

## Before Kay's Edit

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### Music

Music has power.



Imagine watching a movie like Rocky. Now imagine it had no music. At all. No crescendos. No trumpets. No drums. How flat would the movie be! The emotional impact that music has on the scary parts of movies is palpable. Seriously. The music gives emotions to the movies.

The power of music is strong enough to be used in medicine and education. According to <http://www.musictherapy.org>, "Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals." They may be designed to:

- Promote Wellness
- Manage Stress
- Alleviate Pain
- Express Feelings
- Enhance Memory
- Improve Communication
- Promote Physical Rehabilitation

A few of my favorite quotes about music:

“Music...will help dissolve your perplexities and purify your character and sensibilities, and in time of care and sorrow, will keep a fountain of joy alive in you.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

“My heart, which is so full to overflowing, has often been solaced and refreshed by music when sick and weary.” Martin Luther

“Music can change the world because it can change people.” Bono

“Music is the strongest form of magic.” Marilyn Manson<sup>1</sup>

It was 1973 and my parents had 4 children under the age of 3 (twins in the middle). We were living in Charlotte, North Carolina a very long way from family and friends in New Mexico and Texas.

My dad worked long hours during these years, leaving Mom to tend to our needs. My parents came from different religious backgrounds and hadn't found a workable way to navigate their differences yet.

One night, my Mom was mopping the floors while listening to the radio. In those days, there were no Christian radio stations so the secular stations were rented by the hour, often in the wee hours of the night.

By divine appointment, God encountered my Mom right where she was, and she came to know and love the Lord that night with a mop in her hand. Through music.

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<sup>1</sup> From <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/power-of-music>

Music is an extremely powerful tool. It can soothe the savage beast (or baby). It can stir us to very strong emotions. How do you feel after listening to the Rocky Theme Song? What about after the National Anthem? Okay, what about after Amazing Grace?

Music has power.

There are songs that cause us to lust after things or people, songs that cause us to feel depressed, songs that cause us to feel happy... They cause us to FEEL. Letting feelings out is good, but it's also important to remember that feelings can lie, so what we listen to matters.

Through music, we can validate our emotions and may be willing to express and/or understand our emotions in deeper ways. There are times when we need to let these feelings out, and doing this vicariously through a fictional avenue (whether through a book, movie or song) can be beneficial. Music provides a voice for our emotions. And we come to believe what we hear, as we know the Bible says in Romans 10:17 (NIV), "Faith comes from hearing..."

It was through music that my family came to understand Biblical truths. I will never forget my Grandpa's favorite song "Blessed Assurance" and have held dearly to the words, as this song shapes my identity even today. We were exposed to some wonderful Christian music in the 1970's and 1980's as we were developing.

But somewhere along the way, when I was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade or so, we began listening to secular radio and were exposed to many concepts that built a stronghold in my life. These songs opened the

# After Kay's Edit

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## Chapter 15

### THE POWER OF MUSIC

"I read it to (my husband) and we love it! Love the JAWS (section) and the separation of the quotes from good and evil sources, we just LOVE it! Really wonderful!" - Jen Wisdom-Schepers, MD

Music has power.

Imagine watching a movie like *Rocky*. Now imagine it had no music. No crescendos. No trumpets. No drums. How flat would the movie be? How uninspiring? The training montage where Rocky is running through the city and ends on those famous stairs in Philadelphia—how moving would that movie have been without the music?

I'll tell you, without any doubt—it wouldn't have been. It wouldn't have been moving. It wouldn't have been inspiring. It wouldn't have had the same impact on our hearts.

The emotional impact music has through the scary parts of horror movies is palpable. Think about *Jaws*. Hearts started racing when the tuba played those infamous two notes because people knew the shark was coming. Just that little bit of music gave the viewers strong emotions, and people en masse reported that they had never been so terrified. It was so powerful, the producers managed to run a successful advertising campaign, persuading audiences to return to theaters a second time to see the film (since they missed so many scenes the first time around by covering their eyes). It worked! *Jaws* became the highest grossing film of all time back then and

held the title until *Star Wars* came out a few years later.

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*Music can change the world because it can change people.* – Bono

All of these men are believers, persons of faith in Jesus Christ. Here, also, are a few quotes about music from unbelievers:

*Music is the strongest form of magic.* – Marilyn Manson

*...the sole test of music is its power to exalt the soul.* – Aleister Crowley

*Music is a complete evocation – like a smell. It can bring an entire memory and feeling back to you in a rush. Much more complete than even a photograph. You allow yourself a certain visual distance with photos – not music. It envelopes you – there’s no way to escape it.* – Anton LaVey

For those of you who may not be familiar with these men: Anton LaVey was the founder of the Church of Satan; Marilyn Manson is a rock star known for his dark, anti-Christ theatrics (he became a “reverend” for the Church of Satan before LaVey died); and Aleister Crowley is an infamous occultist whose teachings many Satanists follow (he became the inspiration for the Black Sabbath song “Mr. Crowley”).

You may be wondering, *What does this have to do with anything?* I bring this up because, although Christians can tap into the power of music through the worship of our Lord, it’s important to remember that Satan can tap into that power too. And he does.

*“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering . . . . The workmanship of your **timbrels** and **pipes** was prepared for you on the day you were created.*