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Communicating the Gospel Authentically:

Message Transmission Between the Christian Music Artist and the Audience

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Ph.D. in Christian Worship

by

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DISSERTATION DEFENSE DECISION

The committee has rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

Lindsey M. Graham

on the Dissertation,

Communicating the Gospel Authentically:

Message Transmission Between the Christian Music Artist and the Audience

as submitted on 12/6/22:

1. _____X_____ Full approval to proceed with no revisions. The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

2. _____ Provisional approval pending cited revisions. The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

3. _____ Redirection of project. The student is being redirected to take WRSP 989 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

Print Name of Advisor

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Declaration of Original Work

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university. I remain solely responsible for the content of this thesis.

Abstract

This study seeks to establish that congruence between the Christian artist and the piece directly affects the process of Message Transmission. Artist authenticity and perceived artist authenticity are central to this study. Authentic expression must be believed in the heart and then confessed with the mouth (Romans 10:9–10; Matthew 12:34; Matthew 15:18). In the secular space there is an expectation for the artist to embody or emulate the performance piece temporarily while performing the song, but to not "be" the piece in life. In the Christian setting, however, the artist is communicating the means by which people should live their lives and trust for eternity. To be duplicitous would be sinful. Therefore, the primary research question asks, "What is the effect upon the audience when they detect duplicitousness between the Christian artist and the gospel message of the song?"

This project applies a mixed-methods approach. Two separate anonymous survey tools have been created to gather data from both the Christian artist's perspective and the perspective of the audience. The data reveals insight into the topics of Message Transmission, Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Congruence between the Artist and the Piece.

Research on this topic contributes statistical and analytical evidence of necessary congruence between the Christian artist and the piece and brings an awareness to the worship community of the spiritual influence belonging to the Christian artist. It also provides the data-supported responsibility of the Christian artist to walk in integrity and authenticity. Opportunities for further research includes a study of the inner working relationships between the artists with an awareness of the competitive nature in which the artists live and work and how these realities may affect the process of Message Transmission, as well as investigating the role the audience plays in the process of Message Transmission.

Dedication

The author of Psalm 104:33 proclaims, "I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live." This is my life verse and personal commitment as a Christian artist to sing to the Lord for as long as I live. I am eternally grateful for the rich opportunity He has provided for me to challenge and support the Christian artist community that I love and value as strategic influencers of Christ. May my voice sing through every word on every page to the glory of my Heavenly Father. He alone is worthy. I delight to lay this offering at His feet for it is from Him, through Him, and to Him. Soli Deo gloria!

Thank you to Dr. Vernon Whaley who set me on this educational journey many years ago. Dr. Whaley, you have single-handedly given me my love for higher education learning. Thank you!

To my choir family at church, thank you! You are my accountability community. I am who I am because of your love for me. Your prayers helped me to find great joy in writing and have propelled me across the finish line. I am forever grateful!

Finally, words fail to express my gratitude for my parents who have endured this process with much grace. Mom, I cannot thank you enough for your determination to see me complete this dissertation and for the time you have spent reading different sections. Your encouragement and example of educational excellence has motivated me to press on when all I wanted to do was hit pause. The timing of this project is a direct reflection of your influence in my life. Dad, you have allowed me to share ideas with you and you have encouraged me to consider multiple options and potential angles which have helped to sharpen my thoughts. You have kept me laughing, even through tears, during this season of stretching and growth. I love you both and look forward to spending more *quality* time together in the near future.

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Introduction

Artist authenticity and integrity are essential in the life of the Christian artist. In the secular space, there is an expectation for the artist to temporarily embody or emulate the performance piece while performing the song but to not *be* the piece in life. In the Christian setting, however, the artist is communicating the means by which people should live their lives and trust for eternity. To be duplicitous would be sinful.

This study is essential to the Christian worship academic community, the worship through music community, and the Christian artist community. It is also intended to be a meaningful contribution to the body of Christ. In an age of inauthenticity, distrust, skepticism, and dishonesty, the Christian artist has the unique platform to cultivate a culture of trust with the audience through authentic communication of the gospel through music.

In an *American Idol* culture, the platform of the Christian artist has been elevated to more than that of an entertainer but to an influencer. Influencing culture is an opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with listeners and audience members through musical means of communication. However, an apparent lack of authenticity quickly disqualifies the spiritual influence of the Christian artist and potentially the message the artist is attempting to communicate. Therefore, artist authenticity is a necessary topic with specific research on the Message Transmission occurring between the Christian artist and the audience.

Statement of the Problem

A lack of congruence between the artist and the piece results in a breakdown of authentic communication by the artist. When this incongruence becomes evident to the listener, the artist is no longer perceived as authentic but as an imposter or a hypocrite. This damages not only the reputation of the artist potentially but also the reputation of all professed followers of Christ who are ambassadors for Jesus Christ and perhaps even the validity of the gospel message itself to those who witness the duplicity. There is much at stake in the Message Transmission process when that message is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Research Purpose Statement

The purpose of this research project is to examine Christian artist authenticity and perceived artist authenticity by the listener by identifying elements of congruence between the artist and the transmission of the gospel message through song.

Research Questions

The perception of an artist's authenticity is of utmost importance when the Christian artist communicates biblical truths through songs and testimony. There are consequences for the artist's actions during the process of Message Transmission. What is the effect upon the audience when they detect duplicitousness between the Christian artist and the gospel message of the song? What inherent or necessary correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece is essential when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?

Research Methodology

This project applies a mixed-methods approach. It is a fixed methods design that is not sequential or multi-phase. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods is fixed from the beginning, with the procedures being implemented as planned. This design study may be depicted as QUAN+QUAL. The convergent design is the framework of this research approach. The convergent design allows the databases to be integrated to compare the qualitative and quantitative research results more effectively.

The researcher is not measuring a cause-and-effect relationship but is rather looking at existing circumstances. There is no direct manipulation of the independent variable, and the cause has already taken place. The pre-existing practice of lifestyle worship, or lack thereof, will be examined in the qualitative interviews of the nine artists to determine better the influence of lifestyle worship on the authenticity of the artists and how this authenticity is perceived by the audience. Authenticity will be examined in the overall process of Message Transmission.

Two separate anonymous survey tools were created to gather data from both the artists and the audience. The Artist Survey Tool has been formulated as an anonymous open-ended survey for current Christian artists who identify as full-time artists and are affiliated with the Christian recording industry. The Audience Survey Tool has been formulated as an anonymous, multiple choice, rank scale, and open-ended survey. Both surveys have been created using Google Forms. The Artist Survey was sent out via email, text, and Facebook Messenger, while the Audience Survey was posted to social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

This study has followed Liberty University's IRB guidelines for conducting research with human beings, and IRB exemption has been obtained due to the anonymous nature of the contact with participants as well as the anonymity of participants. The purpose of the study has been

revealed to each potential participant, and each participant has been made aware of how they are involved in the study. In addition, the researcher has ensured that all categories of ethical issues in the research have been addressed, including protection from harm, informed consent, privacy, and honesty.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

The qualitative research is conducted using a biblical worldview in which the Bible is seen as inerrant and authoritative for everything required to live the Christian life, including expressions of artistry and worship. There is a necessary correlation between the heart and the mouth of the worshiper as derived from Scripture. Romans 10:9–10 explains this relationship for salvation, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved" (English Standard Version). Jesus teaches in Matthew 12:34, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks," and also in Matthew 15:18, "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person." This concept of correlation between the heart and the mouth is foundational to the purpose of this research project which is to emphasize the role of the Christian music artist as an authentic communicator of the gospel before God, self, and an ever-watching audience.

The quantitative research is based on five hypotheses. The Audience Survey Tool is uniquely designed to measure the variables in each of the five hypotheses. The data is gathered and analyzed to gain statistical insight into the topics of Message Transmission, Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Congruence between the Artist and the Piece.

Significance of the Study

The timeliness of this study is of utmost importance as religious liberties are increasingly challenged in America. The church has largely lost her influence in culture due to her inability to look much different than the culture. In an *American Idol* culture, Christian artists are being given a platform for influence and persuasion for authentic communication of the gospel. However, duplicitousness, *Pharisee-ism*, and hypocrisy are diminishing the influence some Christian artists could have in this season and are potentially belittling the very message of the gospel. Therefore, this research project seeks to identify elements of authentic communication in the process of Message Transmission. This includes topics such as Authenticity, Congruence Between the Artist and the Song, which also includes Song Selection, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission.

Popular comments have captured the researcher's attention, such as, "This artist is the same off the stage as on the stage," and "This artist is the 'real deal.'" These very statements meant to be encouraging are actually indictments of an industry apparently troubled with duplicitousness and inauthenticity. Therefore, with this project, the researcher has identified elements of congruence between the Christian artist and the message of the piece providing a biblical framework for artist authenticity, as well as providing statistical analysis of perceived artist authenticity by the audience.

This study is also valuable as it speaks to the context of the Christian artist as a unique individual contributing to the Christian worship community. The biblical precedents for authenticity and integrity counter the concerns of duplicitousness and *Pharisee-ism*. Christian artist authenticity and integrity are important in the eyes of man and essential in the eyes of God. This research project implores the Christian artist to strive for authenticity while providing

practical insight into displaying authenticity by developing congruency between the artist and the message of the piece.

Key Terms

Artist Authenticity: Congruence between what the heart believes and what the mouth speaks or sings.

Christian Artist: One who professes Jesus Christ as Lord and trusts in His atoning work for eternal salvation; an individual who identifies professionally as a Christian recording artist and is affiliated in some way with the Christian recording music industry.

Lifestyle Worship: The correlation between the heart and the mouth intentioned to honor God through everyday lifestyle patterns.

Message Transmission: The process by which the message of the gospel is being communicated by the artist through song selection, lifestyle worship, and actions on and off the platform to the audience, who receives the message through interpretation, observation, and perception of the artist.

Assumptions of the Study

First, it is assumed that the interviewees of the qualitative research portion understand authenticity and strive to demonstrate lifestyle worship on and off the platform. A second assumption regards the quantitative survey, which was distributed to listeners who subscribe to listening to Christian music and have attended at least one Christian concert in the last three years. It is assumed that the listeners are believers in Jesus Christ and, therefore, desire to see the quality of authenticity demonstrated in the lifestyle of the Christian artist.

Limitations

The purposive sampling technique in selecting specific artists for the qualitative research portion does not intend to be a representative sample of *all* Christian artists. These individual artists speak to their personal experiences as artists identifying in the various sub-genres and in no way are intended to represent the entire Christian artist population. There are several potential

correlations between perceived authenticity and the experience of the listener worth examining in the quantitative random sampling. However, this research project does not intend to identify a correlation between the listener's perception of an artist's authenticity with the listener's gender, ethnicity, education, or professional career. Individual perceptions are undeniably influenced by personal experience. However, these correlations will not be examined in this research project.

The greatest limitation of generalization in the qualitative research is that the interviews reflect each artist's personal experience and observations of fellow artists in the Christian industry. In the quantitative research, the limitation of generalization realizes a separate random sample may garner completely different responses depending on the participant's perceptions. Individual perception is influenced by various facets including, but not limited to, ethnicity, race, gender, education, career, and experience. Finally, it is difficult to assess individual perspective as it is completely subjective. It is impossible for the participants to be entirely objective in assessing an artist's authenticity. Therefore, the generalization of research findings that are based on individual assessment may not easily be applied to the entire population of Christian artists or Christian music listeners.

This project does not attempt to make presumptions about the entire Christian recording industry based on purposive sampling. Rather, the sampling reflects the personal experience and perspective of each participant. This research project will not examine the numerous characteristics contributing to the process of how the listener perceives an artist's authenticity. Many facets affect the way the listener perceives artist authenticity, including age, culture, and experience. However, these factors will not be investigated in this research process.

Qualifications of the Researcher

The researcher is equipped to engage in this research topic as a Christian recording artist, a student of worship with a Doctor in Worship Studies, and a candidate for the Ph.D. in Christian Worship at Liberty University. Through personal experience, the researcher has noted the ever-increasing need for Christian artist authenticity and integrity in Message Transmission. Through national and international experience in Sweden and Northern Ireland as an artist, the researcher has noted a common thread of conversation with audience members about artist authenticity and integrity. Popular comments have captured the researcher's attention around the globe, such as, "This artist is the same off the stage as on the stage," as well as, "This artist is the 'real deal.'" These statements are intended to encourage the artist but unknowingly cast a shadow of doubt on the authenticity of Christian artists in general. Therefore, with this project, the researcher intends to identify elements of congruence between the Christian artist and the song to provide a biblical framework for artist authenticity and integrity to promote effective Message Transmission of the gospel.

In several meaningful conversations with fellow artists in the genres of Southern Gospel, Contemporary Christian, and Worship Music, these artists have affirmed the significant need for the discussion of artist authenticity, which motivates the researcher in this pursuit. These Christian artists feel passionate about their personal musical expressions as authentic efforts to communicate the gospel. Inauthentic artists are easy to identify through inconsistencies in speech, conversation, and attitude, when off the platform versus on the platform. Being an eyewitness to this type of duplicitous behavior also motivates the researcher to lean into the topic of artist authenticity before God and man for the wellbeing of the artist and the Christian music

industry, for the sake of the gospel message being communicated, and for the spiritual benefit of the audience.

Summary of Literature

The literature has been categorized through ten different topics, including Music as Emotive and Cognitive, Interpretation, Christian Identity, Biblical Precedent and Ethics, Integrity: Between the Heart and the Mouth, Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, Spiritual Disciplines, Christian Community and Accountability, and Public Theology. The sources included in the Literature Review are primarily dissertations, peer-reviewed articles, and scholastic books published by theologians and academic contributors. This chapter includes a brief summary of the literature. A more comprehensive survey of the literature is found in Chapter 2.

Music, as cognitive and emotive, informs the identity of the Christian artist. The cognitive factors of singing relate more to the mental faculties utilized to process a lyric, a rhythm, a gesture, or an expression. The emotive factors relate more to the emotional interpretation of a song, including feelings and impressions. In a study by J. Gertrud Tönsing, Cas J. Wepener, and Cas Vos, they surmise, "Besides the Bible itself, songs are one of the primary ways in which the Christian tradition has been codified to be mediated to the next generation, and it is a very important way in which each generation mediates its own experience of faith."[1] In this knowledge, Message Transmission is better understood through the components of mental and cognitive factors.

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[1] J. Gertrud Tönsing, Cas J. Wepener, and Cas Vos, "The 'Cognitive' and the 'Emotive' Component in Christian Songs: Tracing the Shifts in Traditional and Contemporary Songs," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36, no. 1, (2015): 2.

Artistic interpretation of the piece communicates to the audience, as does the way in which the artist imparts the message while both on and off the platform. The embodiment of the song in the way the artist lives is of the highest consideration when the artist is a Christian artist singing songs about the gospel message. Interpretation is more than the performance but is an extension of personal beliefs and lived experiences in the life of the Christian artist. The way the audience interprets the message of the piece is also considered in this project. Certain associations are evidenced by the expectations of the audience between the physical appearance of the artist and the piece, with the perceived congruency supporting an enhanced concert experience by the audience.

Identity is central to Message Transmission. That the Christian artist is a Christian transmitting the gospel message elevates the lifestyle expectations of the artist. The Christian artist is more than an artist who happens to be a Christian. It is the Christian identity of the artist shaped by cultural experience that informs the process of Message Transmission. Tönsing, Wepener, and Vos support this reality by stating, "Singing remains a behaviour that goes to the heart of Christian identity and ministry."[2] Christian identity is fundamentally established through an understanding of biblical precedent and biblical ethics.

Biblical precedent and ethics provide the framework for this research project. This very framework demands artist authenticity as the artist is primarily a worshiper equipped to effectively communicate the truth of the gospel through song and testimony. Daniel I. Block claims, "To be human is to worship."[3] As a Christian artist, lifestyle worship is a daily

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[2] Tönsing, Wepener, Vos, "The 'Cognitive' and the 'Emotive' Component in Christian Songs," 13.

[3] Daniel I. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 1.

expression of lived beliefs about God and an acknowledgment of His presence in every facet of life. Communication of the gospel is expressed through lifestyle worship both on and off the platform. The biblical precedent for a personal relationship with God supports the integrity and morality of the Christian artist.

Integrity is a biblical precedent that is in complete contrast to duplicitousness. Integrity is being wholly committed to a belief or set of beliefs and living them out both publicly and privately. For the Christian artist, this is living a godly lifestyle, as defined by the Bible, both on and off the platform. A disconnect between what the heart believes and what the mouth confesses is contrary to the basic biblical standards of integrity.

God rejects worship that is disconnected from the heart in Isaiah 29:13, "[T]his people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me." Jesus indicts the Pharisees for this same duplicitous behavior, recorded in Matthew 15:7–9 and Mark 7:6–7. Integrity in the life of the artist is when held beliefs in the heart of the artist are then confessed by the mouth of the artist through song and personal testimony. A personal walk with Jesus informs the daily patterns and actions of the Christian artist. Authenticity is the very essence of integrity—representing the personal beliefs of the heart through actions.

Artist authenticity is defined in this research project as congruence between what the heart believes and what the mouth speaks or sings. The issue of artist authenticity is a genuine concern in a world where authenticity is often difficult to define. Nathan Myrick writes, "Authenticity has been variously described as synonymous with sincerity, or conviction, or even integrity. Yet how authenticity is demonstrated and/or qualified remains elusive; how can I *know* a person is being authentic, and to what?"[4] The qualifications of Christian authenticity are

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[4] Nathan Myrick, "Double Authenticity: Celebrity, Consumption, and the Christian Worship Music Industry" *The Hymn* 29, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 24.

established by a biblical understanding of the expectations of God. John William Harrelson suggests in his dissertation that the artist goes to "great lengths to re-characterize themselves and their lives so that the audience supports them in every way, avoiding at all costs any issues that threaten their image."[5]

Lifestyle worship is supported by the practice of the spiritual disciplines, which increases space for the presence of God in the artist's life and increases the power of the spirit over the desires of the flesh. Daily expressions of worship are of utmost importance in the life of the Christian artist. Block explains, "Unless the worshiper walks with God in daily life, no cultic acts will impress God positively."[6] A personal walk with God is more than a recommendation but is a requirement in the life of the Christian artist. Lifestyle worship is a reorientation of life that supports the integrity and morality of the Christian artist.

The Christian community also supports artist authenticity and the practice of lifestyle worship by the Christian artist. The literature reveals many benefits of Christian community as well as the influential shaping of the Christian artist by the Christian community. Block expresses the significance of the Christian community in comparing, "What the physical temple was to Israel, the church as a spiritual community has become to the world: the holy residence of God indwelt by his Spirit."[7] Christian community is vital to the Christian artist. Don Saliers emphasizes the shared aspects of Christian community by suggesting, "Christian virtues are indelibly social."[8] The spiritual benefits of Christian community for the artist include but are not

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[5] John William Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response: A Critical History of America's Music" (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate University, 2001), 55, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

[6] Block, *For the Glory of God,* 81.

[7] Block, *For the Glory of God*, 319.

[8] Don E. Saliers, "With Kindled Affections: Worship and Emotion, Liturgy," *Journal of the Liturgical Conference* 36, no. 1, (2021): 8. https://doi.org/10.1080/0458063X.2020.1865022.

limited to accountability, prayer covering, sharing burdens, and permitting the artist to live an authentic existence in the faith community with little to no concern for persona. The artist rooted in Christian community is strengthened for the public opportunity to witness, referred to in this project as public theology.

Public theology is public worship as well as a public witness of personal beliefs and convictions of the Christian faith. The Christian artist regularly engages in public theology as a communicator of the gospel. In his article, "Sounding the Sacred," Elsabe Kloppers uses the term "public theology," contending for "practical theology with relevance in the public sphere."[9] The practical application of theology through music informs the process of Message Transmission when the messenger is a Christian artist. Music is the primary tool for Christian artists to communicate publicly. Dan Fisher emphasizes, "Music saturates both the public and private spheres of our existence."[10] Therefore, public theology receives careful attention when considering the public nature of the role of the Christian artist communicating the gospel through music.

Preview of the Chapters

This project contains five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction providing an overview of the study. The second chapter is the Literature Review with a more extensive view of the various sources associated with the ten different topics. The reviewed literature is connected to Message Transmission and artist authenticity.

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[9] Elsabe Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred in the Age of Fake News - Practical Theology Reflecting on the Public Sphere," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 76, no. 2, (2020): 2. https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i2.6131.
   3.

[10] Dan Fisher, "Music and Identity: Escape, Engagement, and the Quest for Authenticity in a Commodity Culture," (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2002), 1.

The third chapter is the Methods chapter. This chapter includes insight into the Mixed Methods that have been utilized in this project. This study requires insight from both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a more complex perspective of this research topic. The chapter depicts the research design as well as the population and instrumentation. The research plan also includes data collection, preparing the data, analyzing the data, representing the data, data analysis, and validating the data and results.

The data is presented and analyzed in Chapter Four: Research Findings and Analysis. The quantitative data is prepared, explored, analyzed, and represented independently from the qualitative data. The qualitative data is then prepared, explored, analyzed, and represented. Both the quantitative and qualitative data are interpreted and validated simultaneously. The data is written in prose and is represented through figures, including pie charts, bar graphs, and word clouds.

Chapter Five is a Summary of the Study with insight from the researcher's personal experience in the field. The data summary is categorized into four sections: Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, The Song, and the Role of the Artist: Communicator. This chapter also includes recommendations for future study as well as five points of implication for practice with specific regard given to the Christian artist. The summary provides an overall perspective of the data and has been presented in practical terms for everyday application. A general understanding of the subtopics related to Message Transmission and artist authenticity is presented.

Research Edge and Gap

Chapter Two is the formal Literature Review of this research project. The literature provides a thorough examination of several facets related to Message Transmission and offers insight into Christian artist authenticity. Significant research by others precedes this study and is

being utilized to build a bridge between the general topic of worship and how worship supports authenticity in the Christian artist. Several popular worship books emphasize the roles of the worship leader, including Rory Noland's *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship*, Greg Scheer's *The Art of Worship*, Kevin Navarro's *The Complete Worship Leader*, Bob Kauflin's *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*, and Matt Boswell's *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader*. While these resources apply to the worshiper, interconnections have not been specifically made to the context of the Christian performing artist.

There is a significant gap in the research literature regarding the individuality of the Christian artist and the need for artist authenticity and integrity. Most worship literature refers to the worship leader or worship pastor, with very little mention of the Christian artist as a distinct entity. This project initiates a necessary conversation specifically related to the Christian artist. It introduces an appeal for Christian artist authenticity and integrity with specific concern for congruency between the Christian artist and the piece he/she performs. The researcher suggests congruency between the Christian artist and the piece can be developed through the practice of the spiritual disciplines, which leads to authentic worship expressed in Spirit and in truth.

Another significant research gap is the lack of quantitative research in the field of worship studies. A mixed methods approach honors the qualitative research tradition in worship studies while also including elements of quantitative research. The quantitative research adds statistical insight and analytical accountability in worship studies with specific applications to the Christian artist.

Conclusion

It is the desire of the researcher to advance the Kingdom of God by examining and establishing a premise for the authentic expression of music through worship, known as Message Transmission. The Christian recording artist has an exponential opportunity for Kingdom influence, and this study encourages meaningful congruence between the musical artists and the message of their songs. This researched congruence provides insight into the meaningful connection made between the heart and the mouth of the Christian artist. God's Word defines a necessary correlation between the mouth and the heart. Authentic expression must be believed in the heart and then confessed with the mouth (Romans 10:9–10; Matthew 12:34; Matthew 15:18). This research project also provides statistical accountability to the Christian artist community as well as provides a framework for future mixed methods research in Christian worship related to the performing arts.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

Message transmission is the very essence of communication through the vehicle of the arts. The transmission of the gospel through the arts requires a commitment to authenticity by the communicator. Various components encapsulate an understanding of, striving for, and realization of needing authentic gospel communication between the Christian music artist and the audience. These components include artist identity as a Christian, a biblical precedent to framework the concept of worship, biblical ethics which inform artist integrity and congruence that leads to lifestyle worship, then community and accountability, and finally, public theology. However, it is important to commence with an overview of music and musical interpretation before a thorough investigation of the various components of the Christian artist as a communicator.

Music as Emotive and Cognitive

Music as an emotive and cognitive vehicle carries the potential to affect individual faith and spirituality. Paul Westermeyer writes about songs that incorporate the Word of God. He says, "Such singing of words about the Word ties words and music together closely. For Martin Luther it means music is next to the Word of God."[1] David Lemley explains this persuasion of music realized by Martin Luther in stating, "Music exists for us, somehow, beyond its objects and performances. It becomes part of our consciousness, our memory, and somehow presents to

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[1] Paul Westermeyer, "Music and Spirituality: Reflections from a Western Christian Perspective," *Religions* 4, no. 4 (2013): 569. http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/rel4040567.

us as a means of understanding our everyday selves."[2] Like Lemley, Dan Fisher also suggests, "Music becomes a permanent part of our mental furniture that actively shapes perception."[3]

Cognitive factors of singing relate more to the conscious mental facilities utilized to process a lyric, a rhythm, a gesture, or expression. Reason and judgment guide the cognitive interpretation of a song or presentation of a song. Emotive factors relate more to the emotional interpretation of a song including feelings, impressions, and memory. Fisher writes, "Music is quite useful and important as a repository of the self. It is a memory bank for the living in the world."[4] Music powerfully influences, educates, transports, reminds, and inspires.

In a study by J. Gertrud Tönsing, Cas J. Wepener, and Cas Vos, they surmise, "Besides the Bible itself, songs are one of the primary ways in which the Christian tradition has been codified to be mediated to the next generation and it is a very important way in which each generation mediates its own experience of faith."[5] In this article, they focus on the balance between the cognitive and emotive components in the song. The influence of music extends to both the cognitive and the emotive. They determine, "Singing remains a behaviour that goes to the heart of Christian identity and ministry. It is worth finding ways to help so that it will be most effective, comforting and enriching."[6] The emotive effects of music are deeply correlated to the emotional responses prompted by the musical experience in the listener.

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[2] David Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing: Formation through Contemporary Worship Music* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2021), 121.

[3] Dan Fisher, "Music and Identity: Escape, Engagement, and the Quest for Authenticity in a Commodity Culture," (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 2002), 111.

[4] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 114.

[5] J. Gertrud Tönsing, Cas J. Wepener, and Cas Vos, "The 'Cognitive' and the 'Emotive' Component in Christian Songs: Tracing the Shifts in Traditional and Contemporary Songs" *Verbum et Ecclesia* 36, no. 1, (2015): 2.

[6] Tönsing, Wepener, and Vos, "The 'Cognitive' and the 'Emotive,'" 13.

Tuomas Eerola and Jonna K. Vuoskoski's article, "A Review of Music and Emotion Studies: Approaches, Emotion Models, and Stimuli," investigates the emotional responses to music. In contrast to Tönsing, Werpener, and Vos, these researchers determine music rarely has material consequences for the individual's physical or psychological integrity.[7] In another study, Patrick N. Juslin, Goncalo Barrados, and Ruomas Eerola determine emotional response is not always present when listening to music.[8] The variable of perceived emotion is, in many ways, unmeasurable although it is discernable.

The abstract nature of emotional response may lead researchers to deem it insignificant. However, emotional response is evident to the listener, and the artist is often aware of the listener's emotional response to the live music experience. While these studies suggest a minimal effect of emotional response to music, other researchers seek to prove exactly the opposite. Emotions are an ever-present reality of the human experience and therefore, must be evaluated in direct correlation to music, especially in the context of the Christian artist.

Kristal L. Spreadborough writes an intriguing article on emotional valance and the emotional perception of words by the audience. She investigates the connection between the vocal timbre and the "unique aural experience of an individual song."[9] Spreadborough concludes, "Music seems to heighten the focus on emotive voice-like qualities, making it a

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[7] Tuomas Eerola and Jonna K. Vuoskoski, "A Review of Music and Emotion Studies: Approaches, Emotion Models, and Stimuli," *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 30, no. 3 (February 2013): 307–40.

[8] Patrick N. Juslin, Goncalo Barrados, and Ruomas Eerola, "From Sound to Significance: Exploring the Mechanisms Underlying Emotional Reactions to Music," *The American Journal of Psychology* 128, no. 3 (Fall 2015): 281–304.

[9] Kristal L. Spreadborough and Ines Anton-Mendez, "It's Not What You Sing, It's How You Sing It: How the Emotional Valence of Vocal Timbre Influences Listeners' Emotional Perception of Words," *Psychology of Music* 47, no. 3 (2019): 410. https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735617753996.

highly evocative emotional stimulus."[10] Emotional stimulus is an undeniable response to music although it may be difficult to assess. However, there are uniquely congruent aspects which offer insight into the emotional experience including the observed appearance of the artist in correlation to the musical selections being performed by the artist.

A fascinating study by Amy Belfi et al., "Aesthetic Judgments of Live and Recorded Music: Effects of Congruence Between Musical Artist and Piece," examines congruency between the artist and the piece. Belfi et al. discovers a congruence in audience observation between the visual appearance of the artist and the type of music being performed. In their study, the authors find visual congruence between a military band playing patriotic songs as more appealing to an audience than a university band playing patriotic songs.

The military band performing patriotic music is more compelling because they represent those who are living and dying for what is being portrayed. This is the very essence of authenticity. While the university band expresses patriotism through their musical selections, they are not active representatives of the armed forces. The university band is not inauthentic in the presentation of their song selections. However, the audience does not emotionally connect on the same level with the university band as to the military band because of the visual and contextual disconnect between the identity of the artist and the type of musical piece being performed.

These observable elements of congruence between the artist and the piece affects the audience's overall perception of the performance. The more observable congruency between the artist and the piece seems to invoke a deeper emotive response in the audience. The congruence between the Christian artist and the faith-based musical piece is a powerful demonstration of a

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[10] Spreadborough and Anton-Mendez, "It's Not What You Sing, It's How You Sing It," 408.

potentially life-altering spiritual influence. A faith-filled artist delivering faith-filled lyrics offers more than visual congruence. Where Belfi et al. examines the visual congruence between the artist and the piece, Dr. Hanna Byrd in her doctoral thesis assesses the congruence between spiritual formation and the song lyrics.

Dr. Byrd investigates the influence of lyrical consumption upon the process of spiritual edification. She highlights the "gained influence" of Christian song in the evangelical community.[11] There are many congruent elements working together to formulate this increased influence including a visual congruence between the artist and the piece and congruence between song lyrics and spiritual formation. The audience's perception of the song lyrics is deeply connected to personal spiritual formation. Perception, therefore, is considerably influenced by emotional response.

In a separate article by Tönsing, he examines, "the complex issue of the emotive effect of Christian songs."[12] The subjectivity of emotive effect is the primary focus of Tönsing's study with interest in individual response to Christian songs.[13] Tönsing includes four factors which influence emotional response to a song: "The external situation in which a song is sung, the internal make-up of the one singing it (memories, identity and values), the text, and the tune itself."[14] He surmises, "There are so many variables in people's appreciation of songs."[15] These

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[11] Hanna Jane Byrd, "The Impact of Lyric Choices on Spiritual Edification" (DWS Thesis, Liberty University, 2019), Abstract.

[12] J. Gertrud Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears'—Emotion, Memory and Identity in Encountering Christian Songs," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 76, no. 3 (2020): 1, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i3.5618.

[13] Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears,'" 2. Tönsing recognizes variables that have been studied by musicologists and admits his study "does not attempt to isolate any variables to make objective findings."

[14] Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears,'" 2.

[15] Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears,'" 1.

variables are significant to consider as they indefinitely affect the emotive response of the audience to the artist and the artist's song. Different variables to consider when evaluating emotive response includes the listener's memories, personal experiences, individual contexts, interpretation of the artist and the piece, and perceived authenticity of the artist by the listener.

While music is emotional, it is also informative. In his article, "Music, Emotion, and Relationship in Christian Worship," Nathan Myrick suggests, "We do well to pay attention to the ways that music deeply engrains our understanding of a given idea or doctrine."[16] While music informs idea, Myrick contends it is far more than simply an educational component in the church. He argues for the premise that all of music is about relationship and that the relational beings are "profoundly emotional."[17] With the participating artist and listening audience as emotional beings, the relational aspect of music informs doctrine and ideology as well as relationship.

Music as both cognitive and emotive is influential, informative, and relational. The congruency between the artist and the musical piece remains a central and key theme to better understand both actual artist authenticity and perceived artist authenticity by the audience. The persuasive power of musicking should not be underestimated. Fisher indicates, "Music like identity is all about the performance and the clever hiding of the performance. This is likely why music is so pervasive in advertising—it is the ultimate hidden persuader."[18] Music continues to persuade, shape, and mold through cognitive understanding and emotive experience and response. To understand music as cognitive and emotive requires an acknowledgment of

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[16] Nathan Myrick, "Music, Emotion, and Relationship in Christian Worship," *Journal of the Liturgical Conference* 36, no. 1 (2021): 27, https://doi.org/10.1080/0458063X.2020.1865030.

[17] Myrick, "Music, Emotion, and Relationship," 28.

[18] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 119.

individual taste, opinion, preference, experience, and perspective. These various components contribute to the process of interpretation which significantly informs individual and communal understanding of the musicking experience.

Interpretation

Interpretation in this research project relates to the artist's interpretation of the musical piece, the audience's interpretation of the musical piece, and the audience's interpretation of the artist delivering the musical piece. A thorough investigation of artist authenticity requires a better understanding of the audience's interpretation of the artist and the collective musical experience. Music and music appreciation remains central to virtually every studied culture both past and present. In his dissertation, Fisher observes, "No human culture so far discovered has been without music."[19]

Like Fisher, Tönsing submits, "Music is a universal phenomenon, found in every human society on earth, suggesting that music has very deep, fundamental evolutionary importance."[20] The significance of music as a cultural phenomenon is intriguing. Artists in a certain culture will interpret music differently than artists in other cultures. The way in which the artist interprets the music within a cultural context significantly enhances the listener's experience.

For instance, a secular appreciation of music varies from a sacred appreciation of music. The dueling nature of a secular artist embodying a song temporarily for the sake of the performance is largely in contrast to the Christian artist embodying a song through a lifestyle of worship. This is reflective of Tönsing's discovery as he writes, "Christian songs probably have a

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[19] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 2.

[20] Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears,'" 3.

higher importance for people than music appreciation generally."[21] However, it is not just the song that encourages music appreciation but also the artist's ability to interpret the song through the lens of Scripture and the practice of lifestyle worship. Therefore, the congruence between Christian musical artist and the sacred piece is more intrinsically authentic due to the Christian faith aspect of worship as a lifestyle, or cultural norm.

The idea of lifestyle worship is similar to the educational research ideology known as Pedagogical Content Knowledge. Colleen Conway defines Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as, "knowledge of how to *teach* the content."[22] The artist is a communicator and teacher of the lyrical content of the piece through expressions of lifestyle worship. Not only is the artist required to learn the piece, including melodies and lyrics, but the Christian artist is obligated to interpret the piece to convey or teach its meaning to the audience through emotional and experiential interpretation, expression, dynamics, meaningful gestures, and genuine appeal to the authenticity and eternal significance of the song. Artistic musical interpretation remains a central component of music performance.

Marissa Silverman, professor of Music Education, emphasizes the pedagogical element of artistic musical interpretation and admits, "Enabling student performers to create musically informed, artistic, and personal interpretations of musical works is one of the most challenging and elusive aspects of music education."[23] Music teachers and vocal coaches encourage the artist to presume alter-egos for stage performance while others encourage the artist to attempt to relate

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[21] Tönsing, "'That Song Moves Me to Tears,'" 7.

[22] Colleen M. Conway, *Teaching Music in Higher Education* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020), 6.

[23] Marissa Silverman, "A Performer's Creative Processes: Implications for Teaching and Learning Musical Interpretation," *Music Education Research*, 10, no, 2 (2008): 249–269, 249, DOI: 10.1080/14613800802079114.

an emotional experience to specific lyrics in the song. Silverman points to a fellow researchers' observation and concludes an additional perspective is that "expert musicians devise a plan or 'goal image'… [meaning] a mental-echoic image of a desired performance."[24] Rather than striving for an end goal of a successful performance or attempting to embody a song for the short duration of the performance, Christian artists are compelled to live out the songs they sing in a lifestyle of worship.

This type of authentic lifestyle of the artist helps to inform the process of musical interpretation of the piece. Interpretation will always lead to transmission of ideas, understanding, emotional response, and comprehension. Transmission is significant when considering it is the message of the gospel that is being communicated between the Christian music artist and the audience. As music is performed, ideas and emotional promptings are being transmitted from the artist to the audience. The message of the gospel is being transmitted through not only the song lyrics but also through the artist's interpretation of the music and the lyrics.

John William Harrelson's dissertation emphasizes music that is being transmitted in an American culture. He explains, "The transmitting of music, in whatever format, and the interest such music receives is at the heart of this document."[25] His initial investigation is the connection between the piece and the audience including what is being transmitted by the music/musician to the audience. The message of the piece and the message of the artist's interpretation of the piece are being communicated to the audience. The song itself may prompt an emotional response by

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[24] Silverman, "A Performer's Creative Processes," 252.

[25] John William Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response: A Critical History of America's Music," (PhD diss., The Claremont Graduate University, 2001), 4, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

the audience. Like Harrelson, Westermeyer also investigates emotive and physical effects of music on the listener.

In his article, "Music and Spirituality," Westermeyer studies the various emotional connections to songs and uniquely identifies a double paradox that music is heard and assessed as vibrations with physical bodies, yet it intrinsically carries spiritual and emotive influence.[26] While emotive considerations affect the listener, so do the physical effects of the music upon the listener's body. Westermeyer acknowledges the physical effect of music upon the listener but largely connects the experience to the audience's memory, health, emotion, and time when hearing the musical piece.[27]

The audience's connection to the piece indefinitely influences their ability to observe the artist. This emphasizes the importance of the message while not diminishing the effect of the messenger. Taking into consideration the audience's own memories and emotional connections is central when attempting to ask audience members to identify and assess artist authenticity. The perception of artist authenticity may be persuaded by the listener's emotional response to a song, the song lyrics, and/or the perception of the artist who identifies as a Christian artist. The identity of the Christian artist is remarkably influenced by external forces including culture, worldview, and personal desire.

Christian Identity

Identity is central to the human existence. The quest for human identity and the definition of self, according to Fisher, "Determines to a large extent how one's life should be lived by

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[26] Westermeyer, "Music and Spirituality," 568.

[27] Westermeyer, "Music and Spirituality," 570.

establishing a general orientation to existence and situating oneself in relation to the wider cosmos and other people in particular and meaningful ways."[28] Fisher explains, "Identity forms the basis for every decision we make."[29] Identity shapes thoughts, motives, and actions. In his dissertation project, Fisher notes, "Identity is our compass that directs us in our journey through this existence."[30] Therefore, the term *Christian* before the word *identity* signifies that which should be the acting compass directing the Christian through life.

To identify as a Christian necessitates an adherence to the Christian faith as described in the Holy Bible. For the purposes of this study, three significant contributors to Christian identity include: culture, worldview, and personal desire. Christian identity is informed primarily by the Christian faith message of the gospel of Jesus Christ and is framed by cultural experience, individual worldview, and personal desire.

First, culture is defined by Andy Crouch as, "What human beings make of the world. It always bears the stamp of our creativity, our God-given desire to make something more than we were given."[31] Fisher tersely suggests, "Culture is the way the human species orders chaos."[32] In their thorough research on cultural influence on personality, Harry C. Triandis and Eunkook M. Suh explain, "Elements of culture are shared standard operating procedures, unstated assumptions, tools, norms, values, habits about sampling the environment, and the like."[33] Like

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[28] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 8.

[29] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 8.

[30] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 8.

[31] Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008), 23.

[32] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 94.

[33] Harry C. Triandis and Eunkook M. Suh, "Cultural Influences on Personality, Cultural Influences on Personality," *Annual Review of Psychology* 53, no. 1 (2002): 136.

Crouch and Fisher, Triandis and Suh address the idea of culture being that which humanity makes of their surroundings. Fisher adds, "Culture can shield us from the absurd and irrational. Humans are impelled to create and impose order on chaos."[34]

While humanity shapes culture, in return, culture then shapes the individuals who identify within a particular culture. Arthur W. Hunt, III captures this two-fold phenomenon in his book *Surviving Technopolis: Essays on Finding Balance in Our New Man-Made Environments*. In reviewing the works of Marshall McLuhan, Hunt capitalizes on one of McLuhan's ideologies, "We shape our technologies, and in turn they shape us."[35] Hunt later writes, "Interestingly, evangelicalism has both shaped the culture and been shaped by the culture."[36] Where Smith, like Hunt, notes the shaping effect of worship on all of culture, June Boyce-Tillman specifies communal worship as one of these shaping elements of identity.

Boyce-Tillman points to the moment when the "personal becomes communal."[37] She investigates the phenomenon of the *I* and *my* in Christian hymns giving way to "the discovery that the personal cry of one may also be the voice of many."[38] Tillman continues, "It is in this domain that personal identity is often constructed—an identity formed of being part of a

[34] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 47.

[35] Arthur W. Hunt, III, *Surviving Technopolis: Essays on Finding Balance in our New Man-Made Environments* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 11.

[36] Hunt, III, *Surviving Technopolis*, 14.

[37] Monique Ingalls, Carolyn Landau, and Tom Wagner, eds., *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity, and Experience* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 54.

[38] June Boyce-Tillman and Janet Wootton, eds., *Reflecting Praise* (Stainer and Bell, 1993), 25, quoted in June Boyce-Tillman, "Tune Your Music to Your Heart: Reflections for Church Music Leaders," in *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity, and Experience,* eds., Monique Ingalls, Carolyn Landau, and Tom Wagner, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 54.

particular culture."[39] Worship as a shaping element prioritizes a renewal of worship and all of cultural life. Smith explains, "Not only should worship be re-ordered and renewed but all of cultural life should reflect God's designs and intentions."[40]

Cultural influences continue to shape and mold the individual in the most subtle of ways that are often undetected until the individual is removed from a particular culture and/or cultural influences. Fisher explains the breadth of cultural influence in observing, "One's culture and society can exert a powerful force on the self; one 'chooses' to become."[41] While the influence of culture may seem overwhelming, remarkably, culture is always initiated by a small group of individuals. Crouch expounds, "Culture making is local. Every cultural good, whether a new word, law, recipe, song, or gadget, begins with a small group of people—not just a relatively small group but an absolutely small group. No matter how many it goes on to affect, culture always starts small."[42] Regardless of its absolutely small origins, culture shaping continues to hold the key to establishing worldview.

Second, a worldview is the lens through which an individual sees the world. Worldview largely shapes individual identity as a result of cultural influences. Worldview includes a weighted belief and deeply held conviction to believe one way over another, and yet individual actions may not always confirm a supposed held worldview. James K. A. Smith suggests, "We might have a highly developed, articulate 'worldview' and yet act in ways that are remarkably

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[39] Tillman, "Tune Your Music to Your Heart," in *Christian Congregational Music*, 54.

[40] James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works,* vol. 2, *Cultural Liturgies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 154.

[41] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 30.

[42] Crouch, *Culture Making*, 239.

inconsistent with such a 'perspective.'"[43] Smith explains, "So much of my action in and

orientation to the world is governed by dispositions that are shaped by practice."[44] Where

perspective shapes worldview, practice is a result of personal desire.

Third, personal desire holds the power to not only shape identity but to also inform

practice. Worldview is influential, yet desire carries more weight when determining practices.

What one thinks may indeed be very different than what one desires, resulting in different

practices than held thoughts or beliefs. Individual identity faces a dilemma when there is a

breakdown between what one supposedly believes and the actions one practices. This is the very

essence of duplicitousness. James warns of this in writing, "But each person is tempted when he

is lured and enticed by his own desire" (James 1:14, English Standard Version). Desire appears

to be more influential than thought, especially when it comes to practice.

Smith, in agreement with the strong stimulus of desire, proposes, "Pedagogies of desire

form our habits, affections, and imaginations, thus shaping and priming our very orientation to

the world."[45] Desires fuel practices which inevitably lead to habits that form lifestyle patterns.

Dallas Willard's explanation of "vital or impulsive will," seems to explain the pedagogies of

desire. Willard defines vital or impulsive will as, "A willing that is outwardly directed and

moved by and toward things that are simply attractive."[46] These attractions have less to do with

reason and thought. However, they often shape individual desire that ultimately forms practices

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[43] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 8.

[44] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 9.

[45] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 13.

[46] Dallas Willard, "Spiritual Formation: What it is, and How it is Done," Dallas Willard Articles, http://www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artID=58.

to satisfy the desire. The disciplined or undisciplined exercise of will leads to habitual practices or lifestyle patterns.

In her Ph.D. dissertation, Marlinda K. Ireland refers to a patterned lifestyle and suggests, "A survey of Jesus' ministry preparation habits indicates that he spent a significant amount of time preparing for ministry."[47] Ireland devotes much of her studies to the spiritual formation for emerging adult worship artists in a specific church location, Christ Church in Montclair and Rockaway, NJ. She identifies spiritual formation as a significant component of identity, especially in the life of the Christian worship artist. Similarly, Willard devotes an entire article to the idea of spiritual formation and defines it as, "The process of transformation of the inmost dimension of the human being, the heart, which is the same as the spirit or will."[48] He explains, "[Spiritual formation] can be understood as the process by which true Christlikeness is established in the very depths of our being."[49] This process of transformation does not cancel other elements of identification but rather elevates a priority of identity in something, or Someone, else other than culture, worldview, and desire that have so shaped and molded the individual.

Therefore, the idea of Christlikeness infiltrates all of an individual's experience with culture, worldview, and desire. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ does not eliminate individual culture, worldview, or desire but rather redeems every facet of the human experience to fulfill God's purposes in the life of the individual follower of Christ. To be an authentic

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[47] Marlinda K. Ireland, "Evaluating a Spiritual Formation Course for Emerging Adult Worship Artists at Christ Church" (PhD diss., The Alliance Theological Seminary, 2015), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, iii.

[48] Willard, "Spiritual Formation."

[49] Willard, "Spiritual Formation."

communicator of the gospel requires an individually held Christian identity that prioritizes identity in Christ over identity in culture, worldview, desire, or anything other than Christ.

Christian identity requires a thorough understanding of a biblical precedent for identity, lifestyle, and worship. Biblical precedent is the structural framework from which all the Christian life is patterned and expressed. For generations, the Bible has timelessly guided Christians through various cultural and worldview experiences. Solomon explains in Ecclesiastes 1:9, "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun." The wisdom of God remains steadfast as empires, cultures, and powerful leaders of earth have faded into history books or never to be remembered again. Therefore, it is completely necessary to establish a biblical precedent for this research project.

Biblical Precedent and Ethics

A biblical theology of worship is an understanding of what one believes about God and worship based upon the Word of God. Worship is central to God's design for humanity. Daniel I. Block claims, "To be human is to worship."[50] David Edwards advocates that all of worship is about a relationship with God.[51] David Peterson also attests, "In fact, worship theology expresses the dimensions of a life orientation or total relationship with the true and living God."[52] Matt Boswell adds that belief about God shapes the worship of God.[53] In her dissertation, Emily

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[50] Daniel I. Block, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 1.

[51] David M. Edwards, *Worship Three Sixty-Five: The Power of a Worshiping Life* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2006), 36.

[52] David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1992), 18.

[53] Matt Boswell, *Doxology & Theology: How the Gospel Forms the Worship Leader* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2013), 12.

Snider Andrews proposes experiencing the presence of God is made possible through lived experiences and embodied worship.[54] Similarly, David Lemley defines worship as, "A response to God's loving initiative, a rehearsal of God's kingdom, a means of conscious participation in God's life, and vital to participation in the mission of God's church."[55]

Worship is ultimately a response to the revelation of God.[56] Therefore, a basic biblical theology of worship reveals worship as being relational by virtue of God's invitation and is humanity's response to God's revelation. A biblical theology of worship is necessary in order to have the capacity to understand how God has designed humanity and how He views human identity, lifestyle, and worship. This biblical perspective provides meaning and purpose for the individual, as well as direction and guidance in all aspects of life.

First, human identity is found at the very beginning of time with the *imago Dei*, being created in the image of God. C. F. H. Henry introduces the topic of the image of God in Elwell's Evangelical Dictionary of Theology with this thought: "That humanity by creation uniquely bears the image of God is a fundamental biblical doctrine…Humanity's nature and destiny are interwoven with this foundational fact."[57] Humanity has been created as imaging bearers of the very image of Creator God (Gen. 1:26–27; Gen. 5:1–2; Gen.9:6; 1 Cor. 11:7; James 3:9). Being created in the image of God uniquely links all of humanity to Creator God. This basic reality may be denied by a rebellious heart unwilling to submit to the authority of God. However, the

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[54] Emily Snider Andrews, "Exploring Evangelical Sacramentality: Modern Worship Music and the Possibility of Divine-Human Encounter," (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2019), 8.

[55] Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing,* 16

[56] Several sources agree upon this ideology including Boswell, *Doxology & Theology*, 6; Wainwright, *Doxology,* 37; Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 25; Block, *For the Glory of God*, 6; Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader,* 41; Noland, *The Worshiping Artist,* 19; Edwards, *Worship Three Sixty-Five*, 126.

[57] C. F. H. Henry, "Image of God," in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 591.

follower of Christ rests in this fundamental reality that all identity is found in Creator God. The search for self begins and ends in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Second, lifestyle patterns begin to develop once identity is secure. The search for self gives way to developing intentional lifestyle habits and patterns to reflect individual identity in Christ. When an individual's identity is firmly established in Christ, the ways of Christ begin to inform the lifestyle of the individual. Lifestyle includes daily practices, routines, thought patterns, desires, and engagement with others. Jesus' very life on earth is an example for His followers.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches those who follow Him to be meek, to hunger and thirst for righteousness, to be merciful, pure in heart, and peacemakers (Matt. 5:3–9). In the same chapter, He teaches them to refrain from anger, retaliation, and lust, while, in Matthew 6, he encourages them to give to the needy, pray, fast, seek to store up eternal treasures in heaven, and to refrain from worry. The vast amount of teaching in the Bible about a Christian lifestyle cannot be completely explored in this setting. However, it is necessary to realize that patterns of lifestyle have been described extensively in the Bible.

Third, the greatest resource for a better understanding of worship is God's Word. Worship takes on various postures and expressions, including but not limited to, praying, singing, clapping, shouting, dancing, and kneeling. Humanity often understands worship in the context of the expression. However, at its core, worship is more than simply an expression. E. F. Harrison defines worship as, "Pure adoration, the lifting up of the redeemed spirit toward God in contemplation of his holy perfection."[58] Worship is extensively present throughout the Bible and

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[58] E. F. Harrison, "Worship," in *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology,* ed. Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 1300.

can be seen as offering (Gen. 4:4), obedience (Gen. 6:22), sacrifice (Gen. 22:1–19), lament (Job 1:20–21), faith (Josh. 6:20), and singing (2 Chron. 20:21–22). Worship is meant to encapsulate the life found in Christ with the Bible guiding and directing, teaching and providing understanding.

The Bible is the living and breathing Word of God. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness." All of the Christian life is to be informed by the Bible. A biblical framework for identity, lifestyle, and worship provides the opportunity to explore biblical ethics.

The interconnectedness of "worship, ethics, and doctrine" in the religious life are inevitable.[59] In this study, the emphasis on biblical ethics is in contrast with other philosophical systems in that the very foundation of biblical ethics is a relationship with God.[60] Biblical ethics is a key component of artist authenticity. R. E. O. White defines biblical ethics as, "The unfolding of faith itself, in 'authentic existence.'"[61] Elsabe Kloppers observes, "Authenticity is valued, as that is exactly what is missing in our world."[62] Authenticity is essential for the follower of Christ to be equipped to effectively communicate the truth of the gospel through testimony and song.

Authenticity is informed by biblical ethics. In his groundbreaking systematic theology in worship studies, Geoffrey Wainwright includes a section on ethics titled, "(In)sincerity?

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[59] John D Witvliet, *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 203.

[60] R. E. O. White, "Ethics, Biblical," in The *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Elwell, 402.

[61] R. E. O. White, "Ethical Systems, Christian," in The *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology,* ed. Elwell, 400.

[62] Elsabe Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred in the Age of Fake News — Practical Theology Reflecting on the Public Sphere," *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 76, no. 2, (2020): 2. https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i2.6131.

(In)effectiveness?" He questions the sincerity and effectiveness of worship when there is "an undesirable separation" between the secular and the sacred.[63] This undesirable separation is the very essence of duplicitousness. This research project intends to examine—in further detail than Wainwright provides—the effects of biblical ethics and morality on how the artist connects with the message of the song then transmits the message of the song to the audience.

A desired result of biblical ethics and morality is integrity. Integrity is undeniably essential when communicating the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. A lack of integrity jeopardizes the message of Christ due to inconsistencies in the lifestyle of the messenger. In a commodity culture that pushes the latest and greatest goods, consumers are generally more skeptical, less believing, and often call into question others' motives and agendas. Where the gospel is concerned, the greatest damage is for a lost and hurting soul to look at the Christian and say, "I am not buying what you are selling," all because of the inauthenticity of the messenger. The Christian pursuing a life in Christ strives for integrity so that what is believed in the heart is confessed by the mouth and demonstrated consciously and consistently in action.

Integrity: Between the Heart and the Mouth

God rejects worship that is disconnected from the heart in Isaiah 29:13: "[T]his people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me." Jesus indicts the Pharisees for this same duplicitous behavior recorded in Matthew 15:7–9 and Mark 7:6–7. Jesus makes the connection from God's earlier accusation of duplicitousness in suggesting that Isaiah has prophesied against the religious leaders of Jesus' day. Jesus' charge in

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[63] Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (New York, NY: Oxford Press, 1980), 399.

Luke 11:39–43 is against the Pharisaic heart of duplicitous worship offered from the lips but not

expressed out of a pure heart.

In his article, "The Sacredness of Art and God in the Perspective of Worship," Iacob

Coman warns, "The sacred objects and sacred music, if they are created by God through us,

brings us closer to Him and sanctify us, but if they are created by us both as initiative and as

achievement, the situation becomes unsafe."[64] Coman's study emphasizes the sacredness of

worship. His research provides insightful warning yet does not fully examine how to guard

against duplicitous behavior. This research project further examines the personal motives of the

artist to determine if and how one can actively guard against the mindless action of going

through the motions when presenting the musical piece.

Wainwright, in his acclaimed book, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine,*

and Life, expounds upon the necessary congruence between the heart and the mouth. He writes,

"As to the relation between external confession and internal belief, the moral question concerns

the sincerity-hypocrisy axis."[65] He explains, "Since language is the divine gift which allows self-

expression, there should properly be a positive correspondence between lips and heart."[66]

Morality of the artist is thoroughly investigated by Adely Charles as he researches the

dark side of leadership of six prominent leaders in the Bible in his dissertation, "Modern-Day

Korahites in Crisis: Causes and Consequences of Moral Failure in Worship Leaders."[67] Where

Charles researches the dark side of leadership, this research project seeks to build on his concepts

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[64] Iacob Coman, "The Sacredness of Art and God in the Perspective of Worship." *Science Diet* 163, (December 2014): 279–87, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.12.317.

[65] Wainwright, *Doxology*, 216.

[66] Wainwright, *Doxology*, 216.

[67] Adely Thelus Charles, "Modern-Day Korahites in Crisis: Causes and Consequences of Moral Failure in Worship Leaders," (DWS diss., Liberty University, 2020).

to prevent the causes of moral failure by establishing elements of congruence between the artist and the message of the song to encourage authentic transmission of the song. Congruency between the Christian artist and the piece reflects the sincerity-hypocrisy axis as a heart knowledge of the message of the song is proclaimed authentically by the mouth of the artist. Where Charles emphasizes the worship leader, this research project focuses on the Christian artist. This research project seeks to better understand the cause-and-effect relationship between the practice of lifestyle worship and the authentic transmission of the gospel through song to avoid moral failure in the Christian artist.

Artist Authenticity

Authenticity is the essence of integrity and demonstrating through actions what one believes in the heart and confesses with the mouth. To be authentic is to be genuine, realistic, believable, and trusted. Nathan Myrick explains, "Authenticity has been variously described as synonymous with sincerity, or conviction, or even integrity. Yet how authenticity is demonstrated and/or qualified remains elusive; how can I *know* a person is being authentic, and to what?"[68] Authenticity and perception of authenticity may vary to some degree. Myrick suggests, "On one hand, authenticity could mean 'the real McCoy,' or the genuine artifact. On another, it could mean deeply convicted."[69] Myrick argues for both aspects of authenticity to be found in the Christian artist.

John William Harrelson investigates artist authenticity and artist integrity from a strictly secular perspective. He observes that the artist's authentic commitment "can most effectively be

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[68] Nathan Myrick, "Double Authenticity: Celebrity, Consumption, and the Christian Worship Music Industry," *The Hymn* 29, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 24.

[69] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 24.

done in performance."[70] His study is thorough in examining platform performance and the artist's attempt of personal integrity to appear to "walk the walk" and "talk the talk." Harrelson suggests the artist goes to "great lengths to re-characterize themselves and their lives so that the audience supports them in every way, avoiding at all costs any issues that threaten their image."[71] While this appears to be the way of secular artist authenticity, it remains a troubling practice as it contradicts the very premise of personal integrity. Duplicitousness is not an option for the artist transmitting the message of the gospel through song. Spiritual formation through worship demands Christian artist authenticity.

Bryan Chapell's prominent book, *Christ-Centered Worship*, provides insight into the components of worship and how transmission is intended to have eternal value. He states, "Excellence in all dimensions of worship expression, including music, must not simply be defined by cultural standards of sophistication, but by the ability of the expression to strengthen, deepen, and develop faith."[72] The Christian artist is communicating the means by which people should live their lives and trust for eternity.

David Lemley advocates, "Authenticity is always being measured, in both the performer and listener, in terms of the unwritten rules of style."[73] While measurement is always occurring in musical performance, Albrecht Classen specifies, "There is no universal agreement at all what constitutes 'good' versus 'bad' music, 'elite' versus' 'low' music ('high culture' versus 'low culture'), authentic versus unauthentic music, how to define music as such in the first place, and

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[70] Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response," 38.

[71] Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response," 55.

[72] Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 140.

[73] Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing*, 115.

to what extent personal tastes and ideas matter in such a discussion."[74] Though music itself may

not be universally labeled authentic or inauthentic, the artist embodying and delivering the

message through the music certainly can identify as and be identified as authentic or inauthentic.

In his article, Myrick's reference to "double authenticity"[75] is the process the Christian

recording industry has created to seemingly authenticate the Christian recording artist in the

music ministry. These two points of authenticity include the artist being "committed to a

particular congregation" and "their songs [are] not for entertainment purposes, but [have] a

specifically sacred function."[76] The complication is, then, how one assesses the difference

between genuine authenticity from a marketed authenticity. Assessing artist authenticity is

extremely difficult especially when evaluating the artist only by his or her stage appearance,

public mannerisms, and social media posts. Careful attention is given by the recording industry

to create, disseminate, and protect a specific artist identity with such significance and importance

placed on "commercial appeal and marketing value."[77]

The last two decades have found the Christian community more open to secular

influences of musical style as well as welcoming an increase in purchase of Christian marketable

goods or lifestyle items. Myrick's assessments of the Christian music industry fall in line with

these cultural developments. His observations easily lead to critical summary of and mistrust in

the marketing tactics of the Christian music industry. However, Myrick is quick with his

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[74] Albrecht Classen, "Music as a Universal Bond and Bridge Between the Physical and the Divine: Transcultural and Medieval Perspectives," *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 13, no. 3 (2021), 2.

[75] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 25.

[76] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 24–25.

[77] Nathan Myrick, "The Celebrity Model of Music Ministry: Characteristics and Considerations," *The Hymn* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2018): 26, ISSN: 00188271.

disclaimer, "I have not used [terms and descriptions] to point out some malfeasance in Christian worship."[78]

Myrick is admittedly not writing with indictments against the Christian recording industry or Christian worship models but is rather providing observations to allow the reader to determine personal considerations in response to his findings. In realizing the potential criticism his research may inspire, he warns the reader in good humor and profound wisdom, "Those looking for an axe are sure to find one, but I will caution that it is double-bitted. Beware lest you lop off your own leg."[79]

Where Myrick cautions the loss of a metaphorical leg, humanity attempting to bear the weight of the glory of God results in the complete loss of life. In pursuit of authenticity before God, self-glorification must be resisted. Beale thoroughly deals with the issue of idolatry in his book, *We Become What We Worship*, and says, "In whatever work Christians do, they should pray, 'Lord, cause me to take pleasure in your glory and not in mine.'"[80] Daniel I. Block also affirms every effort should be made to deflect attention from self and given to God.[81] Glorification of God is the ultimate pursuit of artist authenticity requiring a response of "daily life as worship,"[82] or lifestyle worship.[83]

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[78] Myrick, "The Celebrity Model," 25.

[79] Myrick, "The Celebrity Model," 25.

[80] G. K. Beale, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove, IL InterVarsity Press, 2008), 310.

[81] Block, *For the Glory of God*, 360.

[82] Block, *For the Glory of God*, 81.

[83] Lifestyle Worship is a common term utilized by researchers and theologians including: Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader,* 58; Noland, *The Worshiping Artist,* 21; Edwards, *Worship Three Sixty-Five,* 167; Peterson, *Engaging with God,* 63.

Lifestyle Worship

Myrick writes, "If the goal of humanity is to glorify God, then it stands to reason that worship is an integral part of that endeavor; thus, worship as a lifestyle may, in good conscience, be understood as the ends to which conversion aims."[84] Lifestyle worship is more of a process or commitment to practice than an object of tangible measurability. Fisher suggests, "Lifestyle and identity are basically interchangeable."[85] Like Fisher, Rory Noland explains, "Worship is part of our identity as Christians."[86] To adopt a lifestyle of worship requires, much like a shift in identity, a surrendering of will and relinquishing of former practices to embrace a new pattern. Block writes, "Servitude to Christ involves a lifestyle totally devoted to him and is a precondition for acceptable liturgical worship."[87] The apostle Paul explains this ideology in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

Peterson recommends lifestyle worship is a "total reorientation" of life to abandon any form of idolatry for the true worship of the living God.[88] Block, in his book, *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*, points to the importance of lifestyle worship, "Unless the worshiper walks with God in daily life, no cultic acts will impress God positively."[89]

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[84] Myrick, "The Celebrity Model," 27.

[85] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 5.

[86] Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 19.

[87] Block, *For the Glory of God,* 21.

[88] Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 167.

[89] Block*, For the Glory of God,* 81.

Cultic or religious acts without daily personal relationship with Jesus are completely contradictory to the very essence of lifestyle worship.

Therefore, Block appeals to the need to "maintain a purity of life worthy of acceptance to God."[90] Paul states in Ephesians 4:1, "I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called." Another translation of this verse says, "…live a life worthy of the calling you have received" (New International Version). With awareness of Christian lifestyle and daily patterns or habits, Peterson suggests, "Far from being a peripheral subject, [worship] has to do with the fundamental question of how we can be in a right relationship with God and please him in all that we do."[91]

Block implies, "Those who have been redeemed recognize that all of life is to be an expression of worship and that God delights in wholehearted and full-bodied holiness."[92] Andrew Roby's article, "Worshipful Singing," points to the "inseparable bond between the content of worship and the development of belief and faith."[93] Belief and faith are effectively developed through the practice of lifestyle worship. Lifestyle worship then affords the potential for the artist to embody the very message of the gospel being transmitted.

Lemley has contributed to the idea of the artist embodying the message in his book, *Becoming What We Sing.* Lemley suggests there is an expectancy for the artist to *be* the piece whether the artist is Christian or secular. He argues that the listener's perception of artist authenticity is a significant contributor to the listener's experience of the song. He surmises,

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[90] Block*, For the Glory of God*, 359.

[91] Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 18.

[92] Block*, For the Glory of God*, 99.

[93] Andrew Roby, "Worshipful Singing: Four Roles of Song in Worship," *Choral Journal* 57, no 3 (2016): 60.

"Authenticity is a matter of finding congruence among the *law of song* (participation in the music itself), the *law of performance* (the rules of authentic performance related to style and genre), and the *law of lifestyle* (affirming the performance through everyday choices)."[94] Lifestyle worship is the demonstration of congruence between the song, the performance, and the lifestyle. Congruence occurs when the message of the song and the appearance of the performance align with the lifestyle of the artist. This is not a natural occurrence but rather requires intentional preparation and implementation. Ireland addresses the need for spiritual formation to create these elements of congruence.

In her doctoral thesis project, Ireland investigates the spiritual formation of the Christian artist. She identifies, "Postmodern Christian artists need a map for integrating Christian spiritual disciplines and ministry."[95] She develops a program designed to "spiritually prepare emerging adult worship artists for transformational ministry."[96] The very essence of Ireland's dissertation project confirms the necessity for intentional preparation and spiritual formation of the Christian artist before stepping into music ministry. Intentional preparation helps to build lifestyle habits and practices ultimately leading to transformation. Like Ireland, Smith also highlights the need for transformation through training, "Christian worship is, in some sense, construal training: it is a divine encounter that should, over time, effect 'background' transformation by reshaping my horizons of constitution."[97] Experiential training for spiritual transformation that leads to lifestyle worship is fulfilled through the practice of spiritual disciplines.

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[94] Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing*, 107.

[95] Ireland, "Evaluating a Spiritual Formation Course," 38.

[96] Ireland, "Evaluating a Spiritual Formation Course," iii.

[97] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 51.

Spiritual Disciplines

The practice of spiritual disciplines has a unique way of encouraging a lifestyle of worship. Smith emphasizes the crux of spiritual disciplines by reminding, "In the practices of Christian worship, and in related spiritual disciplines, we encounter the Lover of our souls."[98] Donald S. Whitney provides a list of personal spiritual disciplines commended in Scripture including, "Bible intake, prayer, worship, evangelism, service, stewardship, fasting, silence and solitude, journaling, and learning."[99] These practiced disciplines create space for the presence of God to refine the Christian believer as portrayed in Malachi 3:3: "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD."

Whitney strongly articulates the spiritual disciplines are means, not ends, that lead to godliness.[100] In the same vein, Smith explains Christian worship "is not to reduce worship to moral formation or to treat the presence of God as a tool for our self-improvement."[101] The spiritual disciplines lead us to Christ who alone improves the human heart condition. It is the nearness of Christ through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that leads to the path of godliness. Whitney defines godliness as, "Both closeness to Christ and conformity to Christ, a conformity that's both inward and outward, a growing conformity to both the heart of Christ and the life of Christ."[102]

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[98] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 152.

[99] Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2014), 7.

[100] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 9.

[101] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 153.

[102] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 9.

Growth in Christlikeness generates opportunity for God to restore and renew the Christian believer's thoughts to a godly and eternal perspective. The spiritual disciplines provide opportunity for fulfillment of the Psalmists request in Psalm 51:10, which says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit in me." A renewed spirit is filled with eternal hope, joy, and contentment. The renewal of the mind is often best achieved through the practice of spiritual disciplines that assist in removing the trappings of this world, giving way to spiritual discernment and insight. Paul teaches in 2 Corinthians 10:5, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ." This idea of taking every though captive denotes military and war-like implications. Therefore, one may presume spiritual disciplines also train, prepare, and equip the believer in holiness to engage in spiritual warfare.

Robbie F. Castleman, in his book, *Story-Shaped Worship*, suggests, "Training in holiness has always seemed just as unnatural as it is necessary for the people of God."[103] This necessary yet peculiar training is quintessentially the practice of spiritual disciplines. Whitney characterizes spiritual disciplines as, "Those practices found in Scripture that promote spiritual growth among believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are the habits of devotion and experiential Christianity that have been practiced by the people of God since biblical times."[104]

Just as generations of Christians have practiced spiritual disciplines through various seasons of life, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun reminds, "The spiritual journey is a marathon of seasons."[105] Some seasons lend more towards motivated living for the Lord where other seasons

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[103] Robbie F. Castleman, *Story Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 58.

[104] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines,* 4.

[105] Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015), 325.

result in tiredness, frustration, or apathy. Calhoun suggests, "Spiritual disciplines are intentional ways to keep moving through the seasons."[106] These practices help to keep the paths open to preserve forward motion. However, Whitney reminds, "There are no shortcuts to godliness."[107]

The Lord Jesus instructs in 1 Timothy 4:7, "Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness" (New American Standard Bible). The practice of spiritual disciplines is an active way to be filled with God and His Holy Spirit. This seems to be the reason Whitney refers to the disciplines as "*activities*, *not attitudes*."[108] Without the activity of being filled with the Holy Spirit, burnout and inauthenticity become devastating risks for the believer. Spiritual emptiness leads to an inability to minister to others out of an overflow of the heart.

The practice of spiritual disciplines which leads to fullness of the Holy Spirit cannot be neglected for lack of time or busy-ness. Whitney observes, "I've come to the conclusion that, with rare exceptions, the godly person is a busy person. The godly person is devoted to God and to people, and that leads to a full life."[109] The practice of spiritual disciplines continues to give capacity to lead a full life, shape the human soul, and form individual action, increase restraint, and strengthen resolve. Where the practice of the spiritual disciplines leads to godliness, the Christian community embodies the very presence of God and extends support and accountability through communal relationship.

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[106] Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, 325.

[107] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines,* 301.

[108] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 6.

[109] Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines*, 288.

Christian Community and Accountability

Much of the Christian experience is informed and encased by the Christian community. The author of Hebrews 10:24–25 speaks to the significance of this community, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (English Standard Version). Christian community embodies the very presence of God through the indwelling presence of his Holy Spirit in the lives of those who claim Jesus as Savior and Lord. Block expresses the significance of the Christian community in comparing, "What the physical temple was to Israel, the church as a spiritual community has become to the world: the holy residence of God indwelt by his Spirit."[110]

This community provides external witness of the Living God to a secular world. It also provides internal encouragement, exhortation, and accountability for those in Christ. Don Saliers emphasizes the shared aspect of Christian community in suggesting, "Christian virtues are indelibly social."[111] These social expectations create a network of accountability which support authenticity when upheld with a biblical perspective.

The idea of the Christian community involves social expectation and relationship. Meaningful relationship facilitates the necessary relational equity to hold one another accountable, to extend genuine care and concern for one another, as well as to take the mind's eye off self and direct it to another. Philippians 2:3 is the premise of this ideology: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."

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[110] Block, *For the Glory of God*, 319.

[111] Don E. Saliers, "With Kindled Affections: Worship and Emotion, Liturgy," *Journal of the Liturgical Conference* 36, no. 1 (2021): 8, https://doi.org/10.1080/0458063X.2020.1865022.

Christian community encourages the individual to care more for others than attempting to create an impression for others to think about the individual. The Christian artist is part of this community by the unique signifier of *Christian* before artist. Therefore, it is the reality of this communal experience that contributes to authenticity and relational integrity.

There is a genuine concern shared for one another in a healthy Christian community. In his article, "Music, Emotion, and Relationship in Christian Worship," Myrick writes concerning the relational bond produced by music. He suggests, "Music facilitates that emotional bond that is so necessary for healthy communities."[112] Harrelson similarly notes, "Music is an element that aids in the formation and expression of individual and group identity."[113] Therefore, the very community structure providing accountability to the artist is, in essence, made more relationally effective by the music being contributed via the artist.

Effective relationships permit opportunity for personal, individual growth as well as create a safe place where any and all façades may be securely removed without fear of criticism or judgment. Myrick adds, "Musicking affords space for emotional integrity—for being honest with ourselves in the presence of others."[114] An awareness of the presence of others is an active component of the Christian community. Relational connections remain a significant and steadfast element of the communal experience. The Christian community, while shaping and molding individuals, continues to change and morph as a collective entity. Music is a significant contributor to cultural shifts as Ireland notes: "Various kinds of artistic expression[s]… [are] not

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[112] Myrick, "Music, Emotion and Relationship," 28.

[113] Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response," 89.

[114] Myrick, "Music, Emotion and Relationship," 28.

art for art's sake, but enables community and spiritual transformation."[115] Community growth

and influence, in many ways, continue to reflect current culture as well as generational identifiers

and associations.

The younger generations of the Christian community are finding identification in

Christian commodities more than generations of the past. This shift is markedly pronounced and

undeniable as it influences not only individual identity but also identity within the Christian

community. Myrick observes this significant transition. He suggests young believers in their 20s,

30s, and 40s identify as Christians through the purchase of "lifestyle items."[116] He acknowledges

"the effect of consumer culture on Christian worship practices"[117] and writes, "This confirmation

of faith through consumption of tangible goods is both individual and visibly communal."[118]

Like Myrick, Harrelson notes the purchasing phenomenon linked to identity in writing:

"The music chosen for events and gatherings is, of course, a marker of tone and tenor for any

such occasion, but the music one purchases, one's own music, is a facet of not only personal

entertainment or pleasure, but of individual identity."[119] In a consumeristic culture, to buy is to

identify.

Fisher's research aligns with Myrick and Harrelson regarding identity. Fisher claims,

"Everyone now must be a consumer, and consumption becomes the most important realm for

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[115] Marlinda K. Ireland, "Evaluating a Spiritual Formation Course for Emerging Adult Worship Artists at Christ Church" (PhD diss., The Alliance Theological Seminary, 2015.), 37, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

[116] Myrick, "The Celebrity Model," 28.

[117] Myrick, "The Celebrity Model," 25.

[118] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 26.

[119] Harrelson, "Theme and Variation, Call and Response," 90.

finding and expressing identities."[120] He adds an awareness of identity dichotomy in that, "Consumption as an identity resource has the dual capability to integrate as well as distinguish."[121] Therefore, the marketing of Christian products including, but not limited to, music is a necessary management tool that can either be used to integrate or distinguish listeners. In many ways, marketed music is largely meant to integrate in order to capitalize on a larger fan base. However, a distinguishing factor has led to what Myrick refers to as the Celebrity Model of Music Ministry.

Myrick's Celebrity Model of Music Ministry is remarkably influential because of the powerful effectiveness of music as noted earlier by Ireland. This model has emerged in the last decade and a half from "the convergence of ecclesial, cultural, and technological strands in the Christian music industry in the late 1990s."[122] Myrick adds, "Celebrity may be good or bad, but it is neither inherently; instead, it is a reality of life for twenty-first century Americans."[123] A significant constituent to the Celebrity Model is authentication, defined by Myrick as, "The process by which objects and persons are evaluated for trustworthiness."[124]

Authentication remains most effective within the Christian community through relational strengths and experiential bonds. Myrick writes, "So much of what it is to be human is inescapably tied to the ways that our being bumps into other beings and is changed by that encounter in such a way that the being we once were is no longer merely that but now also

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[120] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 25.

[121] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 29.

[122] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 27.

[123] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 21.

[124] Myrick, "Double Authenticity," 21.

something else."[125] Like Myrick, Crouch also emphasizes value in communal relationships.

Crouch writes, "Communities are the way God intervenes to offer, within every culture, a

different and better horizon. To be Christian is to stake our lives on this belief: the only cultural

goods that ultimately matter are the ones that love creates."[126] Considering this reality, Barry

Taylor's words to the Christian community bear importance: "The task before us is to theologize

for the public."[127]

Public Theology

Music inundates the human life. Fisher recognizes the presence of music and its power to

shape and mold identity. He emphasizes, "Music saturates both the public and private spheres of

our existence."[128] Music remains fundamental to human existence and human identity. Fisher

observes, "The idea that music is closer to our essence than any other product of our

consciousness dates back to the beginnings of human history."[129] This historical observation

suggests a deep and abiding connection between music and being. Fisher explains that being is

the very essence of the human individual. He indicates, "Music and Being are deeply connected.

At the most fundamental level, music is crucial for identity."[130]

Music informs identity and lifestyle choices while also influencing culture, community,

belief, and faith. Music is a unique gateway for communication and outreach to others. The

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[125] Myrick, "Music, Emotion and Relationship," 27.

[126] Crouch, *Culture Making*, 248.

[127] Barry Taylor, *Entertainment Theology: New-Edge Spirituality in a Digital Democracy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 195.

[128] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 1.

[129] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 91.

[130] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 93.

emphasis on *other* remains central to public theology.

Mark Porter writes to the influence of Christian music in his book, *Contemporary Worship Music and Everyday Musical Lives*. He discovers:

> For many within the church, deep connections between their musical lives in and out of the church are not a regular part of experience but instead they are found in particular moments, artists or songs on a much more selective basis either within the music of the church or within the musics which they encounter and use in a range of other settings.[131]

Like Porter, Fisher observes, "Music certainly accompanies the most sacred and special of ceremonies. It has always been used in religious functions."[132] Fisher and Porter acknowledge the everyday transformational effect musical influence has upon the listener. This realized potential prompts a deeper understanding of the public display of theological belief, or public theology, through the arts.

In his article, "Sounding the Sacred," Kloppers uses the term *public theology* in contending for "practical theology with relevance in the public sphere."[133] He explains, "Practical theology functions on the level of a public theology wherever it critically engages with society or the 'public sphere.'"[134] Author Barry Taylor examines the public nature of practical theology and concludes, "Practical theology, in my mind, is daring to believe that life and not theory is where the theological enterprise begins."[135] Taylor's research leads to a sobering deduction. He submits, "The only potential for the future of Christian faith lies in the doing, the

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[131] Mark Porter, *Contemporary Worship Music and Everyday Musical Lives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), 76.

[132] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 117.

[133] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 3.

[134] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 3.

[135] Taylor, *Entertainment Theology*, 204.

going, the practice."[136] Wainwright writes in agreement with Taylor regarding witness in the

public sphere. Wainwright proposes, "Christians confess their faith both before God and before

their fellow human beings. The motive and purpose of their confession is both doxology and

witness."[137]

In his dissertation project, Philip Edward Stoltzfus investigates the theological use of

musical aesthetics by Friedrich Schleiermacher, Karl Barth, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Kloppers

also frequently references German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher on emotional expression

of the Christian faith through song. Schleiermacher offers certain relevancy and insight on public

worship through his emphasis on the experiential aspect of a relationship with God.[138]

Regarding aesthetics, Stoltzfus suggests Schleiermacher and Barth exemplify rival

"approaches of expressivism and formalism."[139] However, Stoltzfus champions Wittgenstein's

contemporary "theology as performance." Stoltzfus defines, "A Wittgensteinian musical

aesthetic reflects upon the practice of artists and performers, rather than indulging in speculation

upon subjective or objective musical effects or meanings."[140] He explains, "I advocate for an

orientation of theological activity around pragmatic and socially engaged criteria irreducibly

wedded to the 'authenticity' and 'obligation' of public performance."[141] Stoltzfus' ideology of

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[136] Taylor, *Entertainment Theology*, 204.

[137] Wainwright, *Doxology*, 182.

[138] While not all theological concepts of Schleiermacher are agreeable, he does offer insightful observations on the emotional expression of worship and faith through song noted in the research of Kloppers and Stoltzfus.

[139] Philip Edward Stoltzfus, "Theology as Performance: The Theological use of Musical Aesthetics in Friedrich Schleiermacher, Karl Barth, and Ludwig Wittgenstein," (ThD diss., Harvard Divinity School, 2000), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, Abstract.

[140] Stoltzfus, "Theology as Performance," 327–28.

[141] Stoltzfus, "Theology as Performance," Abstract.

public performance interrelated with authenticity and obligation are necessary elements of congruence in public theology. Artist authenticity in public performance remains closely associated to Wittgenstein's ideology of "theology as performance."

However, music is experienced beyond the temporal moment. Lemley provides meaningful connection to the Law of Performance, which, "establishes the relationship of the listener to the ordered world beyond the song itself."[142] In the public sphere, the artist is influential in directing these musical experiences. Public theology is public worship as well as public witness of personal beliefs and convictions of the Christian faith. Kloppers writes to address the necessity to, "Actively take a stance against untruth and half-truths and to promote meaningful singing in worship, as well as the public sphere."[143]

In his article, "Christianity, Art and Transformation," J. W. De Gruchy addresses the concept of theology and art in the public arena. He explains, "The public role of [the] artist is the relationship between artistic creativity and human need, human longing and hope for healing."[144] Kloppers says of the public sphere, "The task of practical theology that is active in the public sphere is to reflect critically on the meaning and influences of religion in public and more specifically on Christian orientations, rituals and symbols in various contexts."[145] This ideology of public theology in the public sphere relates to the Christian expression of worship from a public platform as creative witness and messenger of hope.

Art provides a unique means for expressing witness and hope. On a public platform,

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[142] Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing,* 115.

[143] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 5.

[144] J.W. De Gruchy, "Christianity, Art and Transformation," University of Stellenbosch, and University of Cape Town. *Acta Theologica* no. 29, (2020): 20, https://doi.org/10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup29.1.

[145] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 3.

engagement with people and transmission of the message through the vehicle of art remain the priorities. De Gruchy observes, "For [the artist], art is not primarily a source of pleasure, more often it is an expression of pain, but it is a way of engaging with social reality in the hope that somehow their contribution may make a difference to the world."[146] Don and Emily Saliers suggest, "Music is intimately related to the narrative quality of our experience of human life in its fullness. We 'hear' in and through the music our own temporality, mortality, our hopes and our fears, our joys and deepest loves."[147]

Castleman advocates that worship creates a "sacred space where earthly life touches the hem of heaven's garment, where transcendence engages time and space, where God is present in the concrete reality of Word and sacrament by the Spirit."[148] This cultivated sacred space is filled with eternal hope for "what is and what will be."[149] Kloppers determines art in sacred space creates an openness for communal opportunity. He writes, "Through this means, spaces of resonance are opened, where people become participants drawn into *a performance of practical theology,* reflecting together on the religion they live and finding new ways of voicing their faith creatively in the public sphere, unveiling aspects of authenticity and truth."[150] Fisher adds, "Art allows us to overcome and conquer truth and reality, without ignoring the fundamental nature of existence. We do not need to run away from it, but through art we can engage it and creatively

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[146] De Gruchy, "Christianity, Art and Transformation," 18.

[147] Don E. Saliers and Emily A. Saliers, "Music as a Door to the Holy," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 71, no. 1 (2017): 12, http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0020964316670843.

[148] Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship*, 69.

[149] Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship*, 65.

[150] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 1.

transform our view of it."[151] Kloppers writes from a similar perspective as Fisher and states, "In sounding the sacred amidst the silence and the brokenness, in singing what we anticipate and what we hope for, the world that is yet to come is made present."[152]

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[151] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 62.

[152] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 5.

Chapter 3

Methods

Introduction

A lack of congruence between the artist and the piece results in a breakdown of authentic communication by the artist. When this incongruence becomes evident to the listener, the artist is no longer perceived as authentic but as an imposter or a hypocrite. This damages not only the reputation of the artist potentially but also the reputation of all professing followers of Christ who are ambassadors for Jesus Christ, and perhaps even the validity of the gospel message itself, to those who witness the duplicity. There is much at stake.

The purpose of this research project is to examine Christian artist authenticity and perceived artist authenticity by the listener by identifying elements of congruence between the artist and the transmission of the gospel message through song. The perception of artist authenticity is of utmost importance when the Christian artist communicates Biblical truths through song and testimony. What is the effect upon the audience when they detect duplicitousness between the Christian artist and the gospel message of the song? In particular, what inherent or necessary correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece is evident when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?

Research Design

This research project follows a mixed methods research methodology, including quantitative and qualitative research. According to John Creswell, "Mixed methods involves combining or the integration of qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research

study."[1] Mixed methods began as a research field in the middle to late 1980s. As an advocate and leader of the mixed method approach, Creswell suggests, "Early thoughts about the value of multiple methods—called mixed methods—resided in the idea that all methods had bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized the weaknesses of each form of data."[2] Christian worship as a practical theological discipline in the field of the humanities tends to favor qualitative research methods. So much of understanding worship is experiential.

Therefore, the nature of this topic benefits from both a qualitative and quantitative research perspective. The topic of Christian artist authenticity as it relates to the communication of the gospel message of Jesus Christ requires this complementary mixed method approach to provide a range of research results. The desired types of results cannot be achieved either by only qualitative or only quantitative research. Providing statistical insight in this research project helps dissuade opinions and lived experiences from swaying the results too heavily in one direction over another. A mixed methods approach supports a broader understanding of the collected data and neutralizes any weakness of only ascertaining qualitative data or quantitative data. It is believed that the quantitative portion of this study brings greater clarity to the rich descriptions discovered in the qualitative portion of the study and vice versa.

There are few qualitative dissertations that deal with the topic of Christian artist authenticity. There are virtually no quantitative studies to provide insight into the effort of numerically or statistically understanding Christian artist authenticity and the perception of the

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[1] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches,* 5th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2018), 14.

[2] Creswell, *Research Design*, 14.

same artist's authenticity. Therefore, this research project seeks to blaze a new trail to gain a more thorough understanding of Christian artist authenticity through both qualitative and quantitative assessment. Creswell highlights the value of mixed methods, "Qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study can complement each other by providing results with greater breadth and depth."[3]

This research project is a fixed mixed methods design as "the use of quantitative and qualitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the research process, and the procedures are implemented as planned."[4] As such, this project is not sequential or multi-phase. All data is collected simultaneously rather than sequentially or through various phases. The core mixed methods design utilized in this research project follows the QUAN+QUAL model, "where qualitative and quantitative data are equally weighted and are collected concurrently."[5] The artist data and audience data are equally weighted in this research project and are collected within the same time frame.

The framework of this research approach is the convergent design. Creswell explains the convergent design: "In this single-phase approach, a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzes them separately, and then compares the results to see if the findings confirm or disconfirm each other."[6] The researcher collects data simultaneously from two separate surveys—one provided to artists and the other provided to audience members. The

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[3] Carol Roberts and Laura Hyatt, *The Dissertation Journey: A Practical and Comprehensive Guide to Planning, Writing, and Defending Your Dissertation,* 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, a SAGE Company, 2019), 144.

[4] John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2018), 52.

[5] Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, 144.

[6] Creswell, *Research Design*, 217.

quantitative and qualitative survey databases are more effectively compared, rather than integrated, to confirm or disconfirm one another. There can be no direct statistical comparison of the data as each survey tool is designed to yield different types of data. The qualitative approach seeks to yield reoccurring themes or patterns, and the quantitative approach seeks to yield statistical data established through variables being tested. The convergent design allows the researcher to "compare the two results with the intent of obtaining a more complete understanding of a problem, [and] to validate one set of findings with the other."[7] The data from the artists is assessed considering the other set of data from the audience, and vice versa, in hopes of better understanding the construct of perceived artist authenticity. However, the data results cannot be integrated due to the different types of data yielded by each survey tool.

Research Ethics & Human Subjects Protection

This study follows Liberty University's IRB guidelines for conducting research with human beings, and IRB exemption has been obtained before any efforts at data collection have been undertaken. The purpose of the study has been revealed to each potential participant, and each participant has been made aware of how they will be involved in the study. In addition, the researcher ensures that all categories of ethical issues in the research are addressed, including protection from harm, informed consent, privacy, and honesty. The researcher guarantees "protection of rights by ensuring participants can comprehend the information about the study, fully informing participants about the study, and obtaining participants' voluntary agreement to take part."[8]

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[7] Creswell, and Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 65.

[8] Creswell, and Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 178.

Conflicts of Interest or Bias

As a Christian recording artist, the researcher is potentially biased in formulating assumptions regarding the data and data analysis. The researcher is passionate about artist authenticity, which may influence how the data is ultimately interpreted. It is the desire of the researcher to guard against a biased interpretation of the data by utilizing quantitative research methods as well as qualitative ones.

Population and Sample Size

The participants in this research project fall into two separate categories: Christian performing artists and audience members.

Quantitative

The audience survey participants provide the quantitative data for this research project. It is virtually impossible to ascertain a population size of individuals who listen to Christian radio at least once a week for ten minutes. However, the audience participants in this research project represent the population of people who listen to Christian music and have also attended a live concert in the last three years. According to Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod, an audience random sampling will "display roughly the same characteristics as the populations from which they were selected."[9] A social media post includes the link to the twenty-question online anonymous survey and is posted to both Facebook and Twitter via the researcher's personal social media pages. The audience survey participants are asked to complete an informed consent form before being given access to the anonymous online survey.

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[9] Paul D. Leedy & Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 12th ed. (New York, NY: Pearson, 2019), 328.

This recruitment strategy has the potential to reach up to 5,000 people, as the researcher has 4,950 friends on Facebook and 539 followers on Twitter. For the purposes of this research project, having 300 qualifying participants from varying demographics and locations complete the survey creates a substantial convenience sampling size.

Qualitative

The artist survey participants provide the qualitative data in this study with an emphasis on "single digit participants and a rich description of participant's experiences."[10] Therefore, an acceptable sample size of the artists is in the single digits for the purpose of this research project. The artist participants are purposefully selected, which "will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research questions."[11] The intent is to "discover and illuminate the lived experience associated with the study topic,"[12] which is the artist's lived experience of artist authenticity. The researcher contacts eight or nine artists to participate in the survey with the hopes of having at least four artists complete the survey. These artists provide rich insight into their lived experiences as Christian artists communicating the gospel message to national audiences in a qualitative open-ended anonymous survey.

The artist participants are contacted via email, phone call, or text by the researcher to inquire about their willingness to participate in the research. Those artists who are willing to participate receive a link to complete the twelve-question online anonymous survey. The artists are asked to complete an informed consent form before being given access to the anonymous online survey.

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[10] Creswell, *Research Design*, 150.

[11] Creswell, *Research Design,* 150.

[12] Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, 148.

Instrumentation

Christian Worship is a relatively new field in academic research. While they may exist, the researcher cannot locate any data-collecting instruments corresponding to the topic of Christian artist authenticity. According to Creswell, the researchers act as key instruments and gather "the information and interpret it. They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers."[13] This research project requires the researcher to rely upon personal experience and to act as the key instrument.

Quantitative

This survey as the assessment tool falls under construct-based validity, which bases validities on "some underlying construct, or idea, behind a test or measurement tool."[14] The reliability of the tool is verified by internal consistency reliability as "the items on a test correlate with one another strong enough that it makes sense to assume they all measure the same thing."[15] A special measure of reliability known as internal consistency is the coefficient *alpha* or Cronbach's *alpha*. A higher value of Cronbach's alpha provides the researcher more confidence that the survey is internally consistent and correlates well with itself. The four survey items/questions that evaluate each variable are used to test for inner correlation. Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is utilized to establish Cronbach's alpha.

The instrument is administered via a link to the survey. The survey is designed and administered using the Google platform. The responses from the survey are compiled

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[13] Creswell, *Research Design*, 181.

[14] Neil J. Salkind and Bruce B. Fray, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2020), 119.

[15] Salkind, *Statistics*, 110.

anonymously in a Google database and are then analyzed by the researcher. IBM's statistical software SPSS is utilized to analyze the quantitative data. SPSS is also used to create charts and graphs to visually report the quantitative data findings from the audience. The types of questions are primarily measured by "categorical scales."[16] However, two questions are open-ended to provide an opportunity for the audience members to contribute their own words related to artist authenticity. Therefore, the types of responses from the audience survey are categorized as rating scale and ranking, as well as open-ended.

The credibility and dependability of the audience survey instrument are determined via a pilot test. A pilot test allows the audience survey to be administered to a few individuals before sending out the survey to the intended participants. Those participating in the pilot test are informed that their responses are not included in the data of the research project. This pilot test provides the opportunity to tweak any questions that may require clarification or further explanation. The pilot test ensures that the data is indeed collected and stored anonymously. Once the pilot test is complete and the survey tool is tweaked, if necessary, the survey is sent to the intended participants via social media outlets.

The quantitative data is analyzed using a *t* test for the independent sample, "examining differences between groups on one or more variables."[17] This allows the relationship of variables identified in each hypothesis to be evaluated. The audience survey will be utilized to test the multiple variables identified in each hypothesis.

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[16] Creswell, *Research Design*, 154.

[17] Salkind, *Statistics*, 188.

Qualitative

The survey tool for the artists will utilize primarily open-ended questions with two ranking questions that will also provide an opportunity for explanation. The qualitative data from the artist participants will be analyzed for themes and the "coding processes used to convert the raw data into themes or categories for analysis."[18] A numerical value will not be added to the qualitative data. The researcher does not utilize predetermined codes or a qualitative codebook but does instead "develop codes only on the basis of the emerging information collected from participants."[19] The researcher does "hand code the data"[20] for reoccurring themes as the qualitative interview with artists produces themes in the open-ended questions. The researcher does not utilize qualitative computer software programs. To ensure a dependability process, a second reviewer is asked to blind code the qualitative data to independently identify themes without being aware of the researcher's observations.

Mixed Methods Surveys

The researcher has developed the survey tools utilized in this research project. Therefore, the researcher is not relying upon questionnaires developed by other researchers. Two separate survey instruments are utilized in this research project. Surveys are the most appropriate tool, considering the nature of this research project investigates within the broader realm of the social sciences. The survey of the artists provides lived, experiential insight into the concept and practice of artist authenticity. The audience survey provides insight into how the audience perceives artist authenticity.

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[18] Roberts, *The Dissertation Journey*, 153.

[19] Creswell, *Research Design*, 196.

[20] Creswell, *Research Design*, 192.

Data Collection

The data is collected at one time, with both surveys being cross-sectional.[21]

Quantitative

The researcher contacts a local radio station to inquire about surveying the listeners who have subscribed in some way to the station. This conversation leads the researcher to conclude this is not the best avenue to seek participants as this radio station does not have email subscribers nor are they comfortable sharing the mailing addresses of those who support the station through financial contributions. The researcher contacts a second radio producer of a nationally syndicated program, who is also the general manager of a prominent radio station. This individual encourages the use of social media to recruit survey participants.

The steps taken to conduct the audience survey begin with a link to the audience anonymous Google survey shared on the researcher's personal Facebook page and Twitter account. Anyone who views the link may complete the survey. A consent form is presented as the first page of the survey. The data is then collected as people participate in the survey. A deadline is set for audience members to participate in the survey. If enough data is not collected by the audience deadline, the researcher designates a new deadline and reposts the social media link to the survey to increase viewership and participation.

Qualitative

The artists are contacted by the researcher via email, text, or call and, if willing to participate, are sent a link to the anonymous survey. The artist survey differs from the audience survey in that it is comprised of primarily open-ended questions. A deadline is also set for the

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[21] Creswell, *Research Design*, 149.

artist survey, though more time is permitted since it is an open-ended questionnaire. The specified window of survey participation is clearly identified and expressed to all participants, and the deadlines are also defined to all participants. If a minimum of four artists do not complete the survey by the designated deadline, the researcher follows up with the original artists to remind them of the deadline. If enough artists do not participate, additional artists are considered and asked to participate in the survey using the same methods specified above.

The Value of Mixed Methods

The quantitative and qualitative databases are from two different contributors: Christian artists and audience members. This research project is patterned after the following statement by Creswell, "The intent is to combine the conclusions from gathering the two different databases: quantitative data collection aims to make generalizations to a population while qualitative data collection seeks to develop an in-depth understanding from a few people."[22] The qualitative data offers themes and lived experience while the quantitative data provides statistical analysis and comparison of variables such as perceived Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, the Concert Experience, and the Christian Music Genre.

Preparing the Data

Quantitative

A numeric value is assigned to each response in the quantitative database using the SPSS software. The database is checked for any data entry errors. The items are recoded, and new

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[22] Creswell and Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 188.

variables are computed to identify summed scores. A codebook is then established to name and define each quantitative variable.

Qualitative

The qualitative data is organized by data type and formatted to facilitate the analysis by hand—identifying reoccurring themes. The interview text is divided into separate units or stanzas when a topic or subtopic shift occurs. This is in accord with Johnny Saldaña, who says, "Other necessary formatting, such as truncating names or placing non-coded passages in brackets, can be taken care of at this layout stage of data preparation."[23]

Explore the Data

Quantitative

The quantitative data is visually inspected to identify trends in the data and check whether the data are normally distributed. A basic assessment is conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measures.

Qualitative

The qualitative data requires the researcher to obtain a sense of the material and to write reflective memos about initial thoughts. A few initial themes are identified from the qualitative data in a pre-coding phase. In this phase, descriptive narrative passages of field notes are logged in regular font. Quotations are logged in bold font. The researcher's comments are set in italics. These preliminary jottings are distinct from the body of the survey data by being italicized.

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[23] Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publishing, 2016), 19.

Analyzing the Data

Quantitative

Data is analyzed by descriptive statistics as the values collected by the data organize and describe characteristics from a sample of the population. The statistical test utilized in this research process is the *t* test for independent samples. Data is coded as necessary and analyzed using a *t* test for the independent sample to examine the "differences between groups on one or more variables."[24] Neil Salkind says of the *t* test formula, "The difference between the means makes up the numerator, the top of the equation; the amount of variation within and between each of the two groups makes up the denominator."[25] This formula will be utilized once the data has been collected.

Five hypotheses are tested while analyzing the data derived from the quantitative audience survey tool. The first research hypothesis is: There is a positive relationship between the perception of artist authenticity by audience members and their concert experience--the stronger the audiences' perception of authenticity, the more favorable their concert experience. The first variable is the perception of artist authenticity. Theologian Geoffrey Wainwright suggests authenticity is considering "the relation between external confession and internal belief." [26] Artist authenticity is defined in this research project as congruence between what the heart believes and what the mouth speaks or sings. David Lemley suggests, "Authenticity is always being measured, in both the performer and listener, in terms of the unwritten rules of

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[24] Salkind, *Statistics*, 188.

[25] Salkind, *Statistics*, 202.

[26] Wainwright, *Doxology*, 216.

style."[27] Therefore, the audience survey tool measures the perception of artist authenticity as a variable by Items 7, 9 and 10.

The second variable in this hypothesis is concert experience. Music is emotive and cognitive. Nathan Myrick defines the concert experience as "the space for emotional integrity—for being honest with ourselves in the presence of others."[28] Christopher Small coined the term "musicking" in an effort to uniquely name the concert experience.[29] For the purposes of this research project, the concert experience is understood to be a Christian concert experience. It is defined as an emotive and cognitive encounter with melody, harmony, and lyrics that inspires personal and—at times—communal faith in God. The concert experience variable is measured by Items 13, 14, and 15 in the audience survey tool.

The second research hypothesis is: There is a difference among Christian music genres of the perception of artist authenticity, whereby those who have selected only praise and worship will have the strongest perception of artist authenticity. The Christian music genre can be defined as an industry of Christian music professionals producing recorded music with faith-based lyrics. The industry representatives often schedule artist tours to promote and pay for these music recordings with special attention given to the "commercial appeal and marketing value" [30] of the artist(s) and the music. The Christian music industry is subdivided into various sub-genres such

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[27] David Lemley, *Becoming What We Sing: Formation through Contemporary Worship Music* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2021), 115.

[28] Nathan Myrick, "Music, Emotion and Relationship," 28.

[29] Franziska Schroeder, "Musicking" In *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Music and Culture*, ed. Janet Sturman (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2019), 1539, https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483317731.

[30] Nathan Myrick, "The Celebrity Model of Music Ministry: Characteristics and Considerations." *The Hymn* Vol. 69, No. 3 (Summer 2018): 26, ISSN: 00188271.

as, but not limited to Acoustic/Folk, Blues, Contemporary, Country Gospel, Dance/Techno,

Gospel, Southern Gospel, Metal, Pop, Praise and Worship, Rap, R & B, Rock, and

Singer/Songwriter. Christian Music Genre is nominal, not a scale, and is represented by the

audience survey participants in Item 2 of the audience survey tool.

The third research hypothesis is: There is a direct relationship between Lifestyle Worship

and Message Transmission of the gospel through song to the audience member, whereby the

Christian message is expected by the audience to be transmitted by Authentic Christian artists

who practice patterns of lifestyle worship. Authenticity is measured by Items 7, 9, and 10. The

variable of Lifestyle Worship is a "total reorientation"[31] of life where "lifestyle and identity are

basically interchangeable."[32] Rory Noland adds, "Worship is part of our identity as Christians."[33]

Lifestyle worship has been defined in this research project as the correlation between the heart

and the mouth intentioned to honor God through everyday lifestyle patterns and are measured by

Items 4, 8, and 17.

The variable of Christian Message Transmission is the process of communicating the

gospel message through song and testimony as an artist and an individual. Paul Westermeyer

identifies a double paradox that music is heard and assessed as vibrations with physical bodies,

yet it intrinsically carries spiritual and emotive influence.[34] Therefore, Message Transmission

includes elements of musical interpretation, congruence between the artist and the piece, and

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[31] Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 167.

[32] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 5.

[33] Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 19.

[34] Westermeyer, "Music and Spirituality," 568.

congruence between the message of the gospel and the messenger. Message Transmission is measured by Items 2, 11, and 12 in the artist survey tool.

The significance level is .05. Once the obtained value is established, the value needed for the rejection of the null hypothesis is determined. The degrees of freedom (*df*) are determined upon receiving and analyzing the data.[35] Using the degrees of freedom number, the level of risk willing to be taken—which is .05—and a two-tailed test, one can use the *t* test table to look up the critical value.[36] The obtained value and critical value are compared, and a decision is made to "reject the null" or to acknowledge that the researcher "failed to reject the null."[37]

The fourth hypothesis is: There is a positive relationship between Message Transmission and the Concert Experience, whereas the audience member who has a higher value for the Concert Experience will also have a high value for Message Transmission. The two variables are measured utilizing the Pearson correlation coefficient at a .05 significance level.

The fifth hypothesis states: There is a direct relationship between Artist Authenticity and Message Transmission; the audience member who perceives the artist to be authentic will accept the message as positive and genuine. A Pearson correlation coefficient measures the relationship between the two variables at the .01 level of significance.

SPSS is the statistical computer program utilized to analyze the quantitative research questions and test the hypotheses. This data analysis software program also provides graphs to present the data from the quantitative survey visually. The research questions and the type of

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[35] Salkind, *Statistics*, 205.

[36] Salkind, *Statistics*, 204–05.

[37] Salkind, *Statistics*, 207.

yielded data determine the analysis approaches. Inferential tests are completed, and effect sizes and confidence intervals are identified.

Qualitative

Implementing a coding process in analyzing the qualitative data includes coding the data, developing descriptions and themes by grouping codes, and interrelating the themes based on an overall qualitative approach.

Represent the Data

Quantitative

The quantitative data is summarized with the statistical results being made available in the text and using figures to visually represent the data.

Qualitative

The qualitative analysis process represents the findings in discussions of description, themes, or categories. Evidence is provided for the themes with the additional use of quotes, multiple perspectives, and rich descriptions. Visual models and tables help provide an overview, or representation, of the themes.

Data Analysis

Quantitative

The quantitative results are interpreted in terms of the research questions and are examined with respect to prior predictions in the stated hypotheses. SPSS is utilized to process and analyze the data with respect to the variables being measured and compared in each hypothesis.

Qualitative

The qualitative data is interpreted in terms of how the findings answer the research questions. A connection is made between findings and past literature and/or theories. A personal assessment of the material is included. Limitations are readily identified, and implications for future research have been provided.

Validating the Data

Quantitative

The quantitative research data requires validity to be established through the use of external standards, reliability and construct validity of the obtained scores, and the use of procedures that reduce threats to internal and external validity.

Qualitative

The qualitative research data requires credibility grounded in the accuracy of credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable information, using at least three validating strategies, and employing limited procedures for checking reliability. The three validating strategies utilized in this research project are member-checking with the artists, reporting disconfirming evidence, and asking another to examine the data.[38] Having another coder blind-code the data prior to knowing the researcher's code(s) complements the credibility of these results.

The rationale for the analysis method is that it has been selected to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data from two differing perspectives: the artist's and the audience's. Relational variables are identified within the qualitative research and the quantitative research,

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[38] Creswell and Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 217.

but variables between the two groups are not analyzed together. While not directly comparing these two sets of data, the researcher can make inferences based on the findings and identifies correlations to support either set of data with the other.

Validating the Results

According to Creswell and Clark, there is a "need for a separate validity approach for mixed methods" that should "match the design type."[39] Since the two methods are utilized separately, validity is established for both the quantitative and qualitative methods.

Quantitative

The researcher conducts a pilot test(s) and enlists an expert, Dr. Bethany Petry,[40] to offer oversight of and insight into the quantitative assessment strategy. The research project takes the form of internal consistency reliability through the strategy of standardization. Reliability is "The degree to which an assessment strategy consistently yields very similar results when the entity being assessed hasn't changed."[41] Internal consistency reliability is "The extent to which all of the items or other tasks within a single assessment instrument yield similar results."[42] Similar results surrounding the construct of authenticity are yielded by the quantitative survey. The quantitative survey is standardized in the way it is presented and administered to all participants through the social media platform as an anonymous online survey.

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[39] Creswell and Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 301.

[40] Dr. Bethany Petry is the Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication and Philosophy at Florida Gulf Coast University. She has a PhD in Organizational Communication and conducts her current research projects utilizing quantitative methods.

[41] Leedy, *Practical Research,* 107.

[42] Leedy, *Practical Research*, 107.

Qualitative

The qualitative method utilizes construct validity that "yields credible results regarding a characteristic that cannot be directly observed but is assumed to exist based on patterns in people's behaviors or creations."[43] The construct of "authenticity" cannot be "directly observed and assessed."[44] To enhance the validity of this assessment strategy, the researcher uses triangulation in collecting multiple forms of data related to the same research questions to identify consistencies or inconsistencies in the data.

An additional qualifier is respondent validation. The researcher takes the research findings back to the artist participants and asks, "Do you agree with my conclusions? Do they make sense based on your own experiences?"[45] Respondent validation is utilized with the artist participants to ascertain validation of the qualitative aspect of the research project.

Mixed Methods

This mixed-methods study is credible in that both quantitative and qualitative data are equally relevant to the same topic of artist authenticity and the research questions. The difference in the quantitative sample size being significantly larger than the qualitative sample size only complements the topic. In any given concert venue, there are more audience members than artists. This is reflected in the sample sizes and has no negative impact on the validity of the conclusion. There may be specific statements from the qualitative element of the study to support or illustrate some of the quantitative results. If the qualitative and quantitative results lead to

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[43] Leedy, *Practical Research,* 105.

[44] Leedy, *Practical Research,* 105.

[45] Leedy, *Practical Research,* 94.

discrepancies, they are easily resolved by acknowledging the two different perspectives of the artists and the audience members.

Limitations

It is an inevitable reality that all studies have some limitations. There are areas with little to no control in this research project, including the population, sample size, and response rate. The nonprobability sample, or convenience sample, is also a limitation as respondents are chosen based on convenience and availability.[46] Another limitation is that the survey assessment tool is based upon the construct of authenticity, which cannot be directly observed and assessed. The researcher is also mindful of the influence of self-reflection, or reflexivity, as a practicing Christian artist and has attempted to take the necessary steps to "reduce the influences of personal, social, political, or philosophical biases likely to affect one's ability to collect and interpret the data."[47]

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[46] Creswell, *Research Design*, 150.

[47] Leedy, *Practical Research*, 240.

Chapter 4

Research Findings & Analyses

Quantitative Study of Audience Members

Prepare the Data for Analysis

The raw data from the Google Survey was downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet. The raw data was converted into a form useful for data analysis by assigning numeric values to each response. After uploading the Excel file into SPSS, a few changes were required, such as changing the variables to Scale from Nominal and changing the variables to Numeric from String. The Questions were labeled, and the Variables were noted.

Hypothesis One:

1) There is a positive relationship between perception of artist authenticity by audience members and their concert experience; whereby the stronger the audiences' perception of authenticity, the more favorable their concert experience.

The variables that have been measured in the first hypothesis are the Perception of Artist Authenticity and The Concert Experience. Authenticity has been assessed by Items 7, 9, and 10 in the Audience Survey (see appendix A; survey). Item 7 asked, "How do you assess authenticity in an artist?" The answers to Item 7 were ranked on a Scale from 1-9, with 9 being the most significant in reflecting authenticity. The following values were given to each possible answer: Lifestyle (9), Actions off Stage (8), Actions on Stage (7), Artist Associations/Friends (6), Song Selections (5), Appearance (4), Social Media Presence (3), Others' Opinion (2), Musical Style (1). The participants were allowed to select more than one answer. With a numerical value having been given to each response, the sum value of each participant's responses to Question 7 has been added together to create a total score for Question 7. Question 9 had six possible answers ranked on a scale from 4-9, and each participant was allowed to select more than one

answer. The following values were given to each possible answer: Genuine (9), Kind (8), Friendly (7), Theological Convictions (6), Good Stage Presence (5), and Prepared (4). The value attributed to each participant's answers has been added together to create a total for each participant in Question 9. Question 10 was a rank-order question with nine possible answers and asked the participants to list the characteristics that define an artist who functions with integrity. The possible answers and their assigned values were Presence Off Stage (9), Seeing the Artist Outside of a Concert Event (8), Theological Convictions (7), Presence ON Stage (6), Types of Events the Artist Participates (5), Association/Friends (4), Song Selections (3), Appearance (2), Others' Opinions (1). The sum of these three totals has been added together to create a score for the variable, Artist Authenticity, for each participant.

The Concert Experience has been assessed by Items 13, 14, and 15 in the Audience Survey. Each of these questions was scale ranked from 1-45. The sum of each participant's answers has been added together to create a numerical value for the Concert Experience.

Hypothesis Two:

2) There is a difference among Christian music subgenres on perception of artist authenticity; whereby the praise and worship genre will have the strongest perception of artist authenticity.

The second hypothesis compares the mean of the variables Artist Authenticity and Musical Sub-Genres. The aspect of Musical Sub-Genres has been assessed by Question 1. It has been used to identify the groups that have been evaluated. The participants who selected only Praise and Worship were placed in Group 1, and all other participants were placed in Group 2. The variable of Artist Authenticity has been measured from the perspective of Group 1, those who only selected Praise and Worship, and from the perspective of Group 2, all other participants.

Hypothesis Three:

3) There is a direct relationship between lifestyle worship and message transmission of the gospel through song to the audience member; whereby the Christian message is expected by the audience to be transmitted by authentic Christian artists who practice patterns of lifestyle worship.

The third hypothesis suggests a correlation between Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission. Lifestyle Worship has been assessed through Survey Items 4, 8, and 17. These questions were rank scaled from 1-45. The total sum of these questions has created a value for the Lifestyle Worship variable for each participant. Message Transmission has been assessed through Survey Items 2, 11, and 12. These questions were rank-scaled from 1-45. The total sum of these questions has created a value for the Message Transmission variable for each participant.

Hypothesis Four:

4) There is a positive relationship between the message of the gospel that is being shared and the overall perception of the concert experience for the audience member, whereas the audience member who values the message of the artist will also leave with a high value of the concert experience.

The fourth hypothesis recommends a positive correlation between Message Transmission from the Christian artist and the audience member's Concert Experience.

Hypothesis Five:

5) There is a direct relationship between an artist who is perceived as authentic and the message they are sharing through song; whereby the audience member who perceives the artist to be authentic will accept the message as positive and genuine.

The fifth hypothesis suggests a direct positive correlation between Perceived Authenticity and Message Transmission.

Explore the Data

A total of 151 individuals participated in the audience survey, which is the quantitative survey tool. In using Google Forms to create the survey, the descriptive statistic of percentages for each question has been provided in graphs and charts. The collected data has been initially examined using these basic graphs and charts provided by Google Forms, with percentages being the primary numerical standard for assessment. Majorities have been identified in the responses for each question. Descriptive analyses for each major variable have been included, and basic assessments of the reliability and validity of the measures have been conducted.

Reliability has been assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The Artist Authenticity subscale consists of 3 items ($\alpha = .81$). The second variable is the Concert Experience, and its subscale consists of 3 items ($\alpha = .61$). The third variable is Lifestyle Worship, and its subscale consists of 3 items ($\alpha = .72$). The fourth variable is Message Transmission, and its subscale consists of 3 items ($\alpha = .64$) Cronbach's alpha standard is .7. Two of these four variables have failed to meet the .7 standard which suggests the items may not measure what they say they are measuring. However, these are new survey tools that need to be adjusted for future research. The data has been visually inspected to identify trends, and the data has been normally distributed by the standard deviation tool using SPSS.

Analyze the Data

The data has been analyzed by hypothesis with an intentional observation of the variables being measured in each hypothesis.

Hypothesis One

The appropriate inferential statistical test for the first hypothesis is Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. The variables Perception of Artist Authenticity and Concert Experience have been

found to have a weak positive correlation, r(151) = .129, p < .001. The sample size has likely

limited the correlation between the perception of Artist Authenticity and the Concert Experience.

However, the null has not been rejected.

Variable: Perception of Artist Authenticity

The Perception of Artist Authenticity is a significant variable, as it has been included in

three of the four hypotheses. Artist Authenticity is central to message transmission Questions 7,

9, and 10 measure the Perception of Artist Authenticity.

The audience was asked how they assess authenticity. A majority of survey participants

have suggested that they best assess authenticity in an artist by "Actions off the Stage" (93.4%)

followed closely by "Lifestyle" (90.7%). While both are indeed viewed as indicators of

authenticity, it is virtually impossible for the audience to know how an artist actually acts off the

stage or to observe the intimate details of the artist's lifestyle. What the audience is observing as

Lifestyle and Actions off the Stage are still, in many ways, intentionally controlled by the artist.

Therefore, the audience is still largely observing perception rather than actual authenticity. The

Perception of Artist Authenticity off the platform has been influenced by social media, but still,

this remains a perception and not necessarily reality.

Question 9 asked the audience members to select all practices, beliefs, or characteristics

evident in authentic artists. Genuine (143) has received the most selections, followed by

Theological Convictions (122), Kind (114), Friendly (104), Prepared (84), and Good Stage

Presence (61). Three participants have written in Humble as a characteristic of authentic artists.

To be genuine is to be the real deal and to demonstrate integrity on and off the platform. The

survey provided multiple characteristics, and the participants were allowed to select all that

apply. They have also been provided an opportunity to write in specific characteristics or traits expected in the life of an authentic artist.

Variable: Concert Experience

The Concert Experience has been evaluated using Survey Questions 13, 14, and 15. Question 13 asked, "Do you feel a friendly connection with the artist you most admire?" Of the 151 participants, 121 (80.1%) said, "Yes." Eleven (7.3%) participants said, "No," and 19 (12.6%) said, "Not Sure." A resounding majority have identified a friendly connection between themselves and the artist they most admire. It would be difficult to admire an artist if the audience member did not like the artist. A friendly connection is most expected between an artist and the one admiring the artist. Therefore, friendliness is a key component of perceived artist authenticity. The artist does not seem to be unapproachable or appear to be out of reach to the audience member. This makes the audience member feel a certain level of friendship with the artist that extends beyond the concert experience. There is a perceived interconnectedness between the audience member and the artist who is admired by the audience member, whether an actual relationship is established between the audience member and the artist or not. As noted in the Literature Review, relational beings are "profoundly emotional," and this reflects upon the relational aspect of music.[1] These perceived relationships between artist and audience member inform perception but also ideology. While the audience member thinks there is a genuine friendship with the artist, the artist is often just extending friendliness to comply with a certain expectation set by the audience.

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[1] See the Literature Review of this study, 22.

The concept of perception is central to this question. The audience perceives a friendship with the artist because of the artist's friendliness when in reality, a friendship must be developed between the artist and the audience. Friendship with the artist is assumed by the audience when admiring an artist. This is evident in the perception of celebrities. Television and movie stars are thought of in friendly terms when in reality, these stars do not know the fans, let alone call them all friends.

The idea of friendship leads the audience members to assume a closeness with the artist that may not exist. It leads the audience member to often put the artist on the spot with questions like, "Do you remember me?" It also opens the door for the audience to possibly be too relationally presumptive with the artist. The audience presumes upon a friendship that is often not there when making observations about the artist's appearance, including hair, clothing, makeup, social media posts, songs, and communication. The perception of friendship with the artist influences the audience's ability to assess authenticity in the artist, whereas the audience possibly sees what they want to see in the artist.

Perception is often influenced by experience, including the types of songs sung at the concert and the emotional connectedness the audience feels to the songs that are sung. The artist's ability to appear vulnerable and transparent while on the platform leads the audience to assess that the concert experience is in some way more authentic. Question 14 asked, "During your last concert experience, did the artist sing your favorite song?" This question has offered insight into the concert experience to see if it is valued higher due to an emotional connection to a particular song or simply as a result of the concert experience in itself. Of the 151 participants, 104 (68.9%) said, "Yes," while 28 (18.5%) said, "No," and 19 (12.6%) said, "Not Sure." Most participants have experienced their favorite song sung by the artist in a live concert setting. This

is an emotional connection as well as a physical connection because the audience member can now place themselves in a live concert setting, hearing their favorite song sung live by the artist. This sole experience seems to elevate the perception of the authenticity of an artist.

A similar experience seems to contribute to the audience's connection to the artist in the concert setting. Question 15 asks, "When the artist sings your favorite song, does it make you feel more connected to the artist?" Of the 151 participants, 100 (66.2%) selected "Yes," 38 (25.2%) selected "No," and 13 (8.6%) selected "Not Sure." The audience member feels more connected to the artist when the artist sings his/her favorite song. This feeling influences the general perception of who the artist is as an individual. Therefore, the connection the audience member feels to the artist when the artist sings his/her favorite song leads to a higher value of the concert experience. At this point, the connection is not to the artist as an individual but rather to the artist as an artist alone. The audience member has a better concert experience when the concert goes the way the audience member desires, including the artist singing his/her favorite song. However, this experience has little to do with the observed character or the perceived perception of artist authenticity and more to do with the concertgoer's individual experience.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis has been evaluated using a two-tailed t-test. An independent samples t-test was performed to compare those selecting the genre of Praise and Worship (M = 77.20, SD = 24.29) and those who did not select the Praise and Worship genre exclusively (M = 88.05, SD = 25.76). There was no significant difference in the participants' perception of artist authenticity; $t(151) = -1.291$, $p = .099$. Thus, hypothesis two is not supported.

In the second hypothesis, Christian Music Genre was nominal, not a scale, and was divided into two groups; those who selected that they listen only to Praise and Worship (1) and

everyone else (2). Group 1 has a mean of 77.20 and a standard deviation of 24.29. Group 2 has a

mean of 88.05 and a standard deviation of 25.76. The t-test has revealed a .099 significance.

Therefore, the null hypothesis has not been rejected as the data reveals that there is not a

significant correlation between the sub-genre of those who listen only to Praise and Worship

music and their perception of Artist Authenticity in comparison to everyone else, and their

ability to assess Artist Authenticity. The sample size may have contributed to the limitations of

identifying a correlation. Only ten participants have selected only Praise and Worship and have

been compared with the rest of the 141 participants. The stark contrast in sample size may have

influenced the reliability of the data.

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis required a bivariate correlation using SPSS Pearson's Correlation

Coefficient. There was a positive correlation at the .01 level (2-tail) where $r(151) = .351$, $p <$

.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been rejected as the data has revealed a positive

correlation between the variables of Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Message

Transmission.

Variable: Lifestyle Worship

Lifestyle Worship has been assessed by Survey Items 4, 8, and 17. However, when asked

in Question 6 if authenticity is a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist, 94% said,

"Yes." This audience sample largely expects authenticity to be part of and evident in the life of

the Christian artist. However, when asked in Question 8, "Do you believe authenticity is largely

being pursued by MOST Christian artists?" a large number (45.7%) of the sample said, "Not

Sure." Then, when asked in Question 4 if the audience felt that Lifestyle Worship is evident in

MOST Christian artists, 48% said they were "Not Sure." Authenticity as a result or means of

Lifestyle Worship is expected, yet the audience could not clearly identify either of these character traits in the broad body of Christian artists. Question 17 similarly asks, "Do you believe MOST Christian artists believe and live what they sing?" While the majority (62.3%) answered with "Yes," there are still 44 (29.1%) individuals who selected "Not Sure." The researcher received two separate messages through Facebook Messenger regarding Question 17 from two individuals who participated in the survey. Both individuals commented that this question could have been broken down into two separate questions. One participant shared that most artists believe what they sing, but the disconnect is between believing and living out that belief. This participant noted the complexity of this question and selected "Not Sure" for this reason.

Variable: Message Transmission

The idea of Message Transmission is central to this research project and should be a primary duty of the Christian artist. Message Transmission is the process of communication from one individual to another. It includes the method of communication, the individual who is communicating, the individual receiving the message, the content of the message, and the nature of the message itself. Perception is a central component of Message Transmission which takes into consideration the body language, physical appearance, and observed character of the messenger. The content of the message often determines its nature, which affects how it is delivered. Communication from the artist is either received or rejected by the audience member who is hearing the message. This determination to receive or reject the message is based upon the believability and perceived authenticity of the artist as the messenger, as well as the reliability of the message. Message Transmission does not guarantee message reception. However, the Christian artist strives to improve Message Transmission through various efforts,

including perceived authenticity, physical appearance, and an intentional correlation between the artist and the message being transmitted.

Message Transmission has been assessed by the subscale items 2, 11, and 12. Question 2 in the survey asks if the artist's life should demonstrate the words they are singing. The majority of participants (95.4%) said there should be a correlation between the life of the artist and the message of the songs the artist sings. This suggests the importance of perceived authenticity by the audience in that there is an expected congruency between the artist's lifestyle and the lyrics they sing.

The participants were asked in Question 11, "Do you expect a correlation between the physical appearance of the artist (hair, makeup, clothing, etc.) and the message of the piece?" Of the 151 participants, 72 (47.7%) answered "Yes," while 65 (43%) answered "No." There were 14 individuals who selected "Not Sure." The audience, while somewhat concerned with the artist's physical appearance, appears to rely more upon the perceived Lifestyle of the artist, as seen in Question 2, when assessing the message of the song that the artist is communicating. However, 72 survey participants do expect the artist to have a physical correlation to the content of the message of the song being sung by the artist.

Question 12 asks, "Does a visual correlation between the appearance of the artist and the contents of the song improve your opinion of the artist?" Of the 151 participants, 74 (49%) said, "Yes," 58 (38.4%) said, "No," and 19 (12.6%) said, "Not Sure." A slight majority of the survey sample suggests a visual correlation between the appearance of the artist and the lyrical content of the song improves their overall opinion of the artist. This suggests that the audience meaningfully observes the physical appearance of the artist, and a process of assessment occurs as the audience listens to the song lyrics while seeing the appearance of the artist. The audience

contemplates not only the appearance of the artist but how the physical appearance of the artist corresponds with the message being transmitted by the artist through song. A higher opinion is given of the artist who is observed to have a correlation between the physical appearance and the message being transmitted.

Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis utilizes SPSS Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. There is a positive correlation at the .05 level (2-tail) $r(151) = .190$, $p = .020$. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been rejected as the data has revealed a significant positive correlation between the Concert Experience and Message Transmission variables. These two variables have previously been examined extensively.

Hypothesis Five

The fifth hypothesis requires a bivariate correlation and has also been processed using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient. There is a positive correlation at the .01 level (2-tail) where $r(151) = .351$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been rejected as the data has revealed a significant positive correlation between the variables of Authenticity and Message Transmission.

<div align="center">Represent the Data Analysis</div>

As the data has been represented, the variables have first been assessed, including Perceived Authenticity, Concert Experience, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission. Then the five research hypotheses have been evaluated, and the data has been included to represent each hypothesis.

Perceived Authenticity

Artist Authenticity as a measurable variable has been statistically assessed using Items 7, 9, and 10. However, the answers to several other questions stand alone to represent the audience's understanding of artist authenticity. Questions 2, 6, and 11 have also assessed Artist Authenticity by inquiring about the expected correlation between the artist and the lyrics of the songs. Question 2 of the survey asks, "Should the artist's life demonstrate the words they are singing?" A resounding 144 individuals, or 95.4%, said, "Yes." See figure 1. According to this sample, the answer to this question alone has supported the premise of this dissertation regarding a necessary congruence between the artist and the piece, especially when the Christian artist is singing Christian lyrics.
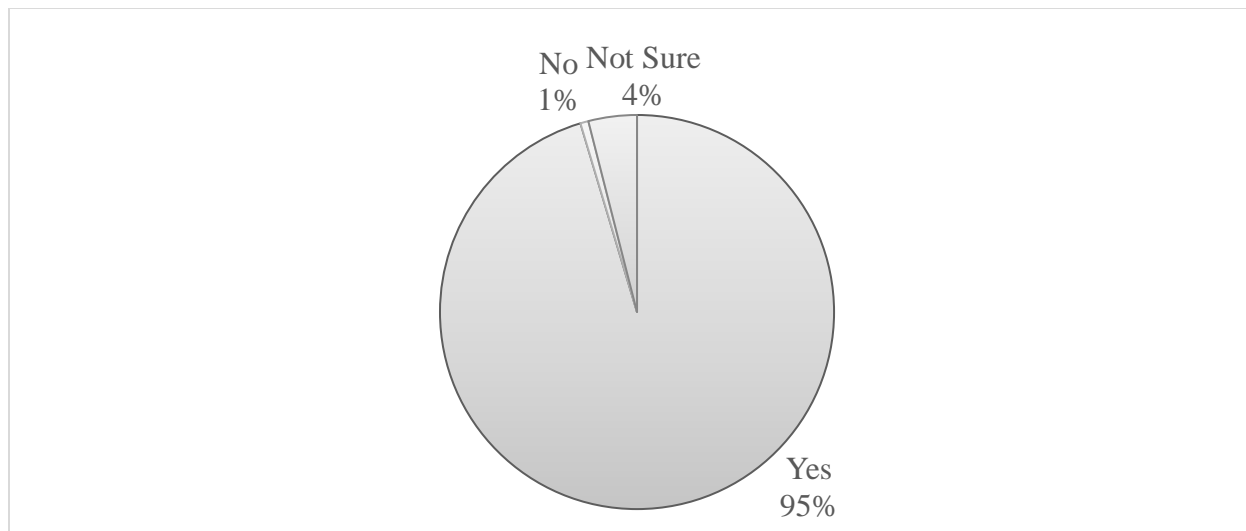
Figure 1. Audience answers to Question 2 of the Audience Survey tool.

When asked in Question 6 if authenticity is a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist, 94% of participants answered "Yes." See figure 2. This sample largely expects authenticity to be part of and evident in the life of the Christian artist. There is a stronger expectation for the Christian lifestyle to be evident in the artist, according to the data in Question 6, than there is an expectation for the physical appearance of the artist to align with the lyrical content.
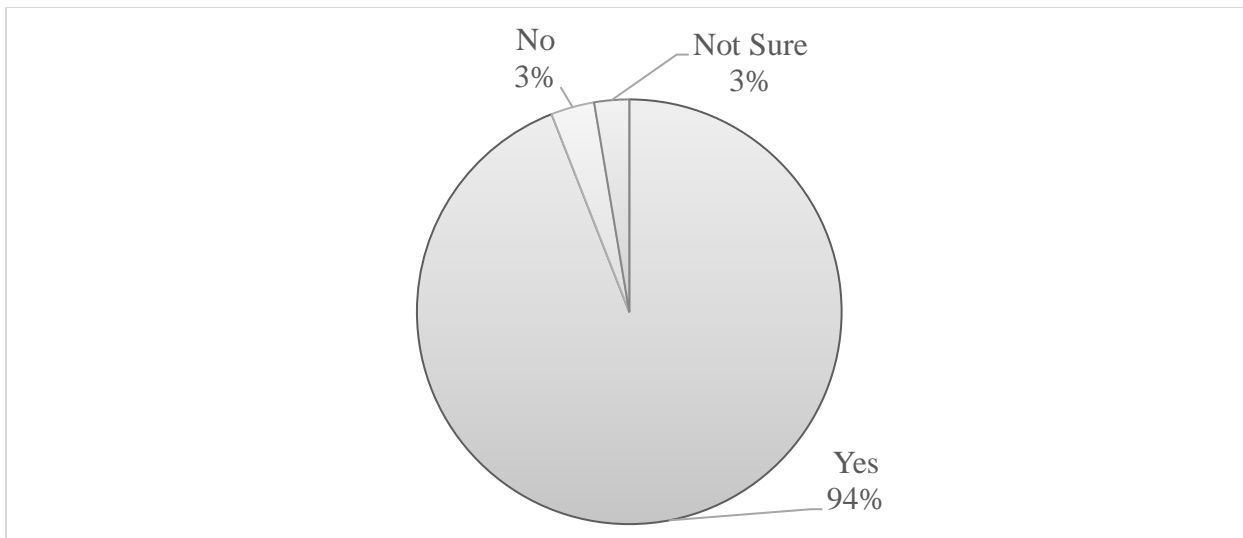
Figure 2. Audience answers to Question 6 of the Audience Survey.

The participants were then asked in Question 7 to select applicable qualities they use to assess authenticity in the artist. "Actions off the Stage" received the highest selection with 93.4%, and "Lifestyle" being a close second with 90.7%. "Actions on the Stage" came in third with only 59.6% of the selection. See figure 3.
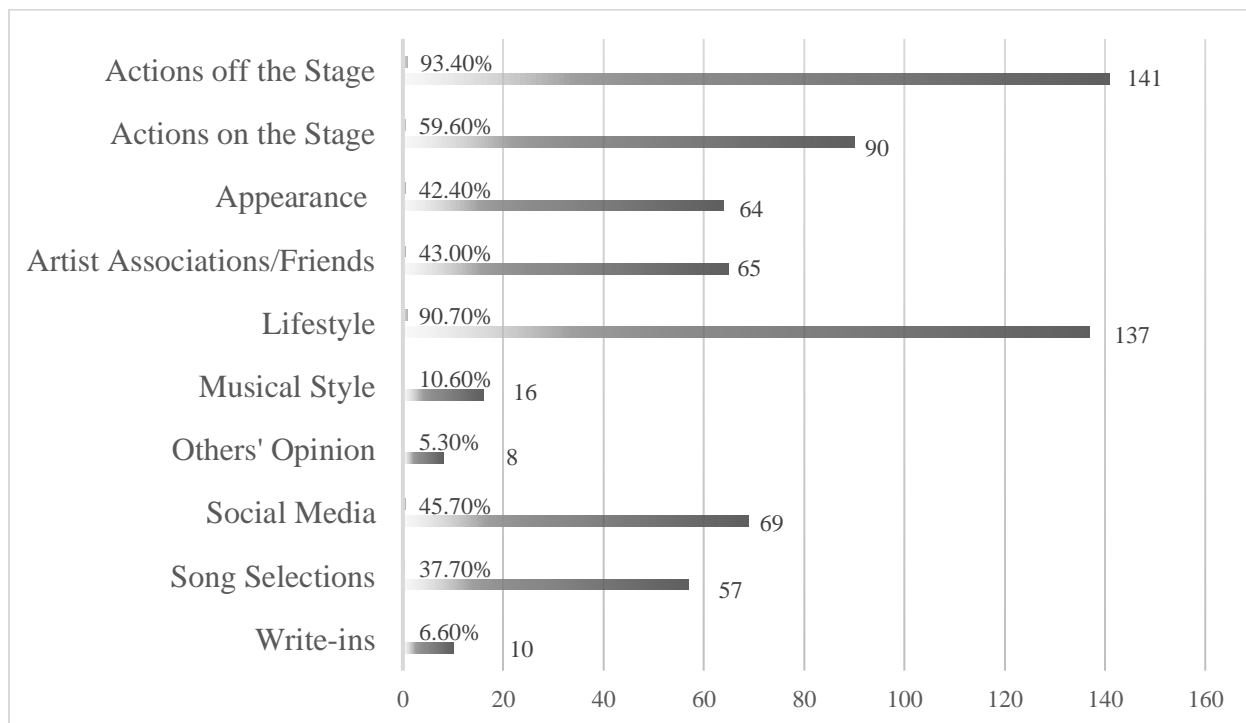
Figure 3. Audience answers to Question 7 of the Audience Survey.

While most artists focus on their actions on the stage, it is apparent that their actions off the stage are what reflect authenticity to the audience. The perception of the artist's lifestyle is also a significant component when assessing artist authenticity. These two factors are of greater importance to the audience than any other selection. The third most selected means of assessing authenticity is "Actions on the Stage." Actions by the artist are most observed and assessed by the audience when determining if an artist is authentic. In this regard, actions do speak louder than words.

The participants were also asked in Question 9 to select any applicable characteristics evident in an authentic artist. "Genuine" was selected by 143 audience members (94.7%) as the most important trait found in an authentic artist. Stage presence ranked least for these participants, with only 61 (40.4%) having selected "Good Stage Presence." This graph is shown in figure 4.
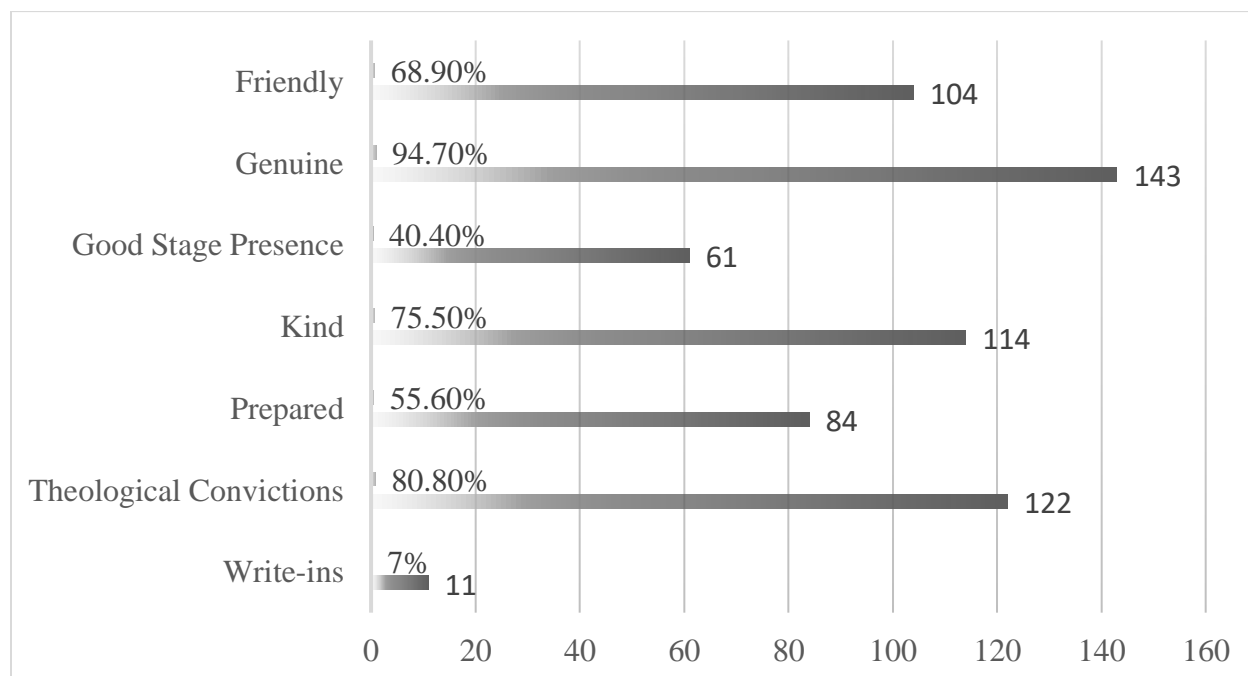

Figure 4. Audience answers to Question 9 of the Audience Survey.

"Good Stage Presence," like "Actions on the Stage" in Question 7, seemed to do little for the audience in communicating genuine authenticity. "Genuine" remains a difficult construct to assess, but it has been evaluated in Question 5, "What do the following statements mean to you? 'The artist is the same on the stage and off the stage.' 'The artist is the real deal.'" Most participants (114) said, "The artist is genuine." Thirty-four selected "The artist appears genuine." One participant (.7%) selected "The artist is nice." One participant (.7%) writes in, "The artist is consistent. He/She practices what he/she preaches."[2] Another participant (.7%) writes in, "On stage behavior is consistent with off-stage behavior with the implication that the on-stage presentation conveys Christian character."[3] The key term for 75.5% of participants answering this question appears to be Genuine. There were 34 audience participants (22.5%) who selected that the artist "appears" to be genuine.

The appearance of the artist is primarily what is being assessed, and yet a majority of participants have suggested that these comments mean the artist is indeed genuine. The question is perception vs. reality. When someone says, "The artist is…," it is often taken at face value and interpreted as reality. However, the insight of the artist participants on this question is revealing as they have shared in the artist survey that it is impossible for the audience/fans to really know them as people. All the audience sees is what the artist portrays. Therefore, perception often drives the audience's opinion, not reality. The Christian music industry knows this, which is why it champions the appearance of the artist through strategic marketing and public relations. This creates a potential spiritual crisis where the outward appearance of the artist is more valuable

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[2] Participant answer, Question 5 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[3] Participant answer, Question 5 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

than the inward, personal relationship with Jesus and individual walk with God. This brings into question character, motive, authenticity, and integrity.

When asked in Question 10 to select characteristics of an artist who functions with integrity, 138 individuals (91.4%) selected "Presence OFF Stage." See figure 5.
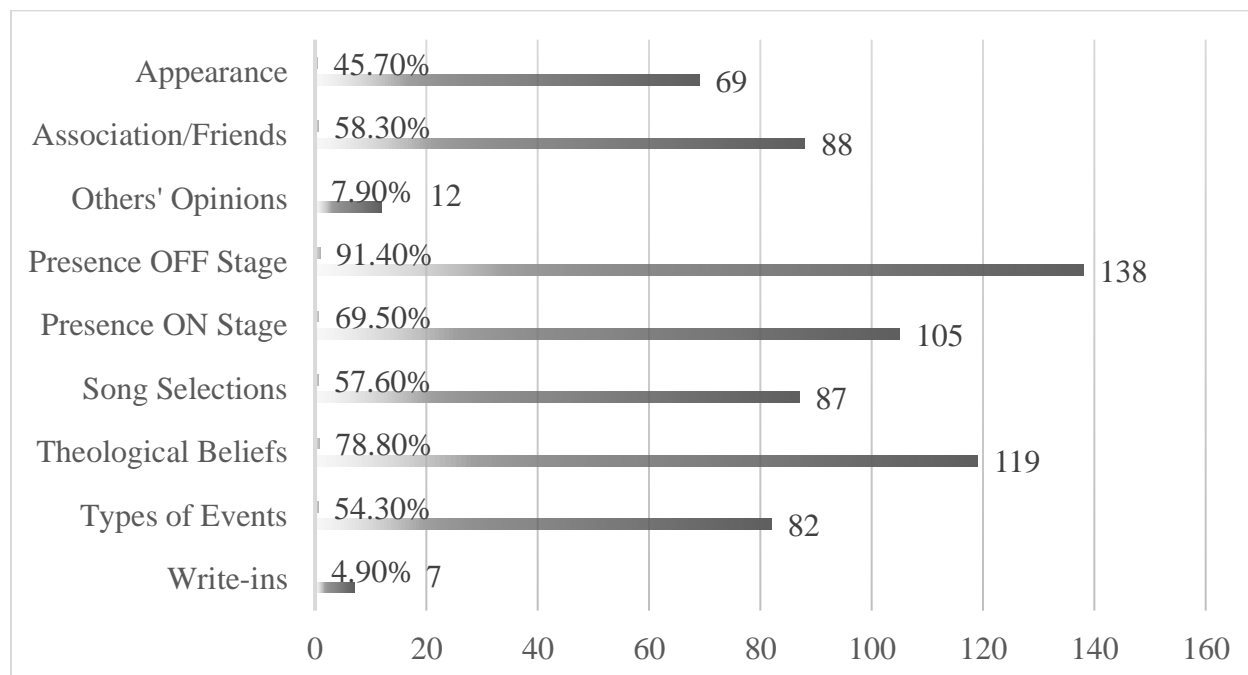
Figure 5. Audience answers to Question 10 of the Audience Survey.

It is arguably difficult to truly assess an artist's Presence off the Stage as the artist is dutifully intentional in portraying a certain image when in a position to be seen by others, whether on a physical platform (the stage), a virtual platform (social media), or simply walking around a venue or in a public place in which he or she is easily recognizable. However, the sample has suggested that "Theological Beliefs" are more telling of an individual's character as 119 audience survey participants have included "Theological Beliefs" as a characteristic that shapes individual assessment of an artist who functions with integrity. Of least importance to the sample is the "Opinion of Others." This sample has largely assessed the characteristics of the

Christian artist by individual observation and personal experience with the artist rather than by relying upon the opinions of others.

Concert Experience

Personal experience and individual observation largely occur in the concert setting. It is the concert experience where artist authenticity is assessed and personal conclusions are made. The perception of authenticity is correlated to the audience's concert experience; the higher the perception of authenticity by the audience, the higher the audience's concert experience. The Concert Experience variable has been measured using Questions 13, 14, and 15.

These three questions inquire of the audience member about their concert experience and their feeling of connection to the artist. The concert experience is subjective to individual perspectives, with many factors playing into the observed concert experience by the audience. When the audience member feels a friendly connection with the artist, this contributes to a higher value of the concert experience. When the artist sings the audience member's favorite song in a live setting, this also contributes to the higher value of the concert experience as a whole.

Lifestyle Worship

Lifestyle worship is defined by the patterns in life that reflect worshipful devotion to God in everyday lifestyle activities. This variable has been measured by Questions 4, 8, and 17. However, Questions 3 and 16 also inquire about observed lifestyle worship in the life of the artist from the perspective of the audience member.

Question 4 asks, "Is lifestyle worship evident in MOST Christian artists?" 73 people said, "Not Sure," while 17 people said, "No," and 61 people said, "Yes." See figure 6.
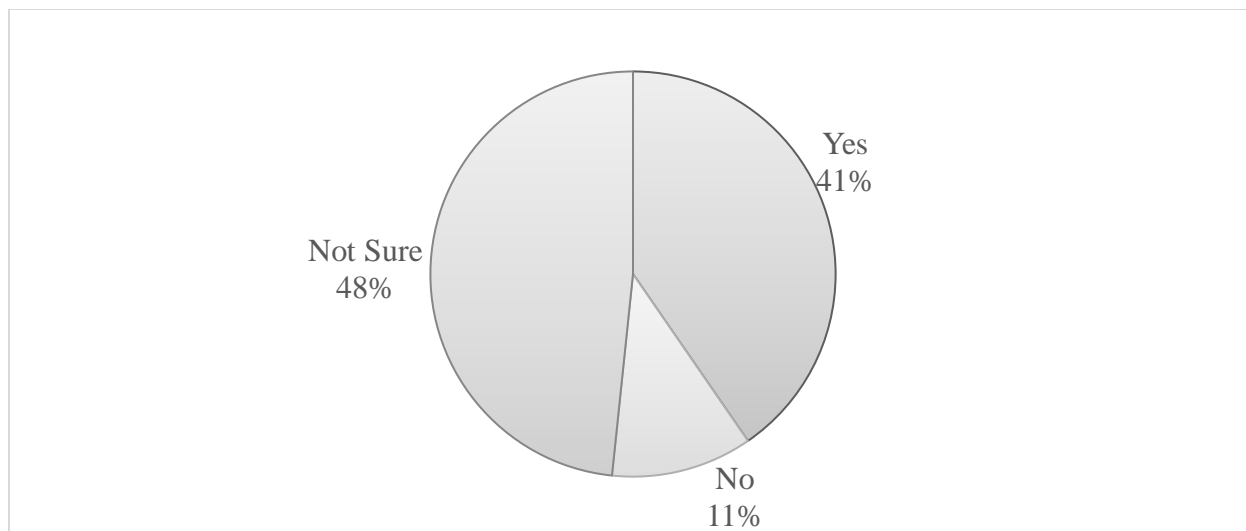
Figure 6. Audience answers to Question 4 of the Audience Survey.

This question has been brought to the researcher's attention by a few participants that it possibly lacked clarity in the way it was worded. The participants seem to have struggled with the term *lifestyle worship* and in being able to assess this in the life of the Christian artist. The researcher was asking if MOST Christian artists are living pure lives in which worship is evident in their lifestyle and not just when on the platform. Perhaps this is a quality the audience cannot accurately assess in most Christian artists. It is possible that the wording of the question has left the audience members unsure of their ability to actually assess lifestyle worship in most Christian artists.

Another "MOST" question has left the majority "Not Sure." Question 8 asked, "Do you believe authenticity is largely being pursued by MOST Christian artists?" See figure 7.
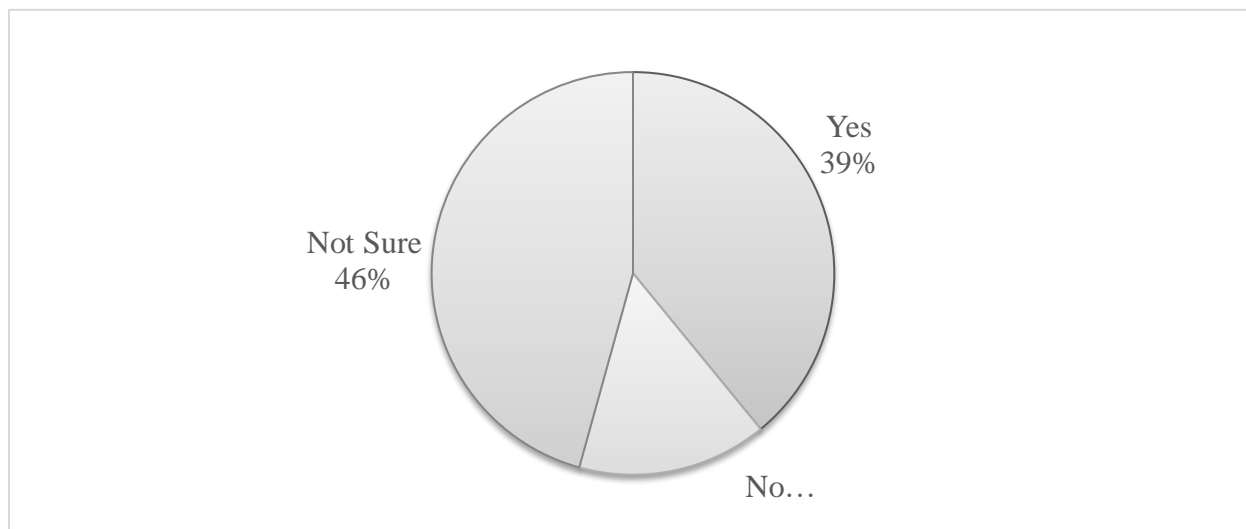
Figure 7. Audience answers to Question 8 of the Audience Survey.

Of the 151 participants, 69 (45.7%) selected "Not Sure." However, 59 (39.1%) affirmingly selected "Yes," while 23 (15.2%) selected "No." Authenticity, like lifestyle worship, is more difficult for the audience to assess in most Christian artists. It seems from this sample that there is a reluctance on the part of the audience member to assess most Christian artists. Perhaps the survey sample is not confident to assess artists they do not personally know. The publicized stories of moral failure, failed integrity, duplicitousness, and fraud that have riddled the Christian music industry and Christian music artists may have also contributed to the inability of a majority of this sample to say "Yes" to this question. However, a more encouraging response has been given by the sample to the next question.

Question 17 asked, "Do you believe MOST Christian artists believe and live what they sing?" The majority, 94 (62.3%), said, "Yes," while 13 (8.6%) said, "No," and 44 (29.1%) said, "Not Sure." See figure 8.
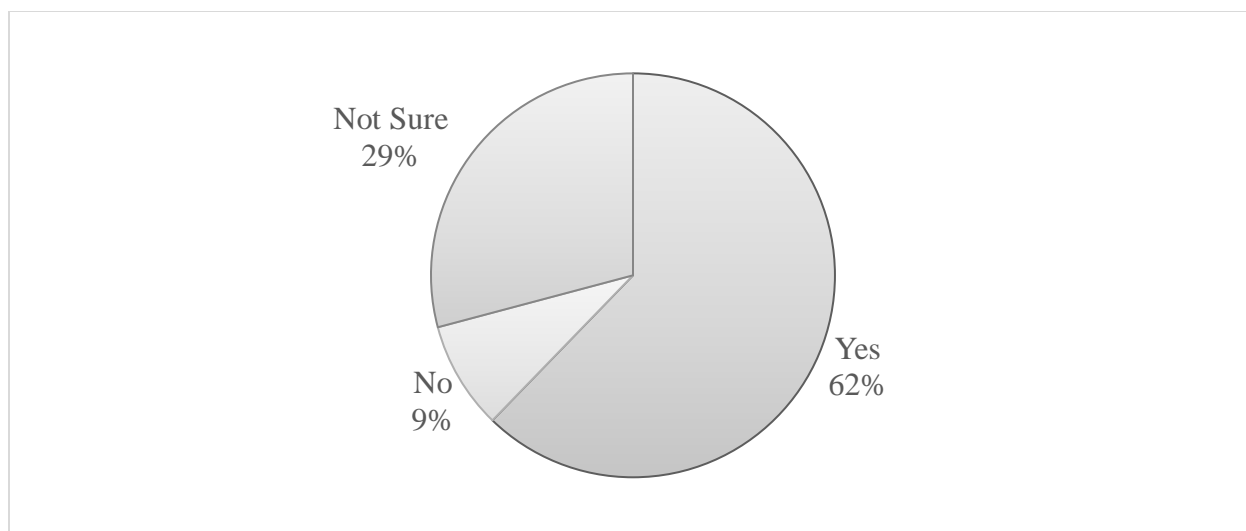
Figure 8. Audience answers to Question 17 of the Audience Survey.

This question seems to have left 29% of the sample unsure of how to assess the beliefs of

the artist to know if the artist is indeed living what he or she is proclaiming through song. Some

audience members observe an apparent discontinuity, given that 44 survey participants are

unsure if most Christian artists believe and live what they sing. It is even more concerning that

13 people have said, "No," they do not believe most Christian artists believe and live what they

sing.

It seems there is an inability or an unwillingness for the survey participants to reflect

upon Christian artists as a whole. However, when asking the audience about an individual artist

or their personal concert experience with an artist, there appears to be more freedom or

willingness to make an assessment. When the scope has been broadened to include most

Christian artists, the opinion of the audience tends to be less certain and even less favorable. This

reflects more upon the Christian music industry and the community of Christian artists less

known personally by the audience member. With well-known artists, there is often less of a

personal connection to the artist because of the popularity of the artist. These artists may be

extremely popular but have failed to connect in a friendly manner with the audience member. It

seems to be far easier for the survey participants to assess and provide confident answers (i.e.,

"Yes," "No") when being asked about individual artists they feel they know.

Although not used as a sub-scale item to measure the variable of lifestyle worship,

Question 3 probed the audience members about lifestyle worship directly. Question 3 asks, "Can

lifestyle worship improve artist authenticity by the practice of spiritual disciplines such as prayer,

fasting, Bible reading, etc.?" Of the 151 participants, 149 people said, "Yes," and 2 people

(1.3%) said, "Not Sure." A vast majority of this sample believe spiritual disciplines are a key

component of lifestyle worship in the life of the Christian artist and that the practice of spiritual

disciplines improves not only the perception of artist authenticity but authenticity in and of itself.

Therefore, lifestyle worship contributes to and complements authenticity.

Question 16 was not used as a sub-scale variable to measure lifestyle worship. However,

this question inquired about the influence of the songs the artist sings upon the artist's identity.

"Do the songs the artist sings reflect upon who the artist is as a person?" A resounding 119

(78.8%) said, "Yes," 13 (8.6%) said, "No," and 19 (12.6%) said, "Not Sure." These responses

indicate that the songs are believed to be an extension of who the artist is as a person and are

viewed as an expression of the artist's personal faith and identity. Therefore, the songs as an

external attribute are viewed by the audience as insight into the internal faith and identity of the

artist. When lifestyle worship envelops all of life, the songs become a reflection of the identity of

who the artist is as a person and as a communicator of the gospel.

Message Transmission

Message Transmission is the communication of the gospel message by the Christian

Artist through song and personal testimony to be received by the audience. This variable has

been measured by Questions 2, 11, and 12.

Question 2 asked, "Should the artist's life demonstrate the words they are singing?" See figure 1. A resounding 95% agree that there should be congruence between the lifestyle of the artist and the words being sung by the artist. This question is intended to bring to light the necessity of correlation between the communicator and the message being communicated. Message Transmission is received more favorably and is more accepted as genuine when communicated by an artist who is perceived to be authentic and aligned with the lyrical content of the songs he/she shares.

Questions 11 and 12 have dealt more with the physical appearance of the artist and how the physical appearance correlates with the message being communicated. Question 11 asks, "Do you expect a correlation between the physical appearance of the artist (hair, makeup, clothing, etc.) and the message of the piece?" Of the 151-sample size, 72 said, "Yes," while 65 said, "No" and 14 said, "Not Sure." See figure 9.
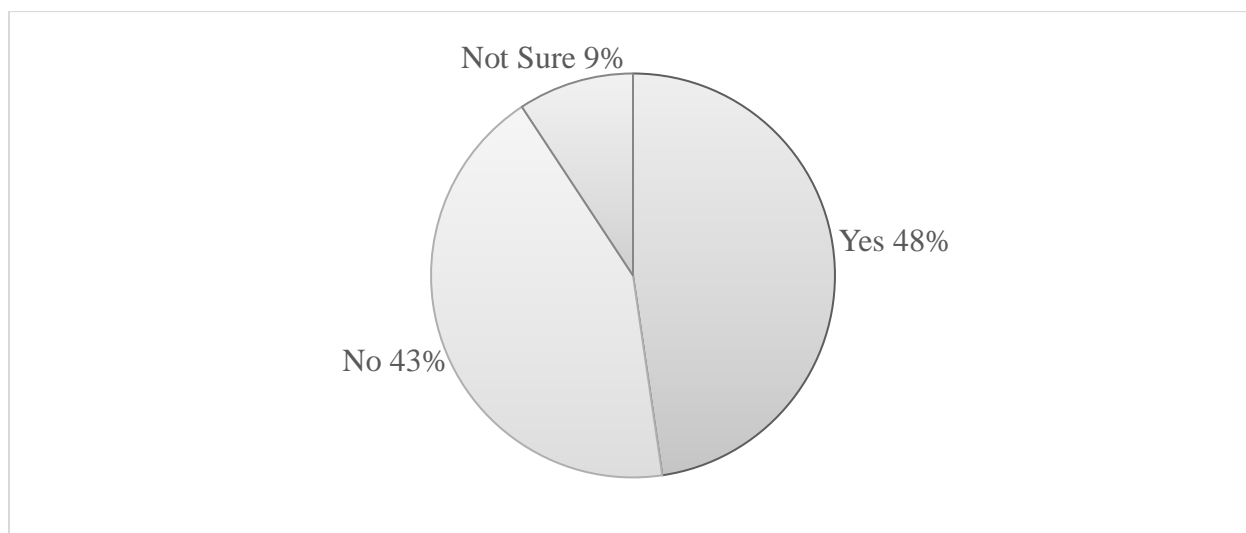
Figure 9. Audience answers to Question 11 of the Audience Survey.

As seen in the pie chart, there is almost an even split between those who expect the physical appearance of the artist to match the message of the piece versus those who say that it is not necessary. In a culture dominated by visual stimulation, it seems the artist's hair, makeup,

and clothing all contribute to the overall impression of who the artist is as well as the type of

concert experience the audience member has. However, 43% of the sample size seems to suggest

that the significance of the message is unaffected by the appearance of the artist. Therefore, the

artists can dress however they choose because it does not affect the message of the song. This

split in audience response is potentially telling of a cultural shift, generational shift, or simply a

divide of public expectations of the artist. However, the anonymous nature of the audience

survey has not permitted a deeper examination into a cultural or generational study on this

question, as these categories have been excluded from the survey.

However, it is important to recognize that 72 people in this sample have said it does

matter what the artist looks like physically because of the message they are communicating. This

leads to Question 12, which asks, "Does a visual correlation between the appearance of the artist

and the contents of the song improve your opinion of the artist?" The majority (74 individuals)

said, "Yes," while 58 said, "No," and 19 said, "Not Sure." The opinions of 49% of the sample

size have been positively influenced by the evident congruence between the physical appearance

of the artist and the message of the song. See figure 10.
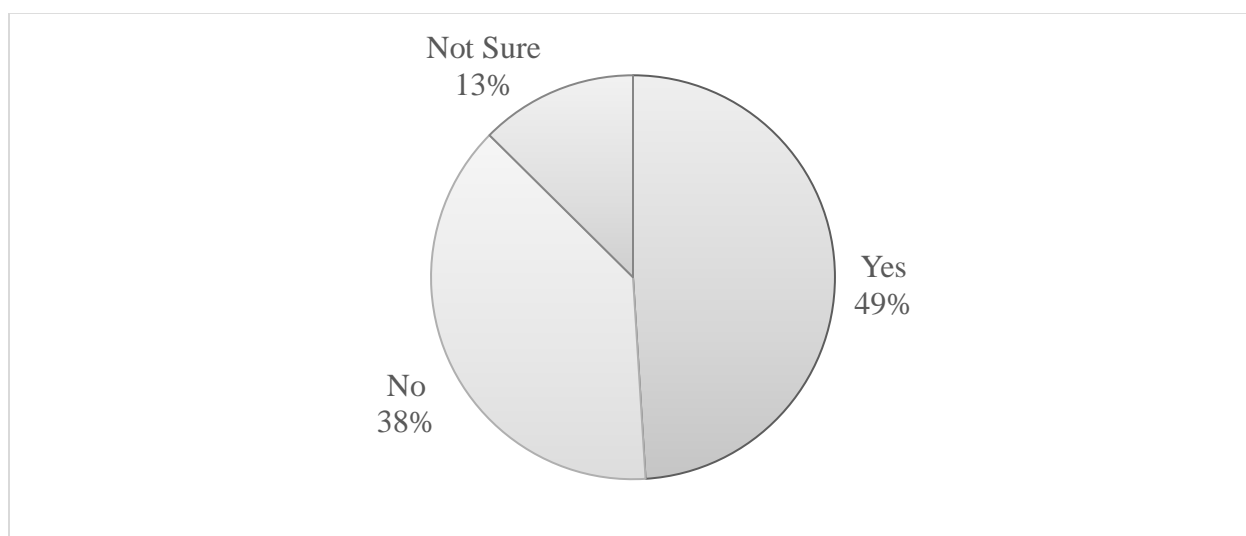
Figure 10. Audience answers to Question 12 of the Audience Survey.

As the chart above shows, Message Transmission receives higher approval when the message is delivered by an artist who physically appears to represent the message. While 38% of the sample size has said their opinion does not increase through a visual correlation between the artist and the message, the researcher is resigned to determine that the opinion of the audience member does not rise and fall on the physical appearance of the artist. Again, the artist's appearance seems to have no effect on the message that is being transmitted.

Amy Belfi et al., in the study "Aesthetic Judgments of Live and Recorded Music: Effects of Congruence Between Musical Artist and Piece," examines the congruency between the visual appearance of the artist and the type of piece being performed.[4] While the Belfi et al. study appears to conclude that there is a higher overall opinion when the artist aesthetically reflects the type of piece being performed, 38% of this current research sample disagree, while 49% affirm this conclusion. Therefore, physical appearance remains a significant aspect of the Christian artist. The Christian artist is influencing the perspective of the audience member, who is essentially looking to observe a correlation between the physical appearance of the communicator and the message being communicated.

Hypotheses

Five research hypotheses have been investigated using the previously mentioned variables and the sub-items utilized to measure each variable. The first hypothesis states:

1) There is a positive relationship between perception of artist authenticity by audience members and their concert experience; whereby the stronger the audiences' perception of authenticity, the more favorable their concert experience.

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[4] Amy M. Belfi, David W. Samson, Jonathan Crane, and Nicholas L. Schmidt, "Aesthetic Judgments of Live and Recorded Music: Effects of Congruence Between Musical Artist and Piece," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, (2021): 1-11, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.618025.

The two variables being assessed in this hypothesis are Perceived Authenticity and the Concert Experience. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient has been computed to assess the linear relationship between Perceived Authenticity and the Concert Experience. There is a weak positive correlation between the two variables, $r(151) = .129$, $p = .115$. Because the p value is greater than the significance level, the null hypothesis has failed to be rejected. Therefore, there is no correlation between Perceived Authenticity and the Concert Experience. The audience member who perceives the artist to be authentic does not necessarily have a better concert experience.

The second hypothesis is:

2) There is a difference among Christian music subgenres on perception of artist authenticity; whereby the praise and worship genre will have the strongest perception of artist authenticity.

This hypothesis claims that those who listen to the Praise and Worship Christian music subgenre have a higher Perception of Authenticity score. Of the 151 participants, only 10 selected only Praise and Worship in answer to Question 1. While many select Praise and Worship in addition to many other genres, the ones utilized to test this hypothesis were those who only selected Praise and Worship. There is no significant difference in the participants' perception of artist authenticity; $t(151) = -1.433$, $p = .15$. Thus, Hypothesis Two has not been supported. If a larger sample had selected only Praise and Worship, the results might have varied. However, this sample suggests that there is no correlation between those who listen to certain types of Christian music and their perception of artist authenticity.

The third hypothesis is:

3) There is a direct relationship between lifestyle worship and message transmission of the gospel through song to the audience member; whereby the Christian message is expected by the audience to be transmitted by authentic Christian artists who practice patterns of

lifestyle worship.

This hypothesis looks at the messenger in correlation to the message being transmitted. It suggests a direct relationship between Perceived Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient has been computed to assess the linear relationship between Perceived Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission. At the 0.01 level (2-tailed), there is a positive correlation between the three variables, $r(151) = .351$, $p < .001$. The hypothesis has been supported, and the null hypothesis has been rejected as the p value is less than the significance level.

The fourth hypothesis is:

4) There is a positive relationship between Message Transmission and the Concert Experience. In contrast, the audience member who has a higher value for the Concert Experience will also have a high value for Message Transmission.

Message Transmission is a central part of the concert experience. The Christian artist is transmitting the gospel message through song, which influences the concert experience for the audience member. This hypothesis suggests a positive correlation between Message Transmission and the Concert Experience. A Pearson correlation coefficient has been computed to assess the linear relationship between the Concert Experience and Message Transmission. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) between the two variables, $r(151) = .190$, $p = .020$. The hypothesis has been supported, and the null hypothesis has been rejected.

The fifth hypothesis is:

5) There is a direct relationship between an artist who is perceived as authentic and the message they are sharing through song; whereby the audience member who perceives the artist to be authentic will accept the message as positive and genuine.

The Perception of Artist Authenticity has a positive linear relationship with Message Transmission. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was computed to assess the linear relationship

between Artist Authenticity and Message Transmission. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) between the two variables, $r(151) = .351$, $p < .001$. The hypothesis has been supported, and the null hypothesis has been rejected. This supports the concept that there is a directional relationship between perceived artist authenticity in an artist and the message being communicated by the artist.

Qualitative Study of Christian Artists

Prepare the Data for Analysis

The data has been collected in an anonymous online survey, and the artist participants have written a response to each question in their own words. A few artists' answers have appeared to include typos or grammatical errors that have made some of the answers unclear. These errors have been interpreted and documented by the researcher.

The artists have been assigned a label to identify them as a representative of the musical genre they have selected. The Singer/Songwriter artist has been labeled "S/S," and the Praise and Worship artist has been labeled "P&W." Three participants have selected Southern Gospel as their professional music industry. These artists have been labeled SG1, SG2, and SG3. The artist order has remained consecutive from question to question to help the researcher establish a better feel for each artist's perspective as an individual participant. All the artists' answers have been categorized by question. For instance, Question 2 has been stated at the top of the page, and all answers from each artist have been listed below each question in a random order that is maintained from question to question. The data has been compiled in a Word document for a more accessible approach to identifying key terms and phrases.

Explore the Data

The researcher has read through the data to obtain an overall sense of the responses from the artists. A color-coding system has been utilized to gain a more thorough awareness of the responses, and memos have been made during this phase. Many observations have been included in this phase of exploring the data. An initial consensus has been that most artists share a similar concern for being authentic and realize that the perception of artist authenticity is central to Christian music. The artist participants have seemed to suggest an underlying awareness that not all artists are authentic; not all artists are who they portray themselves to be. The artist participants have seemed to have direct insight into the plight of artist authenticity and have been willing to share what they know and have observed from personal experience to help the cause of the Christian artist. The artists do not seem to seek to indict their fellow artists as a cruel act but rather to uncover the truth of the dilemma of artist authenticity.

A key has been determined and implemented in this process.[5] The descriptive narrative passages of field notes have been listed in regular font. The quotations from the artists have been listed in bold font. The researcher's comments have been italicized. Since this is an anonymous survey, each artist has been labeled by his/her identified musical industry.

The first question asked the artist participants, "Which sub-genre of Christian music do you identify professionally?" Artists from the following genres have participated in this survey: Southern Gospel (3), Many Genres (1), Acoustic/Folk (1), Praise and Worship (2), Classical Crossover (1), Contemporary (1), and Singer/Songwriter (1). "Many Genres" and "Classical Crossover" have been written in by the artists in the "Other" column.

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[5] See Appendix C for a sample of the key utilized for initial coding.

All participants contributed unique tones and perspectives to the 12 questions they were asked. Each artist, as a reflection of a specific musical sub-genre in Christian music, reflected transparently his/her personal experiences and observations as professional Christian artists. Though the sub-genres were different, the overall perspective of each artist largely reflected upon their experience operating within the Christian music industry. While these artists vary in their day-to-day activities and the specific music circles in which they operate, the commonality they share is their collective commitment to communicating the gospel through song.

Analyze the Data

Question 1 asked the artist to select a Christian musical sub-genre in which they identify as a way of labeling each artist's answers and to maintain a sense for each artist from question to question. The researcher has desired to have a variety of representations from within the Christian music industry. There are at least seven sub-genres represented including artists writing in "Classical Crossover" and "Many Genres." The researcher could not categorize Many Genres with a specific musical genre within the Christian music industry. However, the artist's answers have been included in the research and data analysis as this artist has confirmed participation in the larger community.

The second question asked, "Is there inherent and/or necessary correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?" Three participants simply stated, "Yes," with no further explanation. Three different participants suggested the need for a correlation but acknowledged that it is not always the case. SG2 began with, "There should be," and SG1 stated, "Ideally yes, but that is not always the case." Artist S/S echoed this perspective, "The impact of the message is certainly enhanced when the artist is personally invested in the lyrical content because the audience (congregation) can sense that

connection. Perhaps even more true when the lyrical content is biblically-based. It would be difficult to 'believe' an artist if they are singing things they don't personally believe." However, SG2 explained, "The talents and gifting God has given mankind allow for some to be able to emotionally perform a song that appears to show conviction even if the performer is not a believer."

The Contemporary artist and Classical Crossover artist began with "Absolutely," and both explained this belief. Artist Classical Crossover suggested that the truth of God's Word will not return void and can still "penetrate the heart of the hearer even if there is no correspondence between the Christian artist and the lyrical content." This artist continues, "But it is much more unlikely that the artist can properly interpret (with the necessary passion and emotion) the lyrics if there is no belief from the heart." Artist Contemporary stated, "I believe that any artist but especially a Christian artist, should never sing or lead a song that they themselves wouldn't be affected by or resonate with. If it's just a 'good song,' but there's no real connection to the song by the artist, I believe the audience can feel the disingenuous communication."

Question 3 asks: "When singing Christian songs, are there intentional, emotional, and cognitive connections being made to the song lyrics in rehearsal and/or when on the platform in a performance? If connections are being made in the performance but not in the rehearsal, please explain why. If connections are being made in the rehearsal but not in the performance, please explain why." Many artists in this sample referred to connections made in performance and/or rehearsal. For all the artist participants, there appear to have been an intentional mental and/or emotional connection to the song lyrics they sing at some point in time. However, Artist Many Genres writes, "Connection may be made in both instances, but may not. The connection may be

primarily musical, professional, and performance based."[6] The artist interestingly suggests, "Assumptions about the personal spiritual connection of an artist or performer are not wise, just as assumptions about any other person's spiritual depth or personal commitment to God."[7] This question has been written for the artist to share his/her personal experience, and yet this artist has also reflected upon the idea of assuming a spiritual connection to lyrics in others' lives as not being wise. The researcher agrees it is difficult, if not virtually impossible, to attempt to assess another's connection to a lyric. This question has been strictly intended for the artist to reflect upon personal practices and not the practices of others.

Artist SG3 simply states, "Yes." Six of the nine artists write, "Both,"[8] and SG1 and P&W lean towards an easier connection made in performance than in rehearsal. Artist A/F writes, "Both" yet clarifies, "But sometimes more so when there are people in front of you-sometimes the Holy Spirit allows you to see their pain and that helps you feel the lyrics as you are sharing them." As a messenger, the artist is aware of and sensitive to those who are receiving the message. The realization that the audience is comprised of individuals who have unique life experiences, possibly filled with hurt and pain, creates a concern for these people in the hearts of the artists. When the artist is ministering through a song lyric, an interpersonal connection to the truth found in the lyrics is also made when seeing the faces of the recipients. These types of connections are perhaps more easily experienced in performance rather than in practice due to the presence of the audience.

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[6] Artist Many Genres, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[7] Artist Many Genres, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[8] Artists SG2, A/F, P&W, Contemporary, Classical Crossover, and Many Genres, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Regarding a connection being made during performance, Artist Contemporary recounted people asking if the songs get old, and the artist states, "My answer is always 'absolutely not.' The songs never [get] hurt…because the audience changed every night. With new people, you have new connections, and fresh faces look at you, hoping a song will hit them right where they need it."[9] Artist Classical Crossover offered insight into the moment of performance by stating:

> My desire is to lead others in worship, and in so doing, you yourself must be worshiping…leading by example. But mistakes and musical errors also distract the listener from worship, so it's just as critical to be mindful of the musicality and technique. If the heart's ultimate desire is to glorify Christ in humility, and make His name known through a performance, then I believe God can be glorified throughout a performance even when the mind is jumping back and forth between the lyric and the technical.[10]

Artist SG1 also mentions distractions: "In performance, those distractions have been assuaged, and you are more free to focus on communicating the words to the songs to the audience and relating them to your own experience."[11]

A few artists emphasized the focus on technical aspects during the rehearsal. Artist SG1 writes, "In rehearsal/studio time, you are more focused on the execution of the song and making sure the technical elements are in place."[12] Artist Classical Crossover states, "There are some rehearsal days when I (personally) focus more on the technical aspects of the music: i.e. intonation, clarity, choreography, etc."[13] Artist Contemporary, who said a connection is made in both performance and rehearsal, explains about the rehearsal, "For rehearsal there are probably songs that you personally resonate with more than others. That doesn't mean you are

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[9] Artist Contemporary, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[10] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[11] Artist SG1, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[12] Artist SG1, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[13] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

disconnected with other songs but there are always certain songs that you sing that you just always feel."[14] Artist S/S emphasized the need to help others on the platform to "connect with the messages of the songs, especially if they are instrumentalists. I do this so that the 'performance' is just overflow of the message's impact in our personal lives first (hopefully)."[15] Artist Classical Crossover, who stated there is a connection between both rehearsal and performance, explains:

> Yet on other days (often depending on what is taking place in life), practice becomes my own time of worship; A time to reflect and remind myself of the Truths contained in the lyric. Sometimes practice even has to end early because I get moved to tears by certain phrases and Scriptural Truths I needed to be reminded of.[16]

Rehearsing the songs is a way to make personal connections with the lyrics of the songs and to practice worship and expressions of worship without having to take into consideration the presence of the audience. In rehearsal, the artist truly sings for an Audience of One, as the songs are studied and learned behind closed doors, away from the watching eyes of the public. It is in this time that musical technique and emotional experience can connect with spiritual worship, equipping the artist as a skillful musician and a worshiping being. Out of this type of intentional preparation, including technical study and lyrical meditation and application, the artist more confidently presumes the role of communicator.

However, a connection to a song does not always occur for the artist. Artist SG2 offers insight into the moments when a connection may not be occurring for the artist:

> There are so many factors at play that will contribute to the emotional response to a lyric. Personally, when I do not feel an emotional connection to a lyric in rehearsal or live performance I rest on the fact that the theology in the song is true and the power of truth

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[14] Artist Contemporary, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[15] Artist S/S, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[16] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

works [in spite] of me.[17]

The reality is that the artist may not always have a deep emotional connection to a song. The artist may still choose to record the song or plan to perform it live because they realize the message may relate to others. There are several layers of consideration when an artist selects songs for recording and performance. A song may seem to work well on a record but fail to connect with the audience in the live performance or vice-versa. Song selection is essential to the ministry and career of the Christian artist. The process of song selection is an art in and of itself, with significant consequences for the ministry of the artist. With this knowledge, the researcher has asked the artists to reflect upon two processes—their procedure when selecting songs for recordings and their procedure when selecting songs for performance.

Questions 4 and 5 ask the artists to rank order specific elements when selecting songs for recordings and when selecting songs for performances. They had to number from 1-5, with 1 being of most importance and 5 being of least importance. The five categories included lyrics, melodies, commercial appeal, the way the audience will receive the song, and overall impression or fit of the song. A few artists selected more than one "1," and therefore, the 1-5 rank order scale was not correctly executed by all artists.

Question 4 asks, "When selecting songs for RECORDINGS, rank the following in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Please select only one "1", one "2", one "3", etc." The artist's responses were:

Artist SG1: (1) Commercial Appeal, (2) Melodies, (3) Lyrics, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist SG2: (1) Lyrics, (1) Melodies, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Commercial Appeal, (2) Audience Reception

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[17] Artist SG2, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist SG3: (1) Lyrics, (1) Audience Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist A/F: (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Lyrics, (3) Melodies, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Audience Reception

Artist P&W: (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist Contemporary: (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist Classical Crossover: (1) Lyrics, (1), Melodies, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Audience Reception, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist Many Genres: (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Commercial Appeal, (3) Audience Reception

Artist S/S: (1) Lyrics, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Commercial Appeal

The figure below represents the five artists who utilized numbers 1-5 in the rank scale order,

with 1 being the most important and listed as closest to the artist. See figure 11.
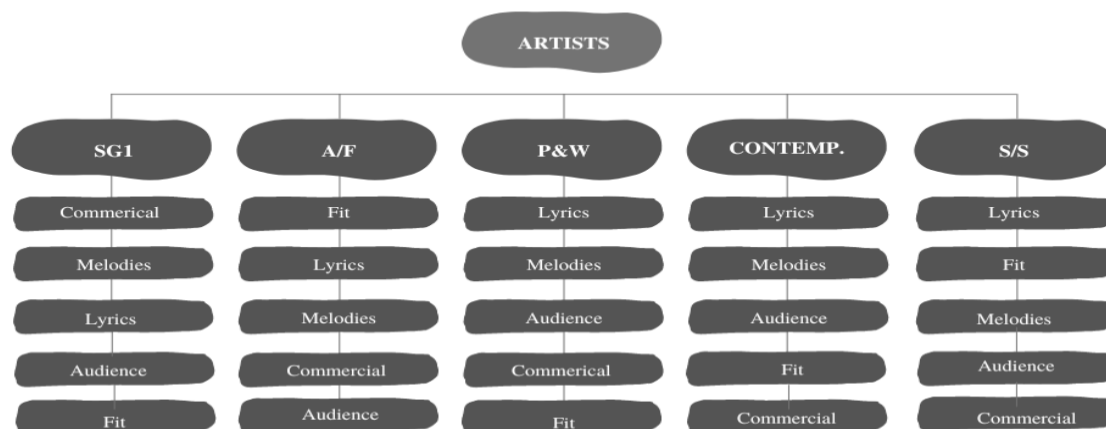
Figure 11. Five Artists' answers to Question 4 of the Artist Survey when selecting songs for recordings.

Five of the nine artists completed the rank order correctly by selecting only one "1," one "2," one "3," etc. [18] Four of these five artists selected "Lyrics" as the most important aspect when selecting songs for recordings. Recordings are the tangible products of an artist's performance that the audience can listen to at home, in the car, on the radio, from a phone, computer, or a tablet. It includes CDs, USBs, digital downloads, music videos, and music streaming services such as Apple Music and Google Music, and YouTube videos. These recordings often saturate the listening community, causing a greater awareness of the artist as a recording artist. Often, recordings are the artist's first exposure to the audience. Songs are heard and added to playlists, influencing the mind of the listener who has possibly not even seen the artist in a live setting. This potential influence by the artist may be why the artists prioritize lyrical content when

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[18] Artists SG1, A/F, P&W, Contemporary, and S/S, Question 4 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

selecting songs for recordings. A great lyric with a catchy hook can influence beyond the boundaries of an artist's live performance venue. This dynamic combination may be why three of the five artists chose "Melodies" as the second most important category when selecting songs for a recording.

Artist SG2 and Artist Classical Crossover both selected "1" for "Lyrics" and "Melodies," having given equal consideration to the importance of both items. Artist SG2 also gave a "1" to the Overall Impression. Artist Many Genres selected "Lyrics" as "1" and "Melodies" as "2," with "Melodies" tied with "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song." Artist SG3 prioritized "Lyrics" with equal consideration given to "Audience Reception," giving both a "1." This is perhaps reflective of a heightened awareness of the type of audience the artist typically stands before. If the song fails to reflect the audience the artist usually ministers to, then Artist SG2 does not record the song. Interestingly, the song may be a hit or completely effective for another artist, but it is passed over by Artist SG2 if there is a sense that the song/message misses its mark with the audience.

Artist A/F prioritizes the "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" as a "1," whereas Artist SG1 selected "Commercial Appeal" as the top priority. These can be viewed similarly when considering the overall impression of the song may include the ability of the song to be commercially appealing. Artist SG1 may hold to the notion that "Commercial Appeal" increases the potential for the song to be played on radio, which in return increases exposure for the artist through the song. However, "Overall Impression" is most meaningful to Artist A/F potentially signaling an importance for the feel of a song over the commercial appeal of the song.

The artists have, in some ways, diminished the importance of "Audience Reception" during the process of song selection for a recording. Artists P&W and Contemporary list

"Audience Reception" as a "3" of mid-importance out of the five items. Artist Many Genres lists "Audience Reception" as last but has numbered it as "3." This artist has only utilized numbers "1," "2," and "3" in this assessment of selecting songs for a recording. Artist Classical Crossover lists "Audience Reception" as a "2" but has it following three "1's." This could be viewed as the fourth most important item for Artist Classical Crossover when selecting songs for a recording. Artists S/S and SG1 have both list Audience Reception as a "4." Artist A/F actually lists "Audience Reception" as least important with a "5."

"Commercial Appeal" has a contrasting role in the artists who have participated in this sample. Artist SG 1 lists "Commercial Appeal" as the most important aspect when selecting songs for a recording. All the other artists list "Commercial Appeal" somewhere in the last three spots in order of importance. Artist Many Genres has given it a "3" but has it following a "1" and two "2's." This could be interpreted as a fourth or fifth spot since the artist has also given "Audience Reception" a "3." For this artist, "Commercial Appeal" ties in with "Audience Reception" as the least two important components when selecting songs for recordings. Artists A/F and P&W list it as a "4," and Artist SG2 lists it as a "2" but also has it following three "1's." It is, therefore, in fourth place of importance when selecting songs for recordings.

Artist SG3 gives "Commercial Appeal" a "3" but has only utilized the numbers "1," "2," and "3" in this assessment. This artist has "Commercial Appeal" tied with "Melodies" as a "3." Artist Classical Crossover gives "Commercial Appeal" a "3," but it follows three "1's" and one "2." Therefore, it has been ranked as the least important for Artist Classical Crossover. Artist Contemporary also ranks "Commercial Appeal" as least important by giving it a "5." Interestingly, Artist Contemporary diminishes "Commercial Appeal" though Contemporary music has been a genre known to reflect the popular sounds of cultural influences. However, the

Contemporary Artist in this sample prioritizes "Lyrics," "Melodies," "Audience Reception," and "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" over "Commercial Appeal" when selecting songs to record. Artist S/S also gives "Commercial Appeal" a "5." This does not mean that "Commercial Appeal" is not considered by the artists when selecting songs for recordings, but it does insinuate that many other factors are prioritized for the artists in the song selection process for recording.

The process is apparently different for the artists when selecting songs for a recording versus selecting songs for live performances. These differences are evident in the rank order answers to the questions shown in figure 12. The same five artists have completed the rank order correctly for Question 5, and have only utilized one "1," one "2," one "3," etc.
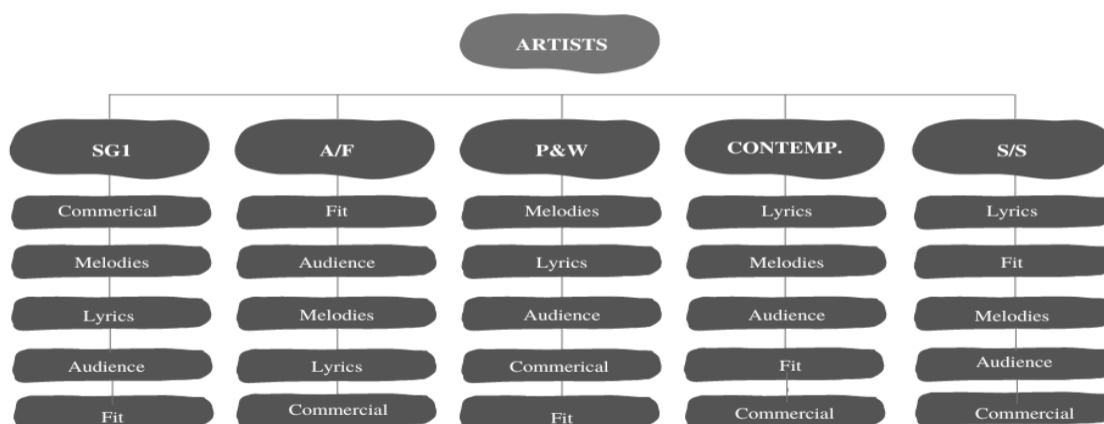

Figure 12. Five Artists' answers to Question 5 of the Artist Survey tool when selecting songs for Performing.

Question 5 asks, "When selecting songs for PERFORMANCES, rank the following in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Please select only one 1, one 2, one 3, etc." The artist's responses were:

Artist SG1: (1) Commercial Appeal, (2) Melodies, (3) Lyrics, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist SG2: (1) Lyrics, (1), Melodies, (2) Audience Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist SG3: (1) Lyrics, (2) Audience Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist A/F: (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Audience Reception, (3) Melodies, (4) Lyrics, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist P&W: (1) Melodies, (2) Lyrics, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist Contemporary: (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist Classical Crossover: (1) Lyrics, (1) Melodies, (1) Commercial Appeal, (1) Audience Reception, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist Many Genres: (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Commercial Appeal, (3) Audience Reception

Artist S/S: (1) Lyrics, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Commercial Appeal

"Lyrics" received two "1's" with two of the five artists who completed the rank order having correctly used numbers 1-5. [19] To these two artists, "Lyrics" are the most important element when selecting songs for performances. This supports congruence between the artist and the lyrical content they choose to sing, taking into consideration the performance environment, which includes an audience. Lyrics are a direct form of communication between the artist and the audience. This reality seems to support an emphasis of the message transmission of the gospel between the artist and the audience.

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[19] Artists Contemporary and S/S, Question 5 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist SG3 lists "Lyrics" as the most important with a "1," as has Artist Many Genres. Artist SG2 lists "Lyrics" as of utmost importance tied with "Melodies" when considering song selections for performances. This artist scores both items with a "1." Artist Classical Crossover gives every item a "1," equalizing all components when selecting songs for performances.

Artist A/F lists "The Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" as the most important when selecting songs for performances. This artist prioritizes the "Overall Impression" when selecting songs for a recording and for a performance. If this artist does not sense a fit with the song, then the song is not included in the recording or considered for a performance. Artist S/S has considered "Overall Impression" as the second most important item when selecting songs for a performance. Artist Many Genres gives the "Overall Impression" a score of "2" but has tied it with "Melodies." For this artist, the musical element of "Melody" is just as significant as the overall "fit" of the song. These items are equally significant to Artist Many Genres when selecting songs for performance.

Artist SG3 ranks "Overall Impression" as a "2" but has it tied with "Audience Reception," which has also been ranked as a "2." These two items are related as the "Overall Impression" of the song may reflect an awareness of the audience and the expectations of those who listen to a certain genre. If the artist is not sensing a fit with the song, it may be in part due to the personal preference of the artist. However, the artist may also be taking into consideration an awareness of who the audience is. This awareness is reflected in "Audience Reception." It seems Artist SG3 does not consider a song for performance if the song does not have a good fit or if it does not hit the mark with "Audience Reception."

Artist SG2 also ranks "Overall Impression" as a "2" but has it tied in importance with "Audience Reception." Both of these follow "Lyrics" and "Melodies." Artist SG2 seems to trust

the musical aspect and the lyrical content when selecting songs for performance more than leaning into "Audience Reception" or "Overall Impression." This seems to be a more practical approach to song selection with less reliance upon impressions or contemplating how the audience may receive the song. If it is a good song lyrically and melodically, this artist is likely hoping the audience will receive it, and it will be a good fit for the artist.

Artist P&W has ranked "Overall Impression" last with a score of "5." This artist relies more upon "Melodies," "Lyrics," "Audience Reception," and "Commercial Appeal" than "Overall Impression." As a creative artist, Artist P&W seems to lean into the tools of the craft more than personal impressions or feelings about a song. This is an interesting diminishment of the artist's personal impressions and perceptions of how the song may fit the artist.

With a keen awareness of "Overall Impression," Artist A/F lists "Audience Reception" as second most important when selecting songs for performance. If a song does not fit the artist or make an impression on the artist, Artist A/F is likely convinced the song will not work. In a similar concern, if the artist senses the audience will not receive the song for one reason or another, Artist A/F likely does not consider the song for performance. This artist is committed to being able to communicate the song from a personal fit, as well as being aware of the expectations of the audience and if they will receive the song. The ability to communicate is central to these assessments by Artist A/F.

"Audience Reception" is vital to the process of Message Transmission. A message communicated but not received leaves the process incomplete. Artist SG3 ranks "Audience Reception" with a "2," tied with "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song." This similarity echoes Artist A/F's ranking and awareness of communication through the songs in a performance setting. Artist SG2 prioritizes "Audience Reception" with a "2" following "Lyrics – 1" and

"Melodies – 1." When considering songs for performance, this artist relies primarily upon good lyrics and a catchy melody. However, "Audience Reception" brings into focus this artist's awareness of the audience as the recipient of the gospel message that is being lyrically transported through the melodies of the songs. If the audience cannot or will not receive the message for any reason, this artist may consider sacrificing a good hook for the sake of "Audience Reception."

Artist P&W and Artist Contemporary both rank "Audience Reception" in the middle of the rank order with a "3." "Melodies" and "Lyrics" surpassed "Audience Reception" for both artists. Artists S/S and SG1 rank "Audience Reception" as a "4" out of the five items. "Lyrics," "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song," and "Melodies" are prioritized for these artists over "Audience Reception" when selecting songs for performance. These artists seem to trust lyrical content, the fit of the song, and the musical elements of melody to guide in the process of song selection more than considering if the audience will receive the song. Perhaps these two artists sense that "Audience Reception" will happen if the "Lyrics," "Fit," and "Melodies" are all approved by the artists.

In Question 6, the artists were asked to provide a brief definition of lifestyle worship. Artists SG1, P&W, and Classical Crossover have all three used the term *daily* in their definitions of Lifestyle Worship. Artists SG2, A/F, and Contemporary have used the phrase *everyday life* in their definitions of Lifestyle Worship. Artist S/S states, "I suppose it means that a person can, and does, worship throughout their day, or week, and not just in corporate times of worship within a congregation."[20] This definition points to daily worship outside of the corporate setting. Artist Contemporary and Artist Classical Crossover uses the word *mundane* to suggest that

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[20] Artist S/S, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Lifestyle Worship happens in the exciting and mundane aspects of life; in every facet of life, the individual is compelled to express worship to the Lord. See figure 13.
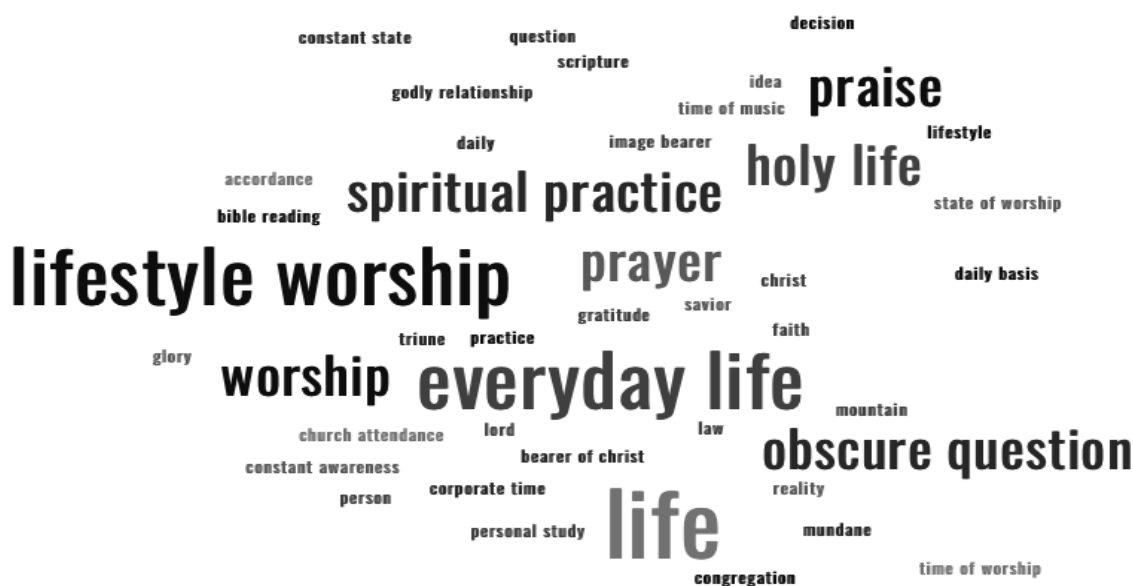
Figure 13. Themes from Question 6 of the Artist Survey.

Question 7 asks the artists, "Is lifestyle worship something that is, or does it need to be developed?" In general, six of the nine artists strongly suggest the need for lifestyle worship to be developed.[21] This process was addressed by two artists, SG1 and P&W, as "discipleship." Three artists use the words *growth*,[22] *grow*,[23] and *growing*.[24] Three artists refer to this process as intentional teaching/education/training.[25] Artist Classical Crossover states there is "Certainly

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[21] Artists SG1, SG2, SG3, P&W, S/S, Classical Crossover, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[22] Artist SG2, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[23] Artist S/S, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[24] Artist P&W, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[25] Artists Classical Crossover, SG3, SG1, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

room for education…from a biblical perspective,"[26] and Artist SG 3 writes, "One must train him/herself to create a lifestyle of worship."[27] Artist Many Genres suggests lifestyle worship is a "condition of the heart in relation to God."[28] This artist references spiritual disciplines in which lifestyle worship is expanded, including: "solitude, reading spiritual texts, listening to or singing music, corporate settings with other believers or other settings."[29] Artist Contemporary equates authentic worship with the development of lifestyle worship. This artist suggests this may be "intentional or not."[30] Artist A/F hints at the process of development of lifestyle worship by suggesting, "It does become easier with time."[31]

Artists in the Christian music industry are most familiar with the following statements: "This artist is the same on the stage and off the stage." "This artist is the real deal." The artist participants were asked in Question 8 what these statements mean to them. See figure 7. Five artists use the terms *live(s)*[32] or *everyday life*[33] to suggest that artist authenticity is not determined on the platform. Artist SG1 refers to "what I was like at home,"[34] and Artist Many Genres writes, "Probably what happens at McDonald's after the concert is more important than on stage during

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[26] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[27] Artist SG3, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[28] Artist Many Genres, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[29] Artist Many Genres, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[30] Artist Contemporary, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[31] Artist A/F, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[32] Artists SG2, SG3, Classical Crossover, and Many Genres, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[33] Artist Contemporary, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[34] Artist SG1, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

the concert."[35] Artist SG1 refers to certain qualities such as "sincere, kind, and friendly." Artist P&W includes qualifiers such as "a true follower of Christ," "to serve," and "humble."[36] Artist S/S uses "spiritual sincerity" and suggests authenticity refers to the artist's personality being the same on and off the platform.[37] Artist S/S and Artist Classical Crossover refer to the connection being made between the artist and the lyrics being sung in using these terms: "wholeheartedly believes" and "believing."[38]

In context, these statements seem to mean that the artist personally believes the lyrical content of his/her songs. Interestingly, Artist SG1 uses the term *believable* to describe how counterfeit individuals appear to be "believable and authentic" when in reality, they are not.[39] Belief and believability appear to be common threads of artist authenticity from the artist's perspective when asked about the statements, "This artist is the same on the stage and off the stage." "This artist is the real deal."

Question 9 asks the artists, "Is authenticity a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist? Explain." Three artists use the word *should* when answering this question. [40] This suggests that authenticity may not be a common practice for some artists since these artists admit that it "should" be. Three artists say, "Yes."[41] Artist Contemporary says authenticity is necessary "to truly connect with the audience on a heart and mind level." Artist Classical

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[35] Artist Many Genres, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[36] Artist P&W, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[37] Artist S/S, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[38] Artists S/S and Classical Crossover, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[39] Artist SG1, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[40] Artists SG1, SG2, and A/F, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[41] Artists SG3, Contemporary and Classical Crossover, Question 7 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Crossover points to the second commandment suggesting duplicitousness is breaking the second

command, which is, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."[42] This artist

also suggests the inauthentic artist "lies" to the audience, telling them, "We are someone we

actually are not."[43] Artist SG3 implies that being authentic is part of the Christian identity and

being part of God's Kingdom in stating, "Yes. God has made everyone different with talents,

abilities, and kingdom duties."[44] Artist SG2 and Artist P&W use the word *otherwise* to explain

that the desired answer is "Yes," but if authenticity is not a component in the life of the Christian

artist, then the artist needs to remove the identifier *Christian* before artist.[45] Artist SG2 says of

the presence of authenticity in the Christian artist's life, "It should be. Otherwise, Christ is being

used for selfish motive."[46] This is a serious indictment of the artist to use Jesus for personal gain

and/or platform opportunities. A lack of integrity or inconsistency in lifestyle seems to be

interpreted as the exact opposite of authenticity in the life of the artist.

Artist Many Genres uses the term "life consistency,"[47] and Artist S/S writes about the arts

having the most impact from an artist who "fully believes what they are communicating."[48] This

artist surmises, "So, authenticity might not be 'necessary' for an artist to be effective at some

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[42] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[43] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[44] Artist SG3, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[45] Artists SG2 and P&W, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[46] Artist SG2, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[47] Artist Many Genres, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[48] Artist S/S, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

level, but that effectiveness is certainly enhanced when that authenticity is present."[49] Therefore, effectiveness is enhanced when authenticity is present.

Authenticity was further investigated in Question 10. "Is authenticity largely being pursued by most Christian artists? If yes, please provide a list of practices, beliefs, or characteristics that you find evident in these artists. If no, please provide insight into what you believe is missing (or present) in the lives of artists that is preventing a pursuit of authenticity." Artist SG 1 answers, "I would not describe authenticity as a pursuit, but rather, as a way of being. You don't try to be authentic. Such is not truly authentic. You just…are what you are."[50] This clarification is beneficial, yet many artists cannot simply say, "Yes," to the core of the question regarding authenticity in the lives of most Christian artists. There are some who do believe their fellow artists are genuine in their desire to be authentic, but there are others who sense authenticity is not a consistent part of the lives of many Christian artists.

The latter group of artists has identified destructive patterns, routines, and habits that contribute to inauthenticity, including tour schedules, progressive thinking, personal lives being a mess, and the accusation that some artists in the Christian music genre do not have a personal relationship with Christ at all. They have also pointed out certain desires, motives, and fears that may impede artist authenticity, including the temptations of pride, fame, man's applause, living in the past, trying to be like artists from the past, and the fear of not receiving airplay or concert bookings based upon what they say—whether it be progressive or conservative ideologies. There are many temptations to overcome and battles to be won to maintain integrity as an artist and communicator, as well as to be authentic in artistic expressions and communication.

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[49] Artist S/S, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[50] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Question 11 asks the artists, "Think of an artist who you believe functions with integrity. What are the characteristics that shape your assessment of this individual?" The following characteristics are believed to be found in artists who function with integrity and have been compiled from the artist's answers to this question: discipline, focus, balance, humility, character, grace, honoring God, having knowledge of the Word of God, living it out practically on and off the platform, being active in church, spending obvious time with God, and being surrounded by people who hold them accountable (community). The complete list may be viewed in its entirety in Appendix A. See figure 14.

Figure 14. Themes from Question 11 of the Artist Survey.

Several traits reflect Lifestyle Worship, including grace, character, not being prideful or boastful, honoring God, and living it out practically on the platform and off. Other artists suggest the importance of understanding personal depravity apart from Christ, knowing the need for a Savior, and that gifts and talents come from the Lord. Lifestyle worship includes extending

kindness and forgiveness as well as demonstrating integrity and having Christlike attitudes. Traits reflecting self-discipline includes knowledge of the Word of God, focus, obvious time with God, and endurance.

A few descriptions refer to the need for Christian community, including balance, being active in church, being surrounded by people who hold them accountable, attitude at home, how they treat the waitress at Waffle House, and how they react when treated poorly. The Christian artist who functions within the community seems more grounded, humble, and has a deeper appreciation for and dependence upon others in the body of Christ. Christian community supports the Christian artist in such meaningful ways that if neglected, it leaves the artist more exposed to becoming prey to the ways of the world.

The last question of the survey asks about the artist's thoughts and thought patterns when on the platform by asking, "As an artist on the platform, what is usually going through your mind (e.g., musicality, appearance, technique, lyrical interpretation, artistry, communication, etc.)? Explain." Seven of the nine artists have included the word "communication" in some way in their response. Two other artists include the idea of communication.[51] Of these two, Artist Classical Crossover simply writes, "A little bit of it all." Artist A/F suggests elements of communication, including, "Presentation, performance, purpose, ministering to people." This artist also writes, "All of those examples," referring to musicality, appearance, technique, lyrical interpretation, artistry, communication, etc.

Communication is undoubtedly central to the identification, ministry, and purpose of the Christian Artist. Musical presentation, stage presence, appearance, artistry, technique, musicality,

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[51] Artists SG1, SG2, SG3, P&W, Contemporary, Many Genres, and S/S, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

and lyrical interpretation are all the means to realize the artist's primary role as a communicator. The very essence of the Christian artist is communication. As a communicator, every aspect of the artist's life is communicating to a watching world.

Represent the Data Analysis

The artist survey has been designed to better understand the effect of Lifestyle Worship upon Perceived Authenticity and to seek to understand the effect of congruence between the artist and the piece from the artist's perspective. Duplicitousness between what the artists portray and the lyrics they sing is examined from the perspective of the artists. The process of song selection by the artists is also considered a significant component of communication. Authenticity and integrity have been examined from the unique perspective of the artists. The artists remain the primary focus when attempting to assess and better understand artist authenticity. Several themes have arisen from the artists' answers regarding congruence between the artist and the piece, lifestyle worship, and authenticity.

Congruence: The Artist and The Piece

In asking the artists if there is inherent and/or necessary correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God, their answers have resoundingly approved the premise for this study. See figure 1. Three of the participants have simply stated, "Yes," with no further explanation.[52] Two other participants have suggested the need for a correlation but have acknowledged the reality that it is not always

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[52] Artists SG3, A/F, and P&W, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

the case by writing, "There should be,"[53] and, "Ideally yes."[54] Artist S/S clarified this perspective

by stating:

> The impact of the message is certainly enhanced when the artist is personally invested in the lyrical content because the audience (congregation) can sense that connection. Perhaps even more true when the lyrical content is biblically-based. It would be difficult to "believe" an artist if they are singing things they don't personally believe.[55]

However, Artist SG2 warns, "The talents and gifting God has given mankind allows for

some to be able to emotionally perform a song that appears to show conviction even if the

performer is not a believer."[56] This artist is differentiating between authenticity and perceived

authenticity. Artist SG2's observation is that the artist may appear sincere, convicted, and even

passionate about the message of the song when in reality, they have had no personal connection

with the lyrical content of the song. Artist SG2 expresses a concern that a great performer knows

how to control the platform, engage the audience, and appear real while, at the same time, being

anything but authentic.

Dan Fisher seems to reference this very idea in his dissertation, "Music and Identity:

Escape, Engagement, and the Quest for Authenticity in a Commodity Culture." He writes,

"Music like identity is all about the performance and the clever hiding of the performance."[57] As

related to identity, "hiding the performance" may be an attempt by the artist to hide incongruous

behavior, patterns, and lifestyles. It may be an attempt to cover up the reality that what the artist

presents to the public is indeed a show and not genuine authenticity. Fisher's statement echoes

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[53] Artist SG2, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[54] Artist SG1, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[55] Artist S/S, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[56] Artist SG2, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[57] Fisher, "Music and Identity," 119.

the conversation around congruence between the artist and the piece in his use of the phrase "clever hiding" to describe the cover-up of a performance.

Three artists realize the need for a correlation between the artist and the piece and simply respond with, "Yes."[58] These artists provide no explanation as to why they have said, "Yes," but the definitive nature of this answer emphasizes the significance of congruence between the artist and the piece. Two artists explain why it is necessary, but one of these artists has left room for the effectiveness of the song even if the artist is not connected to the song. Artist Contemporary and Artist Classical Crossover both state, "Absolutely," and have then provide an explanation of their belief.

Artist Contemporary explains, "If it's just a 'good song,' but there's no real connection to the song by the artist, I believe the audience can feel the disingenuous communication."[59] The use of the word *disingenuous* reflects dishonesty and duplicitousness, which are antithetical to authenticity. Artist Contemporary uses the word *feel* to explain that the audience may "feel the disingenuous communication." A feeling is often inexpressible with the use of words but is powerful in influencing emotions and perceptions. Emotional response to a song or the concert experience as a whole may be affected by a disingenuous feeling about the artist. A cognitive connection to the lyrics of the song, though they may be true and accurate, may be prevented if the audience feels the artist's communication is disingenuous.

Therefore, the significance of feelings cannot be underestimated as the Christian artist attempts to communicate the message of the gospel through song to the audience. There are substantial consequences if the audience senses disingenuous communication from the artist,

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[58] Artists SG1, SG2, and S/S, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[59] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

including, but not limited to, the loss of influence over the audience, diminished platform opportunities, discredited reputation, and potential damage to the gospel message itself. Artist Classical Crossover writes that it is "much more unlikely that the artist can properly interpret (with the necessary passion and emotion) the lyrics if there is no belief from the heart."[60] Interpretation is essential to the ability of the artist to effectively communicate the message of a song. Lyrical interpretation, as well as musical interpretation, are essential in the process of communication and message transmission. The artist delivers the message differently if an inner connection to the song occurs through proper interpretation.

Artist Contemporary urges, "I believe that any artist but especially a Christian artist, should never sing or lead a song that they themselves wouldn't be affected by or resonate with."[61] An artist being true to his/her art is viewed as a necessity by Artist Contemporary. The significance placed upon the Christian artists reflects the magnitude of the gospel message being communicated.

However, this artist points to the truth that God's Word will not return void and can still "Penetrate the heart of the hearer even if there is no correspondence between the Christian artist and the lyrical content."[62] This artist continues, "But it is much more unlikely that the artist can properly interpret (with the necessary passion and emotion) the lyrics if there is no belief from the heart."[63] Artist Contemporary states, "I believe that any artist but especially a Christian artist, should never sing or lead a song that they themselves wouldn't be affected by or resonate with. If

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[60] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[61] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[62] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[63] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

it's just a 'good song' but there's no real connection to the song by the artist, I believe the audience can feel the disingenuous communication."[64]

The phrase *disingenuous communication* is a concern as the premise of this research project is whether or not the nature of communication by the artists is genuine. Congruence between the artist and the piece is essential, especially for Christian artists who are more than artists who just happen to be Christians. The perception of artist authenticity relies upon the artist connecting with the song to then communicate the lyrics to the audience. If congruence between the artist and the piece is missing, Artist Contemporary notes the audience experiences and identifies disingenuous communication. This is more than an aesthetic judgment of the appearance of the artist in correlation to their song(s) as assessed by Belfi et al.. This observation is more closely related to Hanna Byrd's study between spiritual formation and the lyrics of songs. As the researcher notes, "A faith-filled artist delivering faith-filled lyrics offers more than visual congruence."[65]

Question 12 asks the artists what goes through their minds when they are on the platform. This question has allowed the artists to share their personal insight into the actual moment they are on the platform before the audience. The researcher has provided the artists with options including musicality, appearance, technique, lyrical interpretation, artistry, and communication. They have been asked to elaborate in greater detail.

Of the nine artists, seven have submitted that communication is a priority in their minds when on the platform.[66] This includes reading the crowd, creating connections, and breaking

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[64] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[65] See the Literature Review, 21.

[66] Artists S/S, Many Genres, Contemporary, P&W, SG3, SG2, SG1, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

down walls.[67] Artist SG1 strives for the audience to leave the concert feeling as if they have had a shared experience with the artist.[68] Artist SG2 explains that the artist's job is to "Guide an audience to a place where scriptural truth will penetrate their hearts and minds so that the Holy Spirit may use it to draw the audience member closer to Christ."[69] As a communicator and guide, the artist strives to connect with the people as individuals who form the audience.

Artist A/F expounds, "Presentation, performance, purpose, ministering to people who are just hanging on by a thread."[70] This realization of hurting people in the crowd seems to allow the artist to reduce the crowd from a mass to individuals. Seeing the audience as individuals gives a unique ministry purpose to this artist. Artist A/F realizes the significance of ministering to people who are hanging on by a thread. These are often desperate people looking for hope, and Artist A/F seems to feel the weight of this type of ministry. Where Artist A/F has emphasized ministry to the people in the audience, other artists maintain focus on the platform where the musical tasks are the priority of the artist who is creating.

Artist P&W emphasizes the goal of "musicality [sic] excellence" as well as "passion of message."[71] With a similar focus, musicality and lyrical interpretation are of utmost importance to Artist Contemporary. The emphasis on musicality speaks to these artists as creative beings, while lyrical interpretation and passion for the message point to the artists as communicators. The artist's role as a communicator remains central to the artist's experience on the platform.

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[67] Artist SG1, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[68] Artist SG1, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[69] Artist SG2, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[70] Artist A/F, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[71] Artist P&W, Question 12 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

While communication is central, as evidenced in figure 15, other aspects, which are part of the artist's concentration when on the platform, have also been included. The artists have not been limited to certain terms, as many have written in different terms. The artist's replies have been combined and represented in this graphic.

Figure 15. Themes from Question 12 in the Artist Survey.

The individual in the audience seems to motivate the artist's intentions as a communicator. Artist Contemporary notes the "enormous need in an audience and my total inability to meet it."[72] This artist continues, "I try not to see an audience as a 'mass' and try to think about actual individuals I've talked to or received communications from."[73] The artist seems to attempt to see the individuals who compile the audience rather than simply viewing the audience as a large crowd. Individual need drives Artist Contemporary, who concludes, "I think

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[72] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[73] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

often of the loaves and fishes miracle and realize I am just the kid with a totally inadequate lunch. If God doesn't show up tonight, these people will not only leave hungry, but disillusioned and cynical."[74]

The artist desires life-change for the audience and realizes that even though they are the flesh and blood communicator, God alone changes the hearts of people. While the artist stands before an audience, there is an apparent attempt from the artist's perspective to view the crowd as individuals. This focus on individuality also encourages a self-focus on individuality as an artist to better understand and demonstrate lifestyle worship.

Lifestyle Worship

The artists have provided definitions of lifestyle worship and have reflected upon what it means to be a faith-filled artist demonstrating lifestyle worship. See figure 13. The artist's answers reflect the significance of lifestyle worship being a part of everyday life and include elements such as prayer, faith, personal study, godly relationship, church attendance, congregation, Scripture, Bible reading, being a bearer of Christ, and living a holy life. Two artists have used the word *constant* in their definitions.[75] There is an awareness of unceasing praise and worship in every detail of life and in every season of life. The artists' use of the word *mundane*[76] reflects a willful decision to worship God even when human feelings contradict this expression of worship. Artist A/F adds, "Making decisions in your everyday life that uphold a Godly relationship."[77] Artist Classical Crossover suggests being "solely devoted to serving

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[74] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[75] Artists SG1 and P&W, Question 6 in the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[76] Artist Contemporary & Artist Classical Crossover, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[77] Artist A/F, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Christ in both the mundane and exciting things of life."[78] Artist S/S suggests it is "worship throughout their day, or week, and not just in corporate times of worship within a congregation."[79] The emphasis on worship outside of the corporate experience points to worship beyond the concert experience for both the artist and the audience. Worship is not an event but rather a practice or way of life. Artist P&W writes, "Being in a constant awareness and worship of the Lord."[80]

Lifestyle worship includes the moral responsibility of integrity to be a certain way on a daily basis, in an honest and transparent relationship with the Lord. As a key component of lifestyle worship and authenticity, Question 11 asks the artists to describe characteristics of an artist they feel functions with integrity. Their responses have been recorded in figure 9.

Integrity and humility have been more common among the artist participants' descriptions when thinking of an artist who functions with integrity. In viewing integrity synonymously with authenticity, these terms have supported other recurring themes related to artist authenticity, including discipline, humility, kindness, and character. This plethora of responses may suggest that a specific qualification, such as authenticity, falls short in assessing the character of an artist. Humility and integrity are key components in the minds of artists describing other artists they admire.

There is also an appreciation for "discipline, focus, and balance," according to Artist SG2.[81] Titus 1:8 provides these very qualifications, which are necessary for the life of a public

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[78] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[79] Artist S/S, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[80] Artist P&W, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[81] Artist SG2, Question 11 in the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

figure who maintains a public ministry over God's people, saying, "Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined." These characteristics suggest a grounding of the artist as an individual with the ability to exercise self-control as described in 1 Corinthians 9:25, "Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable," and 1 Thessalonians 5:6, "So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober." Self-control demonstrates a certain depth of character. Being awake and sober reflects the focus of a mature believer. Balance is essential in the life of the Christian artist. This need for balance includes personal life, personal walk with the Lord, family, public ministry, public work, and artistry. If these are not properly balanced, all other elements in the life of the artist teeter on a fine line and are often impossible to sustain. The ability to prioritize is essential in the life of the Christian artist to maintain a sense of balance so admired by fellow artists.

Interestingly, Artist Contemporary includes being "active in church" and being "surrounded by people [who] hold them accountable" as characteristics of an artist who functions with integrity.[82] This idea of Christian community seems to encourage balance in the life of the Christian artist. The artist is grounded in a faith-based community that encourages authenticity, humility, grace, and genuine friendship, as well as responsibility, accountability, and integrity. The Christian community shares a concern for the individual as a person more than as a public artist. The relational community provided by the local church and accountability partners helps the artist find balance, focus, and discipline as a contributing member of a faith-filled community that is greater than the sum of its parts. This community promotes humility in the life of the artist as well as self-control, hospitality, and discipline as a member of the faith

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[82] Artist Contemporary, Question 11 in the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

community. Public ministry is best supported by a local community of faith-filled believers willing to love the public figure as an individual first and as a public figure second. This type of relationship promotes integrity, humility, and authenticity in the life of the Christian artist.

Authenticity

The artists were asked to respond to the following statements in Question 8, "This artist is the same on the stage and off the stage," "This artist is the real deal." The researcher interprets that these statements are an attempt by the audience to label an artist as authentic. The artists' responses have revealed that these statements may attempt to communicate something that is impossible for someone else to fully assess in the life of the artist.

Artist SG1 begins with, "The fan perceives…." This artist has suggested that the audience is basing these statements on perception rather than reality. Artist SG1 continues, "HOWEVER, this has no bearing upon the artist's ACTUAL authenticity. I have had that statement made about me by people who had literally met me right before I went on stage. They had no way of knowing what I was like at home, but they perceived me to be a nice person (emphasis original)."[83] Artist SG1 emphasizes perception again in explaining that the people who made these comments about this artist had only just met the artist. According to this experience, the characteristic of being a nice person seems to equate to authenticity in the minds of the audience.

Artist SG2 uses a similar phrase, "on the surface," which may reflect perception more than reality. According to Artist SG2, these statements "suggest that the artist is above reproach and lives a lifestyle reflective of the purity found in the lyrics of the songs they perform."[84] The

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[83] Artist SG1, Question 8 in the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[84] Artist SG2, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

lifestyle of the artist is expected to look a certain way based on the lyrical content of the songs of the artist. Artist SG3 writes in a similar interpretation, "The artist lives what he/she sings."[85] These phrases are intended to reflect upon the lifestyle of the artist when, in reality, they are only able to speak to the perception of the lifestyle of the artist.

Artist Contemporary suggests these comments are "naïve statements." This artist expounds:

> We absolutely try our best to be real on stage and many nights this is true, and I will say that I have met some of my hero's in Christian music and felt that they were the real deal but real is so much deeper than that. Real is how they respond when they are treated poorly or just in everyday life. How would an audience member truly know if they are the same person on and off the stage? It's impossible.[86]

Describing these comments as naïve statements is like Artist SG1's awareness of the "wolves in sheep's clothing" in that both artists sense it is virtually impossible to discern the actual authenticity of an artist. Artist SG1 recommends that "spiritual discernment" is the only way to know if an artist is authentic, but Artist Contemporary writes that it is "impossible." Artist Contemporary alludes to a possible disillusionment in meeting a Christian music hero by suggesting that "real is so much deeper than that."[87] The artist explains, "Real is how they respond when they are treated poorly or just in everyday life."[88] Many Genres also writes, "In other words, probably what happens at McDonalds after the concert is more important than on stage during the concert."[89] These artists reflect upon the difference between perception and

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[85] Artist SG3, Question 6 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[86] Artist Contemporary, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[87] Artist Contemporary, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[88] Artist Contemporary, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[89] Artist Many Genres, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

reality and determine it is impossible without spiritual discernment for an audience member to know if an artist is the same person on and off the stage.

Artist S/S suggests these statements are more about the *personality* of the artist being "essentially the same whether they are on the platform or off of it."[90] The artist adds, "In the context of a Christian artist, it further means that the artist's spiritual sincerity is the same on and off." "Spiritual sincerity" seems to mean a sense of spiritual integrity where the artist worships in the same way on and off the platform. The consistency of the artist's personality on and off the platform, as well as their spiritual sincerity on and off the platform together, governs the audience's perception of the integrity and authenticity of the artist. Artist A/F emphasizes the significance of what these two statements suggest in writing, "Most important comment I could hear!!"[91]

The artists were asked if authenticity is a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist in Question 9. Three artists resoundingly state, "Yes,"[92] while three artists surmise, "It should."[93] Artist Contemporary refers to the necessity of authenticity in order to connect with the audience on a "heart and mind level." Artist P&W contends, "Absolutely. Otherwise, just be an artist and quit using the term Christian if Christ is not at the center of the ministry he has entrusted you with."[94] In this regard, authenticity is equated with Christ being at the center of the

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[90] Artist S/S, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[91] Artist A/F, Question 8 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[92] Artists SG3, Contemporary, and Classical Crossover, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[93] Artists SG1, SG2, and A/F, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[94] Artist P&W, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

artist's ministry. Therefore, a Christian artist must be authentic. An inauthentic Christian artist should consider removing the *Christian* identifier to eliminate an affiliation with Christ.

To be deliberately inauthentic, according to Artist Classical Crossover, is to have "lied to the audience and told them that we are someone we actually are not." This artist also points to the idea that inauthenticity is taking the name of God in vain and writes, "According to the second commandment, 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Exodus 20:7),' if we are confessing the Lord Jesus Christ on stage, but don't live a life worthy of Him or in accordance to His Word off of stage, we have broken that command."[95]

Artist S/S writes, "Just like in all art forms, I believe the art will have the most impact when the artist fully believes what they are communicating. So, authenticity might not be 'necessary' for an artist to be effective at some level, but that effectiveness is certainly enhanced when that authenticity is present."[96] According to Artist S/S, the effectiveness of communication is thought to be enhanced when the artist believes what they are communicating. However, authenticity is not completely necessary for communication to be effective.

Effectiveness of communication is believed to improve when the artist experiences a connection between what they believe and what they sing. This connection remains central to authenticity. While most artists in the survey have suggested that authenticity is a necessary part of the Christian artist's life, they were asked in Question 10 if authenticity is being pursued by most artists. The artists have examined the practices and lifestyle patterns of fellow artists based on personal observations and experience.

Artist SG1 begins by observing others and then turns the reflection upon self:

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[95] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[96] Artist S/S, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

> There are some who live their lives this way, and other(s) who try very hard to maintain the appearance of authenticity, as it's better for a Christian personality. I have lived as one of the latter for many years. I was afraid to share my true self with people, and ran from vulnerability. The last few years have been a gradual discovery of the freedom that comes in not trying, but just being.[97]

This artist acknowledges the appearance of authenticity as trying to be something one is not to meet the expectation of what others believe a Christian personality should be. This artist also responds, "I would not describe authenticity as a pursuit, but rather, as a way of being. You don't try to be authentic. Such is not truly authentic. You just…are what you are."[98] Artist SG1 highlights the difference between being authentic versus trying to appear authentic and suggests the use of the word *pursuit* in the question is more of a reflection of perception rather than genuine authenticity.

Artist SG2 claims, "In my experience I would say most artists are trying to live for Christ."[99] Artist Many Genres writes, "My personal experience (which is quite broad across many genres on Christian music), the people I interact with and travel with an[d] perform with are the real deal. That's why we travel with them."[100] This artist uses the phrase, "the real deal," to describe what is believed to be an authentic artist. Artist A/F writes, "[I'd] say in most artists yes."[101] Artist S/S suggests, "In my limited personal exposure to Christian artists, I would say that authenticity is being pursued by them."[102]

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[97] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[98] Artist SG1, Question 10 pf the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[99] Artist SG2, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[100] Artist Many Genres, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[101] Artist A/F, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[102] Artist S/S, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist Classical Crossover examined the industry as a whole and states, "I believe the Christian music industry has a mixture of those who are authentic, and those who are not."[103] Artist SG3 acknowledges, "I think a lot of artists are caught up in the past. Wanting to be like artist[s] from yesteryear,"[104] where Artist P&W simply concludes, "Sadly no."[105] Artist Contemporary surmises, "That's hard to say. In my opinion I believe artist[s] would say they are authentic because everyone wants to believe that component is there, but in reality their personal lives are a mess."[106]

Artist SG2 explains, "Most artist[s] start out with pure motives but end up distracted and lose focus because of the relentless demands of touring, recording, business, and family demands."[107] Many of the artists have provided insightful suggestions of the various distractions which may cause the artist to struggle with authenticity. Artist SG3 felt that artists struggle with being true to themselves because they are stuck in the past. Artist Classical Crossover observes, "The fame, fortune, and media can have such a powerful effect on an artist's humility and devotion to Christ."[108] This artist continues to point out the "temptation of pride" as well as the "pressures of fame and applause" and suggests that fame and applause are "such powerful and dangerous giants, that only the Lord can help us conquer."[109]

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[103] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[104] Artist SG3, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[105] Artist P&W, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[106] Artist Contemporary, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[107] Artist SG2, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[108] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[109] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist P&W observes that most artists are *progressive* in their way of thinking and states, "If they could really speak from their heart, I am afraid we would be very disappointed."[110] This idea of *persona* and perception are key to Artist P&W's reflection, "I think they say what they think everyone wants to hear. I also think they keep to themselves the things they know are not accepted in the conservative circles of Christianity for fear that their songs won't get played on the radio. Or maybe for fear that someone won't book them." Artist SG1 comments on this type of fear, "Not being one's true self is rooted in fear: fear of rejection if we do not live up to people's expectations, fear of what may happen to our careers if people suddenly decide they don't 'like us' for some arbitrary reason."[111] This artist goes as far as to claim, "Those who are not authentic…have not truly begun a relationship with Christ at all, and there are MANY of those in the Christian music world (emphasis original)."[112]

Artist S/S warns, "I believe it becomes evident when those things are missing in an artist's life when something happens to disqualify them, even if just for a time, from continuing to share their art." A lack of authenticity hinders the Christian artist to the point of disqualification when the inauthenticity becomes evident to the public. This may be a moral failure of infidelity, public misconduct, misappropriation of funds, deliberate disobedience to God, or willful sin-filled lifestyle patterns and habits. While these life-altering events might disqualify the artist, if only for a season, Artist S/S writes, "I believe restoration is almost always possible, but when an artist's life and art do not match, [there] will eventually be a breakage in [their] life that usually requires that they stop sharing their art for a season."[113] This season of

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[110] Artist P&W, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[111] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[112] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[113] Artist S/S, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

silence from sharing one's gifting may be short-term or long-term and may result in the loss of audience support, a reduced platform, or minimal ministry opportunities using the arts. There is much at stake, including musical career, personal integrity, ministry influence, and kingdom advancement.

While many things may work to distract the artist from authenticity, the artist participants have recommended a few practices to support and encourage genuine authenticity. Artist A/F includes, "Prayer, fasting, church attendance, kindness, generosity."[114] The practice of spiritual disciplines appears to be key to this artist's understanding of authenticity. Artist Contemporary writes, "The key is: Being involved in the Body of Christ. A present church member who uses their gifts in the church. Also, a consistent devotional life. Spending time in the word, being involved in Bible study or small groups. Also, having people in your life that hold you accountable, not 'yes' people. But people that call you out on things."[115] For this artist, being involved in Bible study, small groups, and the body of Christ support authenticity in the life of the artist. Community is key to authenticity. This artist also points to a consistent devotional life. Consistency supports authenticity, as does a personal devotional life. The artist suggests community to hold one accountable to a consistent devotional life that supports authenticity as opposed to being surrounded by a community of individuals who are "yes" people. The type of community surrounding the artist is significant in shaping the artist's ability to be genuinely authentic.

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[114] Artist A/F, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[115] Artist Contemporary, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist SG3 speaks of identity, which is often informed by community, "Each artist has a specific calling on their life. Be who God made you."[116] Authentic community permits the artist to have an authentic walk with the Lord which encourages the artist to submit to his or her "specific calling" and to "be who God made you." Artist SG1 writes, "Those who are truly authentic almost always are grounded in strong, loving families, a solid church community and have a clear sense of self beyond their music careers or public *persona* [emphasis added]."[117] Self-identity is shaped by a loving family and a solid church community. This artist uses the word *grounded* as a qualifier for authenticity. The authentic artist is grounded in family and church community which gives the artist "a clear sense of self." From this perspective, the Christian artist realizes there is a meaningful experience outside of music careers or public *persona*. Such a realization permits the artist to walk in genuine authenticity rather than attempting to appear to be one way at one time and another way another time for the sake of public *persona*.

Question 11 was the last question utilized to specifically assess artist authenticity. It asks, "Think of an artist who you believe functions with integrity. What are the characteristics that shape your assessment of this individual?" See figure 9. Some artists have provided only a list, while others have offered an explanation of the characteristics they believe encompass the individual artist who functions with integrity. Artist S/S began by naming two individuals and explains, "These are two men who I have had the privilege to be around enough personally to vouch for their integrity. They are not perfect, and would not claim to be, but I do believe they

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[116] Artist SG3, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[117] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

live lives that match what they 'preach' on platforms."[118] The continuity of these artists on and

off the platform resonated as most important in the observations of this artist.

While neither artist has claimed to be *perfect*, the use of the word is noteworthy. The

artists have clarified that they are not perfect. Perfect is interpreted as being different than

consistency on and off the platform. Artist S/S seems to refer to the type of sinless perfection that

only Christ lived. Therefore, perfection is not the goal of artist authenticity for Artist S/S but

rather the continuity of the artists to be the same on and off the stage. The ultimate depiction of

artist authenticity is found in the ability of the artists to "live lives that match what they 'preach'

on the platforms."[119] Artist P&W concurs with this observation in referencing qualifications of

artists living with integrity as "Knowledge of the Word of God and living it out practically on

and off stage."[120] Artist authenticity is assessed through practical lifestyle on and off the stage,

with the off-stage actions being scrutinized most by fellow artists.

Artist Many Genres states similarly, "Certainly, this entails much more than their stage

life. In fact, that may be way down the list of criteria. Maybe first would be how they treat the

waitress at Waffle House and how they react when another artist 'wins' by making a moment of

impact for the night."[121] The use of the word *win* tends to point to a competitive aspect between

the artists that is concerning. Interpersonal relationships with others affect the perception of the

artists. Artist Many Genres emphasizes the interactions of the artist with others, including the

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[118] Artist S/S, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[119] Artist S/S, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[120] Artist P&W, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[121] Artist Many Genres, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

general public (Waffle House waitress), fellow artists, community, family, and interpersonal relationships with the individual artist when assessing integrity.

Artist SG1 capitalizes on this same theme in writing, "They have always been kind in every single social interaction I have observed them in. They treat those around them with respect, whether it's a promoter, pastor, fan, tech worker, or the janitor. Their families and coworkers in ministry speak highly of them."[122] These relationships appear to be significant indicators of the artist's authenticity. If these interpersonal relationships are broken or if the relational efforts of the artist fall short in expressing kindness to others, then the artist is not authentic to the gospel message being proclaimed in song.

Kindness appears to be a key component of authenticity. Artist SG2 adds "Discipline, focus, and balance" to the list of characteristics found in artists who show integrity.[123] These characteristics have previously been examined in great length. Artist SG3 and Artist A/F both include humility as a characteristic found in admired artists who are viewed as having integrity. In addition to humility, Artist A/F adds, "grace, love… not prideful or boastful."[124] There is a depth of character observed by Artist A/F, expressed in grace and love as well as humility. Artist SG3 also writes in the word *character*. Artist A/F concludes by writing this statement, "Honors God in all things."[125] This is an intentional deflection of attention and glory from the artist to God.

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[122] Artist SG1, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[123] Artist SG2, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[124] Artist A/F, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[125] Artist A/F, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Artist Classical Crossover expounds upon this idea of deflection by the artist, "They understand their depravity apart from Christ. They understand that they are in need of a Savior daily. They understand that their greatest accomplishments are still nothing in light of eternity. They understand that their greatest talents and gifts were given them by their Creator."[126] This artist focuses on the mindset and perspective of the artist being Christocentric. All of life is viewed in light of who Christ is and what He has done for depraved humanity. Gifts and talents are from Christ, the Creator. Earthly accomplishments are nothing "in light of eternity." A realization of human depravity creates a desperate need "of a Savior daily." These perspectives encourage humility and dependence upon God in the Christian artist.

Artist Contemporary focused on community as a key cultivator for integrity in the artist and writes, "Active in church, obvious time with God and surrounded by people [who] hold them accountable."[127] Community encourages consistency. Consistency remains a crucial focus of artist authenticity. Artist Many Genres suggests, "As an artist and lyricist, if my professional life and my personal life do not match, I would not write 'Christian Songs.' I would write song[s] that demand no life consistency."[128]

Song Selection

The songs are a major component of Message Transmission and are in many ways central to the identity of who the artist is. Song selection is a significant way for the artist to choose certain messages to communicate to the audience. This process is tedious and thought-provoking as it is an intentional avenue for communication. The artists have been asked two separate

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[126] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[127] Artist Contemporary, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[128] Artist Many Genres, Question 9 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

questions about song selection. One question asked the artists about song selections for recordings, and the other question asked the artist about song selections for performances. While it seems the process would be the same for both, a few of the artists have reflected a difference in the task by providing different answers to both questions.

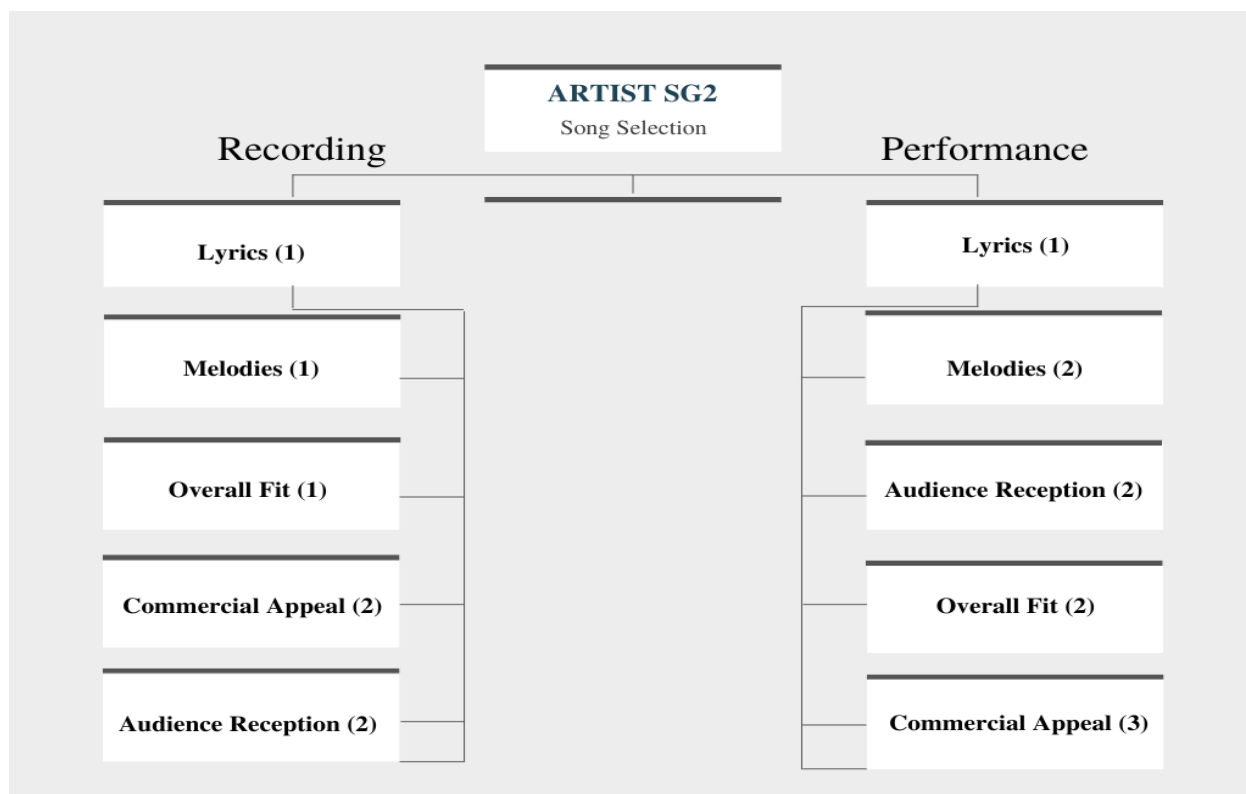Artist SG2 only utilized numbers 1-3 in the rank order scale for Question 4 and only used 1 and 2 in Question 5. The answers have been presented in figure 16.

Figure 16. Artist SG2's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

This artist equally prioritizes "Lyrics" and "Melodies" with "1's" for both processes of selecting songs for a recording and for performance. However, when selecting songs for recordings, Artist SG2 equally considers "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" with "Lyrics" and "Melodies," whereas when the artist is selecting songs for performance, a "2" is given to "Audience Reception" and "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song." While it received a lower score of "2,"

the artist gives more consideration to the "Audience Reception" when considering songs for performances. It seems the artist has an increased awareness of the presence of the audience when selecting songs for performance more than when considering songs for a recording. The artist is also more concerned with "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" when selecting songs for a recording but has less concern for "Commercial Appeal" when selecting songs for performance.

When the artist is considering songs for performance, perhaps the emphasis is more on the song as a means of communication rather than it being commercially appealing. "Commercial Appeal" has been equally considered with "Audience Reception" when Artist SG2 has contemplated songs for a recording. There appears to be less of an emphasis on the recipients of the Message Transmission through song when the artist is considering songs for recordings rather than performance. However, song selection for performance seems to bring into focus an awareness of the audience and how the song fits the artist who is communicating the message.

Artist P&W has utilized the rank order scale 1-5 in both Questions 4 and 5, and the answers to both questions are presented in figure 17.
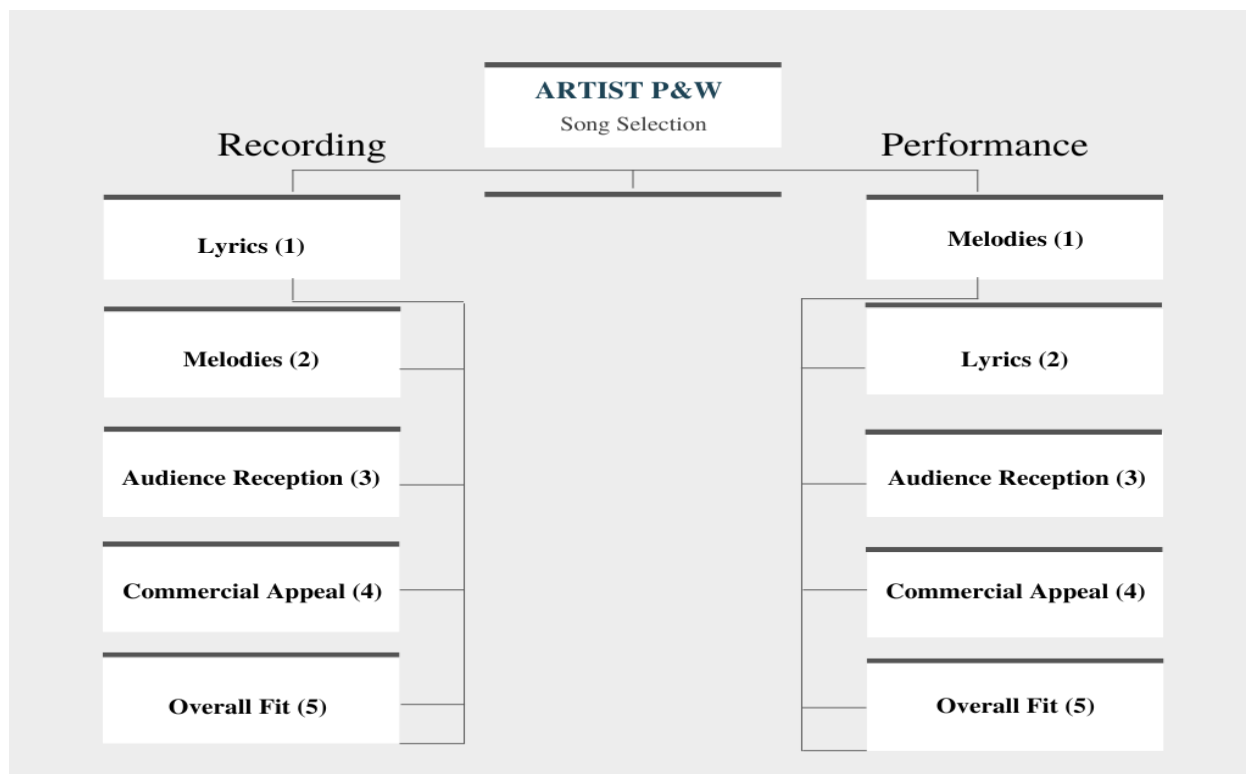
Figure 17. Artist P&W's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for recording vs. performance.

This artist emphasizes "Melodies" with a "1" when selecting songs for performance and "Lyrics" with a "1" when selecting songs for a recording. Perhaps Artist P&W utilized the songs for recording as a primary means of communication, with the emphasis placed on the "Lyrics," whereas the "Melodies" must be captivating and reflect the artistry of the artist when selecting songs for performance. Artist P&W emphasizes "Lyrics" with a "2" when selecting songs for performance and "Melodies" with a "2" when selecting songs for recording. For this artist, "Melodies" then "Lyrics" are prioritized when selecting songs for performance, while "Lyrics" then "Melodies" are prioritized when selecting songs for a recording. This appears to be an intentional differentiation for the artist in the song selection process for recordings and performances, as the final three items are ranked in the same order for both questions. "Audience Reception" is given a "3," "Commercial Appeal" is given a "4," and "Overall Impression or Fit

of the Song" is valued as least important with a "5" when selecting songs for both the recording and the performance.

Where "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" is of least importance to Artist P&W, Artist A/F ranked "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" as a "1," as being most important when selecting songs for a recording and for performance. The answers to both questions from Artist A/F are shown in figure 18.
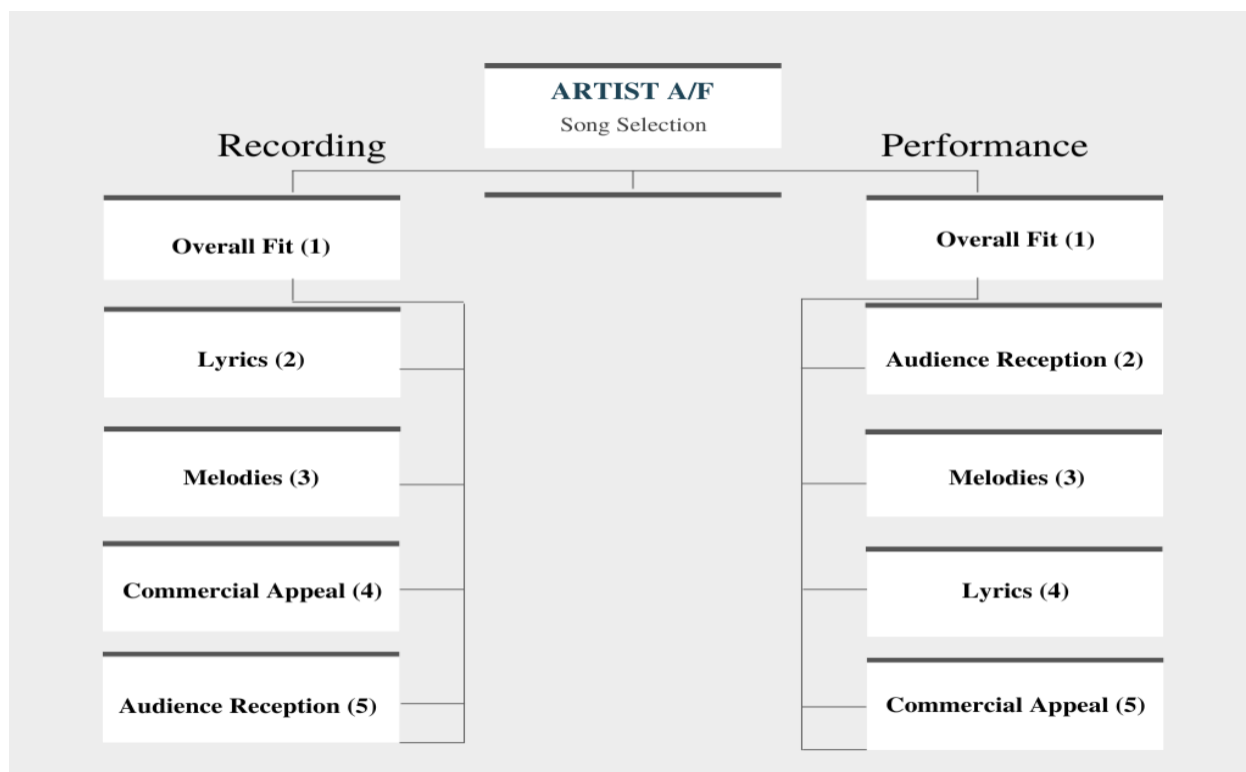

Figure 18. Artist A/F's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

Artist A/F's priority on the "Overall Fit" of the song dictates the song selection process in that if the fit is not good, the artist likely passes on the song. Artist A/F considers the impression or fit of the songs more than "Lyrics" or "Melodies." "Audience Reception" received a "2" when considering songs for performance, reflecting a strong consideration for how the audience will receive the song. However, it is ranked of least importance with a "5" when Artist A/F selects

songs for a recording. The recording process appears to have less to do with considering the audience and more to do with good "Lyrics" and "Melodies."

Interestingly, Artist A/F prioritizes "Melodies" with a "2" over "Lyrics" with a "3" when selecting songs for performance. However, the two are reversed in priority when the artist is considering songs for recordings. Artist A/F gives "Lyrics" a "2" and Melodies" a "3." This seems to be an intentional differentiation, as seen with Artist P&W. The emphasis on "Lyrics" when selecting songs for recordings seems to underscore the importance of the song as a tool of communication. The importance of "Melodies" when selecting songs for performance reflects upon the musicality and artistry of both Artist P&W and Artist A/F. Artist A/F is more concerned with "Commercial Appeal" when selecting songs for recording, ranking it as a "4," than when selecting songs for performance, ranking it as a "5." "Commercial Appeal" is still ranked as being of least importance when Artist A/F is considering the other items in the rank scale. As an artistic individual, Artist A/F is looking for an "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" when contemplating songs for performance and recording. In stark contrast, Artist SG1 completely values "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" with much less regard.

Artist SG1 has utilized 1-5 in the rank order scale and has selected the same order for both of the processes of song selection for a recording and for performances shown in figure 19.
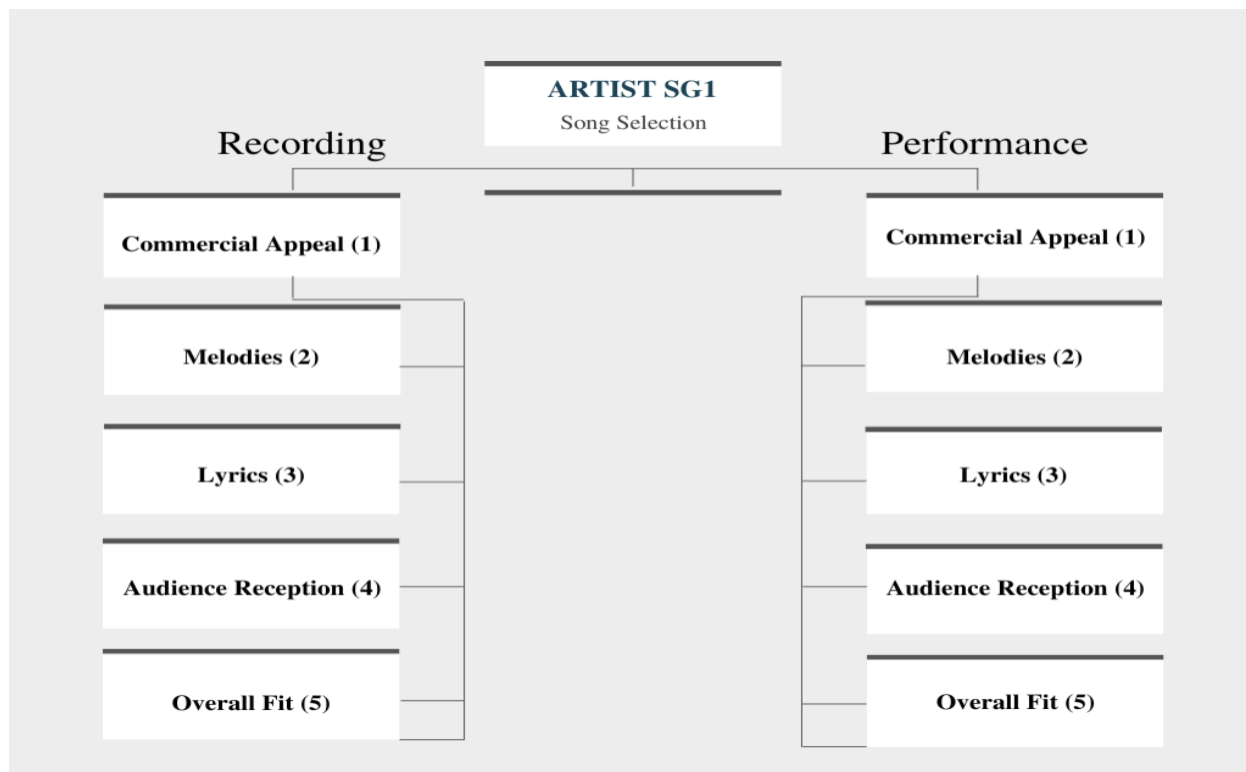
Figure 19. Artist SG1's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

Of least importance to Artist SG1 is "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" with a "5." The next of least importance is "Audience Reception." Artist SG1 does not prioritize "Audience Reception" when contemplating songs for recording or performance. "Lyrics" is ranked with a "3," and "Melodies" is given a "2." Unlike Artist P&W and Artist A/F, Artist SG1 does not differentiate the process of song selection for performance versus recording when considering "Lyrics" and "Melodies." This artist prioritizes the melody of the song over the lyrics. If a song does not have a good hook or melody, the artist is less likely to select a song, even if it has good lyrics. Strong lyrics that are not supported by a catchy melody may result in Artist SG1 bypassing the song during the song selection process. Of most importance to Artist SG1 is "Commercial Appeal."

Where "Commercial Appeal" is not a priority to Artist SG2, it is the most important consideration for Artist SG1 when selecting songs for both performance and for recording. This

may reflect success in a musical industry with frequent radio airplay because the songs selected by Artist SG1 have been commercially appealing. Artist SG1 may feel that if a song is lacking in commercial appeal, it is likely lacking good lyrics and a catchy melody as well. Artist SG1 is the only artist to prioritize "Commercial Appeal" for either song selection process.

Artist SG3 has only utilized the numbers 1-3 when completing the rank order scale for both questions, as shown in figure 20.
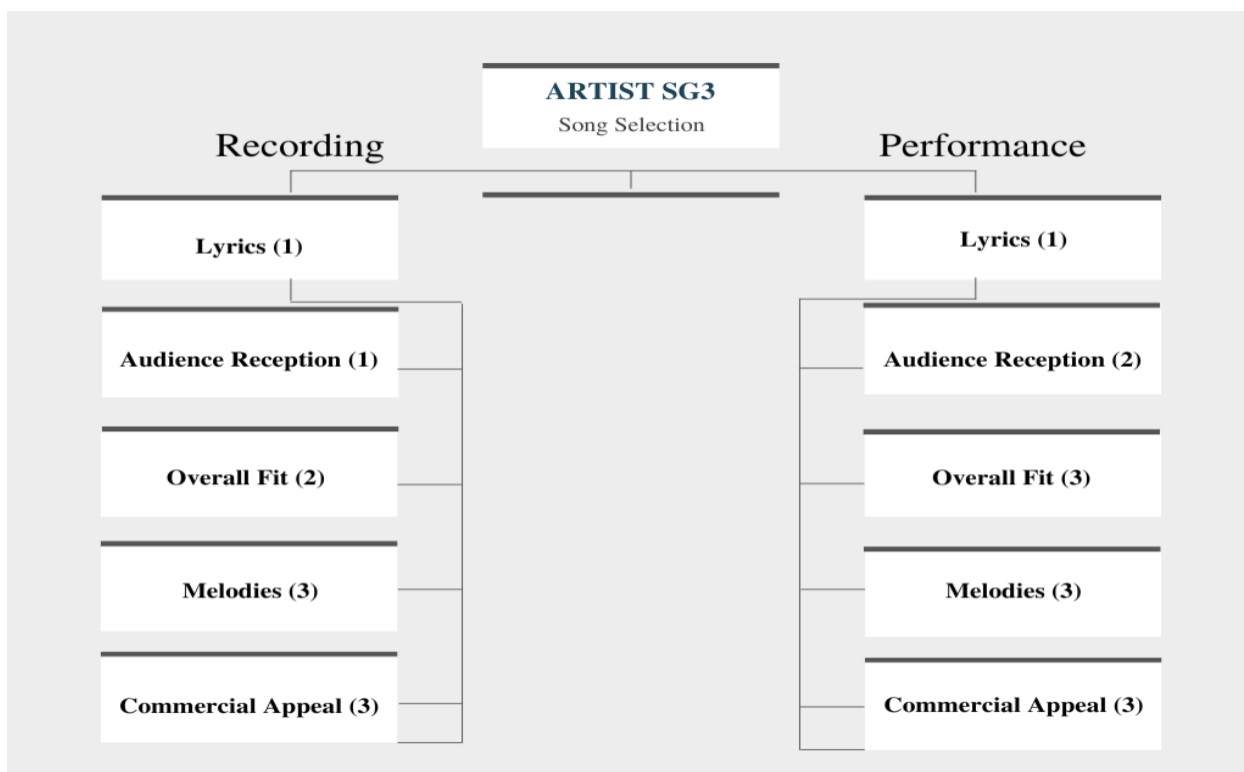

Figure 20. Artist SG3's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

Where "Commercial Appeal" is prioritized by Artist SG1, Artist SG3 gives it a "3" in both the song selection process for recording and performance. For Artist SG3, "Lyrics" is ranked of most importance with a "1" when selecting songs for performance and is tied with a rank of "1" with "Audience Reception" when selecting songs for recording. Lyrics are the primary verbal source of communication and message transmission. While the message must be delivered by a messenger, the message itself in the lyric remains the central component of

message transmission. This may be why "Lyrics" is considered of utmost importance by Artist SG3 when selecting songs for recording and performing. If the song lyrics fail to communicate effectively, Artist SG3 will likely choose not to record the song or select it for performance.

"Audience Reception" is given a "2" when considering songs for performance, whereas it is given a "1" when selecting songs for the recording. Artist SG3 seems to place more importance on how the audience receives a song when selecting songs for a recording than when selecting songs for a performance. "Lyrics" and "Audience Reception" equally dictate which songs are selected for recordings. However, "Lyrics" primarily dictate the process when selecting songs for performance, followed by, and not equal to, a concern for "Audience Reception." The artist is concerned about how the audience will receive the song primarily in the recording process rather than in the performance arena. It leaves one to surmise a certain confidence within the artist that a song will be received better in a live performance with the artist, whereas a recording of a song needs to have a certain appeal to the listener. It is as if this subtle differentiation completely drives the song selection process for Artist SG3. "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" is ranked with a "2" in both processes. "Melodies" and "Commercial Appeal" are both ranked with a "3" in the process of song selection for recordings and for performances.

Artist Contemporary has utilized 1-5 in the rank order scale and has ranked the items the same for both the song selection process for recording and the song selection process for the performance shown in figure 21.
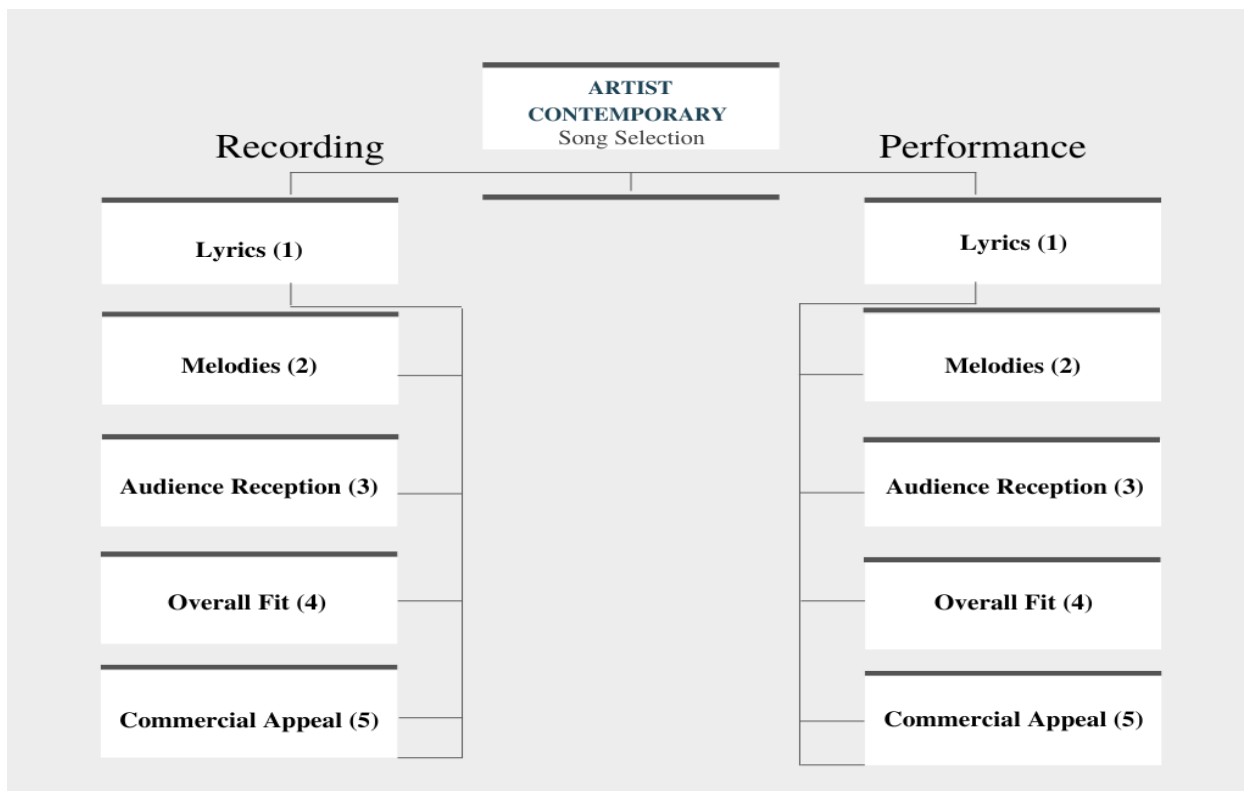
Figure 21. Artist Contemporary's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

Like Artists SG2 and SG3, Artist Contemporary ranks "Lyrics" with a "1" as the most important element for consideration when selecting songs to record and perform. The second rank is "Melodies," with the third being "Audience Reception." Artist Contemporary then emphasizes "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song" with a "4" over "Commercial Appeal," which is given a "5." "Commercial Appeal" is considered with least importance of the five items, which is interesting as the Contemporary genre often reflects the commercial musical sounds of popular secular music. The term *Contemporary* suggests modern and new, which could be considered equivalent to *commercial*. Perhaps Artist Contemporary no longer functions in the Contemporary music industry or has been so successful in the industry that time and experience have permitted the artist freedom not to be held to the constraints of the industry expectations regarding "Commercial Appeal." However, it is a noteworthy observation that

Artist Contemporary prioritizes all elements in the rank scale as more important than

"Commercial Appeal."

Artist Classical Crossover gives a rank order of "1" to every item when selecting songs

for performance. However, the artist has used the numbers 1-3 to rank order the items when

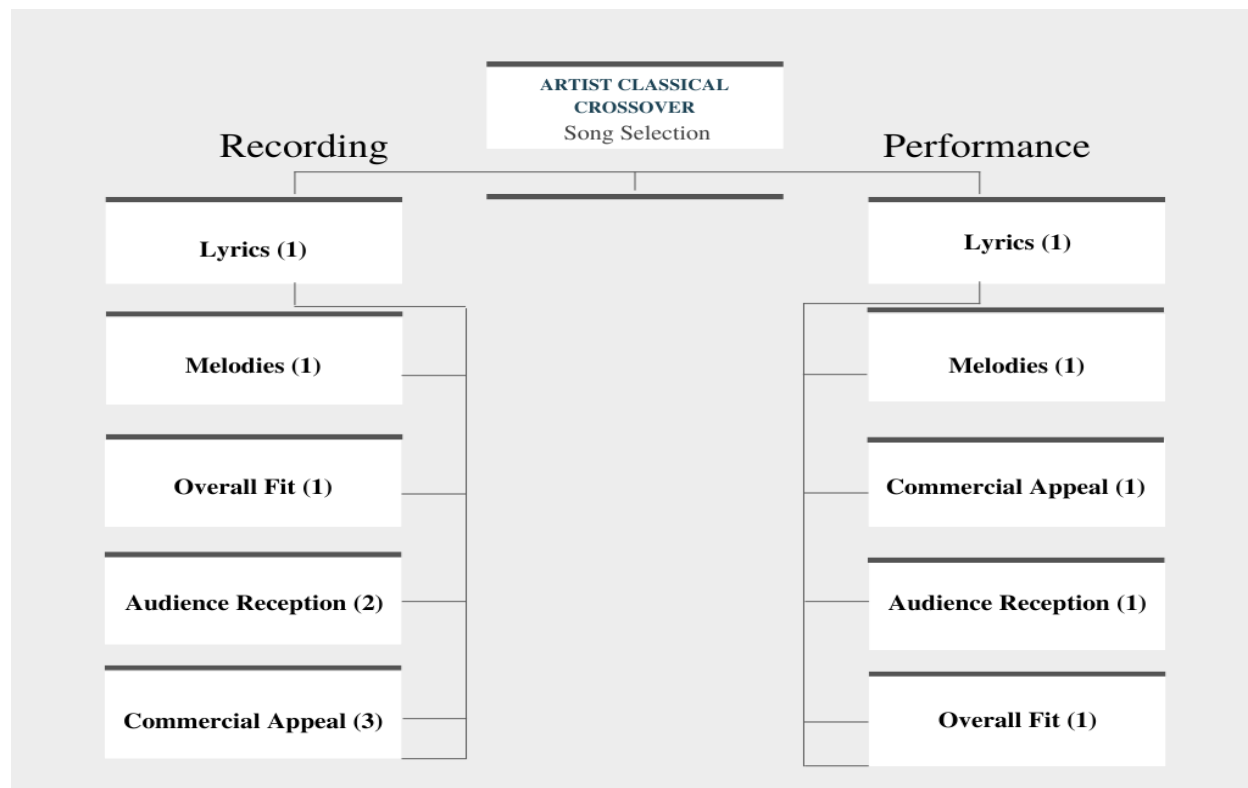selecting songs to record shown in figure 22.

Figure 22. Artist Classical Crossover's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

Apparently, the artist is attempting to communicate that all these items are considered equally

when selecting songs for the performance. This suggests the artist is equally aware of the

significance of "Lyrics," "Melodies," Commercial Appeal," "Audience Reception," and "Overall

Impression or Fit of the Song." The artist does differentiate in the items when selecting songs for

recording. "Lyrics," "Melodies," and "Overall Impression" are ranked with a "1," showing these

three items are considered as most important by Artist Classical Crossover when selecting songs

for a recording. "Audience Reception" is given a "2" but follows three "1's." Therefore, while there is an awareness of "Audience Reception," it is considered less than "Lyrics," "Melodies," and "Overall Impression." "Commercial Appeal" is ranked with a "3" and is the last number utilized in this assessment. Artist Classical Crossover suggests that of least significance when selecting songs for a recording is "Commercial Appeal." While "Commercial Appeal" is given a "1" with every other item when selecting songs for performance, it is distinctively ranked as less important by Artist Classical Crossover when selecting songs for a recording.

Artist Many Genres has utilized numbers 1-3 in the rank order scale and has given the same rank order value to each item in both questions shown in figure 23.
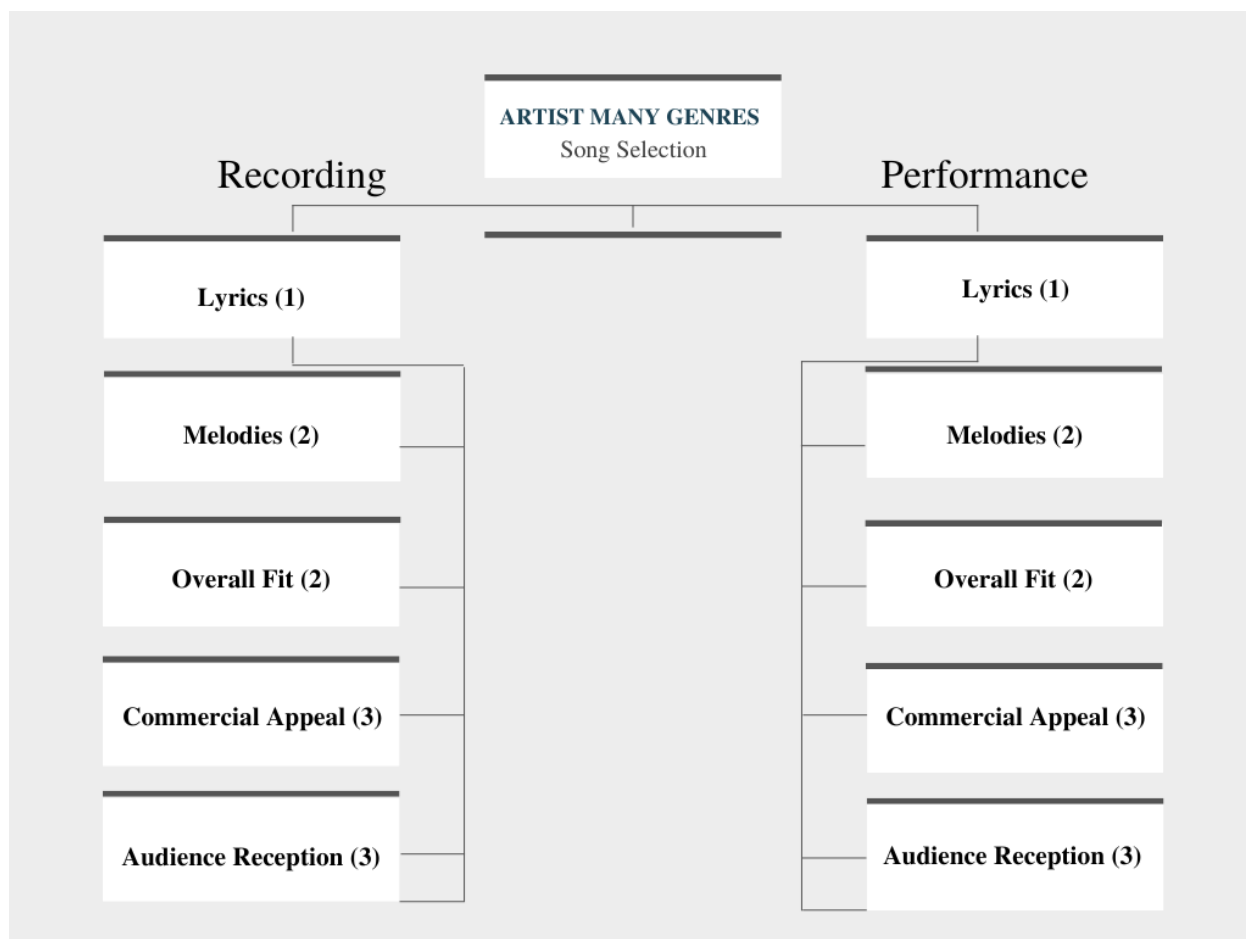
Figure 23. Artist Many Genres' answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

This artist prioritizes "Lyrics" with a "1" in both the song selection process for performance and recording. "Melodies" is ranked with a "2," tied with "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song," which is also ranked as a "2." "Commercial Appeal" and "Audience Reception" have both been ranked with a "3." It seems Artist Many Genres is concerned less with "Commercial Appeal" and "Audience Reception" when determining which songs to record and perform. The priority of the song selection process is placed on the song itself, including the "Lyrics," "Melodies," and "Overall Impression or Fit of the Song." That the artist does not differentiate between the two processes suggests that regardless of why the song is being selected, the song itself remains the priority more than the listener of the song.

Artist S/S also gives the same rank order for both questions and places an emphasis on "Lyrics" ranked with a "1" in both processes shown in figure 24.
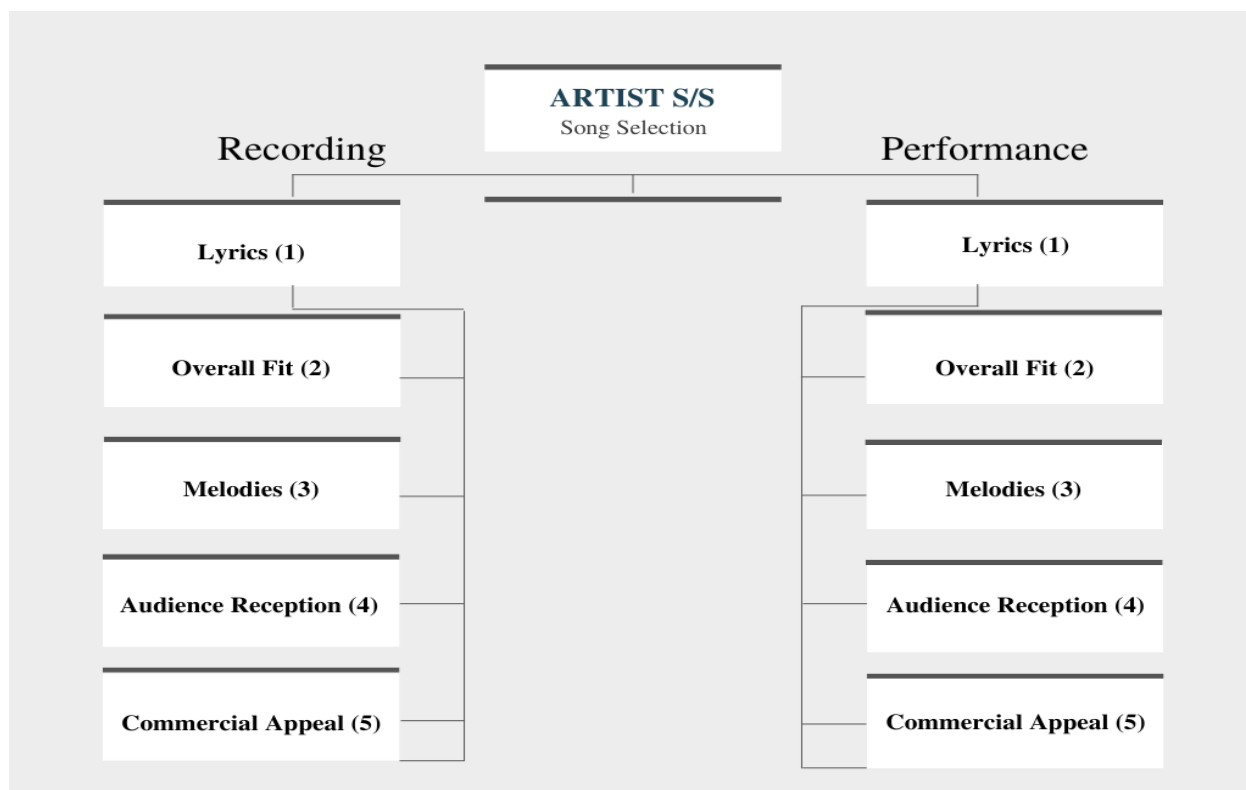

Figure 24. Artist S/S's answers to Questions 4 and 5 when selecting songs for a recording vs. performance.

It is not surprising that Artist S/S values lyrics. As a songwriter, the lyrics are central to the art of songwriting. Interestingly, Artist S/S next lists "Overall Impression or Fit of the song" with a "2" in both processes of song selection for performance and recording. The researcher is surprised that "Melodies" would not be prioritized after "Lyrics" for the Songwriting artist. However, it is important to note that the artist looks for the fit of the song to the artist, the audience, the record, and the live concert. This points to the artistry of Artist S/S, who, more than catchy hooks or melodies, uses the tool of song selection to communicate lyrically. Artist S/S ranks "Melodies" with a "3," suggesting it is of mid-importance when contemplating songs for recording and

performance. Following "Melodies" is "Audience Reception" with a "4." Of even less value to Artist S/S when considering song selections for performance and recordings is "Commercial Appeal." The songwriter is most concerned with "Lyrics" and least concerned with "Commercial Appeal" in both processes.

Audience: Songs and Artists

While the artists have provided insightful details about the song selection process, the audience has also been asked to reflect upon song selection and the artist. Question 20 in the audience survey asks, "Do the songs 'make' the artist, or does the artist 'make' the songs? Explain." The premise of this question is to evaluate the correspondence between the message (the song) and the messenger (the artist) from the perspective of the audience (the message recipient). The data from this question is shown in figure 25.
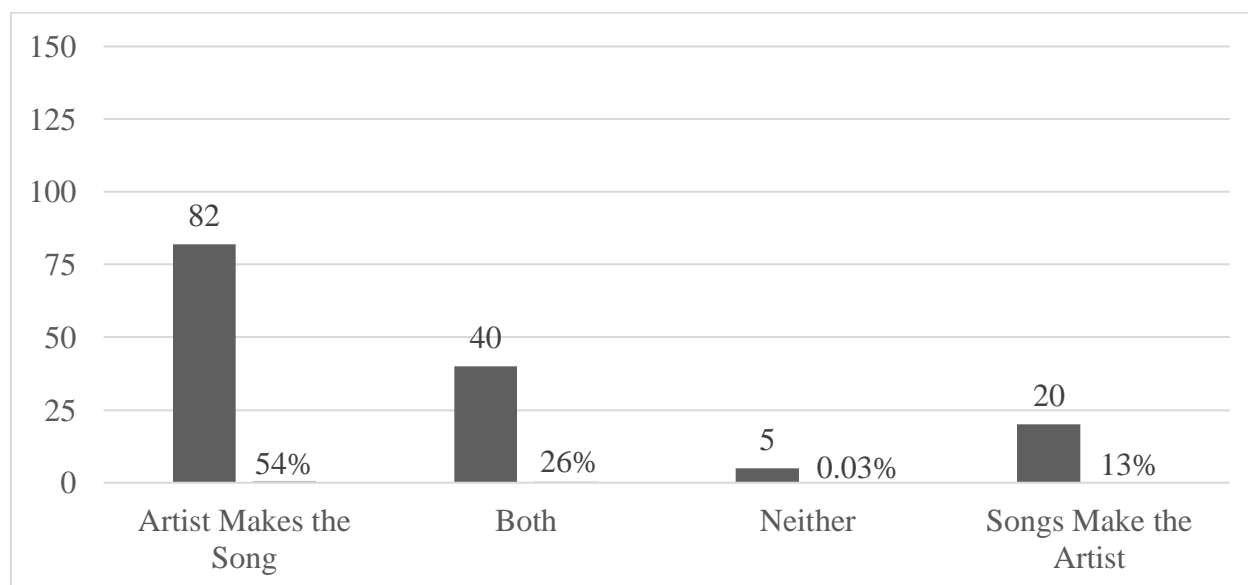

Figure 25. Audience answers to Question 20 of the Audience Survey.

While this question has been included in the quantitative survey, it lends itself to being coded qualitatively to better understand the perspectives of the audience participants' interpretation of the connection between the artist and the song. Of the 151 responses, 82 (54%)

of the participants have suggested the artist makes the song. There are 20 participants (13%) who said the songs make the artist. A total of 40 participants (26%) used the word *both* in their answers. Five individuals (.03%) have responded with neither, and one participant (.007%) has said they have no opinion. The answers provided by three survey participants are unclear to interpret and have not been included in the data above.

Audience: The Artists Make the Songs

Most audience participants believe the artists make the songs. This places the emphasis on the artist as the communicator and suggests that if a song is a hit, it is because of the artist who delivered, recorded, and/or performed the song. Songs, therefore, do not make the artist but are rather reflections of who the artist is. As one audience participant states, "They [the songs] are an extension of their [the artist] feelings and beliefs."[129] Another suggests, "Yes, because it reflects what's in their heart."[130] It is believed by one survey participant that "The song must have meaning to the Artist."[131] Another similarly explains, "They communicate what the song means to them in the way they present it."[132]

There seems to be a certain expectation for the song to reflect who the artist is. One participant even states, "They make the songs. If they are not genuine the song loses its impact."[133] The value of the song is directly linked to the audience's perception of who the artist is. There is a certain expectation for the artist by one survey participant who states, "The artist

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[129] Audience participant answer 3, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[130] Audience participant answer 138, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[131] Audience participant answer 41, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[132] Audience participant answer 20, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[133] Audience participant answer 120, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

makes the song. By putting their heart into the song, having lived the song or experienced what

is being sung."[134] To this survey participant, the songs are viewed as an extension of the lived

experiences of the artists. Another survey participant explains, "The artist conveys thru

music/songs their beliefs."[135]

Another participant expounded upon the necessity of artist authenticity when the artist is

believed to make the song. This participant explains, "Because when you see that they are living

what they sing about, it makes it truly mean something. It becomes more than just words."[136] The

message of the song is depicted as "just words," which requires an authentic artist to make the

words "truly mean something." The message of the song must appear to be believed by the artist

in order for the artist to "own the song." This process of the artist owning the song is essential in

Message Transmission.

One survey participant explains in further detail the objectivity of lyrics and the

subjectivity of the artist:

> Lyrics and music are objective–they exist. However, the subjective element is what the
> artist brings to the song. What phrasing and emphasis is used on which words? How does
> the artist "arc" the song. A secular example–Madonna singing "Don't Cry for Me
> Argentina" in the film version of "Evita." Comparing that with Patti Lupone singing it.
> There is no comparison. Madonna is playing a part; Lupone has become Evita.[137]

This participant seems to point to the difference between inauthenticity in using "playing a part"

and authenticity by using, "becoming." Even secular performances leave this survey participant

aware of the significant contrast between two unique interpretations of the same song. It also

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[134] Audience participant answer 72, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[135] Audience participant answer 60, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[136] Audience participant answer 47, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[137] Audience participant answer 80, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

brings to light the importance for the artist to have an artistic connection to the message of the song. Anything less leaves the audience aware of a disconnect. Another survey participant provides a similar example:

> The song "Heartbeat" recorded by Freedom Voice is sterile and disconnected, but a live recording of Randy Shafer (sincere) singing it is connected, piercing and powerful. If the sing[er] isn't purposefully emoting the meaning of each word/phrase of the song, then just put your dime in the jukebox. Each note doesn't have to be perfectly placed, but each message needs placed perfectly.[138]

This participant places more emphasis on the way the artist conveys the message in the song and expects it to be "connecting, piercing and powerful." It is interesting that this audience member admits that "Each note doesn't have to be perfectly placed." There is no expectation of musical perfection. However, there is an expectation for the message to be placed perfectly. The comparison is largely between musicality and message, which the artist is responsible for both. Yet this participant clearly looks at the artist as more of a communicator of the message than a performer of the song.

It is believed by another survey participant that "How the artist presents the message reflects the message of the song."[139] This participant has emphasized the use of the word *how*. This short statement reflects a concern for the way the message is presented by the artist and demonstrates the belief that the presentation of the song affects the message of the song. Artistic interpretation includes musicality, lyrical interpretation, and physical gestures that are used during the presentation of the song. Feelings, impressions, and memories also contribute to artistic interpretation. In return, these components directly influence the audience as they interpret how the artist presents the message. Therefore, if the presentation is passionate, the

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[138] Audience participant answer 61, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[139] Audience participant answer 62, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

message is received as passionate, but if the presentation is disconnected, the message is received as disconnected.

Another survey participant referred to passion in explaining, "The passion that the artist displays/portrays makes the song."[140] The song, in many ways, is dependent upon the artist messenger who is often viewed by the audience with importance as the carrier or transporter of the message in the song. Another survey participant seems to confirm this principle by deducing, "The meaning of a lyric can and should stand on its own, however the artist is the primary communicator of [the] lyrics. If the audience does not believe the artist they will not believe the song."[141]

As the primary communicator, the artist is responsible for the delivery of the message of the song. If there is a disconnect between the artist and the message, this may be evident to the audience and result in the audience dismissing, discrediting, or disbelieving the message in the song. This realization is especially critical when the message of the song is the message of the gospel. Christian artists bear a significant responsibility as communicators of the message of the gospel through song. This survey participant summates, "If I know an artist is participating in behavior that does not follow Christian principles, then the words he/she sings have no basis or credibility."[142]

Audience: The Songs Make the Artists

There are 21 people in this survey who believe the songs make the artists. One survey participant writes, "The song has to have a good melody and be musically pleasant. No matter

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[140] Audience participant answer 65, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[141] Audience participant answer 75, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[142] Audience participant answer 53, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

how nice the artist is, if the music doesn't work, the niceness doesn't help."[143] This participant

places more emphasis on the songs than on the artist who is communicating the message of the

song. This participant refers to an artist being nice and suggests that if a song does not work, the

"niceness" of the artist does not matter. Another participant explains further, "Words of song are

super important to me, even more than [the] artist's ability to sing well."[144] This audience

member views the artist primarily as an artist with a focus on the artist's ability to sing well

rather than as a communicator of the gospel message through song.

One survey participant expounds, "The songs make the artist because I've got huge

collections of songs I like, [whose] names I couldn't even tell you sings it. The message of the

song, the instruments, rhythms, and tempos all play a huge part in whether the song is good. I

really don't care about the artist's name."[145] To this listener, there are no connections being made

with the artists but rather only with the songs themselves. Another participant explained a

personal belief that songs make the artist because "Plenty of poor talents have gotten over with

great material."[146] While this participant believes songs make the artists, it is an observation that

has been made in a negative light. This mentality suggests a distaste for artists who make it on

great songs rather than talent and ability and is especially condemning in Christian music. There

is something to be said about the merit of an artist bringing authentic talent to the table rather

than only an ability to commercially sell great material.

Again, there is an observed expectation that the songs are simply extensions of who the

artist is as a person. One participant explains, "I feel the songs make the artist in [that] they

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[143] Audience participant answer 133, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[144] Audience participant answer 119, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[145] Audience participant answer 12, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[146] Audience participant answer 28, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

reflect the true heart of the artist."[147] Another states, "The songs make the artist because the songs they are singing should be a reflection of them and their life experiences (struggles, praises)."[148] This deeply held belief that songs reflect who the artist is goes so deep as to expect that the songs are shaping the artists as they sing them because they are a reflection of who they are. The process of song selection and interpretation is viewed as circular in that the songs reflect who the artist is, shape who the artist is, then demonstrate who the artist is. The songs reflect the personal beliefs and deeply held convictions of the artist. Then the songs continue to shape the artist while the artist is singing the songs.

Finally, the songs are an expression of personal belief, testimony, and public theology. This expression of public theology is defined by Klopper as "practical theology with relevance in the public sphere."[149] The practical theological beliefs of the artist are on display in the public sphere through the songs being sung. Therefore, to these survey participants, the songs are making the artist.

Audience: Both and Neither

There are 41 participants who contend that both the songs make the artists and the artists make the songs, while five suggest neither process is occurring. Several individuals write that the process can work both ways without providing an explanation. One participant expounds, "Hopefully, the two are intertwined. Authentic artist[s] should compose music that is real and personal or they should select song[s] that reflect who they are personally."[150] Another

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[147] Audience participant answer 141, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[148] Audience participant answer 46, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[149] Kloppers, "Sounding the Sacred," 3.

[150] Audience participant answer 123, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

participant writes, "It works both ways depending on the message of the song."[151] The song itself is considered of utmost importance when contemplating the idea of the songs making the artists and the artists making the songs.

One participant explains, "The right songs performed can help further the artist's career and some of them come straight from their heart." Another survey participant expounds on the significance of choosing songs, "Song choice is important in developing credibility with the 'audience,' however an artist must live the truth of their lyrics authentically or song choice can become irrelevant."[152] The songs lose their relevancy if the artist fails to live the truth of the song's lyrics authentically. A different survey participant explains the importance of song choice, "A song can truly impact an artist and therefore if they are transformed they will 'make' the song."[153] The influence of the song on the artist is in some way expected to be evident by the audience. It is this supposed transformation of the artist because of the song that will cause the artist to, in return, make the song.

Song selection is a significant component of message transmission and perceived authenticity. The artist endeavors in two separate processes when considering songs for recording and when considering songs for performance. While the artist is the messenger of the song, the audience is the song receiver and, therefore, weighs in on the song selections by the artists. Songs reflect who the artist is, communicate to the audience, and help the audience to form a perception of the artist in real life. As the fundamental method of communication between

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[151] Audience participant answer 131, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[152] Audience participant answer 101, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[153] Audience participant answer 83, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

the artist and the audience, song selection is undeniably central to the artist's identity and crucial to the audience formulating a perception of the artist.

Quantitative and Qualitative Observations

Interpreting the Results

A summary of major quantitative and qualitative data has been developed together while interpreting the results of both the artists and the audience survey tools. This section is best suited to permit a connection between both the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data is from the audience's perspective, and the qualitative data is from the artist's perspective. However, the questions reflect similar themes derived to better understand the message transmission process from both the artist and the audience. While the data is not being compared as apples to apples, there are valuable intersections between the audience's and artists' answers which need to be developed and explained to better understand the process of message transmission between the artist and the audience. These unfold in four major categories, including: Authenticity, Congruence Between the Artist and the Song, Lifestyle Worship, and Message Transmission.

Authenticity

The perception of authenticity is indeed different from actual authenticity. Perception includes visual appearance, observed patterns, and behavior, while authenticity is better understood of in terms of integrity and consistency. In the audience's quantitative survey tool, Authenticity has been assessed by Items 7, 9, and 10. The data has revealed that authenticity is largely assessed by the audience's observed behavior of the artists "Off the Stage" (93.4%) and the artists' "Lifestyle" (90.7%).

However, the artists suggest it is impossible for the audience to actually know if the artist is authentic based upon behaviors off stage and personal lifestyle. While the artists who participated in this survey suggest that there is an effort to be real, they admit that it is impossible for the audience to know if they are the same on and off the stage. In every public situation, the artists are aware that they are visible. Therefore, they may control their behavior or change their demeanor, knowing they could possibly be seen by others. The way the artists act at home with their families without the watching eyes of others is virtually unknown to the audience unless an intimate friendship exists between the artist and the audience member.

While it may seem impossible to ever assess artist authenticity completely, Artist S/S warns that inauthenticity will eventually become evident. A façade can only be maintained for so long, and a show can be sustained only temporarily before real-life patterns, behaviors, and thoughts become evident to the general public. It is, perhaps, these moments of genuine authenticity that break through when an artist is caught off guard or is disappointed in some way that the audience is able to assess the authenticity of the artist off the platform. The artists point to examples of true authenticity in the way they treat the waitress at the Waffle House or the staff at McDonald's. To these artists, these places provide an opportunity for them to relax and be who they really are more than who others think they should be.

To better understand artist authenticity, the researcher has asked both audience and artist survey groups, "What do the following statements mean to you? 'The artist is the same on the stage and off the stage.' 'The artist is the real deal.'" The audience has been provided multiple choice answers, and 114 (75.5%) selected "The artist is genuine," while 34 individuals (22.5%) selected "The artist appears genuine." The majority associate the above statements with a genuine interpretation of who the artist is as an authentic artist. However, a significant sample

realizes the importance of the word *appears*. In their answer selection, they admit that much of what is seen publicly of an artist is appearance or perception. This is the difference between authenticity and the perception of authenticity.

The perception of artist authenticity is of utmost importance to both the artists and the audience. The artists recognize the need for authenticity when asked in Question 9 if authenticity is a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist. The data has revealed that the artists believe there should be but that it is not always the case. The audience agrees that authenticity is a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist in Question 6, where 94% of participants said, "Yes." This is an agreed-upon consensus by the artists and the audience that seemingly drives artists' actions on and off the platform while also shaping how the audience looks to observe the artists' actions.

While authenticity is expected, it is the perception of authenticity that is often being evaluated. The audience observes the authenticity of the artist primarily off the platform, and yet the artists suggest there is no way to fully assess their authenticity when they are at home and with their families. The artists know the importance of presenting themselves a certain way when they are visible, whether this is on the platform, walking around a venue, on social media, in a public restaurant, etc. There is a sense of being *on* when the artist is in a public space. Therefore, it is very difficult to say someone is authentic based upon their behavior when they know they are being observed. However, integrity becomes a central component of authenticity. The way the artist is behind closed doors, away from the public eye, is the true essence of who the artist is as a person. The greatest observers of authenticity in an artist are then the family members and closest friends of the artist.

As previously expressed, assessing authenticity is difficult, yet both artists and the audience engage in this task. The audience was asked in Question 7, "How do you assess authenticity in an artist? Please check all that apply." Most participants selected "Actions off the stage," with this answer receiving 93.4% of the selections. "Lifestyle" is second with 137 selections, and 90 individuals selected "Actions on the Stage." Assessing authenticity was also inquired of the artists in Question 11 when they were asked, "Think of an artist you believe functions with integrity. Please list the characteristics that shape your assessment of this individual." The artists provided their own words, including character, living out God's Word practically "off and on the platform," and living lives that "match what they 'preach' on platforms." The artists expressed the same expectation for the lifestyle of an authentic artist to be consistent on and off the platform.

The researcher had asserted that those who identified with the Praise and Worship musical sub-genre might be able to better assess authenticity. This belief has been tested in Hypothesis Two, which states, "There is a difference among Christian music subgenres on perception of artist authenticity; whereby the praise and worship genre will have the strongest perception of artist authenticity." This hypothesis has tested the two variables of Artist Authenticity and those who selected that they listen to only Praise and Worship music in the audience survey. It is not supported. Therefore, the data has revealed that there is no difference in the ability to assess artist authenticity based on the preferred sub-genre of music the listener identified within the survey tool. Assessment of artist authenticity is not limited or enhanced by musical sub-genre preference but is rather a common thread that interconnects the Christian music industry and Christian artists as a musical community.

Upon inquiring of the audience and artists about how they assess authenticity, the researcher asked both survey groups if authenticity is being pursued by MOST Christian artists. Of the audience participants, 45.7% said they were "Not Sure." Even fewer participants (39.1%) said "Yes." There are 15.2% of the survey participants who said, "No." While the audience can express how they assess authenticity in the life of the artist, it appears more difficult for them to generally assess authenticity in Christian artists. Question 17 was a follow-up to the audience members in the Audience Survey and asks, "Do you believe MOST Christian artists believe and live what they sing?" Most participants said, "Yes," at 62.3%, and 29.1% selected, "Not Sure." There is a smaller representation, 8.6%, that said "No."

It seems the audience is more confident in their evaluation if the artists believe and live what they sing than in their authenticity. These elements of consistency and integrity in the life of the artist somehow seem to be easier to assess than if the artist is authentic. There appears to be a complexity to authenticity that makes it more difficult for the audience to define and identify in an artist's life. This question was asked of the artists in Question 10 in the artist survey. The complexity of authenticity is again seen in the artists' responses, as many artists are unable to say "Yes." Artist SG1 said there are some who live authentically, and there are others who "try very hard to maintain the appearance of authenticity, as it's better for a Christian personality."[154] This dilemma is evident in many of the artists' answers that point to destructive schedules, progressive ideologies, the temptation of pride, and personal lives that are a mess as being responsible for producing inauthenticity. Certain expectations are placed upon Christian personalities by the public because of their platform ministries. When an artist fails to meet these expectations yet puts up a façade to make fellow artists and the audience think they are different

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[154] Artist SG1, Question 10 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

from what they are, the artist slips into inauthenticity or duplicitousness. The ultimate goal of the artist is not to confess every sin publicly but rather to actually have an authentic walk with God privately that informs the public space.

The researcher has asserted that the public space of the concert experience is viewed more favorably by the audience when the audience perceives authenticity in the artist. This has been tested in Hypothesis One, which states, "There is a positive relationship between perception of artist authenticity by audience members and their concert experience; whereby the stronger the audiences' perception of authenticity, the more favorable their concert experience." The two variables tested in this hypothesis are Artist Authenticity and Concert Experience. This hypothesis is not supported. However, artist authenticity is a component of the concert experience for the audience since the artist is primarily viewed in Question 18 in the audience survey as Communicators. One audience participant explains, "If I know an artist is participating in behavior that does not follow Christian principles, then the words he/she sings have no basis or credibility."[155] Therefore, artist authenticity matters in the context of the concert experience for the audience.

The difficulty is knowing if effectiveness, in general, is still possible even if authenticity is not present in the life of the artist. Two audience participants connect lifestyle and authentic walk with effective ministries. One individual says, "When by their offstage testimony you can observe their authentic walk with Christ, it makes any of their songs that much more meaningful and effective in ministry."[156] Another individual states, "Seeking a biblical worldview and living a lifestyle that points others to Christ off the platform creates a more effective ministry in the

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[155] Audience participant answer 53, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[156] Audience participant answer 122, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

artist's musical life on the platform."[157] These participants suggest authenticity enhances effectiveness in ministry. The artists seem to agree with the audience but also acknowledge there are moments of effectiveness even when inauthenticity is present in the life of the artist.

Artist S/S suggests that authenticity may not be necessary for an artist to be effective at some level.[158] This points to the difference between perceived authenticity and actual authenticity. This perspective is like Artist SG2's observation in an answer to a previous question, "However, the talents and gifting God has given mankind allows for some to be able to emotionally perform a song that appears to show conviction even if the performer is not a believer."[159] Appearance shapes perception. Even if the artist only appears authentic, there is a certain level of effectiveness observed by the audience. Artist Classical Crossover claims in an earlier answer, "Of course God's Word will not return void, and Truth can still penetrate the heart of the hearer even if there is no correspondence between the Christian artist and the lyrical content, but, it is much more unlikely that the artist can properly interpret (with the necessary passion and emotion) the lyrics if there is no belief from the heart."[160] However, as the two audience participants state and Artist S/S concludes, effectiveness is enhanced when authenticity is present. As effectiveness is supported by authenticity, so authenticity is supported by lifestyle worship.

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[157] Audience participant answer 151, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

[158] Artist S/S, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[159] Artist SG2, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[160] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 2 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Lifestyle Worship

Effectiveness in Message Transmission is believed by the researcher to be directly correlated with the practice of lifestyle worship by the artist. As stated in the Literature Review, "This research project seeks to better understand the cause-and-effect relationship between the practice of lifestyle worship and the authentic transmission of the gospel through song to avoid moral failure in the Christian artist."[161] Hypothesis Three states, "There is a direct relationship between lifestyle worship and message transmission of the gospel through song to the audience member; whereby the Christian message is expected by the audience to be transmitted by authentic Christian artists who practice patterns of lifestyle worship." This hypothesis has been supported by statistical data analysis.

This ideology has also been supported by the qualitative data from the artists' answers to Question 6 when asked to provide a brief definition of lifestyle worship. Many artists refer to lifestyle worship as being an everyday or daily practice. A few artists also use the word *constant* to express a continuous awareness of God—being in a constant state of worship, praise, and prayer. The practice of lifestyle worship promotes authenticity in the life of the practitioner as it creates an awareness of God and produces an atmosphere for His presence. David Peterson's phrase, "total reorientation," of life seems a perfect description of lifestyle worship.[162] This process of reorientation may be experienced in and through the practice of spiritual disciplines. The ability of the artist to relate to a song is enhanced through the practice of lifestyle worship, which is defined by most artists as a daily expression of worship.

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[161] See the Literature Review of this study, 38.

[162] Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 167.

Question 7 asks the artists, "Is lifestyle worship something that is, or does it need to be developed?" See figure 3. Several artists refer to a process of growth in lifestyle worship and mention words such as discipleship, maturity, and training. The practice of spiritual disciplines promotes discipleship, maturity, and provides the opportunity for training the spirit in the ways of Christ. These disciplines are reflected in lifestyle worship and help to support authenticity in the life of the practitioner. The audience has been asked to weigh in on lifestyle worship and if it is evident in MOST Christian artists. Unfortunately, 48.3% of the survey participants said, "Not Sure," while 11.3% said, "No," and 40.4% said, "Yes." Most audience survey participants were unsure if lifestyle worship is evident in *most* Christian artists.

While the artists claim lifestyle worship is a significant component of everyday life in the life of the Christian, a majority of survey participants are unsure if lifestyle worship can be identified in MOST Christian artists. There seems to be a disconnect between what the audience perceives versus what the artists sense to be true about lifestyle worship. Perhaps the private practices of the spiritual disciplines are simply undetected publicly by the audience. The audience may be lacking clarity and direction from local spiritual leaders regarding the importance of public figures as well as themselves having a developed or mature lifestyle worship approach. The audience may not even know what to look for or recognize in the artists. More concerning is the possibility that there are a lack of artists practicing the spiritual disciplines, and therefore the evidence of lifestyle worship fails to penetrate their public persona. However, an evident connection to the song helps to reflect lifestyle worship as the artist relates to the lyrics emotionally and mentally. Lifestyle worship is revealed through congruence between the artist and the song.

Congruence Between the Artist and the Song

There is an expected correlation between the artist and the song, which has been investigated through Question 3 of the artists' survey tool. The artists allow the lyrics to minister to them during rehearsal so that when they sing the songs publicly, they can lead others in worship. The reality of who the audience is as individuals sinks into the artists' awareness and helps to make the connection to the lyrics much more meaningful. Artist Contemporary writes about the audience as "fresh faces" looking at you, "hoping a song will hit them right where they need it."[163] Artist A/F says, "You see their pain, and that helps you feel the lyrics as you are sharing them."[164] Artist SG1 writes about "communicating the words to the songs to the audience, and relating them to your own experience."[165]

This mental correlation between the lyrics and personal experience is necessary for the artist to fully interpret the lyrics. This type of interpretation supports effectiveness in the process of message transmission between the artist and the audience because the words mean something personal to the artist as the messenger. While mental and emotional congruence between the artist and the song remains a priority in message transmission, the audience also expresses an expectation for congruence between the physical appearance of the artist and the message of the song.

Questions 11 and 12 in the quantitative survey tool ask the audience about the visual appearance of the artists in correlation to the message of the songs. There are 47.7% of the survey population who expect a correlation between the physical appearance of the artist,

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[163] Artist Contemporary, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[164] Artist A/F, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[165] Artist SG1, Question 3 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

including but not limited to hair, makeup, and clothing, to the message of the piece. However,

43% do not expect a correlation between the physical appearance of the artist and the message of

the piece. When asked if a visual correlation between the appearance of the artist and the content

of the song improved the opinion of the artist, 49% said, "Yes," while 38.4% said, "No." The

majority of both answers express a certain expectation of a correspondence between the physical

appearance of the artist and the message in the song. For the artist to have a spiritual, mental, and

physical congruence with the song enables the process of Message Transmission to be more

effective.

Message Transmission

Message Transmission is the means to investigate artist authenticity and audience

perception of authenticity. Much of the Message Transmission process encapsulates the various

details that have been examined in this research project. The artists are primarily identified by

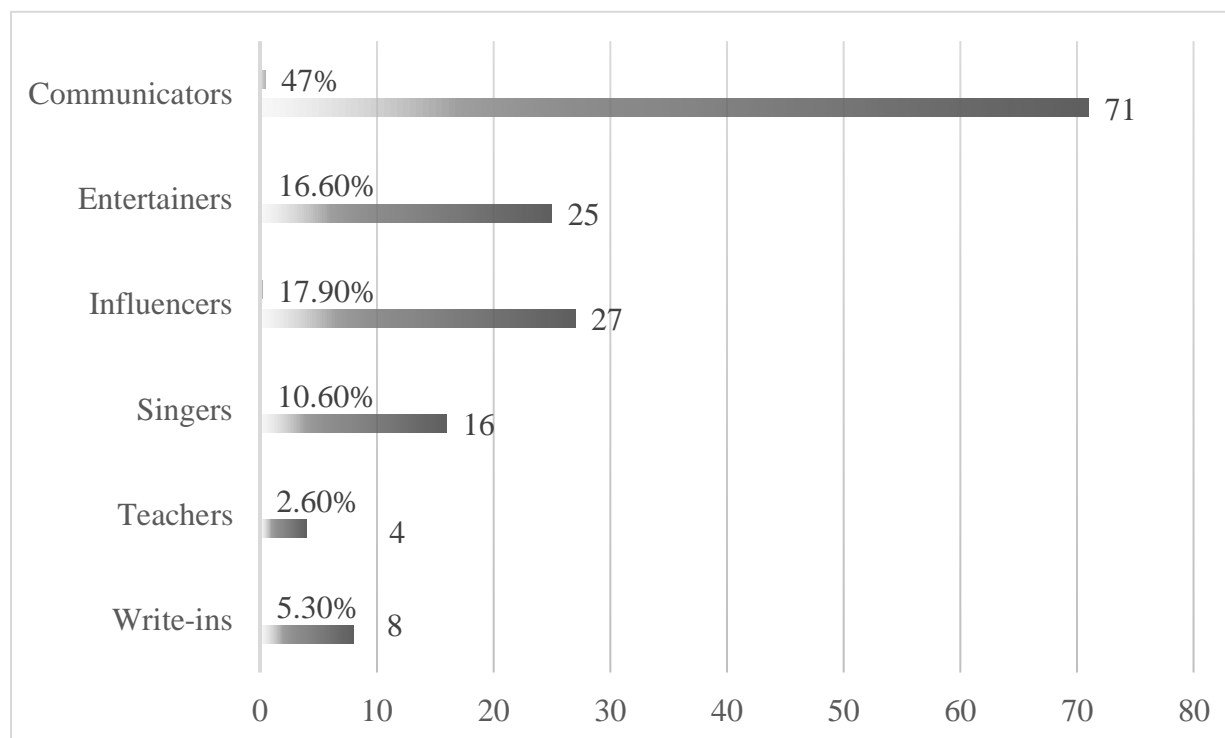the audience in the quantitative survey tool as communicators. See figure 26.

Figure 26. Audience answers to Question 18 in the Audience Survey tool.

To support this data, the artists have also identified that their primary focus of attention on the

platform is communication. Therefore, Message Transmission between the artist and the

audience is all about communication.

The artists are communicating through their song selections, physical appearance,

evidence of lifestyle worship, and behavior on and off the platform. The audience, as the

recipient of the communication is constantly observing, assessing, and perceiving what the artists

are saying through their various means of communication. The significance of Message

Transmission is increased because the content of the message is the gospel of Jesus Christ. When

the artists are Christian artists sharing the gospel message of Christ, the consequences of

communication are magnified, and the artists are not their own, according to 1 Corinthians 6:19-

20, "You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body"

(English Standard Version). The responsibility as a messenger for Christ through song and the

public platform is a sobering reality for the artists. The way in which the artists communicate has a direct reflection upon the message content they are conveying to the audience. This relationship has been tested using quantitative research in Hypothesis Five.

Hypothesis Five states, "There is a direct relationship between an artist who is perceived as authentic and the message they are sharing through song; whereby the audience member who perceives the artist to be authentic will accept the message as positive and genuine." There is a positive correlation at the .01 level (2-tail) where $r(151) = .351$, $p < .001$. The data has revealed a significant positive correlation between the variables of Authenticity and Message Transmission. This hypothesis is supported by showing a direct correlation between the perception of Artist Authenticity and Message Transmission. This reality is also supported by the audience's answers to Question 2, "Should the artist's life demonstrate the words they are singing?" A resounding 95.4% of the survey population said, "Yes." Therefore, the artists may know that the way in which they communicate and how they are perceived has a direct influence on the way the content of the message is received.

Hypothesis Four seeks to test the relationship between Message Transmission and the overall concert experience for the audience. The researcher claims in Hypothesis Four that "There is a positive relationship between the message of the gospel that is being shared and the overall perception of the concert experience for the audience member, whereas the audience member who values the message of the artist will also leave with a high value of the concert experience." There is a positive correlation at the .05 level (2-tail) $r(151) = .190$, $p = .020$. The data has revealed a significant positive correlation between the variables of Concert Experience and Message Transmission. The Concert Experience has an emotional and cognitive influence on the audience participants, which influences the audience's interpretation of the process of

Message Transmission. Therefore, the concert experience as an event is also influential in the process of Message Transmission.

Validate the Results

Quantitative

The validity and reliability of the quantitative survey tool have been assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, used to validate the internal consistency of the quantitative survey tool. In essence, this evaluation determines if the tool is actually measuring what it claims to be measuring. This assessment seeks to validate the sub-elements of each variable and how the scale items are related. Each variable had a total of three subscale items, or questions, utilized in the survey. The Perception of Authenticity subscale consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .81$), the Concert Experience subscale consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .61$), the Lifestyle Worship subscale consisted of 3 items ($\alpha = .72$), and the Message Transmission subscale consisted of three items ($\alpha = .64$). Two of these reliability coefficients are below the .7 standard. However, these are newly developed scales and will require refinement in future research.

Qualitative

Three different methods have been used to validate the qualitative data. First, the data has been peer reviewed with a fellow researcher coding the survey answers provided by the artists. This researcher has also identified the same themes and patterns as the researcher in the first cycle coding process. A similar method of coding was employed by the colleague, including highlighting and noting common themes/terms in each set of answers provided by the artists to the individual questions. Second, the researcher has spent extended time in the field with fellow artists and has been able to make informed observations in real-time circumstances based on the

information gleaned from the survey. What has been observed in real-time often supports the data findings and provides new meaning and understanding to some of the artists' perspectives. Finally, triangulation of data has been employed in that the survey participants are representatives from different sub-genres of Christian music. With a different perspective from each sub-genre, the data is more thorough in analysis of the Christian music community in its entirety rather than only receiving data from one sub-component within the broader Christian music community.

In this chapter, the data has been prepared, explored, analyzed, represented, and validated. The final section of this chapter interprets the results together of both the quantitative and qualitative data. This interpretation seeks to honor the mixed methods approach to this study by utilizing the perspectives of the artists (qualitative) and the perspectives of the audience (quantitative) to gain a better understanding of the process of Message Transmission and the various contributing components. The next chapter summarizes the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data that have been interpreted independently in this chapter.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Summary of the Study

The process of Message Transmission of the gospel through the vehicle of song from the artist to the audience is the primary focus of this study. There are consequences for the artists' actions that affect this process of Message Transmission. Therefore, whether or not the Message Transmission is authentic has remained the central concern. The study has utilized two separate survey tools to gain insight from the audience and the artists. The audience survey tool is quantitative, and the artist's survey tool is qualitative, making this research project a Mixed Methods study. Utilizing both methods provides a more in-depth look at artist authenticity, Message Transmission through song, and the audience's perception of artist authenticity.

Summary of Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to examine Christian artist authenticity and artist authenticity perceived by the listener through the process of Message Transmission of the gospel through song and the public platform. The researcher has evaluated Christian artist authenticity through Message Transmission by examining the components of Perceived Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, Concert Experience, and Congruence between the Artist and the Song, including song selection and lyrical interpretation.

Summary of Procedure

Upon receiving IRB exemption for this research project, the researcher initiated interaction with the artists as well as the audience members in a synchronous data-gathering phase to share the anonymous online survey links. A unique Audience Survey Tool was created

by the researcher using Google Forms and was administered through the researcher's personal social media accounts, including Facebook and Twitter. A unique Artist Survey Tool was created and administered by the researcher utilizing text, email, and Facebook Messenger to share the link for the anonymous survey created in Google Forms with the artists. The researcher personally knows most of the artists who were invited to participate in the study. However, many other artists were invited to participate in the study the researcher did not know personally. These were contacted by other artists, or their contact information was shared with the researcher to invite them to participate.

Once the survey data was collected, the researcher began analyzing the quantitative data utilizing SPSS and hand-coding the qualitative data. A second coder coded the data to support and refine the researcher's findings when initially coding the data. These mixed methods research data were analyzed separately and then compared to allow each data set to inform the other. While the data is not being compared as apples to apples, there are valuable intersections between the audience's and artists' answers which need to be developed to understand better the process of Message Transmission between the artist and the audience.

<div align="center">Summary of Findings and Prior Research</div>

Message Transmission is of utmost importance when the message is the gospel of Jesus Christ as depicted in God's Holy Word. The gospel reflects the story of Jesus' life on earth, his crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. The application of this message to a recipient's life is transformative with eternal ramifications. This life-changing message is intended to be communicated through the songs of the artists. Therefore, the effect of the artists' actions on the process of Message Transmission is consequential. Message Transmission consists of three main components including the artist who is transmitting the message, the audience who is receiving

the message, and the song which is the message. However, in this research project, the artist and the song have been the objects of focus from both the perspective of the audience and the artist. Artist authenticity, congruence between the artist and the piece, and lifestyle worship reflect who the artist is as a messenger and influence how the message is received by the audience.

The primary research question asks, "What correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece is necessary when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?" Congruence between the artist and the piece remains central in this study of Message Transmission. The data reveals that a correspondence between the artist and the piece is expected by the audience and is often experienced by the artists. The data from both the qualitative and quantitative surveys support this concept of congruence by revealing insight from the artists' perspectives when they are *on* the platform and how the audience perceives artist authenticity most often when the artist is *off* the platform.

The data is summarized in four main sections in this chapter: Artist Authenticity, Lifestyle Worship, The Song, and the Role of the Artist: Communicator. Two subsequent research questions have been asked. The first is assessed in the Artist Authenticity section. It is, "What is the effect upon the audience when it detects duplicitousness between the Christian artist and the gospel message of the song?" The second is examined under the Lifestyle Worship section and asks, "Are patterns of lifestyle worship necessary in the life of the artist for the audience to observe artist authenticity?"

Artist Authenticity

Congruence between the Christian artist and the piece is completely necessary when considering artist authenticity. If the gospel message is not portrayed by an authentic artist, the

message risks being tainted or viewed with skepticism by the audience member. Therefore, genuine congruence between the artist and the piece cannot occur if the artist is not authentic.

While artist authenticity is deemed by one artist survey participant as not something to be *pursued*, this research project concludes that artist authenticity can be improved in the life of the Christian artist through the practice of spiritual disciplines, lifestyle worship, and being an active member in a local church community. The process of being real requires an intentional removal of all the practices in life that are not real. These may include necessary changes to one's persona, appearance, lifestyle patterns, and thoughts that are communicated both publicly and privately. Facades have a way of hiding what is real, yet authenticity demands integrity between the heart and the mouth. Deeply held convictions that are not demonstrated publicly hinder authenticity, just as appearing to champion certain beliefs that are not deeply held also limits authenticity. Incongruence between the lifestyle of an artist *off* the stage and the persona of the artist *on* the stage is deceiving not only to the audience but also to the artist.

A lifestyle of deception bears heavy consequences before a holy and just God, especially when the artist is a Christian who is attempting to communicate the gospel message. The artist must be a good steward of this message. God has entrusted His message to the artist just as the man entrusted his property to his servants in Jesus' Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30. The gospel is not the artist's message; it is God's message.

Inauthenticity with this message leads to personal burnout, disappointment, frustration, and negativity. It may also end destructively, with the artist being seasonally disqualified from ministry because of moral failure. When inauthenticity in the artist's life becomes evident to the audience, the artist is perceived as an imposter or a hypocrite and leaves the audience shattered, disillusioned, cynical, and skeptical of Christian artists in general. The audience is left with an

inaccurate impression of who God is and the trustworthiness of his message. If the messenger

cannot be trusted, the audience member is left to wonder if the message itself can be trusted. This

damages not only the artist's reputation but also potentially the reputation of all professing

followers of Christ who are ambassadors for Jesus Christ, and perhaps even the validity of the

gospel message itself, for those who witness the duplicity. There is much at stake when

considering Christian artist authenticity and the perception of artist authenticity by the audience.

Audience expectations influence the perception of authenticity. The data reveals that

there is a certain expectation from the audience for the artists to look a certain way to correspond

with the artists' identified musical sub-genre. There is also a majority expectation for the artists

to live out the beliefs they sing. The artist's lifestyle is consistently scrutinized by the public eye,

which reaches on and off the platform. Artists may sense the weight of such expectations and

view them as unreasonable, unattainable, and undesirable. However, audience perception is a

significant component in Message Transmission. Therefore, audience perception and expectation

must be considered by the artist but should not be permitted to dictate the essence of who the

artist is as a singer or communicator. Perceived authenticity has a way of appearing to be the

reality. The audience and the artists are equally affected by the expectations of perception.

Perception of authenticity remains difficult to accurately assess, as Nathan Myrick writes,

"Authenticity has been variously described as synonymous with sincerity, or conviction, or even

integrity. Yet how authenticity is demonstrated and/or qualified remains elusive; how can I *know*

a person is being authentic, and to what?"[1] The researcher has gained insight into genuine

authenticity from the perspective of the artists whereas the audience largely only speaks to the

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[1] Nathan Myrick, "Double Authenticity: Celebrity, Consumption, and the Christian Worship Music Industry," *The Hymn* 29, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 24.

perception of authenticity. It is in the unguarded and private settings of the artist's life that the artist is truly authentic. The public audience is largely not invited into the home or exposed to the private details of the artist's life. Therefore, much of what the audience sees publicly is persona or appearance.

Much of what is interpreted about the artist by the audience is strictly based on the appearance or the persona of the artist. The research question asks, "What is the effect upon the audience when it detects duplicitousness between the Christian artist and the Gospel message of the song?" When the artist's persona does not correspond with the artist's actions, words, and/or beliefs, a fracture between the artist and the audience leads the audience to have concerns about the artist being duplicitous. This fracture deeply affects the process of Message Transmission as now the messenger is viewed as inauthentic, tainting the very message itself in the eyes of the audience as the message recipient. One audience survey participant concludes, "Even if I hear a song I like, but I get the sense that the artist's personal life doesn't match up with the song, it diminishes the song in my eyes."[2] The message of the gospel raises the significance of Message Transmission between the artist and the audience to that of exceeding importance and demands an authentic congruence between the artist and the piece.

As a communicator of the gospel, the Christian artist deeply affects how the gospel message is perceived and received by the audience. Therefore, it is significant for the artist to weigh the cost of engaging in public ministry. Jesus warns in Luke 12:48, "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more" (English Standard Version). This biblical principle applies to the Christian artist. Much has been entrusted to a Christian artist with a large platform ministry,

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[2] Audience participant answer 93, Question 20 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix B.

including significant influence, and yet Jesus warns that much will be required of such an artist. James similarly warns, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brother, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness" (James 3:1). The artist, as a communicator, teaches through song, testimony, and lifestyle behaviors to an ever-watching public audience. Therefore, a Christian artist must accept a higher standard of expectation as a public influential figure and be willing to live to this higher standard as a teacher of the gospel through song and testimony.

Lifestyle Worship

Living to a higher standard cannot be achieved by individual personal strength and inner fortitude. It may only be achieved through a humble heart submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Christian artist must become a surrendered vessel, emptied of self, pride, and independence to be filled with the love, compassion, and grace of Jesus Christ. A secondary research question asks, "Are patterns of lifestyle worship necessary in the life of the artist for the audience to observe artist authenticity?" While the audience is constantly assessing perceived artist authenticity, the patterns of lifestyle worship in the life of the Christian artist help to demonstrate genuine faith and authentic lived experiences as a follower of Christ.

Lifestyle worship is defined in this project as: "The correlation between the heart and the mouth intentioned to honor God through everyday lifestyle patterns." Lifestyle worship is supported by personal spiritual growth through the practice of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, and reading and meditating on God's Word. However, there are many things in the life of the Christian artist that may hinder spiritual growth and distract from lifestyle worship.

The following hindrances are exposed by the artist participants, including a fear of the expectations of others, destructive touring schedules, living in the past and wanting to be like

former artists, progressive thinking, fear of speaking the truth of God's Word in love because it may hurt someone's feelings, fear of not getting radio play for speaking what one believes, the reality that at times the personal lives of the artists are a mess, as well as the temptation of pride, fame, and applause. An artist participant refers to pride, fame, and applause as "powerful and dangerous giants that only the Lord can help us conquer."[3] The temptation remains very real for the Christian artist to love the "glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God" (John 12:43). In all these hindrances, the Lord tests the heart of the Christian artist through refinement to ensure the glory rightfully goes to God and to encourage the artist in a closer, more intimate walk with Him.

Refinement may occur through the practice of spiritual disciplines and/or circumstances permitted by God outside of the control of the artist. Refinement through circumstances is often a painful, yet necessary, process to ensure the glory finds its rightful Recipient in the Creator God. The writer in Proverbs 17:3 explains, "The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests hearts." The word *tested* is *matsrep* in the Hebrew, referring to the "crucible." "A crucible is a vessel in which metallic elements are melted to be cast into new objects or to create a new alloy."[4] God, as the Refiner, permits circumstances to become the crucible in the life of the artist.

Proverbs 27:21 conveys, "The crucible is for silver and a furnace for gold, but a man is tested by the praise accorded him." In this verse, the Lord reveals that man's applause becomes the *crucible* for any platform figure receiving public accolades, recognition, and honor. The praise and applause of humanity being directed to another human becomes insurmountably

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[3] Artist Classical Crossover, Question 10 in the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

[4] Kristin Arzt, "What Is a Crucible?" June 22, 2021, The Crucible, https://www.thecrucible.org/what-is-a-crucible/.

greater than what the human heart can handle independently of God. However, God permits

circumstances, including public recognition and an increased platform, to test the artist to see if

the artist will deflect the public honor and praise back to the Creator God or attempt to absorb it

into the human heart, soul, and mind. Glory intended for God alone will destroy humanity.

Mortal flesh cannot bear the overwhelming weight of God's glory. Myrick warns about this in

his article, "The Celebrity Model," writing, "A final warning is necessary: celebrity can be a

disease that infects equally, regardless of musical style and ecclesial forms."[5] Therefore, the

artists must resist self-glorification and the disease of *celebrity-ism*. God allows these giants of

success, pride, fame, and applause to drive the Christian artist to a poured-out, humbled, and

desperately dependent relationship with the Lord. The Lord is the Refiner of the Christian artist

as He alone tests the heart of the artist by the crucible of human praise.

A mindful artist pursues the ways of the Lord and disciplines the mind to think about

"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely,

whatever is commendable" (Phil. 4:8). Individual practices such as discipline, focus, balance,

knowledge of God's Word, and spending time with God encourage spiritual growth and reflect

integrity. The practice of the spiritual disciplines supports integrity in the life of the artist as the

artist spends more intentional time with the Lord.

Other markers of integrity include humility, kindness, endurance, having character, and

being filled with grace. These reflections are summarized by Paul as he writes in Titus 2:7,

"Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity,

dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame,

having nothing evil to say about us." As an influencer and teacher of the gospel through song,

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[5] Nathan Myrick, "The Celebrity Model of Music Ministry: Characteristics and Considerations" *The Hymn* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2018): 28. ISSN: 00188271.

the Christian artist is accountable to be a model of good works, to show integrity and dignity, and to communicate with sound speech. The artist must strive to live a life that does not allow the message of the gospel to be discredited or diminished by an opponent.

Such expectations are not only biblically required but are also indicators of personal time spent with God. These character traits are not merely legalistic rules to be followed as the Pharisees did, but are rather an overflow of a personal relationship with God. The artist continues to have Christ-like character refined through the practice of spiritual disciplines. The spiritual disciplines overflow into public expressions of faith, such as lifestyle worship and meaningful connection being made between the artists and the songs they sing. The lifestyle of the Christian artist is supported by being actively involved in a faith-filled community of believers in Jesus Christ.

Communal accountability may be found in the local church, in a Bible study group, or accountability group of like-minded friends seeking to live for God. A demanding tour schedule makes it extremely difficult for a Christian artist to be part of a meaningful community outside of industry relationships. However, there is an unquestionable need for and benefit to the artist of being an active member of a faith community. If the artist neglects this support community, it leaves the artist more exposed to becoming prey to the temptations of the world. This worshiping community covers the Christian artist with prayer and helps to hold the artist accountable as a fellow Christian and laborer in Christ, not a musical celebrity placed on a pedestal. Personal relationship, not a persona, is valued and validated within the boundaries of a loving, Christ-filled Christian community. The artist is prudent and spiritually proactive when not "neglecting to meet together" (Heb. 10:25) with the people of God.

In a world shattered by famed Christian leaders failing morally, the Christian artist must "count the cost" (Luke 14:28; Mark 8:34-35), realize the risks, identify the spiritual traps, and plead for God's mercy and unfailing love to become the very undercurrent of the Christian artist's existence. The artist is wise to lean into the strength of the Christian community to support the artist as a follower of Christ. The lifestyle of the Christian artist is a vital representation of the spiritual health of the artist. If the artist is not spiritually healthy, the message will be affected. The spiritual health and well-being of the artist should be the priority of the Christian artist, and compromise must have no place in the lifestyle patterns of the Christian artist. There is a higher calling for every follower of Christ, "For you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:20). The gospel message demands not some but all.

The power of this message cannot be underestimated when identifying behavioral requirements and defining the spiritual responsibilities of the Christian artist. Patterns of lifestyle worship in the life of the artist are necessary. The Christian artist is foremost a Christian with certain expectations for lifestyle indicators to correspond with God's Word. The patterns of the artist, as well as the community which surrounds the artist, encourage authenticity in the lifestyle of the artist. Therefore, patterns of lifestyle worship are necessary in the artist's life for the audience to observe that artist's authenticity. It is the message that is carried by the Christian artist that elevates the standard of expectation for that artist.

The Song

The song is a crucial component of Message Transmission as it contains the message of the gospel and represents so much more than a catchy hook or radio single. The song is viewed as an extension of who the artist is, and the song is also expected, in some way, to be a testimony

of the lived experience of the artist. In many cases, the audience is first introduced to an artist through the song. This reality causes the process of song selection to be tedious and weighty for an artist. Careful attention is given to the lyrical and musical content when selecting a song.

Song selection is vital to the congruence between the artist and the piece as it helps to identify who the artist is and signals to the audience what the artist believes. The primary research question asks, "What correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece is necessary when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?" It is the content of the song as the gospel message that makes it necessary for the artist to connect with the song on a personal, spiritual, and emotional level.

Emotional experiences with music are persuasive, influential, and possibly life-changing. Dan Fisher points to a potentially lasting influence of music in concluding, "Music becomes a permanent part of our mental furniture that actively shapes perception."[6] The influential nature of music elevates its significance in the life of the Christian who seeks to be shaped by the truth of God's Word. Therefore, the song selection is extremely important for both the artists who internalize and sing the songs and the audience who listens to and absorbs the message of the song internally. Eventually, both the artist and the audience member absorb the lyrical content, which is why lyrical content should be prioritized by artists responsible for communicating the song's message.

The artists realize the song is a communicative tool and, therefore, contemplate lyrics, melodies, overall fit/impression, audience reception, and the commercial appeal of the song. Some artists trust personal instinct and lean more into the overall fit/impression of the song,

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[6] Dan Fisher, "Music and Identity: Escape, Engagement, and the Quest for Authenticity in a Commodity Culture," (Ph.D. diss., University of Arkansas, 2002), 111.

while others rely heavily upon quality lyrical content when selecting songs. Some artists are more aware of the audience than others because of the emphasis placed on audience reception when selecting songs to perform and record. The artist participants in this research project do not unanimously agree on the prioritization of any one item over another when contemplating song selection. The song selection process is as unique as each individual, with each artist contemplating different song qualities. The artists utilize songs to communicate. This supports the consensus that the role of the Christian artist is primarily a communicator.

As an artistic individual creating art through music, there is an obligation for the artist to be true to self in order to be most effective as a communicator. J. W. De Gruchy explains, "For [the artist], art is not primarily a source of pleasure, more often it is an expression of pain, but it is a way of engaging with social reality in the hope that somehow their contribution may make a difference to the world."[7] Artistic creativity by the Christian artist serves a much higher purpose than record sales and sold-out concert arenas. De Gruchy suggests, "The public role of [the] artist is the relationship between artistic creativity and human need, human longing and hope for healing."[8] The Christian artists see the audience as comprised of individuals in need of hope and healing. This perspective changes how the artists interpret the lyrics of the songs they sing, which in turn affects the way the artists then communicate the lyrics. Interpretation of the song is a significant responsibility for the artist to be able to communicate authentically to a hurting world.

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[7] J.W. De Gruchy, "Christianity, Art and Transformation," University of Stellenbosch, and University of Cape Town. *Acta Theologica*, no. 29, (2020): 18, https://doi.org/10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup29.1.

[8] De Gruchy, "Christianity, Art and Transformation," 20.

Interpretation of the song encourages the artist to believe with the heart and confess with the mouth the truth of the song. This biblical premise of correlation between heart and mouth is established in Romans 10:9-10, "If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." Jesus teaches in Matthew 12:34, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks," and also in Matthew 15:18, "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person." Without a heart connection to the songs, the artists fall prey to simply going through the motions of singing songs with no real purpose other than to entertain. Entertainment is temporal and often forgettable. The audience can sense a heartfelt connection between the artist and the song and, likewise, is aware if this connection is missing.

Songs are deeply intertwined with the identity of whom the artist is perceived to be. This may be a positive or negative reality for the artist. However, the influence of song selection and interpretation actively form the perception of who the artist is in the eyes of the audience. An internal connection between the artist and the song supports the communication process and emphasizes the artist as a communicator through song. The expectations for congruence between the artist and the piece occur in the interpretation of the song lyric and the lived experience of the song lyric. From such interpretation and experience, an authentic connection between the heart and mind of the artist is genuinely made to the lyrics of the song. Every facet of song selection entwined with artist authenticity and lifestyle worship points to the artist as a communicator.

Role of the Artist: Communicator

When considering the role of the Christian artist, both the audience and the artists agree upon the descriptive label—*Communicator*. The fact that communication is a priority in the eyes

of both the artists and the audience strongly supports the necessity for this study on Message Transmission between the artist who is connected to the message in song and the audience who receives the message. In further detail, there are various facets related to the Christian artist as the messenger, potentially affecting the process of communication. These include artist authenticity, artistic and spiritual interpretation of the message, and how the message is delivered both on stage and off the stage. The message as the gospel of Jesus Christ requires a higher standard of living for the Christian artist as the communicator. Christian lifestyle is shaped by the practice of spiritual disciplines and is expressed publicly through expressions of lifestyle worship—honoring God through everyday lifestyle patterns. It is through these practices that the artist experiences an authentic relationship with God which infuses authentic existence and authentic ministry through song. Without an intimate relationship with Jesus, the Christian artist strives for futile gain and is left to function out of fleshly strength, which invariably fades over time.

It is in this personal relationship with Jesus and spending time with God that the Christian artist's striving can cease, as Psalm 46:10 asserts, "Be still and know that I am God." The discipline to be still is extremely challenging in a fast-paced culture that is always taunting with the pursuit of bigger, better, faster, and more. The demands of the music industry on the Christian artist to remain relevant and current are unending. However, the artist must be willing to give time for spiritual self-care. To be still in the presence of Almighty God deepens the spiritual roots of faith and strengthens the spirit within the flesh. It is only in these times that the creative artist basks in the presence of the Creator and is subsequently filled by that presence. Then from this relational overflow, the artist is equipped to minister to others through songs and testimony from a personal experience of living with Jesus.

The practice of the spiritual disciplines enables the Christian artist to be more effective in communicating the gospel message because the artist is speaking and singing from personal experience. The artist must fully believe the message being communicated to enhance the effectiveness of the Message Transmission process. The audience expects the artists to believe deeply what they are singing and can sense a unique passion when an artist's personal experience resonates with the message in the song they are singing. A genuine believability is known by the artist who spends time with God and creates space for His presence through the practice of the spiritual disciplines. As a communicator of the gospel, the Christian artist has a higher responsibility to walk closely with the Lord and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Christian artist is more than an artist who happens to be a Christian. The Christian artist strives to worship God and to help others through songs and testimony from a public platform. Artist authenticity is repeatedly linked to the success or failure of communication of the message. Because the message is the gospel, there is much at stake.

While this project has endeavored to bring awareness to the artist's role in the process of Message Transmission, the artist is not responsible for how the audience may or may not respond to the message. The sovereignty of God is evident as seen in Isaiah 55:10-11:

> For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

This reality calls the Christian artist to a higher commitment as a communicator of the gospel message that accomplishes that which God has purposed. It is crucial to realize that this message is more than entertainment or a positive, feel-good word of encouragement. An artist who is faithful to the biblical authenticity in the message has no pressure to make people respond. There is a measure of confidence in the artist that a response will take place because of the power of the

gospel, even if the artist never witnesses the response. It is this gospel message that separates Christian artists from all other artists and elevates the responsibility of the Christian artist as a communicator of truth through song.

Congruency between the Christian artist and the piece is more than the artist simply making a connection to the song. Congruency between the Christian artist and the piece is seen when the artist embodies the message of the gospel with the character of personal life, communicating a genuine lifestyle of worship through an authentic relationship with God. Christian artist authenticity is not about an attempt to falsely *portray* authenticity but is rather about demonstrating a genuine walk with Christ that should be inspiring and encouraging. The Christian artist should strive to confidently say with Paul, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, New International Version).

As a result of earnest congruency between the artist and the piece, the artist is not only perceived by the audience as being authentic but genuinely *is* authentic. Genuine congruency between the artist and the piece, when that piece accurately reflects the truth of the gospel, affords the Christian artist the opportunity to cultivate a culture of trust with the audience through authentic communication of the gospel. This rich privilege to communicate the gospel through music demands artist authenticity that is significant in the eyes of man and essential in the eyes of God. The Christian artist is commissioned by God to share the gospel message through concert ministry. The requirements remain for the Christian artist to function with sincerity and to not peddle the Word of God for personal gain, benefit, or fame, as Paul asserts in 2 Corinthians 2:15-17:

> For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, like so many, peddlers

of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ (English Standard Version).

Limitations

The purposive sampling technique in selecting specific artists for the qualitative research portion does not intend to be a representative sample of *all* Christian artists. The sample size has represented various subgenres in the Christian music genre but is not considered a complete representation of the larger Christian music genre. Each participating artist is not a formal representative of each subgenre. Additionally, the lack of identifiers of the participants, such as gender, age, ethnicity, education, or professional career, limits some research insights into the individual perception of each participant. These identifiers, as well as the collective community from which the participant identifies, could influence the individual's perception.

Recommendations for Future Study

Several recommendations for future study have arisen from this study. One recommendation is a study of the inner working relationships between the artists with an awareness of the competitive nature in which they live and work and how these realities may affect the process of Message Transmission. Further research implications include surveying the opinions and reflections of those that are close to the artist—or perhaps a "quality assessment" of the people and nature of the relational interactions (discipleship-quality, trusted confidante level, "hang-out" level friend, superficial interactions). A specific kind of research endeavor through the IRB would be warranted to investigate the interpersonal relationships of the artists effectively and ethically on a deeper level than this study affords.

Second, a study of how interpersonal relationships and communal influence affect the identity of the audience. These influences have been investigated in this research project

regarding the artist. However, it would be beneficial to study the influence of community, peer relationships, and experiences on the audience participants and how these realities shape the perception of who the artist is in the eyes of the audience.

Third, a beneficial future study would be to examine the spiritual health of the audience, who may unknowingly form negative opinions of the artists based upon a critical spirit. While the audience contribution has helped support the premise for artist authenticity in this study, there is a side of the audience that may be more critical because the artist is a public figure with all of the trappings that such a representation may bring. Fourth, while three major components of Message Transmission have been examined in this study, the emphasis of the research has been placed on the artists–their practice of spiritual disciplines, lifestyle worship, and authenticity. Interest is warranted in a future study emphasizing the role of the audience member as an observer, perceiver, and message recipient. Several facets of the audience's life experiences influence the way the audience views the artists.

Fifth, a study is warranted to understand better the cultural expectations of each musical sub-genre in the way the artist should dress and appear, including hair and makeup. A split in the audience response to Question 11 of the Audience Survey (see figure 10) is potentially telling of a cultural shift, generational shift, or simply a divide of public expectation of the artist. Different musical sub-genres within the Christian music genre possibly have varying expectations of the artists who represent that sub-genre. A study to better understand the premise of these expectations may serve the artist community to know why the expectations exist and if the expectations hold merit according to the Word of God. This study would help Christian artists manage expectations and could provide a tool to better discern whether an expectation is

warranted or unrealistic. Insight into this topic would build communication between the artist and the audience by bridging the expectations of both the artists and the audience.

A final note for future research is the adjustment of the Artist Survey tool for the variable Concert Experience ($\alpha = .61$) and Message Transmission ($\alpha = .64$) to meet the standard .7 Cronbach's alpha. The three items utilized to measure each of these two variables require a rewording of the questions to tighten the reliability of these two variables in the Audience Survey tool. The researcher recommends that the three items utilized to measure each variable should be similar, such as all three questions to be rank order, the reliability is more likely to meet the Cronbach's alpha standard of .7. A pilot test should be implemented to refine the tool.

Implications for Practice

Practical application is of utmost importance in any study. This section develops five implications for practice. These are intended for the benefit of the Christian artist.

First, an artist's authenticity can be supported and even improved by becoming more like Christ through the practice of spiritual disciplines, lifestyle worship, and being an active member of a local church community. Every follower of Christ has a responsibility for spiritual growth. As a Christian artist with a public platform ministry, this responsibility is elevated. While hectic schedules may seem to eliminate time for spiritual growth, the spiritual disciplines are necessary for the Christian artist who is more than an artist who happens to be a Christian. The mission of Message Transmission of the gospel demands spiritual preparedness in the life of the Christian artist.

Being part of a faith-filled community is often challenging for the itinerant Christian artist. However, there is no substitute for the family of God, and there is no way to place a value on what this family does for the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of the artist. The

family of God provides a safe community to be completely true to self and grounded as a follower of Christ who is co-ministering with fellow believers. This community is humbling to the Christian artist who can genuinely serve alongside the body of Christ without being elevated or viewed with a higher status. The faith community serves the artist through genuine love and friendship that is not based upon a platform persona or stage success.

This community cares for and knowingly ministers to the artist and the artist's family. There is safety that can only be experienced within the local community of Christ's followers. From this safe haven, the Christian artist is covered by the prayers of God's people, loved as a fellow follower of Jesus Christ, and is grounded in humility afforded through genuine friendship. As one artist writes of characteristics observed in artists who function with integrity, the revered artist is described as "Active in church, obvious time with God and surrounded by people [who] hold them accountable."[9] This type of accountability is not a hindrance, nor does it encroach on the personal space of the artist. In contrast, accountability provides a stronger sense of security and assists the artist in walking humbly before the Lord. It is within the hedge of communal accountability that the artist is set free to be genuine and authentic.

Second, the song selection process is increasingly vital in the life and ministry of the Christian artist. This project highlights the significance of the message in the process of Message Transmission. In the world of the Christian artist, the message is the gospel being communicated through song. This gospel message is the truth of whom Jesus Christ is as depicted in the Bible and the application of his completed work on the cross in a believer's life. Therefore, Christian artists must be mindful of the song selection process for both recording and performing when focusing on Message Transmission as the communicator.

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[9] Artist Contemporary, Question 11 of the Artist Survey. See Appendix A.

Song selection resonates with the audience. Songs reflect a Christian artist's identity and often help to formulate the audience's perception of who the artist is as a person. The data suggests that Christian artists should be mindful of audience reception when selecting songs for performance and recording because of the importance placed on the song by the audience as message recipients and perceivers of the artists as messengers.

Third, Christian artists are wise to be aware of how they are perceived and what patterns or behaviors shape the audience's perception of the artist. It is this reality that drives the Christian artist to complete and humble dependence upon the Lord in every facet of life. The practice of the spiritual disciplines supports authenticity in the life of the artist and encourages the artist to live a lifestyle of worship. The concert experience is completely influenced by audience perception. The messenger has a certain responsibility to deliver the message so that it might be well received. Audience perception is critical in the process of Message Transmission as the audience receives the message that is communicated by the messenger who is a Christian artist.

The artist is being observed on and off the platform. Therefore, the artist must consider personal lifestyle choices and patterns when accepting the role of a communicator of the gospel as the artist's lifestyle off the platform is most influential in forming the audience's perception of the artist. In this knowledge, the warning from James resonates, "Not many of you should become teachers, my brother, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness" (James 3:1). In counting the cost, the artist considers the liability of lifestyle behavior and patterns as a messenger of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Fourth, the Christian artist realizes the consequences of personal actions on the message of the gospel being represented and transmitted. The nature of the gospel message prevents the artist from living for self. In contrast, the message of the gospel calls the Christian artist to die to

self. Paul urges in Romans 12:1, "Present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to

God, which is your spiritual service of worship." The responsibility of the artist extends off the

platform. Message Transmission is most successful when the artist is perceived as authentic. The

artist's lifestyle is expected to be congruent with the message of the songs being sung.

Congruence is also expected to some degree between the physical appearance of the artist

and the message of the song. A visual correspondence between the artists and the songs they sing

improves the opinion of the artists by those in the audience. In a society dominated by

appearance, the visual look of the artist is meaningful to the audience. Each musical subgenre

has different cultural expectations regarding the appearance, actions, and sounds of genuine

artists who represent the specified genre. Therefore, the Christian artist is sensible to consider

personal physical appearance as it also weighs upon the audience when formulating a perception

of the artist.

Fifth, the Christian artist is called to prioritize the role as a communicator with careful

attention given to song selection and lyrical content, interpretation of the lyric, congruence

between the artist and the piece, and being filled with the Holy Spirit as an authentic ambassador

for Christ on and off the platform. As an artistic communicator from a public platform, the artist

recognizes the influence of persona. One artist writes, "We absolutely try our best to be real on

stage and many nights this is true."[10] While there is an undercurrent of expectation from the

audience for artist authenticity, there is also a desire by the artists to be real. As a communicator,

the artists' desire should be authenticity on the platform and in lifestyle patterns. An artist being

true to his/her art is also viewed as a necessity by another artist who writes, "I believe that any

artist, but especially a Christian artist, should never sing or lead a song that they themselves

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[10] Artist Contemporary, Question 8 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix A.

wouldn't be affected by or resonate with."[11] The emphasis placed on being a Christian by this artist reflects the magnitude of the gospel message communicated through song. The message of the gospel demands artistic authenticity.

While authenticity is deemed a necessity, the audience is often unable to confirm that it is indeed a vital part of most Christian artists. This may be reflective of a disconnect observed through the moral failures of artists in the past. The break of trust when one Christian artist fails may lead to skepticism of the entire genre. Negative experiences with Christian artists may leave the audience cynical in their thinking of all Christian artists. Broken trust affects not only the relationship between the artist and the audience but also limits the ability of the artist to communicate effectively.

These are potential oppositions that a Christian artist faces and must work through to build trust as a communicator. This trust is built through song lyrics, presentation of the lyrics, and observed behavior of the artist on and off the platform. To be an authentic Christian who is also a Christian artist is not an unrealistic expectation but one that is most reflected in the internal qualities represented by integrity, consistency, and humility. These characteristics inform the authenticity of an artist and, in return, are contemplated by the audience when assessing the authenticity of an artist who is a communicator of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These observations cannot be ignored by the Christian artist but must be sincerely contemplated when presuming the role of communicator.

A Dissertation Summary

This research project emphasizes the process of Message Transmission of the gospel authentically between the Christian artist and the audience. In the Christian setting, the artist

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[11] Artist Contemporary, Question 2 of the Audience Survey. See Appendix A.

communicates the means by which people should live their lives and trust for eternity. For the artist to be duplicitous is sinful because it defies the heart of the very message he/she communicates. The emphasis on authenticity is derived from popular statements the researcher has heard as an artist, including, "The artist is the same on the stage and off the stage" and "The artist is the real deal." These comments, meant to compliment the artist, are indictments of an industry apparently ladened with duplicitousness and inauthenticity.

Authenticity is demanded of the artist as the messenger and communicator of the gospel message of Jesus Christ. The data supports the need for artist authenticity as well as the audience's expectation of artist authenticity. The artists also express that authenticity should be part of the life of the Christian artist. However, these artists willingly share in the anonymous online survey what they believe may be inhibiting artists from being authentic. The data from both surveys suggest the practice of spiritual disciplines supports authenticity and encourages daily expressions of lifestyle worship.

The primary role of the Christian artist as a communicator is established from both the audience's and the artist's perspective. Therefore, the premise of this research project as Message Transmission applies to the ministry of the Christian artist and is a necessary investigation to enhance the transmission of the gospel through song. The influence of the Christian artist is too significant to neglect. The audience's impression of Christ and his gospel is directly informed by the Christian artist delivering the message. The message is powerfully transformative when communicated by an authentic presentation of the true gospel by a true Christian artist. However, the soul of the audience member is eternally at stake if they choose to reject the gospel based upon a negative personal experience with a duplicitous artist sharing the gospel message.

God is often viewed through earthly circumstances rather than through His Word. If the artist fails to authentically represent Christ, the audience may assert poor beliefs about God based upon the negative perceptions of the artist. The eternal significance of the Christian artist's participation in the process of Message Transmission cannot be diminished or denied. Therefore, it is the aspiration of the researcher that this project would be just the beginning of a new spectrum of research in the field of Christian Worship.

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Appendix A

Artist Survey Data

QUESTION 1 – Which sub-genre of Christian music do you identify professional?
Artists from the following genres have participated in this survey: Southern Gospel (3), Many Genres (1), Acoustic/Folk (1), Praise and Worship (1), Classical Crossover (1), Contemporary (1), and Singer/Songwriter (1).

Identifying Labels:

Southern Gospel is labeled SG. Three participants are from the Southern Gospel genre and have been labeled SG1, SG2, and SG3. Their answers have been maintained in the same order for every question.

Acoustic/Folk is labeled as A/F.

Praise and Worship is labeled as P&W.

Contemporary is labeled as Contemporary.

Singer Songwriter is labeled as S/S.

Classical Crossover is labeled as Classical Crossover.

The artist who wrote in "Many Genres" is labeled as Many Genres.

QUESTION 2 – Is there inherent and/or necessary correspondence between the Christian artist and the piece when singing lyrics based upon the truth of the Word of God?

Artist (SG1) "Ideally yes, but that is not always the case."

Artist (SG2) "There should be. However, the talents and gifting God has given mankind allows for some to be able to emotionally perform a song that appears to show conviction even if the performer is not a believer."

Artist (SG3) "Yes."

Artist (A/F) "Yes"

Artist (P&W) "Yes."

Artist (Contemp.) "Absolutely, I believe that any artist but especially a Christian artist should never sing or lead a song that they themselves wouldn't be affected by or resonate with. If it's just a 'good song' but there's no real connection to the song by the artist, I believe the audience can feel the disingenuous communication."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "Absolutely. Of course God's Word will not return void, and Truth can still penetrate the heart of the hearer even if there is no correspondence between the Christian artist and the lyrical content, but, it is much more unlikely that the artist can properly interpret (with the necessary passion and emotion) the lyrics if there is no belief from the heart."

Artist (Many Genres) "Not necessarily. Many artists sing songs and do projects not totally based on personal commitment or deep religious beliefs."

Artist (S/S) "I believe the impact of the message is certainly enhanced when the artist is personally invested in the lyrical content because the audience (congregation) can sense that connection. Perhaps even more true when the lyrical content is biblically-based. It would be difficult to 'believe' an artist if they are singing things they don't personally believe."

QUESTION 3 – When singing Christian songs, are there intentional, emotional, and cognitive connections being made to the song lyrics in rehearsal and/or when on the platform in a performance? If connections are being made in the performance but not in the rehearsal, please explain why. If connections are being made in the rehearsal but not in the performance, please explain why.

Artist (SG1) "Speaking only for myself, it is easier to make those connections in the performance than in rehearsal or recording. In rehearsal/studio time, you are more focused on the execution of the song and making sure the technical elements are in place. In performance, those distractions have been assuaged and you are more free to focus on the communicating the words to the songs to the audience, and relating them to your own experience."

Artist (SG2) "I have experienced all the above myself and I have witnessed this from those I have sung with over the years. There are so many factors at play that will contribute to the emotional response to a lyric. Personally, when I do not feel an emotional connection to a lyric in rehearsal or live performance I rest on the fact that the theology in the song is true and the power of truth works inspire [in spite] of me.

Artist (SG3) "Yes."

Artist (A/F) "For me it is both but sometimes more so when there are people in front of you- sometimes the Holy Spirit allows you to see their pain and that helps you feel the lyrics as you are sharing them."

Artist (P&W) "No necessarily in rehearsal because you are trying to make sure you can play it confidently. However, if you are rehearsing the song, it has gone thru the rigorous process if either doing or not doing the song because of the lyric and or music or both. Familiarity to audience *us* [is] also extremely important.*"*

Artist (Contemp.) "I think it can be both. For rehearsal there are probably songs that you personally resonate with more than others. That doesn't mean you are disconnected with other songs but there are always certain songs that you sing that you just always feel. As far as concerts go, people have often asked how I can sing the same songs night after night and keep it fresh. They would ask if it ever got old my answer is always absolutely not. The songs never got hurt or because the audience changed every night. With new people you have new connections and fresh faces look at you hoping a song will hit them right where they need it."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "Yes and no (to both questions) depending on the day. There are some rehearsal days when I (personally) focus more on the technical aspects of the music: i.e. intonation, clarity, choreography, etc. Also, when you practice and review the same material day after day, unfortunately, a passivity can creep in, and practice sometimes takes on a more technical approach. Yet on other days (often depending on what is taking place in life), practice becomes my own time of worship; A time to reflect and remind myself of the Truths contained in the lyric. Sometimes practice even has to end early because I get moved to tears by certain phrases and Scriptural Truths I needed to be reminded off.

In performance, it is also a mixture. My desire is to lead others in worship, and in so doing, you yourself must be worshiping…leading by example. But mistakes and musical errors also distract the listener from worship, so it's just as critical to be mindful of the musicality and technique. If the heart's ultimate desire is to glory Christ in humility, and make His name know through a performance, then I believe God can be glorified throughout a performance even when the mind is jumping back and forth between the lyric and the technical."

Artist (Many Genres) "Connection may be made in both instances, but may not. The connection may be primarily musical, professional, and performance's based. Assumptions about the personal spiritual connection of an artist or performer are not wise, just as assumptions about any other person's spiritual depth or personal commitment to God.

Artist (S/S) "As I work with the musicians that accompany me in artistry and / or in leading worship, I am very intentional about helping them connect with the messages of the songs especially if they are instrumentalists. I do this so that the 'performance' is just overflow of the message's impact in our personal lives first (hopefully)."

QUESTION 4 – When selecting songs for RECORDINGS, rank the following in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Please select only one 1, one 2, one 3, etc.

Artist (SG1) (1) Commercial Appeal , (2) Melodies, (3) Lyrics, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (SG2) (1) Lyrics, (1) Melodies, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Commercial Appeal, (2) Audience Reception

Artist (SG3) (1) Lyrics, (1) Audience Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist (A/F) (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Lyrics, (3) Melodies, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Audience Reception

Artist (P&W) (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (Contemp.) (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist (Classical Crossover) (1) Lyrics, (1), Melodies, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Audience Reception, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist (Many Genres) (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Commercial Appeal, (3) Audience Reception

Artist (S/S) (1) Lyrics, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Commercial Appeal

QUESTION 5 – When selecting songs for PERFORMANCES, rank the following in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 5 being the least important. Please select only one 1, one 2, one 3, etc.

Artist (SG1) (1) Commercial Appeal, (2) Melodies, (3) Lyrics, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (SG2) (1) Lyrics, (1), Melodies, (2) Audience. Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (SG3) (1) Lyrics, (2) Audience Reception, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (3) Commercial Appeal

Artist (A/F) (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (2) Audience Reception, (3) Melodies, (4) Lyrics, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist (P&W) (1) Melodies, (2) Lyrics, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Commercial Appeal, (5) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (Contemp.) (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (3) Audience Reception, (4) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (5) Commercial Appeal

Artist (Classical Crossover) (1) Lyrics, (1) Melodies, (1) Commercial Appeal, (1) Audience Reception, (1) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song

Artist (Many Genres) (1) Lyrics, (2) Melodies, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Commercial Appeal, (3) Audience Reception

Artist (S/S) (1) Lyrics, (2) Overall Impression or Fit of the Song, (3) Melodies, (4) Audience Reception, (5) Commercial Appeal

QUESTION 6 – Provide a brief definition of lifestyle worship.

Artist (SG1) "Being in a constant state of worship, praise and prayer. Daily!!!"

Artist (SG2) "Lifestyle worship, to me, is one's personal spiritual practices in everyday life, such as Bible reading, prayer, church attendance, personal study, etc.

Artist (SG3) "To me lifestyle worship is living in the reality and faith with gratitude of who God has revealed Himself to be through scripture."

Artist (Acoustic/Folk) "Making decisions in your everyday life that uphold a Godly relationship."

Artist (P/W) "Lifestyle Worship be the way we live our lives on a daily basis. Being in a constant awareness and worship of the Lord. All that we do to glorify him daily."

Artist (Contemp.) "Worshiping the triune God in everyday life. Hey n the mountain and I'm the mundane."

Artist (Singer/Songwriter) "I suppose it means that a person can, and does, worship throughout their day, or week, and not just in corporate times of worship within a congregation."

Artist (Many Genres) "Obscure question. Have no idea what you mean by 'lifestyle worship.'"

Artist (Classical Crossover) "A life that is solely devoted to serving Christ in both the mundane and exciting things of life. Worship is not just a time of music. It is daily dying to ourselves, and living a holy life (in accordance to the law of God) as image bearers of Christ, and living to the praise and glory of God our Savior."

QUESTION 7 – Is lifestyle worship something that is, or does it need to be developed?

Artist (SG1) – "When one becomes a Christian, one has no concept of these spiritual practices. A new Christian is a blank slate that must be taught, encouraged to grow. This is the whole concept of discipleship. Many Christians have not been truly discipled to grow in their personal spiritual life. They may be completely sincere in their beliefs, but have not developed their own practices. This may be due to lack of discipleship, lack of time, other distractions, etc. and is very common amongst Christian in general, but especially Christian music artists. Our travel and work schedules present challenges that we must work harder to overcome."

Artist (SG2) "As with anything involved in the believers life, growth and maturity should be expected."

Artist (SG3) "One must train him/her self to create a lifestyle of worship."

Artist (Acoustic/Folk) "Yes it does become easier with time."

Artist (P/W) "In one sense, it is discipleship. We are always growing in maturity."

Artist (Contemp.) "If your worship is authentic it will develop whether it's intentional or not."

Artist (Singer/Songwriter) "It is mandatory in the Christian, but there will always be room for growth. It is part of our sanctification journey! We will never perfectly worship, and we will never perfectly be holy, but we should strive to grow in our likeness to Christ, through His grace alone.

Artist (Many Genres) "No answer to this. Worship refuses to be labeled. It is a condition of the heart in relation to God, whether individually in nature, in solitude, while reading spiritual texts, listening to or singing music, in corporate settings with other believers, or dozens of other settings."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "Some of both. I believe worshipful responses to God's creation, or perceived activity of His in the world are natural, even for a young believer, when a person is paying attention to those things as acts of God. However, just as in corporate worship, there is certainly room for education…helping people understand more, from a biblical perspective, about what God wants from us in worship."

QUESTION 8 - What do the following statements mean to you? "This artist is the same on the stage and off the stage." "This artist is the real deal."

Artist (SG) "The fan perceives the artist to be sincere in their beliefs and feels that the artist is a genuinely kind, friendly person. HOWEVER, this has no bearing upon the artist's ACTUAL authenticity. I have had that statement made about me by people who had literally met me right before I went on stage. They had no way of knowing what I was like at home, but they perceived me to be a nice person. We have all witnessed examples of 'wolves in sheep's clothing' who were able to fool large numbers of people into thinking they were believable and authentic, but weren't. Knowing the difference can largely be only spiritually discerned and not based purely off personality or appearance."

Artist (SG) "On the surface those statements are to suggest that the artist is above reproach and lives a lifestyle reflective of the purity found in the lyrics of the songs they perform."

Artist (SG) "The artist lives what he/sings."

Artist (Acoustic/Folk) *"Most important comment I could hear!!"*

Artist (P&W) "He is a true follower of Christ and wants to serve the Lord with his gifts and wholeheartedly believes in the word of God and is humble."

Artist (Contemp) "In my opinion these are naïve statements. We absolutely try our best to be real on stage and many nights this is true, and I will say that I have met some of my hero's in Christian music and felt that they were the real deal but real is so much deeper than that. Real is how they respond when they are treated poorly or just in everyday life. How would an audience member truly know if they are the same person on and off the stage? It's impossible."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "They don't put on a 'super holy' performance façade, but are genuinely believing and feeling the lyrics they are sharing/performing. They aren't just going through the motions as a good performer, but they are striving to live out on a daily basis what they sing about."

Artist (Many Genres) "In order for this to be a legitimate statement, one would have to have had experience with the artist both in public performance situations where the moving of the Spirit could be sense in the corporate body of the audience and in unguarded private living situations. In other words, probably what happens at McDonalds after the concert is more important than on stage during the concert."

Artist (Singer/Songwriter) "To me this statement means that the artist's personality is essentially the same whether they. Are on the platform, or off of it. In the context of a Christian artist, it further means that the artist's spiritual sincerity is the same on and off."

QUESTION 9 – Is authenticity a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist? Explain.

Artist (SG1) "It should always be an ideal we strive for. However, we are human and we fail. If we present ourselves as superhuman with no apparent flaws or sins, we will inevitably disappoint people. True authenticity means we share the appropriate parts of our story with people with a redemptive theme, be honest, and kind to others.

Artist (SG2) "It should be. Otherwise Christ is being used for selfish motive."

Artist (SG3) "Yes. God has made everyone different with talents, abilities and kingdom duties."

Artist (A/F) "It should be but sadly not always is."

Artist (P&W) "Absolutely. Otherwise, just be an artist and quit using the term Christian if Christ is not at the center of the ministry he has entrusted you with."

Artist (Contemp.) "To truly connect with the audience on a heart and mind level yes. Being authentic and semi vulnerable with the audience is necessary but I do believe that artists should be wise in how they communicate their vulnerability. These days with social media the things we say can be twisted to be something completely different."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "Yes! According to the second commandment, 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain (Exodus 20:7)', if we are confessing the Lord Jesus Christ on stage, but don't live a life worthy of Him or in accordance to His Word off oof stage, we have broken that command. We have also lied to the audience and told them that we are someone we actually are not."

Artist (Many Genres) "Depends on the artist, and only he/she and Jesus knows. As an artist and lyricist, if my professional life and my personal life do not match, I would not write 'Christian Songs.' I would write song that demand no life consistency."

Artist (S/S) "Just like in all art forms, I believe the art will have the most impact when the artist fully believes what they are communicating. So, authenticity might not be 'necessary' for an artist to be effective at some level, but that effectiveness is certainly enhanced when that authenticity is present.

QUESTION 10 – Is authenticity largely being pursued by most Christian artists? If yes, please provide a list of practices, beliefs, or characteristics that you find evident in these artists. If no, please provide insight into what you believe is missing (or present) in the lives of artists that is preventing a pursuit of authenticity.

Artist (SG1) "I would not describe authenticity as a pursuit, but rather, as a way of being. You don't try to be authentic. Such is not truly authentic. You just…are what you are.

There are some who live their lives this way, and other(s) who try very hard to maintain the appearance of authenticity, as it's better for a Christian personality. I have lived as one of the latter for many years. I was afraid to share my true self with people, and ran from vulnerability. The last few years have been a gradual discovery of the freedom that comes in not trying, but just being.

I think there are many, many people who fit this category. Not being one's true self is rooted in fear: fear of rejection if we do not live up to people's expectations, fear of what may happen to our careers if people suddenly decide they don't 'like us' for some arbitrary reason. Those who are truly authentic almost always are grounded in strong, loving families, a solid church community and have a clear sense of self beyond their music careers or public persona. Those who are not authentic are often missing those crucial elements in their lives, or have not truly begun a relationship with Christ at all, and there are MANY of those in the Christian music world.

Artist (SG2) "In my experience I would say most artists are trying to live for Christ. The biggest stumbling block I have witnessed is the lack of rest and spiritual growth because of excessive touring. Most artist start out with pure motives but end up distracted and lose focus because of the relentless demands of touring, recording, business and family demands. Specifically in Southern Gospel music the touring schedule is very destructive.

Artist (SG3) "I think a lot of artist(s) are caught up in the past. Wanting to be like artist from yesteryear. Each artist has a specific calling on their life. Be who God made you.

Artist (A/F) "*If* [I'd] say in most artists yes. Prayer, fasting, church attendance, kindness, generosity…

Artist (P&W) "Sadly no. I would say most artists are progressive in their thinking and if they could really speak from their heart I am afraid we would be very disappointed. I think they say what they think everyone wants to hear. I also think they keep to themselves the things they know are not accepted in the conservative circles of Christianity for fear that their songs won't get played on the radio. Or maybe for fear that someone won't book them. This also works on the other side as well. Fear of speaking the truth of God['s] word because it may hurt someone's feelings."

Artist (Contemp.) That's hard to say. In my opinion I believe artist[s] would say they are authentic because everyone wants to believe that component is there, but in reality their personal

lives are a mess. I've personally experienced both. The key is: Being involved in the Body of Christ. A present church member who uses their gifts in the church. Also, a consistent devotional life. Spending time in the word, being involved in Bible study or small groups. Also, having people in your life that hold you accountable, not 'yes' people. But people that call you out on things.

Artist (Classical Crossover) "I believe the Christian music industry has a mixture of those who are authentic, and those who are not. The fame, fortune, and media can have such a powerful effect on an artists' humility and devotion to Christ. But then I know many artists who by God's grace fight the temptation of pride, and fight to hold fast to the Truth they know…despite the pressures of fame and applause. Those two things (fame and applause) are such powerful and dangerous giants, that only the Lord can help us conquer."

Artist (Many Genres) "I refuse to answer this question. Only God knows the answer to it. But my personal experience (which is quite broad across many genres on Christian music), the people I interact with and travel with an perform with are the real deal. That's why we travel with them.

Artist (S/S) "In my limited personal exposure to Christian artists, I would say that authenticity is being pursued by them. I would guess that means the artist has a personal devotional life with God, that they are pursuing an intimate relationship with the Lord by reading His word and praying to Him. And, in contrast, I believe it becomes evident when those things are missing in an artist's life when something happens to disqualify them, even if just for a time, from continuing to share their art. I believe restoration is almost always possible, but when an artist's life and art do not match, *their* [there] will eventually be a breakage in *there* [their] life that usually requires that they stop sharing their art for a season."

QUESTION 11 – Think of an artist who you believe functions with integrity. What are the characteristics that shape your assessment of this individual?

Artist (SG1) "They have always been kind in every single social interaction I have observed them in. They treat those around them with respect, whether it's a promoter, pastor, fan, tech worker, or the janitor. Their families and coworkers in ministry speak highly of them. Their reputation is of financial integrity in business. They do not appear to think more highly of themselves than they ought: they champion people, and deflect attention away from themselves. This individual is universally admired in his field and has a long career to show for it."

Artist (SG2) "Discipline, focus and balance."

Artist (SG3) "Humility, character"

Artist (A/F) "Humility, grace, love…not prideful or boastful. Honors God in all things."

Artist (P&W) "Knowledge of the word of God and living it out practically on and off stage."

Artist (Contemp.) "The same things I just mentioned. Active in church, obvious time with God and surrounded by people [who] hold them accountable."

Artist (Classical Crossover) "They understand their depravity apart from Christ. They understand that they are in need of a Savior daily. They understand that their greatest accomplishments are still nothing in light of eternity. They understand that their greatest talents and gifts were given them by their Creator."

Artist (Many Genres) "Certainly, this entails much more than their stage life. In fact, that may be way down the list of criteria. Maybe first would be how they treat the waitress at Waffle House and how they react when another artist 'wins' by making a moment of impact for the night. And again, I don't even have access to their attitudes at home in their communities or homes. I can, however, sense their spirits over months of travel where kindness, endurance, forgiveness, Christlike attitudes when conditions are far less that perfect demanded.

Artist (S/S) "Steve Green, Steven Curtis Chapman. These are two men who I have had the privilege to be around enough personally to vouch for their integrity. They are not perfect, and would not claim to be, but I do believe they live lives that match what they 'preach' on platforms. A great Steve Green quote is something he told me personally once: 'A message prepared in the mind reaches a mind; a message prepared in the heart (emotions) reaches the emotions; but a message prepared in the life can change a life.'"

QUESTION 12 – As an artist on the platform, what is usually going through your mind (e.g. musicality, appearance, technique, lyrical interpretation, artistry, communication, etc.)? Explain.

Artist (SG1) "All of the above, simultaneously, enter your mind at some point. My greatest focus in the moment of being there with the audience is communicating with the people in front of me: reading the crowd and making friends with them. Finding something personal I can share with them that will help them know me better, trust me, and help them know we have something in common. A successful performance, for me, is one that broke down the wall between me and them, and created connections. We all left feeling like we had made friends and had a shared experience."

Artist (SG2) "Communication first. We are leaders and in that respect it is our job to guide an audience to a place where scriptural truth will penetrate their hearts and mind so that the Holy Spirit may use it to draw the audience member closer to Christ. Secondly I am just trying to protect the voice."

Artist (SG3) "Communication mostly but some of all of it."

Artist (A/F) "All of those examples. Presentation, performance, purpose, ministering to people who are just hanging on by a thread."

Artist (P&W) "Communication first and foremost and then musicality excellence. Passion of message. And most of all humility in spirit."

Artist (Contemp.) "I was in a group so musicality was essential, but lyrical interpretation was very important as well. The way we communicate in song is when we understand and resonate with the lyric. Appearance is important as well.

Artist (Classical Crossover) "A little bit of it all ☺"

Artist (Many Genres) "I am overwhelmed by the enormous need in an audience and my total inability to meet it. I try not to see an audience as a 'mass' and try to think about actual individuals I've talked to or received communications from. I think often of the loaves and fishes miracle and realize I am just the kid with a totally inadequate lunch. If God doesn't show up tonight, these people will not only leave hungry, but disillusioned and cynical.

Artist (S/S) "Yes. In order to be excellent, I am thinking of all those things. However, my personal spiritual giftedness (teaching) makes the communication element the. Most important to me. If the listener doesn't walk away different (in their beliefs, their thoughts, etc.) than they walked in I have failed."

Appendix B

Audience Survey Data

QUESTION 1

What type(s) of Christian music do you primarily listen to? Please check all that apply.
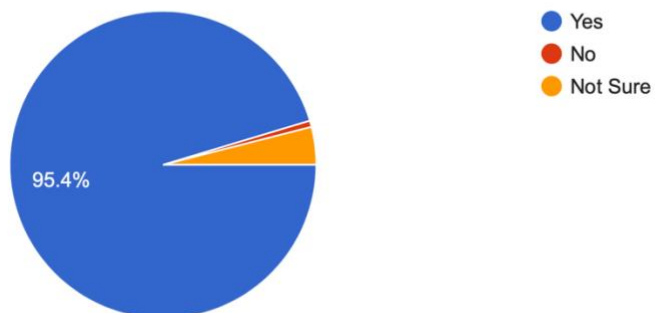151 responses
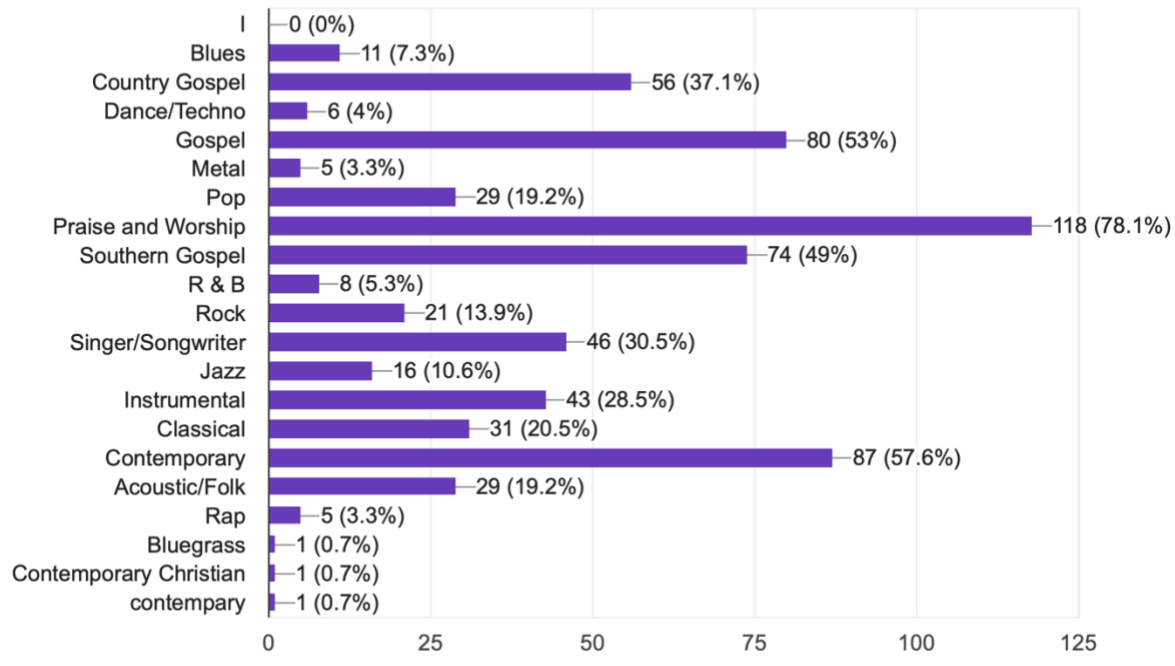
Praise and Worship - 118 (78.1%)
Contemporary - 87 (57.6%) / 89 (59.6%?)
Gospel - 80 (53%)
Southern Gospel - 74 (49%)
Country Gospel - 56 (37.1%)
Singer/Songwriter – 46 (30.5%)
Instrumental – 43 (28.5%)
Classical – 31 (20.5%)
Acoustic/Folk – 29 (19.2%)
Pop – 29 (19.2%)
Rock – 21 (13.9%)
Jazz – 16 (10.6%)

Blues – 11 (7.3%)
R & B – 8 (5.3%)
Dance/Techno – 6 (4%)
Metal. - 5 (3.3%)
Rap – 5 (3.3%)
Bluegrass – 1 (0.7%)

QUESTION 2:

Should the artist's life demonstrate the words they are singing?
151 responses

Yes = 144 (95.4%)
No = 1 (.7%)
Not Sure = 6 (4%)

QUESTION 3:

Can lifestyle worship improve artist authenticity by the practice of spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, Bible reading, etc.?
151 responses
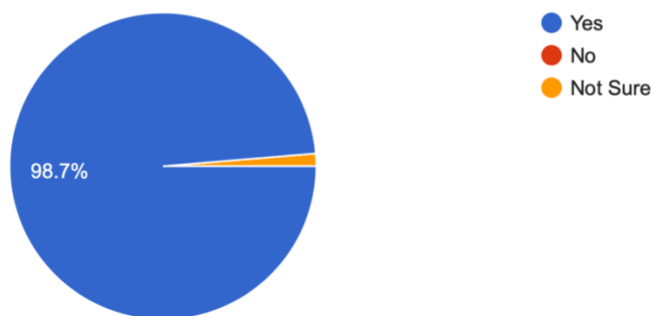
Yes = 149 (98.7%)
No = 0
Not Sure = 2 (1.3%)

QUESTION 4:

Is lifestyle worship evident in MOST Christian artists?
151 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

48.3%

11.3%

40.4%
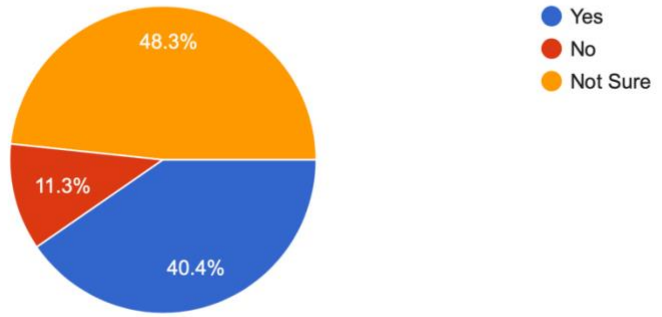
Yes = 61 (40.4%)
No = 17 (11.3%)
Not Sure = 73 (48.3%)

QUESTION 5:

What do the following statements mean to you? "The artist is the same on the stage and off the stage." "The artist is the real deal."
151 responses

- The artist is genuine
- The artist appears genuine
- The artist is nice
- The artist is consistent. He/She practices what he/she preaches.
- On stage behavior is consistent with off-stage behavior with the implication that the on-stage presentation conveys Christian character.

22.5%

75.5%
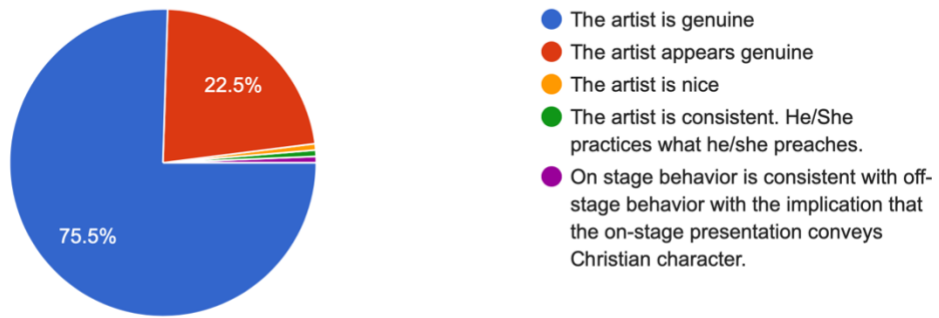
The artist is genuine = 114 (75.5%)
The artist appears genuine = 34 (22.5%)

QUESTION 6:

Is authenticity a necessary component in the life of the Christian artist?
151 responses
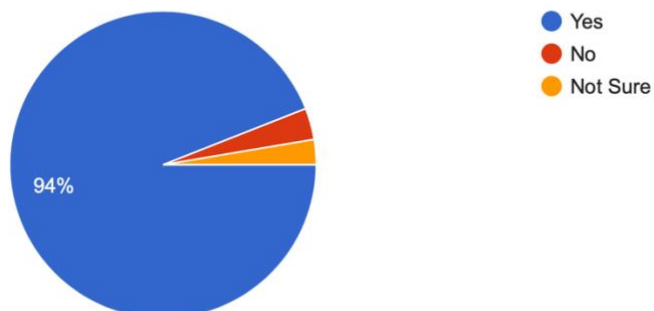
Yes = 142 (94%)
No = 5 (3.3%)
Not Sure = 4 (2.6%)

QUESTION 7:

How do you assess authenticity in an artist? Please check all that apply.
151 responses

In
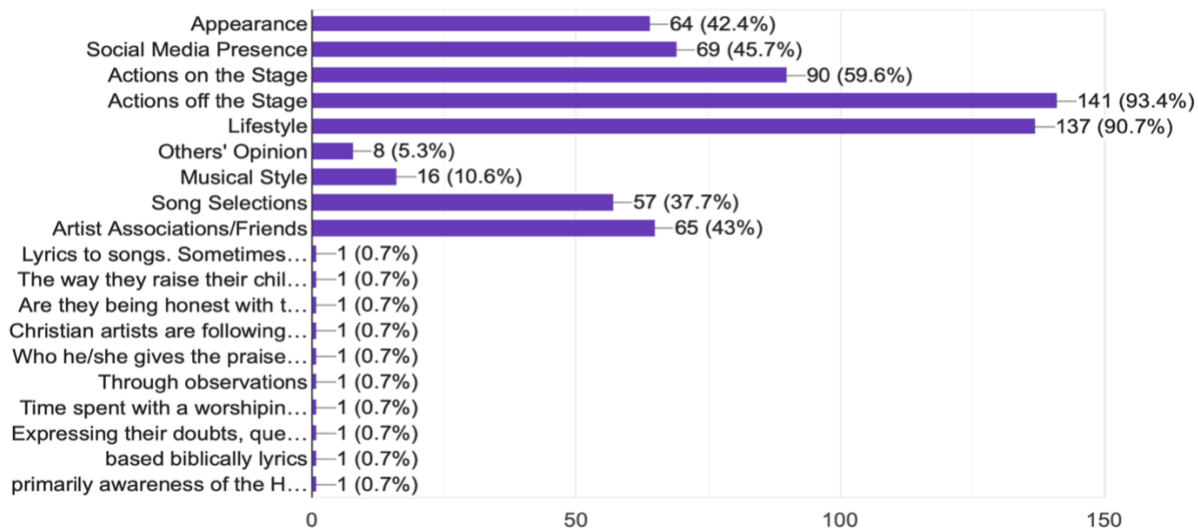
Order from Greatest to Least:
- Actions off the Stage - 141 (93.4%)
- Lifestyle - 137 (90.7%)
- Actions on the Stage – 90 (59.6%)
- Social Media Presence – 69 (45.7%)

- Artist Association/Friends – 65 (43%)
- Appearance – 64 (42.4%)
- Song Selections – 57 (37.7%)
- Musical Style – 16 (10.6%)
- Others' Opinions – 8 (5.3%)

WRITE INS:
- Lyrics to songs. Sometimes you can tell they artist is walking through stuff with the Lord and it's reflective in their creations or what they choose to sing – 1 (0.7%)
- They way they raise their children. – 1 (0.7%)
- Are they being honest with their song writing? Are they writing about personal struggles and experiences with God or are they repeating tropes. 1 (0.7%)
- Christian artists are following people just like everyone else and judging should be left up to God. 1 (0.7%)
- Who he/she gives the praise to and directs the attention to will tell me a lot about the motivation behind their music. -1 (0.7%)
- Through observations. 1 (0.7%)
- Time spent with a worshiping community – 1 (0.7%)
- Expressing their doubts, questions, struggles. Whether or not they support outreach & social justice. 1 (0.7%)
- Based biblically lyrics 1 (0.7%)
- Primarily awareness of the Holy Spirit through the presentation – 1 (0.7%)

QUESTION 8:

Do you believe authenticity is largely being pursued by MOST Christian artists?
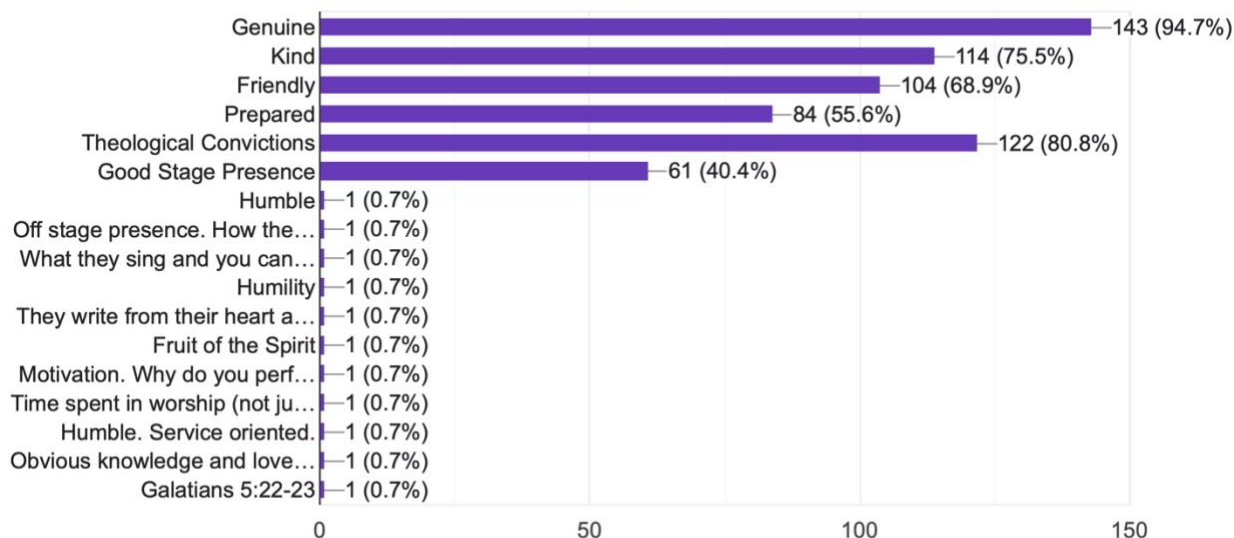151 responses
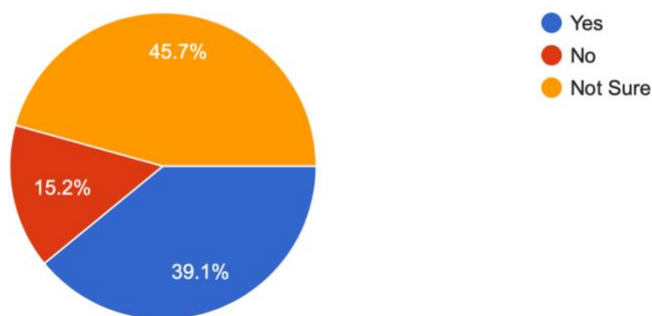
Yes = 59 (39.1%)
No = 23 (15.2%)
Not Sure = 69 (45.7%)

QUESTION 9:

Include any of the following practices, beliefs, or characteristics you find evident in authentic artists. Select all that apply.

151 responses

In Order from Greatest to Least:

- Genuine 143 (94.7%)
- Theological Convictions 122 (80.8%)
- Kind 114 (75.5%)
- Friendly 104 (68.9%)
- Prepared 84 (55.6%)
- Good Stage Presence – 61 (40.4%)

WRITE INS:
- Humble – 1 (0.7%)
- Humility – 1 (0.7%)
- Humble. Servant Oriented. – 1 (0.7%)
- Off stage presence. How they interact with others. 1 (0.7%)
- What they sing and you can see it in their eyes besides their – 1 (0.7%)
- They write from their hearts and don't recycled tropes. – 1 (0.7%)
- Fruit of the Spirit – 1 (0.7%)
- Motivation. Why do you perform? – 1 (0.7%)
- Time spent in worship (not just music) – 1 (0.7%)
- Obvious knowledge and love of the scriptures. – 1 (0.7%)
- Galatians 5:22-23 – 1 (0.7%)

QUESTION 10:

Think of a Christian artist you believe functions with integrity. What are the characteristics that shape your assessment of this individual? Please check all that apply.

151 responses
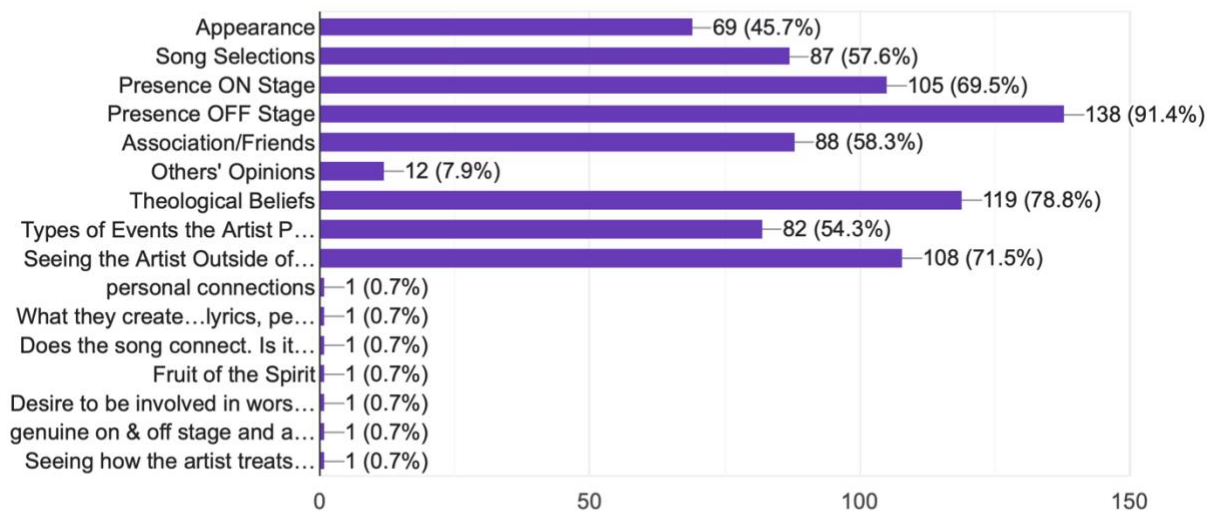
In Order from Greatest to Least:

- Presence OFF Stage – 138 (91.4%)
- Theological Beliefs – 119 (78.8%)
- Seeing the Artist Outside of a Concert Event – 108 (71.5%)
- Presence ON Stage – 105 (69.5%)
- Association/Friends – 88 (58.3%)
- Song Selections – 87 (57.6%)
- Types of Events the Artist Participates – 82 (54.3%)
- Appearance – 69 (45.7%)
- Others' Opinions – 12 (7.9%)

WRITE INS:

- Personal Connections – 1 (0.7%)
- What they create…lyrics, performance environments, social media, 1 (0.7%)
- Does the song connect. Is it authentic and truthful – 1 (0.7%)
- Fruit of the Spirit – 1 (0.7%)
- Desire to be involved in worship (aside from being paid) – 1 (0.7%)
- Genuine on & off stage and a heart to serve through music – 1 (0.7%)
- See how the artist treats people he/she sings to and works with – 1 (0.7%)

QUESTION 11:

Do you expect a correlation between the physical appearance of the artist (hair, makeup, clothing, etc.) and the message of the piece?
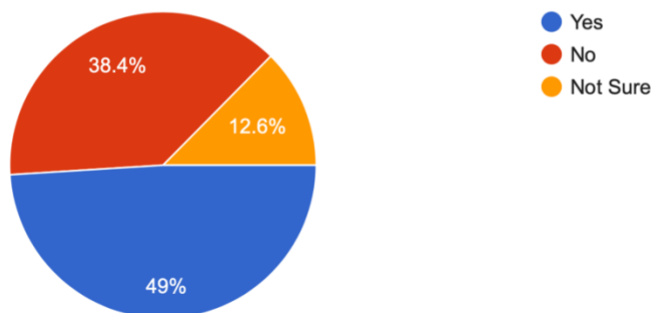
151 responses
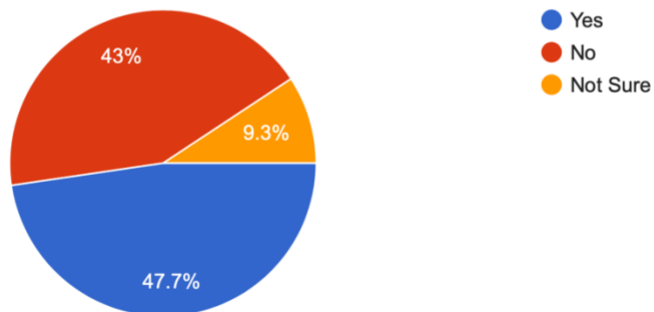
Yes = 72 (47.7%)
No = 65 (43%)
Not Sure = 14 (9.3%)

QUESTION 12:

Does a visual correlation between the appearance of the artist and the contents of the song improve your opinion of the artist?
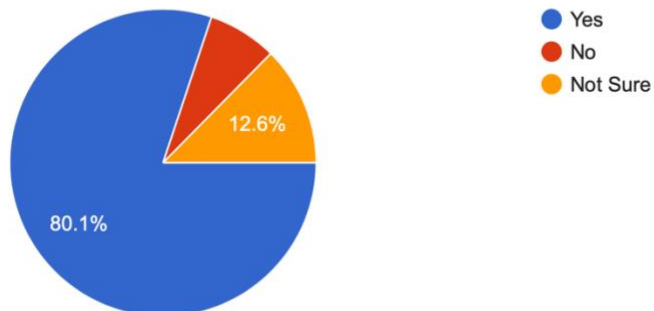
151 responses

Yes = 74 (49%)
No = 58 (38.4%)
Not Sure = 19 (12.6%)

QUESTION 13:

Do you feel a friendly connection with the artist you most admire?
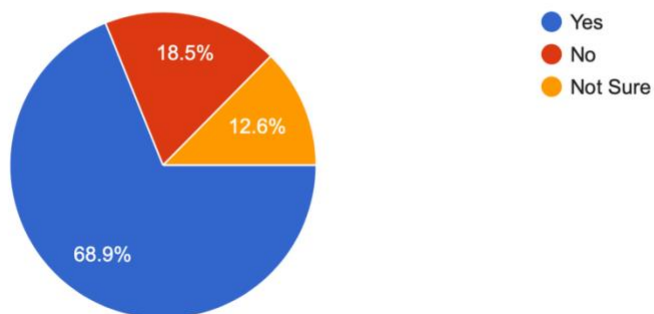151 responses

Yes = 121 (80.1%)
No = 11 (7.3%)
Not Sure = 19 (12.6%)

QUESTION 14:

During your last concert experience, did the artist sing your favorite song?
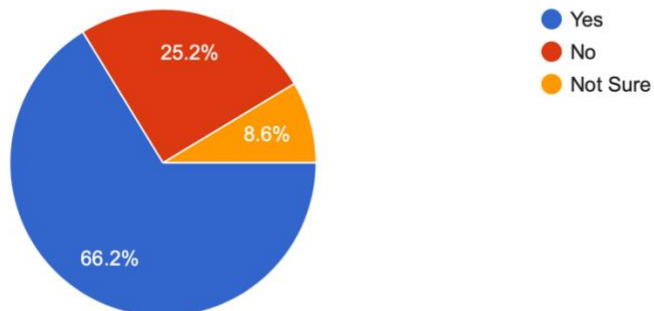151 responses

Yes = 104 (68.9%)
No = 28 (18.5%)
Not Sure = 19 (12.6%)

QUESTION 15:

When the artist sings your favorite song, does it make you feel more connected to the artist?
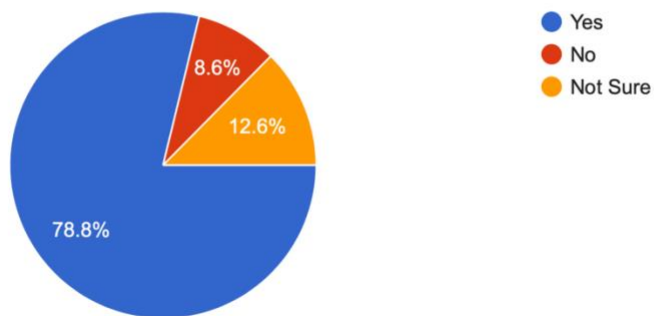151 responses

Yes = 100 (66.2%)
No = 38 (25.2%)
Not Sure = 13 (8.6%)

QUESTION 16:

Do the songs the artist sings reflect upon who the artist is as a person?
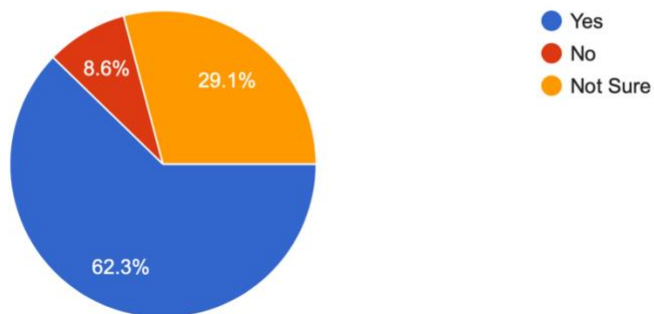151 responses

Yes = 119 (78.8%)
No = 13 (8.6%)
Not Sure = 19 (12.6%)

QUESTION 17:

Do you believe MOST Christian artists believe and live what they sing?
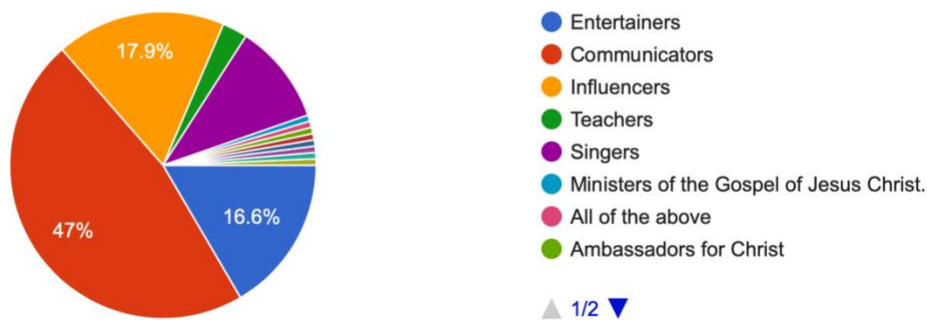151 responses

Yes = 94 (62.3%)
No = 13 (8.6%)
Not Sure = 44 (29.1%)

QUESTION 18:

Christian Artists are primarily:
151 responses

In order from Greatest to Least:

- Communicators – 71 (47%)
- Influencers – 27 (17.9%)
- Entertainers – 25 (16.6%)
- Singers – 16 (10.6%)
- Teachers – 4 (2.6%)

WRITE INS:

- Ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – 1 (0.7%)
- All of the Above – 1 (0.7%)
- Ambassadors for Christ – 1 (0.7%)
- Worship Leaders – 1 (0.7%)
- Worship Leaders – 1 (0.7%)
- Ministers to the Glory of God – 1 (0.7%)
- Couldn't settle on one. Question wasn't clear as to whether you meant to peak as to what they are supposed to be or what they are regardless. Running out of space here… lol Anyhow…they are all those things and thus must meet high standards at listed in Paul's epistles. – 1 (0.7%)
- The most successful and effective artists are a combination of all of these. – 1 (0.7%)

QUESTION 19:

Does the observed lifestyle of the artist affect your opinion of the artist's songs?
151 responses
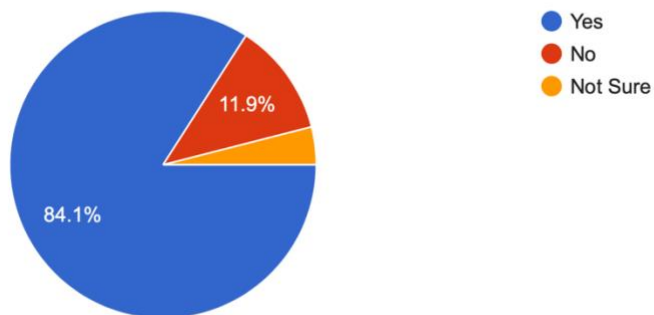
Yes = 127 (84.1%)
No = 18 (11.9%)
Not Sure = 6 (4%)

QUESTION 20:

Do the songs "make" the artist, or the artist "make" the songs? Explain.

Written Responses:

1. Make the song.
2. Artist makes the songs. They are an extension of their feelings and beliefs.
3. I think the Holy Spirit inspires the artist and God gives the glory
4. The artist makes the song. Two people can do the exact same song, but if you aren't a story teller of can't get the message of the song across, it looses [sic] its meaning.
5. Songs make the artist.
6. Songs make the artist. Depends on what they are singing about and how relatable they are.
7. I think the answer is both. Some songs that have been written have moved me deeply without even knowing the artist. However, I have heard some songs that I didn't appreciate until I. met the artist and heard the story of how God gave the song, and then I loved the song.
8. An artist make [sic] the song
9. It is a mutually beneficial relationship. The audience knows the artist for the songs, but the songs have no voice or identify without the artist.
10. Songs
11. A great song can become the vehicle through which the artist receives their platform to effectively minister.
12. The songs make the artist because I've got huge collections of songs I like, who names I couldn't even tell you sings it. The message of the song, the instruments, rhythms. And tempos all play a huge part in whether the song is good. I really don't care about the artists name.
13. Not necessarily either
14. Songs make the artists
15. Both. Songs – singing & writing them – come from our heart but can also shape & better our heart.
16. Artist makes the song.
17. I think the artist "makes" the songs because of what the artist puts of himself/herself into the songs when the sing them.
18. Both
19. The Artist definitely makes the songs!!!!!!
20. I think the artist makes the songs; in other words, they communicate what the song means to them in the way they present it.
21. It can be both. The lifestyle must match the song, but some songs project a perceived lifestyle.
22. Artist make the songs, talent comes from the artist.
23. Artist make [sic] the song
24. Artist makes the aong [sic]
25. They go hand in hand. Both are important.

26. Artist "make" the song. Words can be said or song by anyone, but a Christian artist hopefully is an actual Christian and therefore the words they are singing should matter to them. It's there act of worship to the Lord.

27. I think it can be both. Some songs create a persona the artist has to live with for a long time. But that doesn't make them authentic. When artists believe something deeply, create something that communicates. The message uniquely, and performs/shares it meaningfully, that is when you see authenticity.

28. Valid argument for both could be made, but more often than not, the song makes the artist. Plenty of poor talents have gotten over with great material.

29. The artist makes the song.

30. The artists makes the songs through their delivery of the song and the story behind the song.

31. Not sure.

32. Artist makes the songs, the artist bring the message to us

33. I think this answer could go both ways. Sometimes I start listening to an artist for the first time because the song and the way they perform it draws me in. Other times, I have listened to an artist for quite some time and love the song because I love them. Ultimately, I want a good mix of both.

34. If the song is totally newly created and well loved the song makes the artist. But if a well known and loved popular artist redoes an older well loved song you can then say the **artist "made" the song!**

35. The latter. The way the artist communicates the song is so important. The way a song is communicated regardless of style and sound is crucial to sharing the message effectively.

36. Artist makes the song

37. Artist make the songs

38. If they're really great songs, sing for His glory, then the songs "make" the artist.

39. Neither. The combination of the song, the artist, and the audience makes the song.

40. Artist make the songs

41. The Artist Makes the song. The song must have meaning to the Artist.

42. If the artist claims to be a songwriter, then the artist makes the songs. If the artist simply chooses other people's songs to cover, then the songs make the artist.

43. The songs are a fruit. They should reflect their creator.

44. Seems to me both have to take place for the artist and song to work

45. Songs can make artists.

46. The songs make the artist because the songs they are singing should be a reflection of them and their life experiences (struggles, praises).

47. The artist makes the songs, because when you see that they are living what they sing about, it makes it truly mean something. It becomes more than just words.

48. Artist makes the songs

49. Artists make songs. Sometimes they are stories created in imagination or fantast. Songs do not necessarily correlate to personality just like a fiction writer to their craft.

50. The artist makes the song.

51. The artist makes the songs. Songs without heart and conviction are just that -songs. When an artist communicates the. Good News of The Gospel in a son, using the gifts that God has given them to provide genuine heart and soul to a song is when the "magic" of the song takes place.

52. both
53. Artist makes the song. If I know an artists is participating in behavior that does not follow Christian principles, then the words he/she sings have no basis or credibility. The opposite is true… if they following their convictions and singing about it, then it means so much more.
54. Yes and yes
55. If you are trying to speak to integrity, I don't know how to answer this question. Performance-wise, the artist makes the song what it is. It is his or her interpretation that makes or breaks a song.
56. Artist makes the song allowing for the personal experiences to I fluency [influence] a performance.
57. This is a both/and situation. There are too many facets to this question to explain in this space.
58. Both
59. I think the artist makes the songs because they are the primary communicator of the lyrics and the theological meanings behind them. An artist can either "make or break" that communication of those lyrics on and off the stage by there authenticity.
60. The artist conveys thru music/songs their beliefs
61. The song "heartbeat" is recorded by Freedom Voice is sterile and disconnected, but a live recording of Randy Shafer (sincere) singing it is connected, piercing and powerful. If the sing isn't purposefully emoting the meaning of each word/phrase of the song, then just put your dime in the juke box. Each note doesn't have to be perfectly placed, but each message needs placed perfectly.
62. How the artist presents the message reflects the message of the song.
63. The artist makes the song. I can hear the same song sung by 3 different artists, and I am more drawn to and blessed by the artist that I know is a genuine, authentic Christian.
64. I believe the songs make the artist. I love hearing Christian songs re-sung by different individuals.
65. The passion that the artist displays/portrays makes the song.
66. If the artist is involved in writing and/or production, then the song is more a reflection of them than just singing the words.
67. Artist make the songs
68. Both happen, but the song, genre, instrument choices, sequence in the album/in concert, etc are all tools that the artist uses to their strengths and the lyrics strengths.
69. I think song selection is key in expressing what an artist wants to communicate and what messages/themes God places on their hearts to deliver to God's people. An experienced artist/communicator can bring life and depth to an otherwise mediocre song. I think it can go both ways.
70. For me the artist makes the song. A reprobate can sing the greatest theological songs and still be no good as a person. But give a great song to a lousy performer and they won't make the song or anything else. The right artists has to make a song.
71. The artist makes the songs come alive with their presentation
72. The artist makes the song. By putting their heart into the song, having lived the song or experienced what is being sung.
73. The artist makes the song due to their arrangement and style.
74. Both

75. The artist makes the song. The meaning of a lyric can and should stand on its own, however the artist is the primary communicator of that lyrics. If the audience does not believe the artist they will not believe the song

76. If the song tugs the heartstrings the songs make the artist, but if the artist can make an unknown song come to life, the artist makes the song

77. Artist makes the songs.

78. Can go both ways.

79. The artist makes the song. I've seen many artist try to duplicate an original song made popular by the original artist and it does not have the same feel most of the time. Vocal style, range and over all timber of one's voice can effect how a song is portrayed. Some artist may have the same notes but without the same melody in their voice, it's not as effective.

80. Lyrics and music are objective – they exist. However, the subjective element is what the artist brings to the song. What phrasing and emphasis is used on which words? How does the artist "arc" the song. A secular example – Madonna singing "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" in the film version of "Evita." Comparing that with Patti Lupone singing it. There is no comparison. Madonna is playing a part; Lupone has become Evita.

81. Neither. The song should always point to Christ and be independent of the artist. The artist can influence listener loyalty.

82. Artist makes the song

83. Both. A song can truly impact an artist and therefore if they are transformed they will "make" the song.

84. Both scenarios are possible.

85. I believe it can be both. I've seen great singers turn a song into something great and the same with a great song being communicated by a less than great singer.

86. Both, really…

87. Artist makes the song because they live it

88. Not sure but it all about communication

89. The artist makes the songs

90. The latter

91. Both ways

92. I would say that the songs make the artist.

93. It's the artist that makes the song. Even if I hear a song I like, but I get the sense that the artist's personal life doesn't match up with the song, it diminishes the song in my eyes.

94. The choice of songs make the artist, until of their convictions.

95. Songs make the artist.

96. The artist makes the song.

97. Artists usually perform songs that fit/reflect their beliefs/faith

98. The artist can make you feel and believe the message of the song.

99. They both go hand in hand. When the artist lives and expresses the song they make the song which in turn makes the artist.

100.   I think some of both. The right songs performed can help further the artist's career & some of them come straight from their heart.

101.   It can go either way. Song choice is important in developing credibility with the "audience", however an artist must live the truth of their lyrics authentically or song choice can become irrelevant.

102.   The songs and the massage is the most important so I guess that means the song make the artist.

103.   Since the artist chooses the song the artist uses the song to communicate the message

104.   The songs are sometimes a reflection of who the Artists are.

105.   Both. An interpretation of a known song can bring an artist into the spotlight, while a new song by the artist can do the same.

106.   The skills of the artist with the genuine emotions felt from the delivery of songs make for a unique bonding between performer and audience.

107.   Artist makes the song

108.   The rendition of the artist for the song

109.   Artist makes the song.

110.   I feel the songs make the artist in the they reflect the true heart of the artist.

111.   The artist makes the song. It can be an average song but the artist can make it a great song by their vocals and genuine presentation.

112.   The artist makes the songs. Usually I find the artist/songs I connect most to reference what they've learned through their life. Experiences within their art/songs. So the songs can stand alone, but are made more powerful by the artist sharing them.

113.   I hope both.

114.   Yes artist adds depth to any song they sing if they are truly authentic.

115.   Neither – the anointing of the Holy Spirit 'makes' the songs

116.   Artist makes the songs/ 100 %

117.   Artist 'make the songs'

118.   It can be both ways

119.   Words of song are super important to me, even more than artist's ability to sing well.

120.   They make the songs. If they are not genuine the song loses its impact.

121.   There is bound to be some of each.

122.   I say it's both/and. By an artist's repertoire, I believe you can define so many things regarding the artist themselves. Thus, the songs making the artist. However, when by their offstage testimony you can observe their authentic walk with Christ, it makes any of their songs that much more meaningful and effective in ministry, thus, the artist making the songs.

123.   Hopefully, the two are intertwined. Authentic artist should. Compose music that is real and personal or they should select song that reflect who they are personally.

124.   Actions are stronger than words.

125.   Depends on the artists

126.   The artist makes the song as they communicate God's truths creatively.

127.   Artist make the songs – Artist will sing with genuineness, truth and verity

128.   Yes. The artist shows musical excellence in performing but also demonstrates the song by lifestyle/living.

129.   Artist makes the song.

130.   Artists MAKE the song by the emotion they put behind the words they sing.

131.   It works both ways depending on the message of the song

132.   Artists makes the song by his/her conviction

133.   Songs make the artist – the song has to have a good melody and. Be musically pleasant. No matter how nice the artist is, if the music doesn't' work, the niceness doesn't help.

134.   Artist make the songs. Conviction and singing and meaning it go a long way

135.   I think it goes both ways

136.   Artist makes the song

137.   Artist make the songs through their life testimony. God changing their life.

138.   Yes because it reflects what's in their heart

139.   Both

140.   Songs make the artist

141.   The artist make the songs. The artist's talent, training, desire, to create, life experiences and relationship with God all influence him/her to create songs. Whether the artist's songs are popular or not does not change this reality.

142.   It can go both ways. If people love the artist as a person (character, personality, vibe, etc.). if that. Artist is really popular then that artist makes the song. They can take any song and people will love it because they love the artist. If you are an artist having a hard time "getting yourself out there", if you aren't as popular and the public just doesn't seem to have a huge "love" for you then in that case, singing songs that the people love will help make the artist.

143.   Artist makes the song. Anyone can sing any song. I believe more in an artist that can write a song based on their personal beliefs, experiences, etc.

144.   A good artist can "make the song" but not sure how often that works in reverse.

145.   Artist makes the song. We are vessels to lead the Holy Spirit. Yes an artist may have a 'style' but it's not there doing. It's the Hoot [Holy] Spirit moving through them to us the viewers.

146.   Both. Not every artist can sing every song. They have to feel a connection to it.

147.   I believe that the artist "makes" the songs. This creates more connect between the artist and the audience.

148.   Songs make the artist

149.   The artist make the songs

150.   I have no opinion. I believe they both come from God.

151.   The artist makes the song if their life reflects the attribute of one who is a follower of Christ. Seeking a biblical worldview and living a lifestyle that points others to Christ off the platform creates a more effective ministry in the artist's musical life on the platform.

Researcher Key:
Artist Makes the Song – 82 (yellow) (54%)
Songs Make the Artist – 21 (blue) (13%)
Both – 39 (pink) (26%)
Neither – 5 (gray) (.03%)
No Opinion – 1 (.007%)
Unsure how to Interpret – 3 (.02%)

Appendix C

Sample of Key used for Coding

QUESTION 7 – Is lifestyle worship something that is, or does it need to be developed?

Artist (SG1) – **"When one becomes a Christian, one has no concept of these spiritual practices. A new Christian is a blank slate that must be taught, encouraged to grow. This is the whole concept of ==discipleship==. Many Christians have not been truly discipled to grow in their personal spiritual life. They may be completely sincere in their beliefs, but have not developed their own practices. This may be due to lack of discipleship, lack of time, other distractions, etc. and ==is very common amongst Christian in general, but especially Christian music artists.== Our travel and work schedules present challenges that we must work harder to overcome."**

*Artist discusses concept of **discipleship** that must be taught when one becomes a Christian. Spiritual practices need to be taught. This artist believes it is "very common" for Christian music artists to not grow in spiritual disciplines/not develop lifestyle worship. This is troubling. The artist suggests **"travel and work schedules"** present challenges making it difficult to practice spiritual growth.*

Artist (SG2) **"As with anything involved in the believers life, ==growth== ==and maturity== should be expected."**
Growth and Maturity suggest the need for lifestyle worship to be developed; possibly through the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Artist (SG3) **"One must ==train== him/her self to create a lifestyle of worship."**
Artist answer possibly reflects the idea of discipleship or the need for the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Artist (Acoustic/Folk) **"Yes it does become easier with time."**
Artist seems to be saying lifestyle worship needs to be developed but the developmental process becomes easier with time. This could be a reference to the practice of spiritual disciplines; development has to happen.

Artist (P/W) **"In one sense, it is ==discipleship==. We are always ==growing in maturity==."**

Artist (Contemp.) **"If your worship is ==authentic== it will develop whether it's intentional or not."** *This artist seems to equate the idea of authentic worship with "developing" lifestyle worship and seems to suggest there may or may not need to be intentionality for this development to occur.*

Artist (Singer/Songwriter) **"==It is mandatory in the Christian,== but ==there will always be room for== ==growth==. It is part of our sanctification ==journey==! We will never perfectly worship, and we will never perfectly be holy, but we should ==strive to== ==grow== in our likeness to Christ,**

through His grace alone. "Strive to grow" *falls in with many of the artists' response to this question. I appreciate the artist saying lifestyle worship is "***mandatory in the Christian."***

Artist (Many Genres) **"No answer to this. <mark>Worship refuses to be labeled. It is a condition of the heart in relation to God</mark>, whether individually in nature, in solitude, while reading spiritual texts, listening to or singing music, in corporate settings with other believers, or dozens of other settings."** *It is completely fascinating to the researcher that this artist says, "No answer to this" and then goes on to answer the question. There seems to be an "offense" to this artist either in the way the question is worded or the content at which it seeks to explore. The researcher is not seeking to "label" worship but rather "define" what worship really is. This is a significant question for the Christian community. If worship cannot be defined it will soon fall to the cultural currents of preference and subjective truth. This initial hostile response from the artist is concerning to the researcher.*

Artist (Classical Crossover) **"Some of both. I believe worshipful responses to God's creation, or perceived activity of His in the world are natural, even for a young believer, when a person is paying attention to those things as acts of God. However, just as in corporate worship, there is certainly <mark>room for education</mark>…<mark>helping people understand more</mark>, from a biblical perspective, about what God wants from us in worship."**

QUESTION 7 – Researcher Observations:

In general, six of the nine artists strongly suggest the need for lifestyle worship to be developed. This process is referred to twice as **"discipleship."** *Three artists use the words* **"growth," "grow,"** *and* **"growing."** *Two artists refer to this process as intentional teaching by stating,* **"room for education…from a biblical perspective"** *and to* **"train"** *self in creating lifestyle worship. One artist suggests lifestyle worship is a* **"condition of the heart in relation to God."** *The artist references spiritual disciplines in which lifestyle worship is expanded including: solitude, reading spiritual texts, listening to or singing music, corporate settings with other believers or other settings." Another artist equates authentic worship with the development of lifestyle worship. This artist suggests this may be* **"intentional or not."** *One artist hints at the process of development of lifestyle worship in suggesting,* **"It does become easier with time."**

Appendix D

Facebook Survey Post

Appendix E

Twitter Survey Post

ARTIST AUTHENTICITY

Are Christian Artists Authentic?

Does it Matter?

CLICK HERE TO GIVE YOUR OPINION

Please complete a short anonymous survey as part of a research study being conducted by a PhD candidate of Liberty University on the topic of Christian artist authenticity.

Appendix F

Liberty University IRB Approval Form

IRB #: IRB-FY21-22-656
Title: Communicating the Gospel Authentically: Message Transmission Between the Christian Music Artist and the Audience
Creation Date: 1-23-2022
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Lindsey Graham
Review Board: Research Ethics Office
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt

Key Study Contacts

Member	Scott Connell	Role	Co-Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Lindsey Graham	Role	Principal Investigator	Contact	
Member	Lindsey Graham	Role	Primary Contact	Contact	

CV for Dr. Lindsey M. Graham

Education

D.W.S. **Liberty University** *Concentration in Worship Studies. Vernon Whaley – doctoral supervisor. Dissertation Title: Ministry through Musical Performance: Establishing Biblical, Historical, and Pedagogical (Educational) Precedent for the Christian Performing Artist*

M.A. **Liberty University** *Concentration in Religion: Worship Studies*

B.M. **Belmont University** *Concentration in Commercial Vocal Performance*

Experience

- Online Instructor and Subject Matter Expert for Liberty University 2018-Present
    - WMUS 610 – Tools and techniques for Worship
    - WMUS 600 – Music Resources for Worship Leading
    - WMUS 400 – Tools, Techniques and Literature for Worship
    - WRSP 997 – Advanced Seminar in Worship Studies
    - CMUS 151, 152, 251, and 252 - Commercial Applied Voice Lessons
- Interim Worship Leader at First Baptist Church Naples 2021
    - Direct and lead 100-voice Adult Choir
    - Direct and lead 25-member Student Choir
    - Conduct 20-piece Orchestra
    - Design/lead worship services
    - Produced and directed four presentations of the Naples Christmas Celebration in 2021
- Christian Recording Artist 2005-Present
    - Recorded 10 CD Projects
    - Recorded a Live Concert DVD
    - Travel nationally and internationally (Sweden, Northern Ireland, Germany, Czech Republic)
- Vocal and Piano Instructor 2006-Present
    - Maintain lesson schedule for 30+ students
    - Host two recitals annually

- Prepare lesson material weekly for each student
- Develop unique vocal curriculum for voice students
- Substitute Teacher: 2005-2011
  - Developed classroom management skills
  - Embraced and implemented lesson plans
  - Encouraged and equipped each student individually for the assignment at hand.

Professional Development

- CITI Social and Behavior Research Course Completion May 2021

Community Action Projects

- FL Worship Choir and Orchestra 2015-Present
- FBC Naples Choir Member, 2005-Present
- Host Annual Private Studio Recitals 2013- Present
- Adjudicate FBA Solo Festival, 2016, 2017, 2019
- Master Vocal Classes for FBA Annual Spring Musical 2015-Present