of art originating in a Christian culture had theological themes. These works were created to represent God's grace, power, and majesty. Artists created beautiful pieces as expressions of thanksgiving for what they believed God had done. To the best of their ability, they attempted to show the glory and wonder of God.

Some pieces of art were used not only to exhibit a work of beauty, but also to communicate the gospel. This is especially true of the pieces of art created in Europe during the Middle Ages, when many of the people were illiterate and church services were conducted in ancient languages that the people did not understand. Works of art became visible means of conveying biblical themes, history, and theology.

One of the world's most renowned artists is Michelangelo (1475–1564). His greatest interest was sculpting large marble statues, but he was a great painter and architect as well. Michelangelo especially enjoyed depicting extravagant examples of heroism and drama, and his greatest sources were the themes and characters of the Bible. Among his best-known works is the *Pietà*, a marble statue of Mary, the mother of Christ, holding Jesus after His crucifixion. Another great work consists of two paintings, *The Crucifixion of Saint Peter* and its companion work, *The Conversion of Saint*

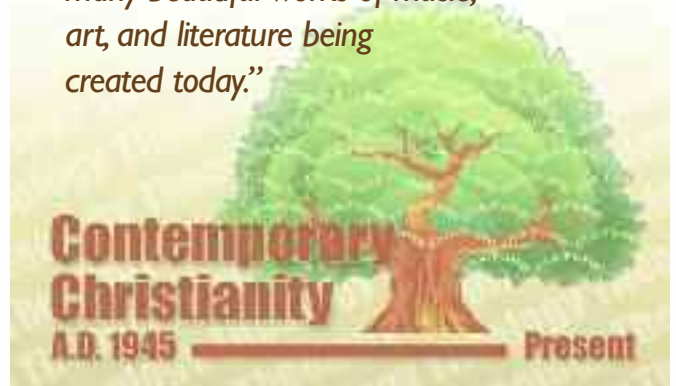
Paul. Probably his greatest achievement as a painter was the painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. This **fresco** represents God the Creator.

Michelangelo is just one of the countless artists whose art glorified God. His works portrayed great heroes of the Bible and depicted many of the great, familiar Bible accounts. Those who view these works are not only impressed with their beauty but are also reminded of many portions of Scripture. When we consider Michelangelo's works, we recognize that they glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31), are decent and orderly (1 Corinthians 14:40), and provoke viewers to meditate on biblical themes (Philippians 4:8).

Throughout history artists and sculptors have created works that promote the message of Scripture rather than deter from it. Though styles and tastes vary—and there may exist various arguments over what is “good” art and what is not—we can easily tell which works are consistent with those things God would want us to appreciate and those things we should reject.

A major point to remember is that art is symbolic. As we view works of art, we must ask ourselves what

“Although it is true that much of today’s art could not be considered works that please God, it is also true that there are many beautiful works of music, art, and literature being created today.”



they symbolize. Do they symbolize the truth about God and His creation or do they distort or deny those truths? Do they cause us to draw closer to God, or do they pull us away from Him? Do they remind us of the beauty of His creation, or do they disfigure it?



Answer the following questions.

- I.14 People from which religion created many of the greatest pieces of art?

- I.15 Since Old Testament times, what has been a primary purpose of art?

- I.16 What is disallowed by the second commandment? _____

- I.17 For what purposes were artistic symbols used in the construction of the Tabernacle? _____

- I.18 What are some symbols used in the Old Testament to communicate God’s presence?

- I.19 What is the world’s greatest literary work? _____

I.20 How has church architecture symbolized the presence of God? _____

I.21 What are some forms of art which have been used to celebrate God and His works?

I.22 What has been a major theme of art in western civilization? _____

I.23 What are some of the best known works of Michelangelo? _____

I.24 When considering works of art, what are some questions we could ask? _____





Music is a powerful and diverse art form

Music

Music is an art form that has been present in virtually every period of the history of man and has been used for a variety of reasons such as worship, **political** rallies, warfare, celebrations, and individual enjoyment. Music is used to express every emotion including grief, anger, excitement, and joy. Due to the widespread use of music and its ability to arouse virtually every emotion, it is an art form that can be used to promote both good and evil.

Music is made up of rhythm, pitch, melody, harmony, and lyrics. Music actually has power—power to calm and power to excite. Consider the following passage from 1 Samuel 16:

But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now

command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him. Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul. And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer. And Saul sent

to Jesse, saying, *Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight. And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*

David's skilled playing of the harp caused the spirit which was distressing Saul to depart from him (verse 23).

Throughout history people have been amazed and bewildered by the power of music. Even when no lyrics are included, changes of pitch, volume, tempo, rhythm, and harmony express a great variety of moods. Although music is intangible, is no longer audibly present once it is heard, and may sound different each time it is performed, it touches the soul and has the ability to communicate and evoke intense emotions. Long after the sound of a particular piece of music is no longer heard, it can live on within the mind of the hearer, and the emotions it induced may later awaken in the listener's memory.

Those who compose music are able to imagine or "hear" the music in their minds while reading or writing a piece, even though no sound waves are produced at the time. Ludwig von Beethoven (1770–1827), one of the greatest classical composers, began to lose his hearing in the late 1790s. Although he eventually became completely deaf, this did not hinder his composing. He was able to continue to compose beautiful sounds within his mind.

Martin Luther was a great Protestant reformer who believed that "next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise." Luther also wrote of the effects that music had on human beings:



Whether you wish to comfort the sad, to terrify the happy, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate—and who could number all these masters of the human heart, namely the emotions, inclinations, and affections that impel humans to evil and good?—what more effective means than music could you find?

As noted by Luther, music has the ability to comfort, excite, calm, and encourage. It is a wonderful gift from God that can greatly enhance our lives. For example, music may develop soundness of mind in times of confusion.

As is true of all that God has given us, music is something that can be used for both the benefit of man and the glory of God, or it can be used in a manner that draws people's minds away from Christ and His glory. Music may sadden, terrify, discourage, anger, and stir up a host of other adverse passions and emotions. Those who possess the ability to compose or perform music may use their gifts in a manner either pleasing or displeasing to God. Likewise, those who listen to music may listen to pieces that stir up within them emotions and reactions that draw them closer to God or those that hinder their walk with Him. As with anything else created by God, music is not good or bad in and of itself. How it is used makes such determinations.

As an art form, music is symbolic. Music is not joy, or grief, or sorrow, or jubilation—it represents these things or prompts these emotions. Neither does it necessarily represent a specific joy or sorrow; instead, it symbolizes the essence of joy or sorrow. In other words, specific incidents may make one sad—such as the loss of a loved one—while music may symbolize the essence of sorrow rather than the specific sense of sorrow for a loved one we have lost. Though music does not represent the specific, certain styles of music are associated with certain emotions. For example, when a person hears a hymn that had been sung at a funeral service, grief may once again be felt.

Music is in a realm similar to love, faith, and imagination. Though it may be intangible and indefinable, it is describable in its effects. When listening to music, even the least musically talented are able to describe the effect the music has on them. They are able to describe the emotions stirred up within them by the music. We listen to a piece of music, and we are able to identify whether the music excites us, calms us, makes us happy, or brings sadness. We may even be able to express whether the music sounds funny, scary, romantic, or religious. When lyrics are added to music, its message becomes even clearer.



Isaac Watts (1674–1748) was an English minister who wrote more than 700 hymns and songs of praise. Several of these are present in many church hymnals. Among the most familiar are “Joy to the World,” “O God, Our Help in Ages Past,” “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” and “There is a Land of Pure Delight.” Watts also adapted many of the psalms to music. Watts said that, “it is both a duty and a delight to worship God, and marvelous things happen when we find expression for our devotion in music, joining instrument and voice and sound to make one music for the Lord of all.”

Styles and sounds of music vary from culture to culture. Within our own culture, styles have certainly changed over the years. Much debate exists among Christians concerning style and rhythm. It is not our purpose to attempt to settle such arguments; however, in determining whether music is good or bad, we should use the same criteria as with any other art form. We use a standard to make such a judgment, and that standard

is the Word of God. Therefore, the sort of music Christians should compose and/or listen to must be determined by asking questions such as: “Does this glorify God?” (1 Corinthians 10:31); “Is this decent and orderly?” (1 Corinthians 14:40); and “Does this music cause me to meditate upon those things the Lord speaks of in Philippians 4:8?”

Music, probably more than any other form of art, challenges us toward honesty. While literature, poetry, and visual art are forms that can be seen by all, music is an art form that “paints images on one’s mind.” It stimulates thoughts and emotions that are only seen by God and the person listening to the music. No one else is able to see the “pictures” in our mind as we listen to certain pieces of music. For this reason, we must be honest when determining whether or not we should listen to certain works of music. We must honestly consider if the music is encouraging us to draw closer to God, and whether or not it is stirring up within us thoughts which are pleasing to God. When we are honest, we will know which types of music with which we should be involved.



Answer true or false for the following questions.

- 1.25 _____ Music expresses very few emotions.
- 1.26 _____ Music can have the power to calm and to excite.
- 1.27 _____ David played the timbrel in order to calm King Saul.
- 1.28 _____ Even after music is no longer heard, it has the ability to evoke intense emotions.
- 1.29 _____ Beethoven composed great pieces of music after he lost his hearing.
- 1.30 _____ Martin Luther said that “next to the Word of God, literature deserves the highest praise.”
- 1.31 _____ Music is a gift from God.
- 1.32 _____ The use of music determines whether it is good or bad.
- 1.33 _____ Certain styles of music are associated with certain emotions.
- 1.34 _____ The message of music becomes even clearer when lyrics are added.
- 1.35 _____ Sir Isaac Newton wrote “Joy to the World!”

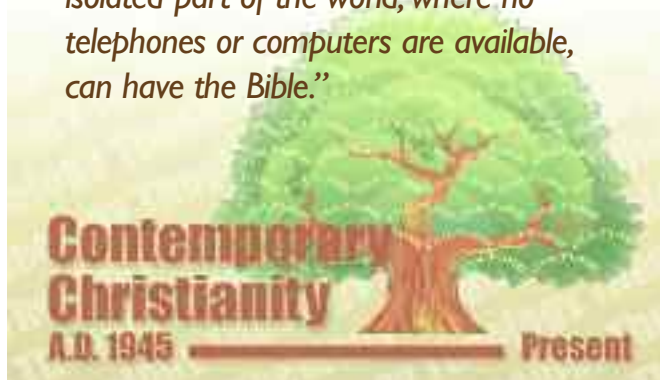
Literature

The dictionary defines literature as written or printed productions; writings that pertain to a particular age, country, subject or branch. For our purpose, we will use the word *literature* in reference to written material, including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. We include literature in this unit because authors and poets can be considered artists; and literary works, as with visual arts and music, are symbols that stimulate the mind and emotions.

Edward George Earle Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873) said, “The pen is mightier than the sword.” This means that societies are affected more by written words than by powerful armies. We have already stated that the Bible is history’s greatest work of literature. The Bible contains virtually every style of literature—historical narrative, poetry, musical lyrics, legal documents, proverbs, parables, allegories, metaphors, similes, hyperbole, and many other literary forms. The styles of its writers can be described on a wide range, from primitive to sophisticated, from simple to complex. Yet the Bible is not profound simply because it is a great work of literature, but rather because of its ability to influence people. Surely the Bible proves the truth of Bulwer-Lytton’s statement more than any other written work.

Consider why God chose to use the written word as His primary means of communicating with people. Once words are written, they are preserved and can be delivered to others, translated to any language, and passed on to future generations. We know that several portions of Scripture were immediately copied so that persons in various locations could read them.

“Even in our day, someone in the most isolated part of the world, where no telephones or computers are available, can have the Bible.”



The book of Revelation is a good example of this. It is probable that at least seven copies were immediately produced to be delivered to the seven churches in Asia Minor.

Revelation 1:11: Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Even in our day, someone in the most isolated part of the world, where no telephones or computers are available, can have the Bible.

Many forms of art have been used to promote ideals, philosophies, and religions, but none with greater potential than literature. The printed word has proven to be the most powerful tool for convincing people of virtually anything. This is particularly true of the Bible, but is also true of many other forms of literature, both fiction and non-fiction. One who is skilled in the art of writing can be extremely influential. One who reads must realize that the written word is able to radically affect the way we think and believe.

Literature has gone through as many changes as other forms of art. For centuries, Western civilization has produced great works, many of which have glorified God and supported the truth of Scripture. These include non-fiction writings such as history books, theology books, biographies, sermons, and Bible commentaries. Such writings exist from church fathers of the early years of Christianity, through the Protestant Reformation, and on to the present.

We can read the great debates of the early Church, which resulted in the formulation of doctrines that we now consider essential to the Christian faith. We can read of God’s providential work in the advancement of His kingdom throughout history. We have available to us countless stories about the many heroic Christian martyrs and missionaries. We are able to read of those who gave up all their personal belongings to serve Christ by serving others. We have accounts of the separation of the Eastern Church and the Roman Church in 1054 A.D. We are able to read the works of great reformers such

as John Huss, Martin Luther, and John Calvin. We can read accounts that show that Christianity was the major impetus behind explorations that led to the discovery of the Americas. We can discover how early settlers desired to make the New World a Christian nation. Christianity has produced the greatest non-fiction works available to mankind.



Works of fiction have also had an enormous effect on readers. A great example of this is the classic allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan. Bunyan, a Puritan who was called the "Immortal Tinker," is one of the world's best-known Christian writers. Of the many books he wrote, his most famous is *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

In 1660 the English government believed that the only way to encourage unity in the country was to force religious conformity. Independent churches were disallowed, as was preaching. Bunyan, a minister, refused to obey the laws established to stop the growth of independent churches and was arrested. He was sentenced to remain in prison until he agreed to conform. Bunyan was thirty-two years old when he was sentenced and remained in prison twelve years. During that time he wrote his two major works, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The former was his autobiography, and the latter became one of the world's best-known works of literature.

Finally, in 1672, Charles II issued a "Declaration of Religious Indulgence," and Bunyan, along with others, was set free. He was immediately appointed pastor of an independent congregation. However, the following year the king withdrew his declaration, and Bunyan was again

put into prison. He was released four years later, and on February 18, 1677, published the work for which he is so well known. Prior to his death in 1688, Bunyan wrote forty additional books.

The Pilgrim's Progress is only one of the countless examples of Christian works of fiction. Throughout the ages, biblical themes and heroes have been the inspiration for many such works. Biblical topics such as salvation, the victory of good over evil, the establishment of God's kingdom, and man's struggle with temptation have provided inspiration for countless writers.

As with other works of art, we must appraise works of literature by using the standard the Bible provides. We ask questions such as, "Does this piece promote the truths of Scripture?" "Does this book draw readers nearer to God?" "Is this work of literature decent?" "Does this book lead its readers to godly meditation?"

It is wonderful that God has given people gifts that enable them to produce great works of art. As with many things God has given man, art may be used for the glory of God or in a sinful manner. As Christians, we should be able to enjoy great music, beautiful paintings, and sculptures. We should read the marvelous works of literature that have been produced throughout the ages. We certainly do not need to hide from these things. We should enjoy them and be educated about them; however, we must always ask ourselves whether such works are pleasing to God.

We are greatly affected by what we see and hear. When we conduct our lives according to Scripture, we will know how to make decisions about art, music, and literature.



Answer these questions.

- 1.36 In this unit, what sorts of works are included in the word *literature*? _____

- I.37 Who said, "The pen is mightier than the sword"?
- _____
- I.38 What are some advantages of communicating through the written word? _____
- _____
- I.39 What has been the greatest tool for convincing people? _____
- _____
- I.40 What is the famous allegorical work written by John Bunyan? _____
- _____
- I.41 Why was Bunyan sentenced to prison? _____
- _____
- I.42 What is the name of Bunyan's autobiography? _____
- _____
- I.43 What are some biblical themes which have inspired authors of fiction? _____
- _____
- _____



Do the following Reading and Writing Project.

- I.44 Read a work by John Bunyan. On a separate piece of paper, write a one-page summary and describe how Bunyan communicates a Christian worldview in his work.



Adult check

Initial

Date



Review the material in this section to prepare for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your understanding of this section. Any items you miss on this test will show you what areas you need to restudy.

SELF TEST 1

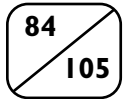
Underline the best word or phrase in the following statements (each answer, 4 points).

- I.01 An (**accountant, scholar, artist**) is one who is skilled in art or who makes a profession of any of the arts.
- I.02 In essence, art is a reflection or a (**copy, symbol, forgery**).
- I.03 Art (**represents, destroys, ignores**) something real.
- I.04 As humans, our “image and likeness” has been blemished by (**sin, fame, art**).
- I.05 According to I Corinthians 14:40, all things should be done (**beautifully, decently, quickly**) and in order.
- I.06 All of God’s (**law, love, creation**) demonstrates His harmonious arrangement.
- I.07 King David committed the sins of (**blasphemy, idol worship, adultery**) and murder.
- I.08 King David had (**Hezekiah, Uriah, Molech**) sent into battle to be killed.
- I.09 Many artistic symbols were used in the construction of the (**ark, garden, Tabernacle**).
- I.010 Among Michelangelo’s greatest pieces of art is the (**Medallion, Pietà, Shroud**), a marble statue of Mary holding Jesus after His crucifixion.
- I.011 (**Jonathan, Saul, Uriah**) became refreshed and well when David played the harp for him.
- I.012 Ludwig von Beethoven began to lose his (**life, sight, hearing**) in the late 1790s.
- I.013 Music represents or prompts the (**emotions, battles, knowledge**).
- I.014 When (**tones, rhythms, lyrics**) are added to music, its message becomes even clearer.
- I.015 One who is skilled in the art of writing can be extremely (**boring, intelligent, influential**).

Answer true or false for the following statements (each answer, 3 points).

- I.016 _____ Art is used to entertain and promote.
- I.017 _____ Works of art affect us because they bring to mind a particular reality.
- I.018 _____ Art always reminds people of God and draws them nearer to Him.
- I.019 _____ The second commandment disallows the creation of a graven image of God.
- I.020 _____ *The Pilgrim’s Progress* was written by the great author, Michelangelo.
- I.021 _____ Music is a relatively new discovery.
- I.022 _____ Music can express a great variety of moods.
- I.023 _____ Martin Luther was against the use of music.

- I.024 _____ Isaac Watts wrote more than 700 hymns and songs of praise.
- I.025 _____ Only works of non-fiction can promote the truths of the Bible.
- I.026 _____ “The sword is mightier than the pen” is an accurate quote.
- I.027 _____ Music has been proven to be the greatest tool for convincing people of virtually anything.
- I.028 _____ *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is the title of John Bunyan’s autobiography.
- I.029 _____ Biblical themes have been the inspiration for many works of fiction.
- I.030 _____ Since so much art is ungodly, art should be considered evil.



Adult Check

_____ **Score**

_____ **Initial**

_____ **Date**