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EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

I'd Like to Teach the Church to Sing Discerning the Theological and Cultural Dynamics of Worship Music

by Gary E. Gilley
and M. Kurt Goedelman

So much that Americans say and do is defined by entertainment. Entertainment is a powerful force that permeates our society and culture.

Two thousand years ago when Herod the Great built his empire of palaces and buildings throughout Israel, Judea had more amphitheaters than Rome before the time of Nero. Herod knew that to control the arts was to control the culture.

This entertainment mindset has infiltrated the church. Even the best of churches are composed of redeemed sinners who have been shaped by the world in which they live. And although Scripture warns us not to be conformed to this world (Romans 12:2), that battle is not easily won.

This has become the defining factor within evangelicalism. Many Chris-

tians base their choice of a church on musical styles and other superficial features rather than on the basis of what the church teaches. Paul Jones wrote:

“Worship music is at the center of controversy, being one of the most divisive issues in the church, as it has been for decades. Somehow we have come to define worship services almost exclusively on the basis of musical style. ‘Contemporary,’ ‘traditional,’ ‘blended,’ or ‘classical’ worship services
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