Charismatic Church Services

(Part-1 of 17)

There is an increase today of the charismatic movement borrowed from Pentecostals. The “holy spirit power” being talked about in most SDA circles comes from feelings, not facts. The following quote describes true Pentecostal energy, not the physical energy, emotions, and feelings displayed today in charismatic services that make one think it is a physical education or dance class instead of a church service.

**Gospel Workers (1915), pp. 307-308:** The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for a renewal of spiritual life. The spiritual energies of His people have long been torpid, but there is to be a resurrection from apparent death. By prayer and confession of sin we must clear the King's highway. As we do this, the power of the Spirit will come to us. We need the pentecostal energy. This will come; for the Lord has promised to send His Spirit as the all-conquering power.

Some examples of SDA churches practicing charismatic services are listed below.

**Mt. Rubidoux SDA Church, Riverside, California**

http://www.mtrubidouxsda.org/index.php

In July of 2010, one church service transpired as follows:

- Organ jazz played in the background as a pastor shouts a very long prayer. Next was thirty minutes of Pentecostal-style contemporary gospel/praise songs accompanied by organ, keyboard, electric guitar, and drums, while bodies swayed and hands were raised.

Regarding the raising of hands during a worship service, notice the following:

**1 Timothy 2:8:** I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

What would “wrath and doubting” have to do with literally raising the hands in a worship service? In commenting on 1 Timothy 2:8, the *S.D.A. Bible Commentary,*
Vol. 7, p. 295 states that the lifting up of holy hands is “figurative of a character void of moral defilement” and that “the hands symbolize deeds.”

Psalm 119:48: My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Why would we literally lift up our hands to the commandments? The verse is obviously written in figurative speech. Those who raise their hands should instead be folding them in prayer and on their knees in repentance for displeasing God.

The clapping of hands is sometimes referred to as “let’s give the Lord a hand” or “put your hands together for the Lord.” The clapping of today actually brings glory to man not to God. A simple “amen” is appropriate. Many use Psalm 47:1 to excuse clapping during a divine service. “O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph.” Does that mean we can also shout during divine service? No. Clapping and shouting do not show reverence in God’s house of worship. Additionally, you will not find clapping as a part of worship in Bible times or even in the recent past of the SDA Church. The Spirit of Prophecy refers to clapping during religious services in the following ways: 1) a snare; 2) causes one to be proud and vain; 3) can stimulate like wine; 4) and can injure a person and influence them to leave the church for the world.

The Review and Herald, December 4, 1894: The applause of men is the food that is relished by the perverted appetite of the Christless soul.

In the Bible, drums (timbrels) were not used in the sanctuary services, only in social gatherings. Please note that there is no reference to drums in the New Testament, because of their association to the common and profane.

- During offertory and while children ran down the aisle for the children’s story, more jazz played. Special music offered another contemporary song with applause afterwards.
- The sermon (which lasted an hour and fifteen minutes) started with more organ playing. The pastor paced the floor, used dramatic hand gestures, and spoke in a loud voice. Some humor produced laughing and applause from the congregation. He used only one Bible verse and two Spirit of Prophecy quotes and also suggested that members consult each other about their specific sins in order to overcome the sins. This is not biblical.
- Another long prayer was offered, then more “praise” singing. They sang, prayed, and preached much about having the Holy Spirit, but when a church
holds a Pentecostal-style service, it is not reverent or of the right spirit. With truth and error mixed, it leaves the congregation in confusion.

(Part-2 of 17)

The modern-type gospel music played in some of the SDA charismatic services is excused away because it is a “cultural” custom. However, it is customary in the U.S. to play rock music, as can be heard in just about every store, business, home, computer, and on radio and television stations. Is that an excuse to use it in the churches? No. God’s true Church is to abide by His Word not the customs of the world. Customs might change, but Bible standards never do. God’s Church cannot let itself be controlled by the latest trends.

**Faith and Works, p. 86:** While thus depending upon God we shall not be found warring against the truth, but we shall always be enabled to take our stand for the right. We should cling to the teaching of the Bible and not follow the customs and traditions of the world, the sayings and doings of men.

**The Signs of the Times, October 15, 1894:** The fallacies of men have in them no power to sanctify the soul; and the word of God is not to be adulterated with the customs and traditions of the world. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

**Leviticus 19:30:** Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord.

**Isaiah 6:1-3:** In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

**Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, pp. 491-499:** To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defiles.

The “song of praise” mentioned by Ellen White is not the same as the modern praise songs of today.
From the sacredness which was attached to the earthly sanctuary, Christians may learn how they should regard the place where the Lord meets with His people. There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred, things which connect us with God are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts, and are being brought down to the level of common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they met with God in sacred service has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God Himself gave the order of His service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature.

If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls. They should remember that heavenly messengers are in the house. We all lose much sweet communion with God by our restlessness, by not encouraging moments of reflection and prayer. The spiritual condition needs to be often reviewed and the mind and heart drawn toward the Sun of Righteousness. If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord and bear in mind that they are in His presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence.

When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit, and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon all, and angels of God are brought very near. Every one of the congregation, also, who fears God should with bowed head unite in silent prayer with him that God may grace the meeting with His presence and give power to His truth proclaimed from human lips. When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One, and every heart should ascend to God in silent devotion. The prayers of faithful worshipers will be heard, and the ministry of the word will prove effectual....

When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common
thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places.

No wonder our churches are feeble and do not have that deep, earnest piety in their borders that they should have. Our present habits and customs, which dishonor God and bring the sacred and heavenly down to the level of the common, are against us. We have a sacred, testing, sanctifying truth; and if our habits and practices are not in accordance with the truth, we are sinners against great light, and are proportionately guilty. It will be far more tolerable for the heathen in the day of God's retributive justice than for us....

It is too true that reverence for the house of God has become almost extinct. Sacred things and places are not discerned; the holy and exalted are not appreciated. Is there not a cause for the want of fervent piety in our families? Is it not because the high standard of religion is left to trail in the dust? God gave rules of order, perfect and exact, to His ancient people. Has His character changed? Is He not the great and mighty God who rules in the heaven of heavens? Would it not be well for us often to read the directions given by God Himself to the Hebrews, that we who have the light of the glorious truth shining upon us may imitate their reverence for the house of God? We have abundant reason to maintain a fervent, devoted spirit in the worship of God. We have reason even to be more thoughtful and reverential in our worship than had the Jews. But an enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship....

The moral taste of the worshipers in God's holy sanctuary must be elevated, refined, sanctified. This matter has been sadly neglected. Its importance has been overlooked, and as the result, disorder and irreverence have become prevalent, and God has been dishonored....

I am often pained as I enter the house where God is worshiped, to see the untidy dress of both men and women. If the heart and character were indicated by the outward apparel, then certainly nothing could be heavenly about them. They have no true idea of the order, the neatness, and the refined deportment that God requires of all who come into His presence to worship Him. What impressions do these things give to unbelievers and to the youth, who are keen to discern and to draw their conclusions? ...Because of the irreverence in attitude, dress, and deportment, and lack of a worshipful frame of mind, God has often turned His face away from those assembled for His worship.

All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article
of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him.

**Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 351:** Everything connected with the apparel and deportment of the priests was to be such as to impress the beholder with a sense of the holiness of God, the sacredness of His worship, and the purity required of those who came into His presence.

**1 Peter 3:3-4:** Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

**Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 500:** When a church has been raised up and left uninstructed on these points, the minister has neglected his duty and will have to give an account to God for the impressions he allowed to prevail. Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion. They can never, with their uncultivated ideas, appreciate a pure and holy heaven, and be prepared to join with the worshipers in the heavenly courts above, where all is purity and perfection, where every being has perfect reverence for God and His holiness.

**My Life Today, p. 286:** When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats.... Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.

**Selected Messages, Book 3, p. 274:** I saw that the house of God had been desecrated by the carelessness of parents with their children and by the untidiness and uncleanness there. I saw that these things should meet with an open rebuke, and if there was not an immediate change in some that profess the truth in these things they should be put out of the camp.

*(Part-3 of 17)*
Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White, p. 73: As I returned to Portland, there were evidences of the desolating effects of fanaticism. Some seemed to think that religion consisted in great excitement and noise.

...And Satan loved to have it so. It suited him well to see the truth handled by unsanctified men; to have it mixed with error, and then all together trampled in the dust. He looked with triumph upon the confused, scattered state of God's children.

We trembled for the churches that were to be subjected to this spirit of fanaticism. My heart ached for God's people. Must they be deceived and led away by this false enthusiasm? I faithfully pronounced the warnings given me of the Lord; but they seemed to have little effect....

Evangelism, p. 595: A strong phase of fanaticism appeared, calling itself the witness of the Holy Ghost. I was given a message to rebuke this evil work.--Letter 79, 1905.

Ibid., pp. 507-508: Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above. We should endeavor in our songs of praise to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. I have often been pained to hear untrained voices, pitched to the highest key, literally shrieking the sacred words of some hymn of praise. How inappropriate those sharp, rasping voices for the solemn, joyous worship of God. I long to stop my ears, or flee from the place, and I rejoice when the painful exercise is ended.

Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voice can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued.

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, p. 492: The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.

Ibid., Vol. 9, p. 143: It is not loud singing that is needed, but clear intonation, correct pronunciation, and distinct utterance. Let all take time to cultivate the voice so that God's praise can be sung in clear, soft tones, not with harshness and shrillness that offend the ear. The ability to sing is the gift of God; let it be used to His glory.
**Evangelism, p. 510:** Some think that the louder they sing the more music they make; but noise is not music. Good singing is like the music of birds—subdued and melodious.

**Selected Messages, Book 2, pp. 36-38:** The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings.

The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working....

Those participating in the supposed revival receive impressions which lead them adrift. They cannot tell what they formerly knew regarding Bible principles.

No encouragement should be given to this kind of worship....

I was instructed to say that at these demonstrations demons in the form of men are present, working with all the ingenuity that Satan can employ to make the truth disgusting to sensible people; that the enemy was trying to arrange matters so that the camp meetings, which have been the means of bringing the truth of the third angel's message before multitudes, should lose their force and influence.

The third angel's message is to be given in straight lines. It is to be kept free from every thread of the cheap, miserable inventions of men's theories, prepared by the father of lies, and disguised as was the brilliant serpent used by Satan as a medium of deceiving our first parents. Thus Satan tries to put his stamp upon the work God would have stand forth in purity.

The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with such a confusion of noise and multitude of sounds as passed before me last January. Satan works amid the din and confusion of such music, which, properly conducted, would be a praise and glory to God. He makes its effect like the poison sting of the serpent.
Those things which have been in the past will be in the future. Satan will make music a snare by the way in which it is conducted.

1 Corinthians 14:33: For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 146: I saw that all should sing with the spirit and with the understanding also. God is not pleased with jargon and discord.

Selected Messages, Book 3, p. 335: Your voice has been heard in church so loud, so harsh, accompanied or set off with your gesticulations [gestures] not the most graceful, that the softer and more silvery strains, more like angel music, could not be heard. You have sung more to men than to God. As your voice has been elevated in loud strains above all the congregation, you have been thoughtful of the admiration you were exciting. You have really had such high ideas of your singing, that you have had some thoughts that you should be remunerated for the exercise of this gift.

The love of praise has been the mainspring of your life. This is a poor motive for a Christian.

Adventist Home, pp. 407-408: They have a keen ear for music, and Satan knows what organs to excite to animate, engross, and charm the mind so that Christ is not desired. The spiritual longings of the soul for divine knowledge, for a growth in grace, are wanting....

The introduction of music into their homes, instead of inciting to holiness and spirituality, has been the means of diverting their minds from the truth. Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should have been devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace while humbly making known his wants and, with strong cries and tears, pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of the evil one. Satan is leading the young captive. Oh, what can I say to lead them to break his power of infatuation! He is a skillful charmer luring them on to perdition.

Selected Messages, Book 3, p. 333: Everything that is connected in any way with religious worship should be dignified, solemn, and impressions. God is not pleased when ministers professing to be Christ's representatives so misrepresent
Charismatic Church Services

Christ as to throw the body into acting attitudes, making undignified and coarse gestures, unrefined, coarse gesticulations. All this amuses, and will excite the curiosity of those who wish to see strange, odd, and exciting things, but these things will not elevate the minds and hearts of those who witness them.

The very same may be said of singing. You assume undignified attitudes. You put in all the power and volume of the voice you can. You drown the finer strains and notes of voices more musical than your own. This bodily exercise and the harsh, loud voice makes no melody to those who hear on earth and those who listen in heaven. This singing is defective and not acceptable to God as perfect, softened, sweet strains of music. There are no such exhibitions among the angels as I have sometimes seen in our meetings. Such harsh notes and gesticulations are not exhibited among the angel choir. Their singing does not grate upon the ear. It is soft and melodious and comes without this great effort I have witnessed. It is not forced and strained, requiring physical exercise.

Messages to Young People, p. 295: Music is the idol which many professed Sabbath-keeping Christians worship. Satan has no objection to music, if he can make that a channel through which to gain access to the minds of the youth. Anything will suit his purpose that will divert the mind from God, and engage the time which should be devoted to His service. He works through the means which will exert the strongest influence to hold the largest numbers in a pleasing infatuation, while they are paralyzed by his power. When turned to good account, music is a blessing, but it is often made one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly.

S.D.A. Church Manual (2005), p. 180: Great care should be exercised in the choice of music. Any melody partaking of the nature of jazz, rock, or related hybrid forms, or any language expressing foolish or trivial sentiments, will be shunned. Let us use only good music in the home, in the social gathering, in the school, and in the church.

(Part-4 of 17)

It is interesting that the SDA Church does not even enforce everything that is in the manual.

Here is an opinion on music from a 2003 Adventist Review article by David Pendleton:
God relishes the vast variety of creation and is eager to accept our worship, whether with pipe organs and candles or tambourines and drums; whether in formal settings with coats and ties and King James English responsive readings, or in informal settings with contemporary drama and aloha shirts. Everything offered up to God in a spirit of genuine worship, authentic praise, and sincere thanksgiving is received with divine favor. The worship of a sincere believer is music to God's ears.

That type of belief system is exactly why God does not accept many of the SDA worship services today. Simply because a believer is sincere does not make him right. A person can be sincerely wrong.


Paul Wohlegemuth, who wrote the book *Rethinking the Church* said that the “1970s will see a marked acceptance of rock-influenced music in all levels of church music. The rock style will become more familiar to all people, its rhythmic excesses will become refined, and its earlier secular associations will be less remembered."

We have certainly seen this change in the churches, sadly, even in the SDA organization. With the majority of the members having partaken of the devil’s music, they are now accepting his religion in the Church or outside the Church, and others have left the organization for no religion at all.

**Evangelism, pp. 146-147:** We cannot be shepherds of the flock unless we are divested of our own peculiar habits, manners, and customs, and come into Christ's likeness....

The workman for God should make earnest efforts to become a representative of Christ, **discarding all uncomely gestures and uncouth speech.** He should endeavor to use correct language. There is a large class who are careless in the way they speak; yet by careful, painstaking attention, these may become representatives of the truth. Every day they should make advancement. They should not detract from their usefulness and influence by cherishing defects of manner, tone, or language.

**The Voice in Speech and Song, pp. 269-271:** The minister of God is not to speak words which will create levity....

All **lightness and trifling** is positively forbidden in the Word of God. His conversation should be in heaven, his words seasoned with grace.
What can the minister do without Jesus? Verily, nothing. Then if he is a frivolous, joking man, he is not prepared to perform the duty laid upon him by the Lord.... The flippant words that fall from his lips, the trifling anecdotes, the words spoken to create a laugh, are all condemned by the Word of God, and are entirely out of place in the sacred desk.

His language should be correct; no slang phrases, no cheap utterances, should fall from his lips.

Ministers cannot be too guarded, especially before the young. They should use no lightness of speech, jesting or joking, but should remember that they are in Christ's stead, that they must illustrate by example the life of Christ.... Flowery discourses will not be sufficient to feed the soul of the famishing child of God.

Some who stand in the pulpit make the heavenly messengers in the audience ashamed of them. The precious gospel, which it has cost so much to bring to the world, is abused. There is common, cheap talk; grotesque attitudes and workings of the features. There is, with some, rapid talking, with others a thick, indistinct utterance.

The messages of truth are to be kept entirely free from cheap, common words of human devising. Thus forcible impressions will be made upon hearts. Let not our ministers cherish the idea that they must bring forth something new and strange, or that cheap, common expressions will give them influence. Ministers are to be the mouthpiece of God, and they must eradicate from their speech every expression that is cheap or common. Let them be careful lest by attempting during their discourse to cause laughter, they dishonor God.

Our message is a solemn and sacred one, and we must watch unto prayer. The words uttered must be of such a character that through them God can make an impression on heart and mind. Let the ministers of the gospel be sanctified through the truth.

**Evangelism, p. 178:** Never weary the hearers by long discourses. This is not wise. For many years I have been laboring on this point, seeking to have our brethren sermonize less, and devote their time and strength to making important points of truth plain, for every point will be assailed by our opponents. Everyone connected with the work should keep fresh ideas; ...and by tact and foresight bring all that is possible into your work to interest your hearers.

**Gospel Workers (1892), p. 71:** Long discourses and tedious prayers are positively injurious to a religious interest, and fail to carry conviction to the consciences of the people. This propensity for speech-making frequently dampens a religious interest that might have produced great results.
Charismatic Church Services

The Review and Herald, June 23, 1891: To preach in a hard, strained voice, pitched on a high key, is suicidal, and those who have practiced this way of speaking should cease to do it, and learn of the divine Teacher. Several of our ministers might have been alive today if they had observed the simple rules that apply to the use of the voice. Let loud speaking and long discourses cease from among us.

Manuscript Releases, Vol. 15, pp. 349-350: Our ministers have not the physical strength to endure the taxation of the vocal organs in this kind of labor. Our ministers should be guarded in regard to preaching long discourses. It is a great tax upon the speaker and a tax upon the people to digest so much matter. Sermons of one half the length would be of far more value than the long sermons usually preached, which are wearing out the strength of the ministers by exhausting efforts that are not necessary.

(Part-5 of 17)

Is it any wonder that these types of worship services exist when one pastor enjoys praise dancing and the other excelled in football while in high school?

On the Mt. Rubidoux website under “Creative Arts/Ministries” is information on “liturgical dance.” It is stated that the purpose of that ministry exists as a way to minister to God's people in order that souls are saved and lives changed, that they wish to use all the talents God has given, and dancing for the Lord is one talent they want to perfect. In the Bible, dancing is never mentioned as part of divine worship.

Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 707: Again the long train was in motion, and the music of harp and cornet, trumpet and cymbal, floated heavenward, blended with the melody of many voices. "And David danced before the Lord," in his gladness keeping time to the measure of the song.

David's dancing in reverent joy before God has been cited by pleasure lovers in justification of the fashionable modern dance, but there is no ground for such an argument. In our day dancing is associated with folly and midnight reveling. Health and morals are sacrificed to pleasure. By the frequenter of the ballroom God is not an object of thought and reverence; prayer or the song of praise would be felt to be out of place in their assemblies. This test should be decisive. Amusements that have a tendency to weaken the love for sacred things and lessen our joy in the service of God are not to be sought by Christians. The music and dancing in joyful praise to God at the removal of the ark had not the
faintest resemblance to the dissipation of modern dancing. The one tended to the remembrance of God and exalted His holy name. The other is a device of Satan to cause men to forget God and to dishonor Him.

**S.D.A. Church Manual (2005), p. 179:** Another form of amusement that has an evil influence is social dancing. “The amusement of dancing, as conducted at the present day, is a school of depravity, a fearful curse to society.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 399.

Following is the type of dancing in Scriptures that resembles modern dancing.

**Exodus 32:17-19:** And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear. And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.

**Matthew 14:6:** But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

(Choice-6 of 17)

Another “creative art” used by Mt. Rubidoux is the drama ministry. Their purpose is to minister through dramatic and artistic presentations to enhance connections and stimulate thoughts relevant to important issues in the church and community.

Many use the excuse for drama because of what is stated in Ezekiel 5:1-4 and Jeremiah 32:14-15. The Lord was simply asking the prophets to use certain objects to make a point or to do something constructive, not to act out a drama. While Jesus spoke to the multitudes, He pointed to the flowers as an object lesson. He did not start performing a drama.

**Ezekiel 5:1-4:** And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair. Thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife: and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them. Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts. Then take of them again,
and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

Prophets and Kings, pp. 466-469: Laying fast hold on the promises of God, Jeremiah, by means of an acted parable, illustrated before the inhabitants of the fated city his strong faith in the ultimate fulfillment of God's purpose for His people. In the presence of witnesses, and with careful observance of all necessary legal forms, he purchased for seventeen shekels of silver an ancestral field situated in the neighboring village of Anathoth....

Having signed the deeds of transfer and secured the countersignatures of witnesses, Jeremiah charged Baruch his secretary: "Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land." Jeremiah 32:14, 15.

The Desire of Ages, p. 582: The cursing of the fig tree [by Jesus] was an acted parable.

Manuscript Releases, Vol. 8, p. 264: This land is not to be occupied with buildings except to provide the facilities essential for the teachers and students of the school. This is the school farm. This land is to be reserved as an acted parable to the students. They are not to look upon the school land as a common thing, but as a lesson book which the Lord would have them study. Its lessons will impart knowledge in the spiritual culture of the soul.

The most common excuse given is that the youth cannot be reached today unless the churches use more contemporary methods such as drama mimes, puppets, and clowns. Nowhere in God’s Word are we instructed that in the end times we must use such disgraceful methods in order to attract people to church. Further in Ezekiel 5:11 we read the result of such methods as follows: “Wherefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou has defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.” Ezekiel 5:8 tells us “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations.” Of all the denominations on this planet, the SDA Church should know better. It has been given plenty of light and those who do not follow that light will be held accountable.
Many urge that by uniting with worldlings and conforming to their customs they might exert a stronger influence over the ungodly. But all who pursue this course thereby separate from the Source of their strength. Becoming the friends of the world, they are the enemies of God.

...church theatricals, church fairs... have banished thoughts of God.

Let there be no oddities or eccentricities of movement on the part of those who speak the Word of truth, for such things will weaken the impression that should be made by the Word. We must be guarded, for Satan is determined, if possible, to intermingle with religious services his evil influence. Let there be no theatrical display, for this will not help to strengthen belief in the Word of God. Rather it will divert attention to the human instrument.

Our success will depend on carrying forward the work in the simplicity in which Christ carried it forward, without any theatrical display.

Not one jot or tittle of anything theatrical is to be brought into our work. God's cause is to have a sacred, heavenly mold. Let everything connected with the giving of the message for this time bear the divine impress. Let nothing of a theatrical nature be permitted, for this would spoil the sacredness of the work.

We are to keep as far from the theatrical and the extraordinary as Christ kept in His work. Sensation is not religion, although religion will exert its own pure, sacred, uplifting, sanctifying influence, bringing spiritual life, and salvation.

The work in the large cities is to be done after Christ's order, not after the order of a theatrical performance. It is not a theatrical performance that glorifies God, but the presentation of the truth in the love of Christ.

We earnestly warn against the subtle and sinister influence of the moving-picture theater, which is no place for the Christian. Dramatized films that graphically present by portrayal and by suggestion the sins and crimes of humanity—murder, adultery, robbery, and kindred evils—are in no small degree responsible for the present breakdown of...
morality. We appeal to parents, children, and youth to shun those places of amusement and those theatrical films that glorify professional acting and actors. If we will find delight in God’s great world of nature and in the romance of human agencies and divine workings, we shall not be attracted by the puerile [foolish] portrayals of the theater.

Why is the SDA leadership not enforcing what is written in God’s Word or even what is in the SDA Church manual? Yes, many are attracted by theatrical performances and contemporary music, but the Holy Spirit does not work through this type of entertainment that destroys a spiritual atmosphere. Can you honestly imagine the heavenly host worshipping with angel actors, clowns, puppets, mimics, drumming and bodies gyrating? No? Then neither should we. Anyone involved in those types of worship activities on this earth would not be happy in the New Earth.

The Signs of the Times, October 13, 1890: Those who have a careless, clownish manner, either in the family or in society, dishonor their divine Lord. Even ministers have thus misrepresented Christ, when in the pulpit they have made a display of theatrical actions and eccentric manners. This is not of God. Eccentricities are sometimes looked upon as virtues by men, but they do not aid in representing Christ. Careless attitudes and irreverent expressions may serve to please men of unrefined tastes, anecdotes may amuse, but the minister who seeks to cater to such tastes has a meager appreciation of the dignity, simplicity, goodness, and loveliness of the character of the divine Lord.

(Part-7 of 17)

Some of the SDA schools and churches perform Easter plays or show movies in which actors portray Jesus. If we really stop to think about this, it is actually a form of blasphemy. In the past, no one would dare play such a part, but today it is a common occurrence.

Do we really want to be modern Israel dancing around the “golden calf”? Is the SDA Church becoming one big party? What are we celebrating? We should be “sighing and crying” and repenting for falling so low.

On November 8, 2008, Verizon Wireless named the best American church choir in Atlanta, Georgia during the grand finale of the How Sweet The Sound (SM) competition. The best choirs from eleven cities competed for $45,000 in cash prizes in the finale concert. Two Grammy winners and an award-winning actress
served as judges. The choirs with the most votes were invited to perform at some of the “hottest venues” in the country. Some of the regional winners that competed were as follows:

- Atlanta West Pentecostal Church (Lithia Springs, Georgia)
- Acme Missionary Baptist Church (Chicago, Illinois)
- **Mt. Rubidoux SDA Church** (Riverside, California)
- New Direction Christian Church (Memphis, Tennessee)
- Grace Baptist Church (Mt. Vernon, New York)
- Jubilee Christian Center (San Jose, California)
- Southern Baptist Church Praise and Worship Center (Washington, D.C.)

The Mt. Rubidoux SDA Church choir performance can be described as “a bedlam of noise” with **dancing, hands raised, and hand clapping**. It can be viewed at this link: [http://www.howsweetthesound.com/media/video_player/2008/21/2008+overall](http://www.howsweetthesound.com/media/video_player/2008/21/2008+overall).

We can be certain that the “bedlam of noise” today is far worse than in the pioneer days.


The information that follows comes from the La Sierra University (LSU) website “News & Events” section for April 2009:

Under the direction of **Alan Woodson**, an LSU alumnus, the 42-member choir won the Los Angeles regionals and performed as the only SDA choir at Atlanta. The members were comprised of Loma Linda and La Sierra alumni and students. They won the Verizon Wireless gospel music contest in Los Angeles before going on to compete at the nationals in Atlanta. Their song, “The Presence of the Lord is Here,” was described as a “toe-tapping combination that started off with an a cappella classical sound” and transitioned into a “hard-hitting gospel rendition with a five-piece band.” At the start of the song, the audience was brought to their feet. Their show “so inspired the choir’s listeners that a competition judge ran up on stage and sang the ending portion of the song with the group.” It must be stated that the presence of the Lord was definitely not at their contests.

**S.D.A. Bible Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 1089**: We are to use every spiritual nerve and muscle in the contest for the **crown of life**. No one who does his best will fail in this contest.

The choir members had “prayed God would help them sing their very best. They left the outcome in His hands. God answered their prayers in ways they could not
have anticipated and . . . had the opportunity to witness about their Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.” Before the Los Angeles competition, one of the judges “started praising God, and praising God and praising God. You could just feel the Holy Spirit rip through the sports arena. This went on for 25 minutes. . . . The competition turned into a worship service. Our prayers, even before we won, were answered.” The choir prayed that they would “represent the SDA Church well. . . . One judge quipped he wanted to move to Riverside and asked what time Sunday services began at the Mt. Rubidoux church. The question allowed the group to witness about its Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.”

The article stated that the choir’s competition brought it “high profile performance opportunities.” Among other events, they performed for an Oscar gala and Knott’s Berry Farm. Woodson explained that gospel music is “very celebratory” and that is one reason why he loves it. He joined the LSU gospel choir in 1986, the same year it won a McDonald’s Gospel Fest and performed at an ABC television sports special and a wedding for two film stars. At Mt. Rubidoux, Woodson also leads a worship team, a children’s choir, youth choir, chorale, six praise teams, a drama department, a praise dance group, etc. Each year he also organizes “Soulful Messiah” concerts with well-known gospel artists and has served for six years as the church’s minister of creative music and arts. The article ends with this statement by Woodson: “I knew it was God’s plan I should be doing this.”

What a shame that those involved in this type of gospel music truly believe it is God’s music and that they are witnesses for Him. The first clue should have been when the judge mistook them for Sunday-keepers. If they do not reform their ways, they will certainly become Sunday worshipers.

(Part-8 of 17)

Madison Mission SDA Church, Alabama

http://www.madisonmission.net/index.html

A typical worship service includes a large group on the podium who spend much time in singing (usually one hour) of contemporary gospel/praise music, with clapping, shouting, raising of hands, facial grimacing, and bodies swaying. Some in the congregation will stand up at different times to sway and raise their hands during the music which plays continually during the preliminaries. You also might see individuals prostrating themselves on the floor. The pastor paces the podium during his sermon, while shouting frequently and using many hand gestures. The service may include a dramatic skit.
Selected Messages, Vol. 3, p. 333: Many have attended the meetings and listened to the words of truth spoken from the pulpit, which have convicted and solemnized their minds; but many times the way the singing has been conducted has not deepened the impression made. The demonstrations and bodily contortions, the unpleasant appearance of the strained, forced effort has appeared so out of place for the house of God, so comical, that the serious impressions made upon the minds have been removed.

In 2000 the church opened its 14,000 square foot facility for its 2,000 worshipers. Thousands attended the five-day opening exercises and celebrated with worship, drama, concerts, sports, and community activities. They are currently constructing a building for youth ministry and education. There are also plans to construct a 4,500 seat worship facility and a food and fellowship court. They are proud about departing from "the beaten path" and believe they have raised up a congregation for such a time as this. It is stated that they rejoice as a community of redeemed people, as a community of faithful soldiers, as a community of wounded healers, as a community of saints blessed because of the Spirit of the Lord. **They do not realize that it is the spirit of Satan, not the Lord.** They may soon be involved in such Pentecostal practices as speaking in tongues.

Counsels on Health, p. 225: Never are we to rely upon worldly recognition and rank. Never are we, in the establishment of institutions, to try to compete with worldly institutions in size or splendor. We shall gain the victory, not by erecting massive buildings, in rivalry with our enemies, but by cherishing a Christlike spirit--a spirit of meekness and lowliness. Better far the cross and disappointed hopes, with eternal life at last, than to live with princes and forfeit heaven.

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, p. 244: Many of the members of our large churches are doing comparatively nothing. They might accomplish a good work if, instead of crowding together, they would scatter into places that have not yet been entered by the truth. Trees that are planted too thickly do not flourish. They are transplanted by the gardener, that they may have room to grow, and not become dwarfed and sickly. The same rule would work well for our large churches. Many of the members are dying spiritually for want of this very work. They are becoming sickly and inefficient. Transplanted, they would have room to grow strong and vigorous.

In Heavenly Places, p. 299: In large churches of believers... there is special danger of lowering the standard. Where many are gathered together some are
more liable to grow careless and indifferent than they would be if isolated and made to stand alone.

**Selected Messages, Book 2, pp. 34-36:** There was much excitement, with noise and confusion. One could not tell what was piped or what was harped.... Others were jumping, dancing, and shouting.... This they repeated again and again. I bore my testimony in the name of the Lord, placing His rebuke upon these manifestations....

There is nothing in these demonstrations which will convince the world that we have the truth. Mere noise and shouting are no evidence of sanctification, or of the descent of the Holy Spirit....

The Lord desires to have in His service order and discipline, not excitement and confusion.... Excitement is not favorable to growth in grace, to true purity and sanctification of the spirit.

God calls upon His people to walk with sobriety and holy consistency. They should be very careful not to misrepresent and dishonor the holy doctrines of truth by strange performances, by confusion and tumult.... When believers speak the truth as it is in Jesus, they reveal a holy, sensible calm, not a storm of confusion.

**Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 505-506:** Eternal things have little weight with the youth. Angels of God are in tears as they write in the roll the words and acts of professed Christians. Angels are hovering around yonder dwelling. The young are there assembled; there is the sound of vocal and instrumental music. Christians are gathered there, but what is that you hear? It is a song, a frivolous ditty, fit for the dance hall. Behold the pure angels gather their light closer around them, and darkness envelops those in that dwelling. The angels are moving from the scene. Sadness is upon their countenances. Behold, they are weeping. This I saw repeated a number of times all through the ranks of Sabbathkeepers, and especially in ----.

**Selected Messages, Book 3, p. 332:** It is not safe for the Lord's workers to take part in worldly entertainments. Association with worldliness in musical lines is looked upon as harmless by some Sabbathkeepers. But such ones are on dangerous ground. Thus Satan seeks to lead men and women astray, and thus he has gained control of souls. So smooth, so plausible is the working of the enemy that his wiles are not suspected, and many church members become lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.
The Faith I Live By, p. 242: Musical talent too often fosters pride and ambition for display, and singers have but little thought of the worship of God.

Evangelism, pp. 510-512: There is nothing more offensive in God's sight than a display of instrumental music when those taking part are not consecrated, are not making melody in their hearts to the Lord.... Their heart is gone "after their idols."

Creeping Compromise, Joe Crews, Homeward Publishing, Yorba Linda, CA, 2008, pp. 89-91: By operating through the thalamus, Satan bypasses the mental and spiritual barricades of intelligent reason, and enters the citadel of the mind—the great control center of all human decisions and action. There, in the mind, Satan has the equipment to translate sensual musical impressions into physical action. Through the telegraphic network of nerves reaching every part of the body, he can communicate the appropriate commands to act in accordance with the emotional stimuli of the music.

...there are some broken-meter, harmonic dissonances in the melodic line which are completely out of harmony with natural body rhythms. Such is the typical, insistent tempo of rock-and-roll music.

He [Satan] has been delighted to manipulate the lives of unconverted young people through rock music, but he is even more delighted when he can intrude his mind-bending, hypnotic music into the church. By his age-old program of gradualism, he has managed to break down the fine sense of discrimination.... Any mingling of spiritual and carnal brings a reproach upon the people who are chosen to proclaim God’s last warning message.

The Holy Spirit also works gradually with individuals, but He uses truth. When the devil works gradually with individuals, he uses truth and error.

(Part-9 of 17)

As an introduction to the following quotes, the author spent over 16 years as a professional rock and roll musician in Europe and Africa. After his return to the Lord, he did extensive research on music and its effects.

From Rock ‘N Roll to Rock of Ages, Brian S. Neumann, Southern Africa, 1997, p. 56: Take a look at this recent statistic that was printed in the Sunday Times, 30th March, 1997 under the heading, “RHYTHM AND BLUES.”

p. 61: Musicians are more twitchy than violin strings, says a report from the British Performing Arts Trust. It found that two out of three musicians suffered
rapid heart beat, sweating hands, muscle tension, trembling, shaking, loss of concentration and breathing problems. They are also anxious, depressed and suffer from joint pain, deafness and ‘disobedient fingers.’ One in five are on permanent medication.

p. 67: Rolling Stone Magazine, rock’s foremost magazine, proudly noted in its 20th anniversary TV special: It’s not just an exaggeration to say that rebellion is more than just an occasional theme in rock, it is its very heart and soul....

p. 75: From here [1950s] on the world embraced the key element of jazz and blues, the beat. On this rhythmic foundation was built the skyscraper of all our modern popular forms of music.

Nothing would ever be the same again....

It is interesting that it was in the 1950s that the SDA organization made its fatal mistake with the publication of the book Questions on Doctrine.

In his book, Brian Neumann also discusses the following facts on well-known rock and roll musicians:

**Little Richard** stated that this kind of music is demonic, taken from the Voodoo drums, drives people from Christ, and is contagious. **Elvis Presley** was addicted to drugs and was involved in the occult, as are many in this industry, including the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and many other musicians today. **David Bowie** stated that “rock ‘n roll” is dangerous, will bring about the “dark era,” and has always been the devil’s music.

Ibid., p. 91: Read any well researched book about the history and origins of the rock ‘n roll beat with its syncopated rhythm, that places the accent on the offbeat in the 4/4 time (march beat), and they will all tell you that the roots of this rhythmical style are derived from the beat of the ritual Voodoo dance’s of Africa. The key to its effectiveness lies in constant repetition, which research has shown has a hypnotic effect on those who are exposed to it for extended periods.

p. 92: What about rap, techno, house music and some of the so called newer modes of pop; do their styles of rhythm fall into the same category as the traditionally accepted Rock ‘n Roll beat? My categorical reply would be, most definitely, yes!

The music today that most closely resembles the Voodoo ritual dance music is rap and some of its hybrid forms.... The music becomes the hypnotic tool and once under its spell, the mind is left wide open to receive the messages that demons want to implant in their subconscious.
Whether we like it or not, the ingredients that make a Voodoo ritual ceremony such a Satanic success are the very same ones that keep the churches of dance and vice so rich and thriving today. **No true child of God will be found in their association.**

http://www.thefreedictionary.com/voodoo

**Voodoo:** A religion practiced chiefly in Caribbean countries, especially Haiti, syncretized from Roman Catholic ritual elements and the animism and magic of slaves from West Africa…. To place under the influence of a spell or curse; bewitch.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17: Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

What about the lyrics of “Christian rock”? Are those all right? According to Neumann, one song, as an example, contains a “garble of mumblings” in the bridge section of the song.

1 Corinthians 14:9: So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

The lyrics of most modern praise music today lack spiritual depth and are nothing but vain repetition. Often the singers can be seen swaying back and forth to the music, grimacing and using much hand movement. **This tends to bring attention to the person rather than to God.** Additionally, most vocalists today are trained to sing in a “bar room” style of voice with a breathy sound rather than the soft, low tone of the past. Christian rock music is not sacred and certainly not Christian. In fact, it is worse than secular music because it blasphemes God. Putting Christian words to demonic music does not make it alright.

**You may be wondering what type of music is good.** Neumann gives some steps which you may wish to follow.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance.
- Then you will “discern whether the music you are listening to has a spiritually uplifting effect, or whether it has a rebellious or even depressive effect,” even in classical music. “Our music should sound as pure and heavenly as possible.”
- If the music contains lyrics, be sure they are biblically sound and do not “insinuate a false spiritual message.”
- The vocalist and musician should be focused on Christ not self.

**The Signs of the Times, January 16, 1879**: Satan had led the heavenly choir. He had raised the first note, then all the angelic host united with him, and glorious strains of music had resounded through Heaven. But now, instead of strains of sweetest music, discord and angry words fall upon the ear of the great rebel leader.

Since Satan was once the music director in heaven, it is logical to conclude that music would be an area where his deceptive skills would be honed to a very sophisticated level. It is also reasonable to conclude that his influence and skills would not be limited to composers of “worship” music. Many composers have written music for special events, ranging from a celebration of the end of a war (Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks*) to the Olympic Games (John Williams' theme music). Since many composers have explored the gamut of real and imaginary life in their music, it is difficult to say that a composers' work is all good or all evil. For example, Mendelssohn wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream* about the love affair between a woman and a half man, half donkey, as well as the glorious oratorio, *Elijah*.

Carelessness in the selection of our music can provide Satan with a powerful tool into our brain and soul. We cannot assume that a piece is good just because it is classical. (Contrast the gloriously reverent style of Handel’s *Messiah* with Ramirez’ setting of parts of the mass to dance tunes, called *Misa Criolla*. The Andrews University Singers use excerpts from both in their CD titled, “Let the People Praise!”).

Discerning appropriate music will also involve the following questions and research:

- Why was this composition written? What was the original purpose? For example, *The SDA Hymnal* includes national anthems and folk tunes. Does the fact that the compilers included them necessarily make them appropriate to sing as we worship God?
- What type of person was the composer? Was he someone whose life lent itself to inspiration from God or from the evil one?
- What is the theme or focus of the music? Does it bring glory to God? If the music has words, discernment may be simpler.
What type of rhythm does it have? Music in 2/4 and 4/4 time (march rhythm) tends to be straightforward and positive, like our heartbeat. Music in 3/4, 3/8, 6/8, etc., tends to be dance or waltz-like. A good deal of modern music has been written in odd or unusual time signatures (syncopated), such as 5/7, which are alien to the body's innate rhythm.

What effect does it have on me? Examples include: Does it lift my spirits or depress me? Does it remind me of heavenly things or make me want to dance? Is it soothing or irritating? Does it make me want to get work done or make me lazy? Is it educational or vain repetition?

**Colossians 3:16:** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

**Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 594:** Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above, and we should endeavor, in our songs of praise, to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs.

On p. 137 of his book, Neumann commends Kenneth Wood, a past editor of the Review and Herald, for his article written on January 20, 1972, entitled “Take these things hence.”

Christian parents and church leaders do young people a gross disservice when they blur the distinction between acceptable and non acceptable music, and condone a low quality of music and performance within the context of the church, ‘to keep the young people in the church.’ What a heavy responsibility they will carry for permitting their youth to enjoy sin without guilt.

Neumann concludes with the following appeal on p. 139:

No Christian should be led to believe that in order to reach the world with music, it is necessary to play its music. **Music does not convert people,** it is the power of God’s Spirit that convicts and converts the soul. It is the Christians duty to always present the higher standard. Do not, for one moment, think that you can assist the Holy Spirit in His work by mixing the sacred with the profane. The ground which you will be treading on will be dangerous ground, fraught with evils that you will not be able to control. Our command is to be separate, a royal priesthood, presenting the pure to a world lost in sin.
As the style of music worsened, the music that came before was not so bad. The wrong type of music—from waltzes to rock, rap, etc.—crept in gradually to ensnare even church members and to destroy their taste for heavenly music.

(Bellfort SDA Church, Houston, Texas
http://www.bellfortsda.org
In 2009 during Sabbath worship, Pastor Joe Grider was shown in photos wearing a robe decorated with what resembles Maltese or Iron crosses. The Maltese cross is the symbol of the Knights of Malta, an order of “Christian” warriors, which originated from the Order of Malta. The Order of Malta is a Masonic Order, closely associated with the Masonic Knights Templar, which is affiliated with Freemasonry, a secret society that is condemned by God. Iron crosses have represented the military, especially in Germany where it was made popular by Adolf Hitler in World War II. Why would an SDA pastor represent himself in such attire? We are not suggesting that Grider is associated with a secret society or fascism. However, the wearing of robes by SDA charismatic pastors during worship services is becoming common practice. One reason given by a pastor’s wife was that her husband would sweat too much and it ruined his suits. Is it just a coincidence that these robes, which resemble Catholic priests’ attire, are coming in at the same time as the emerging church movement?

Activities in this church included an International Day Celebration, another practice becoming popular. Drama was also included as part of the church routine.

(Celebration Center SDA Church, Redlands, California
http://www.celebrationcenter.net
Andy McRae is the current pastor. Besides the usual worship services with Christian rock, hand raising and drama, they also promote the 12 step Celebrate Recovery program.

http://celebrationcenter.net/index.php?nid=146550&s=gl&media_id=434034&showMedia=v
On October 30, 2010, Pastor McRae officiated in a communion service with a dimly lit room and dramatic lighting on the platform. The communion table included lit candles. Part of the communion sermon included a thanksgiving
prayer, a practice performed in Orthodox churches. McRae then stated in prayer in reference to the communion emblems: “These gifts of bread and wine, make them to be for us the body and blood of Christ.” An emblem is a representation that functions as a symbol. John 6:53 states, “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” “Eating Christ’s flesh” and “drinking His blood” is symbolic for taking in God’s Word, depending on it for spiritual food and drink, just as we depend on food and drink for physical life. If that verse was literal, then all those who do not partake in communion would not be alive, since the verse states that unless you partake, “ye have no life in you.” The church members also came forward to receive the emblems, which is a standard procedure for receiving the Eucharist during Catholic mass.

When Steve Daily previously pastored this church, the Events section featured an announcement about the Celebration Center hosting the Great Awakening Tour (April 17-24, 2009) with evangelist Eric Gonyon. It was advertised as a “radical campaign to REACH a radical generation” with the “life-changing message” of Christ. It was also stated that in almost two years almost 25,000 individuals were trained on how to reach communities with the gospel and that over 712,000 people made decisions for Christ. While the revival team is on the road, Eric Gonyon is the administrative assistant to Rodney Howard-Browne. You can find much of his tour activities at http://www.youtube.com. He can be seen doing “faith healings” and together with Kenneth Copeland as they are both involved in speaking in tongues and holy laughter. Under the “Kingdom Adventism” section below, notice what Pastor Daily says regarding “holy laughter.”

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 414: Some of these have much to say upon the gifts and are often especially exercised. They give themselves up to wild, excitable feelings and make unintelligible sounds which they call the gift of tongues, and a certain class seem to be charmed with these strange manifestations. A strange spirit rules with this class, which would bear down and run over anyone who would reprove them. God's Spirit is not in the work and does not attend such workmen. They have another spirit.

http://www.revival.com/revival.xhtml
This website shows the Great Awakening Tour statistics. As of August 2010, the “tour soul count” was at about 1,166,000 and the “global soul count” at about 4,436,000.
One of the beliefs of Revival Ministries International (a part of The Great Awakening) is that the love of Christ should be the primary message of the Christian church and should take precedence over all theological or denominational differences. This is the same emphasis on ecumenism that is being seen more and more even in the SDA Church. Yes, the love of Christ is primary but there is more to the gospel than that. It is only part of the “picture.”

This website includes photos of a Great Awakening Tour in Argentina in November 2010. It shows not only individuals with their hands raised but some lying on the floor who have been “slain in the spirit.” It is obviously not the Holy Spirit, but demon possession. This is the direction SDAs are headed if they continue with celebration services. These methods are being directed by Satan himself to prepare fundamental Christians to accept him when he impersonates Christ.

http://www.revival.com/day-2-pm-service-in-salta-argentina.2865.1.htm

The following website shows that the Celebration Center SDA Church is listed with the Southeastern California Conference of SDAs.

http://www.adventistdirectory.org/searchresults.aspx?&Search=Celebration%20Center%20SDA%20Church& EntityType=C&SortBy=0

(Part-12 of 17)

Kingdom Adventism

http://kingdomadventism.com

2009 and 2010: Steve Daily is currently the senior pastor of the Kingdom Life Fellowship in Redlands, California. While Kingdom Life Fellowship is not part of the SDA organization, it is described below to show the progression that takes place with Daily moving from university chaplain and faculty member at La Sierra University to the Celebration Center SDA Church (with the Southeastern California Conference of SDAs) to the Kingdom Life Fellowship. He states that his “kingdom congregation” is committed to help bring renewal to the SDA Church. His “church” includes a membership of interdenominational Christians not associated with the SDA Church. They emphasize “expressive worship,” the gifts of the Spirit, and an openness to other churches. He has ministered in the SDA Church for over 30 years as a pastor, licensed psychologist, author, university chaplain and a faculty member at La Sierra University. He has called for a more open Adventism that moves beyond sectarian claims of being the “remnant church” to embrace other Christians in a Christ-centered and Spirit-filled kingdom mentality. Daily received his BA plus an MA in History at Loma Linda University,
Daily also stated that through the “radical grace” of God we will know that all our past, present, and future sins have been forgiven. His ministry includes “prophecy,” “delivering those who are demon-oppressed or possessed,” and is open to the “gifts of the Spirit” including “tongues” with emphasis on the discernment of these gifts. Sadly, this pastor is trying to deliver others from demon-possession when he is inviting demons himself. He also believes in the type of “tongues” known as “glossolalia,” which is unintelligible gibberish or a meaningless jumble of sounds or writing. How does this benefit anyone? “Xenoglossy” or “xenoglossia” is the type of “speaking in tongues” through the Holy Spirit, in which a person is suddenly able to speak or write a foreign language which they never learned. This enables a person, when necessary, to share the gospel to those of a different language.
The Acts of the Apostles, p. 39: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." [Acts 2:3-4] The Holy Spirit, assuming the form of tongues of fire, rested upon those assembled. This was an emblem of the gift then bestowed on the disciples, which enabled them to speak with fluency languages with which they had heretofore been unacquainted.

Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 412: Fanaticism, false excitement, false talking in tongues, and noisy exercises have been considered gifts which God has placed in the church. Some have been deceived here. The fruits of all this have not been good. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Fanaticism and noise have been considered special evidences of faith. Some are not satisfied with a meeting unless they have a powerful and happy time. They work for this and get up an excitement of feeling. But the influence of such meetings is not beneficial. When the happy flight of feeling is gone they sink lower than before the meeting because their happiness did not come from the right source.

The most profitable meetings for spiritual advancement are those which are characterized with solemnity and deep searching of heart, each seeking to know himself and, earnestly and in deep humility, seeking to learn of Christ.

After the Great Awakening Tour, Daily stated that he was “totally impressed with Rodney Howard-Browne and his church,” because of his “truly mind-boggling” level of anointing. While sitting next to him at the minister’s luncheon, he was told about a “powerful prophetic word” for the Celebration Center and the SDA Church. Following is what Daily recalled as best he could: That God is pleased with his interdenominational spirit as His servant and that God is going to use him to “raise up an army in his church and in the Adventist denomination” that will give the true gospel and “release His Holy Spirit with fire,” resulting in many souls for years to come. Howard-Browne had Daily give his testimony before television cameras of “what God had done” in his church and community through the Great Awakening Tour. When Howard-Browne prayed over him, Daily states that he “felt a powerful move of God” that allowed him “to experience holy laughter to the greatest degree” at this point. He stated that because he is of Northern European descent that he is not one who “manifests easily” because he suffers from “emotional constipation.” However, he believes that “move of God was powerful” and it will “release” him into a “greater boldness” in his “street ministry.” This information resembles a false latter rain and shows how close we are to the final events of earth’s history. Tragically, he is setting himself up to very easily become a Sunday-keeper.
Steve Daily has written about 15 books, including *Adventism for a New Generation*. The foreword to the book was written by Tony Campolo (a non-SDA who is a forerunner in the evangelical emerging church movement). He states that “it is the best book” he has read that explains Adventism. Lynn Mallery (former President of Southeastern California Conference of SDAs) says that Daily’s book addresses the concerns of how to meet the needs of the younger generations. Yet Daily’s methods and beliefs will take the youth further from Christ at the peril of their salvation. Randal Wisbey (president of La Sierra University) finds Daily’s “application of SDA theology” of current issues “extremely helpful and insightful” and that he writes with the “eyes of a prophet.” It is also recommended by Desmond Ford (“new theology” advocate), William Loveless (former pastor of Loma Linda University Church and founder of the Adventist Student Mission program), Gary Swanson (Editor, Collegiate Quarterly), V. Baily Gillespie (coordinator for Valuegenesis Research Project), as well as Don Hawley (a former SDA who wrote a book against Ellen White and a former employee for the SDA General Conference Health Department).

Some of Daily’s beliefs as stated in his book include the following: It is not essential for us “in general” to agree about “what is right or wrong concerning homosexuality”; after dating for quite some time, couples should discuss “their convictions and sexual boundaries” and that “sexual exploration and experimentation before marriage should respect these boundaries”, that they should enjoy themselves “in a guilt-free balance within those boundaries”; that the “belief that fallen human beings can perfectly keep God’s law is also declared to be a lie in Scripture”; and that we have no right to make ourselves “moral policemen for other Christians.”

On the subject of homosexuality, even though the SDA Church officially does not approve of it or same-sex marriage, SDA churches fall far short of disfellowshipping those who practice or promote it, especially if they are in leadership positions. Some are even baptized while practicing this sin.

> It is obvious from the Bible that homosexuality is a sin and that God did not create us that way. It is not in the genes. That is an excuse made to condone the practice. God created man and woman (Adam and Eve) and told them to be fruitful and multiply. Satan has counterfeited true marriage. If homosexuals do not believe in the Bible, it is hard for them to believe that being a homosexual is a sin. However, it is something they chose and can only be overcome through the power of God.
when they repent and ask for help, just as with any other sin. Environmental influences play a large role in homosexual orientation, but a relationship with Christ can keep a person from giving in to those tendencies.

Each person is of value to God and He wants all to repent and follow Him. It is our Christian duty to encourage others to overcome sin. However, if they do not accept our help, we must move on to those who do. The verses below show us what God’s Word teaches about this type of relationship.

**Leviticus 18:22:** Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

**Leviticus 20:13:** If a man also lie with mankind, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

Jesus states the following to show God’s ideal for marriage (one male and one female):

**Mark 10:6-8:** But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

**Romans 1:26-27:** For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10:** Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.


**Effeminate:** (of a man or boy) displaying characteristics regarded as typical of a woman; not manly.

The following verses give sinners hope when they repent and ask for help.
1 Corinthians 6:11: And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

John 8:31-32: Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Philippians 4:13: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

(Part-14 of 17)

Following are descriptions of some of the graphics that have been on Steve Daily’s website:

- The congregation with most raising their hands during the service and in very casual dress, including faded jeans, shorts, or flip-flops.

  Child Guidance, p. 531: Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week.... While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.

- A worship music team with drums, etc.
- Worshipping with flags.
- A performing dance ministry, including teen dancers.
- Prayer for “deliverance” and a laying on of hands for a person lying on the floor.
- Children stand with raised hands and lead out with flags and dance.
- A large group on the platform rebukes the “religious spirit” with lots of drama.
- A couple participates in a “miracle meal” (a new form of communion) while standing, facing each other, holding hands and each holding a large cup of drink.
- A beach baptism with Daily and a bikini-clad girl in the water.
Daily includes a link to his daughter’s church where she is the pastor at Lone Tree Community Church (Lone Tree, Colorado), which worships similarly to his church.

Tragically, Daily and his daughter are just two more deceived into ecumenism and the charismatic movement. One page on Daily’s website had the following title, “Photos from The Kingdom: Our Role in the Latter Rain.” The latter rain will never fall on those who promote the devil’s tactics.

Kingdom Life Fellowship, Redlands, California
http://www.kingdomlifefellowship.net/index.html
Steve Daily, the senior pastor, stated that he is on “spiritual overload” from all that “God is doing.” He shares how he spent a “powerful weekend” at his daughter’s church to preach and saw God’s Spirit working powerfully with her kingdom congregation. There were at least 17 groups around the country in just two weeks who showed an interest in working with his church and Kingdom Adventism. He also shared that the Lord gave him a new topic for Easter weekend entitled “Holy Levitation!” and encouraged his members to “celebrate Resurrection weekend with a bang!” (written March 2010).

The website also strongly emphasizes “small groups and weekly fellowship,” which uses contemplative prayer practices, etc.

Kingdom Kids: According to the “children’s pastors,” children are nurtured in a safe environment through prayer, relationships and worship through song/dance, creative arts, and “other expressions of the heart.” They explained that through “uninhibited worship” they discover what it means in the Bible to be “at rest”—a place “where God can work His power” through them “in healing, deliverance, and miracles.”

Yes, God can work through people in healing, deliverance, and miracles but not when they are involved with those things not taught in God’s Word.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charismatic_Adventism#cite_note-108
It is interesting to note that Wikipedia states how Adventist churches with “charismatic leanings have been controversial,” and that some have left the denomination. One author states that the first celebration churches in the early 1980s were the New Life Celebration church in the Portland, Oregon area; the Celebration Center in Colton, California; the Hillview Church near Avondale
College in Australia; the Buffalo Church in the New York Conference; and the Cherrybrook church in Sydney—the first in Australia.

Many today believe that the following Spirit of Prophecy quote gives us license to have loud and entertaining worship services and parties.

_Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 371_: Shall we not keep holy festivals unto God? Shall we not show that we have some enthusiasm in His service? With the grand, ennobling theme of salvation before us, shall we be as cold as statues of marble? If men can become so excited over a match game of cricket, or a horse race, or over foolish things that bring no good to anyone, shall we be unmoved when the plan of salvation is unfolded before us? **Let the school and the church henceforth have festivals of rejoicing unto the Lord.**

However, please notice that in the following paragraph that precedes this, it is referring to the joy of having the Holy Spirit—and not in a charismatic way.

_Ibid., p. 370_: Again and again the heavenly Messenger has been sent to the school. When His presence has been acknowledged, the darkness has fled away, the light has shone forth, and hearts have been drawn to God. The last words spoken by Christ to John were: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17. When we respond to God and say, "Lord, we come," then with joy shall we draw water out of the wells of salvation.

If you read other Spirit of Prophecy statements on this subject, you will realize that it does not approve of today’s types of festivals. We are to have holy joy and enthusiasm, through the Holy Spirit, in the work of the Lord. When we have the true Holy Spirit in us, the worship services will be interesting without entertainment. That is how heaven worships.

(Part-16 of 17)

_Southeast SDA Church, Cleveland, Ohio_  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYspnYhZsQI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYspnYhZsQI)  
This video featured a 2010 “Preachout” with very charismatic preaching by several SDA pastors. It seemed the louder they preached and the more they moved, the more attention they received. It is so far away from the reverence of true preaching and something devils appreciate and heaven abhors. If it is not repented of, then “holy laughter,” “speaking in tongues,” and “healings” will follow.
**Evangelism, p. 184:** The Lord calls upon you to make decided improvement in your manner of presenting the truth. You need not be sensational. Preach the Word, as Christ, the Son of God, preached the Word. Violent gesticulations detract greatly from the impressions the truth would make upon human hearts, and lessen the force of the demonstrations of the Spirit of God. They efface the solemn impressions regarding God's Word that holy angels desire shall be made upon minds.

**Ibid., p. 640:** I see that great reformation must take place in the ministry before it shall be what God would have it. Ministers in the desk have no license to behave like theatrical performers, assuming attitudes and expressions calculated for effect. They do not occupy the sacred desk as actors, but as teachers of solemn truths. There are also fanatical ministers, who, in attempting to preach Christ, storm, halloo [shout], jump up and down, and pound the desk before them, as if this bodily exercise profited anything. Such antics lend no force to the truths uttered, but, on the contrary, disgust men and women of calm judgment and elevated views....

Awkward and uncouth gestures are not to be tolerated in the common walks of life; how much less, then, are they to be endured in the most sacred work of the gospel ministry. The minister should cultivate grace, courtesy, and refinement of manner. He should carry himself with a quiet dignity becoming his elevated calling. Solemnity, a certain godly authority, mingled with meekness, should characterize the demeanor of him who is a teacher of God's truth.

Why do people need a church service that entertains? Because they have grown up with entertainment in their home. A love for amusement destroys a love for truth.

**Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 6, p. 437:** When faith lays hold upon Christ, the truth will bring delight to the soul, and the services of religion will not be dull and uninteresting.

(Part-17 of 17)

**Metropolitan SDA Church, Hyattsville, Maryland**

http://www.metrosda.org/home.html

This 900-member church, with Brenda Billingly as the senior pastor, is not only charismatic but a good example of ecumenism.
This link announced an interfaith service held at their church on a Sunday morning to celebrate the 48th anniversary of independence with the Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Pastor Billiny delivered the homily.

Ministries for the over 200 young people include the following:

- Each year the church Cavaliers play in an SDA Church basketball league, with “playoffs and a championship game for each age group.” **What a shame that they include children as young as six years old.** Of course they could not go without mentioning that their “adult team was league champion for the 2004-05 season.” They even mention that the games provide a chance for their young people “to engage in fun, competitive activity” as well as fellowship. It is then stated that once you attend one of their games, you will be sure to be “hooked and keep coming back for more!” Games take place at various county public school gyms. Yes, the devil is very good at hooking the unwary.

- In the last few years for Children’s Sabbath, the Children Ministries and the Education Department collaborated to “host this special day, including an oratorical contest for elementary and high school students.”

- Puppets for Christ is one of their newest ministries, in which “the puppets present a story on the second Sabbath of each month” and is a “favorite with Metropolitan’s children.” This ministry’s goal is to teach children “important moral and spiritual values, through the puppets' often humorous exploits and antics.” The puppets were to be featured in a series of DVDs to be shared with members of their church as well as for “an evangelistic tool to reach non-members.” They explained that if a church member loves children and is interested in acting or scriptwriting, but does not like “being in the spotlight” that the puppet ministry “might be just the thing for you.”

Their Metro Praiz choir was advertised as a “rollicking, hand-clapping, foot-stomping gospel choir” that uses a “contemporary musical alternative,” incorporating “style, professionalism and pizzaz within a deeply spiritual framework to create a consistently moving worship experience.” True Christians find it hard to understand how that type of “music” can have a “deeply spiritual framework.” In line with the usual rhetoric, it was mentioned that they have performed with many artists in the Washington Metropolitan area and that they represented the Allegheny East Conference of SDAs by achieving 3rd place in the competition at the BAYDA Youth Congress held in 2001 in Indiana. They ended by saying that “all the honor and glory belong to God,” in spite of their mentioning...
that the director did an outstanding job and that he was “proud of their performance.”
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvN4FgXzQqw;
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IodZn7Vx37A