

# A RELEVANT LITURGY FOR REFORMED CHURCHES OF AFRICAN ORIGIN CONCERNING LITURGICAL MUSIC

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The question to be answered in this article is: How can the Reformed Churches of African origin come to liturgical music that is Biblical and contextual? The following basis theoretical principles for Reformed Churches can be summarised: Liturgical music must be faithful to the Bible and it has to glorify God; it must edify the congregation and the music should be composed in such a way that people should sing from the heart, through the Spirit and in understanding. Liturgical music is a spiritual, verbal and emotional element that proclaims, exalts, rebukes, comforts, motivates and inspires. Music is natural to the African and is found in the traditional worship of the African and accompanies the ritual and ceremonies. Music is efficient to express religious belief as well as feeling and members have to learn to evaluate music. Music in the Reformed churches can become recognised and unique when it sticks to and upholds the Biblical truth.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Tlhagale (1998:1) argues that the African culture was not recognised as having its own wisdom, insights and values that informed the lives of the Africans<sup>1</sup>. The growth of the African culture appeared to have been arrested. It was either a matter of civilising the African or as

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<sup>1</sup> “Africans” refer in this article to black South African people.

similating them into Western culture. Linda (1997:39) argues that white missionaries attempted to stamp out any vestiges of Africans' indigenous culture and religion upon their conversion to European Christian denominations. On the other hand people are emotionally involved with their culture. For this reason De Klerk (2001b:273) adds that even the churches in the last decade discovered that the gospel is understood better and is more easily accepted when its presentation and reception as well as the reaction on it is rooted in one's own culture. Culture is not merely superficially related to humanity, but deep-seated, one cannot be fully without it.

Having liturgical music in mind Brown (2001:348) declares: "... congregational song is in trouble, nowadays, because our culture undermines it, through social mobility, performance-oriented popular music, electronic discouragement and over amplification". Since this appears to be the case in the USA, what is the situation in the South African context, especially in the context of the Reformed Churches of African origin<sup>2</sup>? Only the well-known hymns that are used by local musicians are still recognised among the church members. The church hymns appear to have little importance to most of the young members. They would rather prefer performance-oriented popular music. They further prefer to perform in front of the congregation members during the worship service with bells (clocks) and bits.

The argument is, as Jensen (2001:359) states, that churches today are filled with colours and sounds that might have driven earlier generations right out of the doors. While earlier the congregation left edified, today they want to leave the church edified but also uplifted, because music is one key to the heartfelt dimensions of worship (Stevenson 1992:295). No matter where people are, singing has the power to help people freely express their feelings for God. Scripture points out that it is God who truly gives a song (Borror 1992:263). Nevertheless, the question remains: Can music still be controlled in the Reformed Churches of African origin and what criteria can be used to evaluate and approve of the music that should be used in these churches? How can the Reformed Churches of African origin come to liturgical music that is Biblical and contextual?

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<sup>2</sup> "Reformed Churches of African origin" refer to all black Reformed churches in South Africa, and especially to members of the Reformed Churches in Synod Midlands.

The method of approach that will be followed here is the model set out by Zerfass (1974:166ff) for Practical Theology. This method comprises the basic-theory, the meta-theory and the praxis-theory.

## **2 BASIC THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES WHEN IT COMES TO LITURGICAL MUSIC**

Steenbrink (1991:3) notes that nowadays not only outsiders complain about the music used in liturgy but also members of the Christian churches in Africa. They feel that the music brought by the missionaries is not a good vehicle for witnessing outside the church or to express the religious feelings within the community. Westermeyer (1998:3-6) mentions a few reasons why the study of liturgical music is so important:

- The fact is that liturgical music is a cultural matter: it does not happen in a vacuum but in a specific time and place. The time and place have a history, memory, community and trajectory that attend to them.
- Liturgical music is intrinsic because it is an organic part of our daily life. It is natural for it is linked with birth, death, fear, happiness, joy and sorrow.
- Music-making brings to life the faith of the church. Music gives flesh to this faith. Just as liturgical music can be the cause of enormous peace in a congregation it can also be the cause of enormous wars: people want to sing specific types of music, the musicians are adamant about their choice and the minister has his own choice of music.
- Because music, worship and theology involve people beyond the rational, they arouse emotions of conscious or subconscious likes and dislikes.

Liturgical music plays an essential role in worship-liturgy. It is an easy means of transporting the doctrine of the church and expressing the faith of the church. Even people who cannot read, can sing, because music is easily learned and followed. Music also easily fits within the culture of people and promotes their language. In one way or another, the liturgy of the worship service of the Reformed Churches begins and ends with music.

## 2.1 Liturgical music in Old Testament (OT) worship

The earliest recorded singing by men appears in Ex 15:1 when the people of Israel rejoiced over their salvation from Egypt. Sacred music could be a doxological story of Israel's deliverance sung to God (Exodus 15:20). Bingle (2000:11) explains that this song (Exodus 15) is not just any song; it is a song of victory, a revelation of the power of God. From this hymn the following can be used as principles for worship music:

- God's name and honour play an important role in the composition of liturgical music.
- God's characteristics are essential in liturgical music because they explain his role in nature and his deeds in history.
- Liturgical music can also become a means of proclamation, a means of teaching people about God. It is often easier than other means because people can learn the song and make the message their own (cf. Carson 1994).

1 Sam 10:5 and 16:23 suggest that music have a power to penetrate the mind where other forces fail, breaking down barriers directly and immediately (Abe 1991:296). Sacred music provides an atmosphere favourable to the ministry of the Word (2 Kg 3: 14-16); it helps to bring men to God (Ps 40:1-3); it fills the house of God with glory (2 Chr 5:13, 14). Sin can also affect the worship of the Lord through music (Evans & Coder 1998:306ff). Sin made the Israelites lose their song while in captivity (Ps 137:1-4) but they recovered it again after they were restored to the land (Ezr 3:2, 11). It is evident that music was in most instances accompanied by joy and dancing (2 Sam 6:10-20). Wright (2002:206-207) emphasises the fact that David danced with great exuberance before the Lord. This should be understood in the context that this music had an aural element which attracted God's attention and so prepared the way for his gracious response. Music in the form of the Psalter received a prominent place in worship.

Religious songs existed for every occasion: from personal prayers, funeral songs, love songs, war songs, working songs and songs praising God to songs that accompanied many different festivals and sacrifices (Viljoen 2001:426). Songs could be sung in forms like the responsorial and antiphonal psalmody and by a soloist us-

ing melodical formulas, responded upon by outcries like “Hallelujah”, “Amen” or “Hosanna”.

## **2.2 LITURGICAL MUSIC IN NEW TESTAMENT (NT) WORSHIP**

Fourie (2000:58) reasons that seemingly the alpha and the omega of the NT is sacred music. Luke 1 begins with songs of praise and Revelation concludes with a song. At the birth of Jesus the angels brought music for Jesus. Even Jesus sang the “Hallel” with his disciples (Matthew 26:30; Mk 14:26). In heaven there is daily worship (Rev 7:15 see Rev 5:9-10, 12-13) and God recorded some of the music for his people (Rev 15:3ff).

Viljoen’s approach to the NT song and music is that they should be understood within their cultural and traditional context (2001:425). This means that at least three cultures play a role in the tradition of music in the NT. These are the Jewish musical traditions, the Greek musical tradition and the Roman musical tradition (Fourie 2000:117). Music can be used to strengthen the individual. James 2:13 states that in times of joy one should sing songs of praise. One has to sing with the spirit but also with the mind because music should also have the function of edifying others (1 Cor 14:15). In Eph 5:19 and Col 3:16 Paul states that we have to sing psalms, songs of praise and other spiritual songs wholeheartedly and with thankfulness to the glory of God. This can only happen if one is Spirit-filled (Eph 5:18).

## **2.3 Liturgical music of the first fifteen centuries**

Chupungco (1994:105) reasons that the church of the first century could not afford musical instruments. The Synagogue made use of local talent and resources after the destruction of the Temple AD 70. Professional instrumentalists and singers of the Temple moved over to the Synagogue with their great knowledge. The reading of the Word, the proclamation and prayers were done in some degree of melody. There was a kind of chanting in cadence that fell someplace between modern categories of speech and song. This was the musical tradition which the Church clearly inherited from their Word-centred synagogal form of worship (Chupungco 1994:105). The church of the second to the fourth century had little or no sympathy for musical

instruments because these were often associated with pagan worship or else with immorality. The human voice and the heart of the human were enough to bring praise to the Almighty (Fourie 2000:112).

Until the fourth century, liturgical music continued to develop in the context of the house church. The practice of the cantillation continued to be the norm especially for biblical readings and the prayers said by the president of the assembly. It can be said that music was another means to proclaim the Word or the liturgical text. There is no doubt that the psalms were sung during this period. However *psalmi idiotici* began to appear at this time. They were compositions by Christians in the style of psalms and hence could be sung like psalms. These non-biblical psalms answered the Christian need to sing “psalms” that were directly and explicitly Christian. This period also called for a Trinitarian doxology at the conclusion of every psalm to support the Christian interpretation of the psalms. Already during the time of Tertullian hymns were introduced. Pliny also indicates this in his writing to Trajan: “They were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing alternately among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a god” (Broekhuijsen 2000:306).

During the Medieval period there was a movement from the houses to the basilica. This did not only involve a change from architectural space but also acoustic space. People worshipped in an imperial hall which encouraged grand, almost theatrical, celebrations. Choirs that were trained for specialised music evolved during this time. It was when the *schola cantorum* appeared to train people from infancy to a very high technical standard to chant singing. The negative aspect of the professionalism that developed within the liturgical music is that the congregation became in a sense more passive (Chupungco 1994:113-114). What is worst about the music of the Middle Ages is that it became more secularised, mystical and scholastic. It became incomprehensible to the people also because of the fact that it was sung in Latin. It is within this context that the changes that the Reformers brought about should be evaluated.

#### **2.4 Liturgical music in the time of reformation worship**

Martin Luther compiled not less than 24 hymns because it was important for him that music should be sung in the language of the people. Luther wanted the music that was first sung only by the choirs and by the blessing bishop who responded, to be sung by the whole congregation. His music contained much theology because of

the pedagogical character in them (Broekhuijsen 2000:309). Luther used three categories of music: the rhyming of Scriptural portions, translations of songs from the Medieval Ages as well as Free hymns. Difficult doctrinal issues could be simplified through music and so could difficult concepts. Luther made use of the tunes of the popular music in the church in a positive way to glorify God.

Although Zwingli was among Reformers the most musical, he nonetheless contributed to the vanity of music in the reformed tradition. His basic argument was that he wanted nothing to disturb the proclamation of the Word. There had to be absolute silence so that the Word could be proclaimed with power (Taylor 1987:311). Unlike Zwingli, Calvin was to make people sing in their own language, because he recognised the force of hymns. There were no suitable songs available and despite the fact that he was not that poetical and musical, he composed a few rhythms of the Psalms (Luth 1990:189). Unlike Luther he did not go for hymns and any song and he even refused to interpret the Psalms in their NT context. He made rhythms of Scriptural portions from the NT and made use of the Psalm compositions of other well-known people (Deddens 1993:106-107). The employment of music had to be monitored because of the great effect music had on the human being.

Calvin desired that Psalms be sung in the church because it could contribute to lifting the heart to the Lord and to move spiritually towards God, singing praises and glorifying him. He also reasoned that it was worth giving God back what He had given to believers. During the time of Calvin instrumental music was not of high priority. When evaluating these arguments one should understand the Reformers in their own context. Anything, even the slightest that could bring hindrance to the pure proclamation of the Word, was for them abhorrent (Deddens 1993:108-109). It is also interesting to realise that both Calvin and Luther made use of contemporary tunes. This implies that it is not improper to make use of modern tunes to bring praise to the Lord. It is a matter of the development of the culture and as society moves forward the church should lead and not become a follower.

The Reformation reacted negatively to the music of medieval centuries. Some of the Reformers went to the extreme while some were more compliant. On account of the great need that existed for it, music had to be translated and composed. It had to be brought back to the people because people were only used to the mystical Latin music which many could not follow or interpret. Moreover

they were not truly part of the singing because the singing was done by the choirs.

## **2.5 Degeneration in the music of the reformation**

In a nutshell the music of the seventeenth century was oriented towards physical, outward manifestations. It was about the feeling of the individual and not the congregation. Under this rubric belong the Methodist hymns of Charles Wesley and the pietistic Lutherans of the seventeenth century. Emotions came to play a great role and songs were thus used to reach and touch off the emotions (Deddens 1993: 109-111). The “*Lifela tsa Sione*”<sup>3</sup> (Zion Hymns) which has been used in some of the Reformed Churches of African origin show influences from the songs of the seventeenth century. Lutheran and Methodist individualism are clearly evident in the “*Lifela tsa Sione*”.

## **2.6 Liturgical music in the African context of twentieth century worship**

For the African, music is just something that he/she cannot go without (Maynard-Reid 2000:69). Music is to worship as breathing is to life. It is the most permanent characteristic of the heritage that blacks possess. It permeates the entire African life and thus continually ministers to the whole person. It is even believed among the African that the Spirit will not descend without a song, and worship without the Spirit is non-worship. Vocal music and not necessarily the drums that accompany it, plays a vital role in the evocation of the Spirit and it intensifies the power of the Spirit’s presence with the people. While the early white settlers placed a heavy emphasis on the words with the music being incidental -- a handful of tunes were used, often interchangeable with different sets of lyrics -- the black felt a need to emphasise music over the words (Maynard-Reid 2000:70). But it was not just for a different melody: it was an entirely new rhythm, an entirely new feel. Blacks and whites could receive the same training, learning from the same sources, yet with regard to music they would sing entirely different songs. If a black composer took a song written by a white composer he or she would reshape it and improvise it in a folk-like manner or “blackenise” it, giving it new life.

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<sup>3</sup> Most popular Hymn Book consisting of Southern Sotho hymns used in the Reformed Churches and most African churches.

It is unfortunate that white missionaries in the times of slavery viewed black music as heathen, nonsensical, barbaric and wild hymns and the drums they used as heathen instruments. The Africans' reaction to that resulted in syncretism and secularism of liturgical music. Syncretic, in the sense of mixing into the "Christian" pattern a contemporary style and the African way. Secularism can be considered as the result of unevaluated syncretism.

## **2.7 Basis theoretical guidelines**

From points 2.1 to 2.6 the following basis theoretical guidelines for Reformed Churches can now be summarised:

- Liturgical music must be faithful to the Bible and it has to glorify God in a manner pleasing to him.
- It must edify the congregation and the edification could be by means of song-confession. The Spirit and the Word should direct it.
- The language should be understandable. The music should be made in such a way that people should sing by heart, through the Spirit and in understanding.
- Liturgical music should not replace the Word but should provide an atmosphere suitable for the Word. Liturgical music when sung should indicate that people are Spirit-filled.
- Instruments that are used with liturgical music should be used as accompaniment and not to dominate.
- Liturgical music is a spiritual, verbal and emotional element that proclaims, exalts, rebukes, comforts, motivates and inspires.

## **3 META-THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

To discover the context of the Reformed Churches of African origin this part involves a literature survey about liturgy and culture with special emphasis on the African culture. Acknowledging the relationship between liturgy and culture, De Klerk (2000:458) argues that the function of liturgy should remain to transform the culture. Liturgy should not be so "strange" that it is unable to communicate within its cultural situation. On the other hand liturgy should not be

so “locally-modern” that it should deprive the gospel of its transforming power. It is important that liturgy should reflect the local culture but also have some traditional and historic trends of the catholic Christian fellowship within it. The risen Christ should always stand in the centre of this liturgy. De Klerk (2001a:66) states that culture that is not transformed by the liturgy amounts to a demotion of liturgy. The church would risk becoming irrelevant if it either ignores its culture or if it simply accepts the culture uncritically.

This fact is relevant because liturgy is the heart of culture, the most dynamic and deepest element thereof (Lukken 1997:136). In line with this Barnard (2000:5) states that liturgy and culture stand in a dynamic relationship with each other. To shed further light on this he argues that liturgy should be viewed as a complex of rituals and symbols. It has to do with the meaning the participant grant to the ritual and the manner in which they deal with it. They would act from within a specific culture that has an influence on them. Barnard (2001:49f) also argues that to understand the ritual one has to understand the culture. One cannot simply export a ritual from one culture to another without the necessary inculturation. The consequences of such behaviour would bring about much damage to the existence of the other culture. This is clearly evident from the consequences that the Western liturgy and European colonisation had on cultures in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Inculturation implies here that the celebration of a liturgy has to be relevant to a concrete group of people.

### **3.1 Results from the literature study**

African music plays a great role in their daily life – from the cradle to the grave, in joy or love and sorrow, in work or in battle. All actions of daily life among the African are intermingled in the wide range of African art which is richly represented in music, dancing, and folk tales. Music is found in the traditional worship of the African and accompanies rituals and ceremonies. Music and religion are very closely connected. Music is further also efficient to express the religious belief and feeling of the African (Eriyo 1987:181). Music provides a very personal, deeply emotional and articulated means of expression, individualised to different cultures. It is mostly through singing that the Gospel and culture meet. Therefore -- if one truly

wants to start with inculturation -- the writing of hymns and songs is the starting place (Steenbrink 1991:7).

If the music is not according to the liking of most African worshippers, the church service becomes described as boring. Some even believe that the sermon is not truly inspired if the music is not good, because music is viewed to have an influence on the preacher. Unlike the Reformed Churches in white communities which concentrate more on the rational (content) aspect of music, the Reformed Churches of African origin put more emphasis on the subjective and the emotional effect that music has on them. African music in most instances is accompanied by body movement and dancing. Without music, dancing and instruments the African liturgy is as good as dead (De Klerk 2001b:290). Emotions should be expressed. Dancing does not only express joy but also pain in serious crisis moments and prosperity. Music accompanied by dance is in most instances an expression of emotions and experience. Dancing can also take the form of aesthetic performance and so can the music. In order for the dancing and the music in the church not to turn only into aesthetic performance it is essential that they have to be oriented toward communal prayer and praise and made responsive to the word and sacrament. In this way congregational music can be integral to a blessed life and provide a foretaste of heavenly bliss (Brown 2001:344).

The music introduced to the African by the Westerners was clothed in a non-African skin. This music was alien to the African culture. Steenbrink (1991:11) argues that most lyrics originated from the first generation of converts and were composed by lay preachers and lay people. The training of the pastors emphasised Western music for use in the liturgy. The rejection of the African music in liturgy was not only founded on religious motives alone but also political factors. As Eriyo (1987:183) states, this music was viewed as primitive, savage or pagan and in this way African music was doomed to die out and had no place in Christian worship. According to Leach (1999:12) many songs are designed primarily to work on the emotional level. This is one of the reasons why popular songs which are sung in society are preferred above the known hymns that have been sung for ages in the churches. However the problem with the popular music is "easy come and easy go". Since there is no logical theological content, these songs are doomed to a short life.

Eriyo (1987:185) also states that the African people have many polyphonic songs, some of which are poor in content and in musical composition but have been accepted and spread all over South Af-

rica. He makes mention of the following obstacles and handicaps that stand out: some of the musicians lack adequate and proper musical formation and training and other musicians show a severe lack of liturgical, theological and pastoral formation. The result is that such music gives to the congregation empty words or a “poor sermon”. Once the liturgical text is given proper priority, the music becomes an explicit confession of faith and not a mere polyphonic performance. Taylor (1987:311) states that the function of the music is ministerial: it must serve and not dominate. The service must not appear to be a service of continuous singing. It appears in many congregations at present that singing is used in the place of reflection.

The African Christian believers of the Reformed Churches of African origin in most congregations still use the *Lifela tsa Sione* as it has been indicated before. The *Lifela tsa Sione* hymnbook, as Müller (1990:41) states, was originally composed by French missionaries of the Parish Evangelical Missionary Society in Lesotho. These authors, namely; F. Coillard, E. Casalis, S. and E. Rolland, T. Arbousset and A. Mabile were reformed people as Müller (1990:41) argues. Their missionary work began in 1833 (Setiloane 1976:1). One should understand the background of this music within the historical and social context of that era. When the missionaries came to Lesotho the heathendom was still very strong. They did not know anything about Christianity and the saving power of Jesus Christ. Ancestral worship was robust and it was still part of the being of the African. The teaching or theology of these missionaries is strongly found in their hymns. Hymn 68 “*Lichaba tsohle tsa lefatshe, li tla tla Sione*” (a rhythming of Isaiah 2) is sung against the background of viewing the African Sotho-Tswana people as the Lost tribe of Judah, that somewhat relates to the Arabs. They still have to come back to Zion, stop fighting and living a peaceful and harmonious life. This song also testifies that these French missionaries had the belief that all are children of Abraham and also believed that there will once again be a re-union in the New Jerusalem and there will no longer be any war again.

Almost all these songs that were used by the missionaries should be understood in the light of their theology. Hymn 323 “*Ke sikilwe ke Jesu*” is a nice way of escapism from the problems of the world. Hymn 342 “*O mohau wa Molimo ke koetsa e kaakang*” should be viewed against the situation of the lost sinners that have been saved from deep darkness, when they were in a hopeless state of death. Not all these songs are originally from the missionaries. The people from

where the missionaries came wrote some of these songs and the work of the missionaries was to do the translations into the languages of the natives. They are altogether 449 hymns, of which 10 are Psalms, 5 are NT Scriptural songs and the other are general religious hymns and choruses as in the old Hallelujah hymnbook of some of the Afrikaans speaking churches. Despite the fact that the authors and the composers of the hymns were evangelical in tradition, their music was influenced by the music of the seventeenth century. The theology of some of the hymns in the *Lifela tsa Sione* is questionable. One can fully agree with Lekalakala (2002:7) when he strongly criticises the continuous empty choruses that are sung in the church and the beautiful melodies that are used in the church without any biblical message. It is like a tradition today that people make use of such choruses to a very large extent in church, at night vigils, at funeral services and even at wedding ceremonies. Due to the fact that they become very common among the members they tend to become part of the liturgical songs.

It can be said that Christian Western religious music had a theology different from African theology. This music was introduced with its own strange tunes. People learned these tunes but these did not affect their culture. As a result they lived two different lives. They worshipped the African god differently from the Christian God. Music would have been the best weapon to fight against the idea that was upheld at that time of a darkened African theology – provided that it also respected the culture. Yet even the way of singing and the tones were used to fight against whatever was African, including African culture.

### **3.2 Meta-theoretical perspectives from the literature study**

- Music is natural to the African and is found in the traditional worship of the African and accompanies the ritual and ceremonies.
- Music and religion are very closely connected. Music is also efficient to express religious belief and feeling.

### 3.3 The results of the empirical research

The positive results of the empirical research on the role of music were the following<sup>4</sup>: Music first has to glorify God; music revives, inspires and heals; music prepares for the Word proclamation. Negative results of the empirical research on the role of music were the following: If one dies while singing liturgical music, one will go straight to heaven; liturgical music brings one closer to God (this can also have a positive side) depending on one's faith and relationship with the Lord of heaven; music acts as a rubber-stamp and dessert after the Word; music gives taste to the worship service.

The positive results of the empirical research on the question which deal with the influence of culture on liturgical music were the following<sup>5</sup>: Culture influences the way we sing and through culture one's true identity is evident before God. African people sing out of the depth of their heart and if there is no music nothing really happens there. Even in case of death, African people sing. Music has a healing and changing effect. It empowers, prepares, acts as a "seal" or confirmation. Through music one worships and glorifies. This is the best way through which the African expresses himself or herself. The negative results of the empirical research about the influence of culture: Culture is separated from religion and thus totally excluded from the church and culture is something that can exist on its own without being affected by other influential dimensions of life.

To most respondents, culture is seen as something that has nothing or little to do with the Christian religion. It is seen as a non-Christian practice. It has been mentioned that people always see their way of worship as heathen and the way they have been taught to worship in the church as Christian. This is the reason for the double life that is so evident in the lives of the African people.

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<sup>4</sup> The full report on the answers to the specific question: "What should the role of music be during the church services?" is available from the authors.

<sup>5</sup> The full report on the answers to the specific question: "What influence does culture have on music?" is available from the authors.

#### 4. PRAXIS-THEORETICAL GUIDELINES

The method that will be used here is to be found in Zerfass as specified by Heyns and Pieterse (1998:35-36). This is where a critical hermeneutical interaction takes place between the basis- and the meta-theories. The aim will be to produce a theory that is true to Scripture and which nonetheless remains in touch with the cultural setting.

Liturgical music should bring glory to God. It should help to re-establish a Reformed identity of singing and improve the quality of singing. Liturgical music should contribute to promoting unity. All members have to be encouraged and motivated to sing together in the Church during worship services. When liturgical music is promoted it would bring harmony in the music. Liturgical music should be of such quality as to encourage members who have left the church because of music and/or singing patterns that were not truly uplifting to return. Music should be doctrinal in order to teach, spiritual to encourage and inspirational to strengthen and edify.

##### 4.1 Glorification of God

One of the criteria when it comes to the evaluation of music is that it should glorify God, be understandable and be in the Spirit. Roughly speaking the youth simply go for short and easy choruses that everyone can sing. The instruments they use are considered more important than the words. The song or hymn must be sung in a tune that will be in harmony with the “bit” and the “clock” (bell) they use as instruments. These instruments have become very common among the African people to the extent that they are used in most of the mainline churches.

There is now a new development in most of the Reformed Churches of African origin. The youth have introduced choir groups in the congregations. These youths prefer to make music solely with their voices. Many of the parents find themselves within these groups because they grew up with this kind of music, referred to as *monyanyako*. These youths can bring back the typical Reformed Churches’ way of singing. The difference will be that songs will be sung with enthusiasm, according to the traditional tunes that make use of bodily movements and loud voices without instruments that overpower the voices to the extent that the words are not heard.

## 4.2 Choirs

The best advice will be to help these groups develop so that every congregation should utilise choirs. These choirs should not be used in the sense that only they would sing in the Church. They should be employed as organisers of music and as people who will take the lead in the liturgical music to be of a high standard. The ministers of the congregations can have contact with the conductors or music committee and advise them in choosing “Psalms” and construct good tunes that may be used in worship and in worship services. This should be a joint effort. Choirs would not only bring back the “Psalms” to the Reformed Churches but they would even become a vehicle of the proclamation to the world. It would be equally good if the Churches would then record music so that the gospel could be promoted via radio and television transmission. It is very painful for ministers of the Reformed Churches who preach on the radio not to be able to call on any Reformed Church congregation for a hymn as ministers of the Methodist, Anglican, Catholic Churches and many other churches do.

This research does not wish to demote the music of the “bit” and the “clock”. It simply calls for a balance between the two. This “bit” and “clock” music can as well be recorded on CD or DVD for proclamation. Yet it also needs serious attention. The youth have to be taught to distinguish between what is right and wrong. They have to be taught how to select music and in what way to sing. Therefore the “bits” and “clocks” should be used in a balanced manner. They should be used in such a way that would not lead to disorder in the worship or to making so much noise that the “mind”-aspect becomes lost in the process. The spiritual aspect should not be emphasised beyond the rational part so that balance should be maintained. It is very easy for the whole service to become bizarre and make most of the members feel uncomfortable. If there is a clear balance between the different ways of singing all would feel welcome and at home in the church of Jesus Christ and all would sing to the glory of the Lord.

This research holds that liturgical music, which glorifies God and goes hand in hand with the criteria set in 2.7, is welcome in the Church of Jesus Christ. Hence strict measures should be taken to monitor the music because through it is very easy for wrong doctrines to be promoted through it. The different Synods of Reformed Church groups will have to sit and discuss this matter once more

because liturgical music has run out of the hand of the Church council members straight into the hands of the members. The members choose what to sing and they choose what instruments to use. The council together with the minister simply follow without causing trouble. This does not imply that members should not have a say with regard to liturgical music but it remains the task and the calling of the council to maintain order and discipline in the church, to guard against any heresy and to see to it that the truth is taught.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Music in the Reformed churches can become recognised and unique when it sticks to and upholds the Biblical truth. As much as music proclaims the gospel it should also be used to minister. Members have to learn to evaluate music so that not only the members have to enjoy the music but primarily God himself.

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