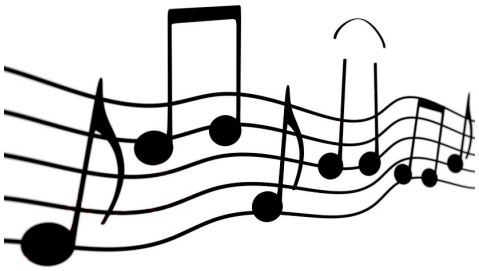
The Power of Music



From ancient times music has been part of ceremonies and worship. King Nebuchadnezzar used music to call people to bow down to his image. Today, as well as being part of most religious services, music is used to set the tone and pace of footsteps in stores, for advertising, movies, video games, etc. Explore music's power over the affections by watching the same video footage set to different kinds of music and discussing music's power to move us.

1. Show *The Power of Music* video at www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-power-of-music. Then discuss what you saw and heard.
2. Did the video soundtrack affect your response during the video? If so, how?
3. In what ways would the video have been different without music?
4. How has music been used in movies you've seen?
5. What kinds of music do you like, and why do you like them?
6. Read *The Power of Music* (p. 2) and continue the discussion.
7. What has the *most* power to persuade you of something—a picture, spoken words, or music?
8. What do you remember best—things you see, or sounds you hear?
9. Compare watching a video with the sound off with watching it with the sound on. How important is sound?
10. Why might people say "silence is golden"? What does silence allow for?
11. Have you noticed how you walk when music is playing, for example in a store?Is it easier to walk in step with the music, or to go at your own speed? Have you deliberately tried to walk at a different pace? What happened?
12. What is the difference between a thought and a feeling? Can a person separate their thoughts from their feelings?
13. Which is easier—stopping selfish *thoughts* or stopping selfish *feelings*? Why?
14. What is the first step we can take to become a heavenly person? Not *doing* something wrong, or not *feeling* the pressure to do what is wrong? (Hint: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not *do* what they knew to be wrong.)
15. How might your feelings try to persuade you to do something that you know is wrong?

Materials Needed

device to show video at www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-power-of-music, copies of *The Power of Music* p. 2.

Prepare in Advance

Watch the video and download it if necessary. Print copies of *The Power of Music* p. 2.

New Church Concept Music

Songs in heaven are nothing but affections in audible form, that is, affections expressed in modulated sounds, for just as thoughts are expressed by speaking, so are affections by singing. *Conjugial Love* 55

New Church Concept Temptation

No one overcomes temptation unless he is steadfast in the spiritual affection of truth, even to the end of his life in the world; then the work is finished. See *Apocalypse Explained* 128

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In former times musical instruments were used for worshipping God. Wind instruments expressed affections for good, and stringed instruments affections for truth. Sounds in the natural world correspond to realities in the spiritual world. Harmonious sounds correspond to states of joy and gladness in the spiritual world, and states of joy and gladness there spring from affections, which in that world are affections for what is good and true. From this one may now recognize that musical instruments correspond to delights and pleasures belonging to spiritual and celestial affections. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8337.2.

Music has great power. Filmmakers capitalize on this by playing exciting, sad or scary music during a film. We may see something that looks ordinary but feel scared because scary music is playing. Or perhaps we hear a violin play a sweet tune and know two people will fall in love. Music brings emotion and meaning to the images we see.

Similarly, advertisers use catchy musical jingles to persuade us to buy products. We may hear the jingles in our minds when we see the products in a store. The music is designed to make us feel we *want* the product, or to think happy thoughts when we see it.

Studies show that buying patterns in stores change when classical or pop music is used. One study showed that people took longer to shop and bought more products when classical music was playing, and took less time and bought fewer products when pop music was playing. Stores also use fast and slow music to encourage people to check out quickly or to linger in the aisles.

Listening to music can speed up or slow down a heartbeat. Some musical sounds produce anxiety—for example certain extremely low tones. Other sounds calm people down and alleviate distress. Many athletes use music to pace a run or work out.

For thousands of years tolling bells have announced worship or signaled the end of wars; trumpets have led soldiers into battle; singing has been used to celebrate special events. The Word gives many examples of songs, such as the Psalms. As people are being prepared to enter heaven, they may learn to come into harmony with others in the society they are entering by singing with them in choirs.

Music is an important part of the story of King Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. Nebuchadnezzar represents selfishness. The tall skinny image he made is a spiritual picture of what selfish thinking looks like. Selfishness ideas may make a person think he or she is taller or more important than everyone else, but in truth they are skinny and lack substance.

The music Nebuchadnezzar used to call people to bow down to his selfish idea represent affections that can be used to justify and drive selfish thoughts. The New Church teaches that a mind has two parts: a will and an understanding. The will directs *intentions* or the *desire* to do things. The understanding directs *thoughts*, or the *things* we want to do. The will and understanding work together. A heavenly mind consists of true thoughts working with good loves, e.g. doing what the Lord wants because we love Him. A hellish mind consists of false thoughts working with selfish feelings, e.g. doing whatever we want because we love ourselves. This kind of "music" can justify what we think in many different ways.

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