



TORTURED CONSCIENCE

JEFF LENORMAND

I think any significance in music is dependent on the musician. I feel too many bands that fly under the banner of "*Christian music*" do so with vague ambiguity, worrying more about showing how clever they can be with lyrics than putting out a message. In the saddest cases, a band that once had good intentions resort to modifying their once bold lyrics with ones that reflect more of a desire to sell more albums than that of praising God. What separates secular from spiritual is, after all, the lyrics. The second a band compromises its lyrical content is when they become just another band.

But if a band or musician, on the other hand, takes on the task of presenting a clear-cut message, then music can have a great deal of significance to spirituality. My personal goal while writing lyrics is to make the listener come away having something to think about. Not just "*rah-rah, God is great*" lyrics, though we have those, but lyrics based on thought-provoking issues such as abortion, the deity of Christ, the Trinity, and personal failures in a walk with Christ. We as Christian musicians not only have the sixty-six books of the Bible to write about, but also a plethora of theological and apologetic issues as well. It is when we raise the bar above the norm and really take a stand that significance comes into play. As the catch phrase of the radio show *Apologetics.com* says: "*challenge believers to think and thinkers to believe*". Only then do we step out of just being a mere musician and into something more.

I was recently watching the Nightline debate between The Way Of The Master hosts Kirk Cameron and Ray Comfort against a man and woman atheist couple with the Rational Response organization. It amazed me at the extent the Rational Response folks thought of Christians as stupid, irrational, and illogical. What's going on here? Are we dropping the ball? Are we forgetting that we are commanded to give a reason for the hope that lies within us, with gentleness and respect? Why do so many in society dismiss us as insignificant fools who believe in an imaginary make-believe God on nothing more than wishful thinking? It's time for musicians specifically and Christians generally to become significant in the arena of thought. No longer can we be complacent in strumming a few chords and singing "*Hallelujah*". If our music is to be significant spiritually, we must meet the challenge of engagement, if not face-to-face then with pen and paper. Get to the heart of the ills of society. Ring true to the ears and minds of those who would normally dismiss us as fools. If we want our music to be significant, then we must do so. If we just want to play songs and think we're cool being in a band, then be in a secular band and be done with it.



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