A SEMIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC (CCM) AS HEARD ON 95.5 WFHM-FM CLEVELAND, OHIO "THE FISH" RADIO STATION (JULY 2001 TO JULY 2006)

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CHAPTER I

95.5 FM: FROM WCLV TO WFHM "THE FISH"

A Brief History

On July 3, 2001 a new-to-Cleveland radio format broadcast its first morning show program, which denoted a shift in the musical landscape of Northeast Ohio: Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) eclipsed the popularity of classical music, and subsequently christened the 95.5 FM station call letters from WCLV (Cleveland) to WFHM (For Him – as in Jesus).

CCM became accessible to a wider audience in Northeastern Ohio through the appropriation of the 95.5 FM frequency, the locally owned and operated all-classical music radio station in Cleveland, Ohio. In 2001, Robert Conrad, president and founder of WCLV since 1962, sold the 95.5 FM station frequency and its subsequent audience share to Salem Communications headquartered in Camarillo, California. At that time, Salem owned and operated eighty radio stations. Of those stations, fifty-five were in the top 25 markets; Salem also owns Salem Radio Network, OnePlace.com, and CCM Communications. When Salem purchased the rights to 95.5 WCLV-FM from Conrad, its radio format and call letters were changed, thus converting the station from all-classical music programming to the prevalent Contemporary Christian Music (CCM).

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1 Salem Radio Network syndicates talk programming, news, and music to over 1600 affiliated radio stations.
2 OnePlace.com is the leading Internet streamer of Christian radio content.
3 CCM Communications is the leading publisher of contemporary Christian music trade and consumer publications.
4 WCLV moved from a 31,000-watt transmitter in Cleveland, Ohio to a 6,000-watt tower in Avon, Ohio.
WCLV repositioned itself and now transmits from 104.9 FM, which, ironically, was the former Christian music radio station; however, it did not broadcast CCM.

Although some have argued (mostly Robert Conrad and his associates) that the transmission was smooth, others, primarily from the WCLV audience, have a different perspective. For instance, Jeff Sikorovsky, a reporter from the local *Sun Newspapers* wrote on July 19, 2001, "The classical music radio station WCLV-FM is getting mixed signals from longtime East Side listeners after its recent jump on the dial from 95.5 FM to 104.9 FM."\(^5\) Those "longtime East Side listeners" that Sikorovsky referred to were the loyal classical music supporters and audience for WCLV. Since 1962, Northeast Ohioans have enjoyed listening to classical music on WCLV; according to Robert Conrad, it was the last locally owned and operated radio station in Cleveland, Ohio. Sikorovsky interviewed devoted audience members and classical music supporters regarding the radio station. A resident from Mayfield Heights who listened to WCLV for nearly 30 years was hoping to hear classical music forever. She expressed her understanding of the station frequency change to Sikorovsky, "we changed our buttons . . . but when the switch came, we didn't hear it . . . we're having a silent summer [2001]."\(^6\)

This radio frequency switch affected local congregational programming, too. Reverend Donald Crellin conveyed to Sikorovsky, "some parishioners who enjoy the Sunday broadcasts are feeling 'disappointed' . . . There are those kind of folks who live with their ear to the radio . . . maybe the newspaper article can help people find their

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\(^6\) Ibid.
way." Crellin's wife also appreciated classical music and listened to WCLV; however, the frequency shift diminished the quality of reception and it became more difficult to listen. The solution was to locate another radio station that also broadcast classical music. The WKSU-FM (Kent State University) station provided an alternative for some people; according to one of the parishioners, the only problem was that "WKSU does not play the breadth and variety of music that WCLV does. I don't mean to trash the (KSU) station, but it is not satisfactory at all."7

Conrad described the circumstances to Sikorovsky, "Classical music radio stations around the country were dropping like flies . . . we could have sold out and gone to Florida . . . instead, we chose to take considerably less money and preserve the radio station."8 Sikorovsky relays some of the details, "Conrad agreed to a three-way deal with Salem Communications and Clear Channel in November [2000] to trade 95.5 FM for 104.9 FM involving WHK-AM and $18.5 million in cash."9 One of the main reasons for poor reception on the East Side of Cleveland is that WCLV continues to operate 104.9 FM from its studios in Warrensville Heights, Ohio, but the transmitter is in Avon, Ohio. Directly behind WCLV in Warrensville Heights is the transmitter for 95.5 FM "The Fish," which operates from Independence, Ohio. Although Conrad sold the station frequency for $18.5 million in cash, overall it was to be "in the neighborhood of $40 million."10 He further justified the transaction to Sikorovsky by explaining, "Similar

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7 Jeff Sikorovsky, "Bad Air Days: WCLV's New Signal is Tangled."
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
music stations in Detroit, Philadelphia and Chicago sold for . . . $28 million to $165 million."\textsuperscript{11} Conrad's response suggests he was somehow saving classical music by relinquishing the station to Salem Communications for a mere $18.5 million. He candidly said, "We could have sold out and gone to Florida . . . instead, we chose to take considerably less money and preserve the radio station . . . we could have sold [it] outright for $40 million and kept the money."\textsuperscript{12} Conrad shared more details of the agreement, "[I] transferred ownership of WCLV's FM license to a new WCLV Foundation, which will maintain the classical format into perpetuity."\textsuperscript{13} Undeniably, a few organizations did prosper from this historic buyout, as "profits . . . will benefit the Cleveland Orchestra, the Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland Institute of Music, the Cleveland Playhouse and the Cleveland Foundation . . . a gift worth about $15 million."\textsuperscript{14}

95.5 FM swiftly relinquished ownership, and the largest classical music station in Cleveland, Ohio transfigured into a Christian-themed format known as "The Fish."

Even though many radio listeners in Northeast Ohio were unaware, evidence demonstrates a historical radio station switch was in position before 2001. As it turns out, Salem Communications is a Christian-oriented radio group that monitored the Cleveland communications market. Its properties are "strategically focused on three complementary formats: Christian Teaching and Talk, News Talk, and Contemporary

\textsuperscript{11} Jeff Sikorovsky, "Bad Air Days: WCLV's New Signal is Tangled."
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
Christian Music – The Fish."\(^{15}\) On November 9, 2000, Salem announced in a press release its plans for the Cleveland market:

[Salem] has entered an asset exchange agreement with Radio Seaway, Inc. and Clear Channel Communications involving several stations in the Cleveland market and surrounding areas. In the agreement, Salem Communications will acquire the transmitting facility of WCLV-FM (95.5) from Radio Seaway in exchange for giving them WHK-AM (1420). Salem's WHK-FM (98.1) goes to Clear Channel. Clear Channel hands over WAKS-FM (104.9) in Lorain to Radio Seaway.\(^{16}\)

The press release disclosed: "Salem Communications will pay $10.5 million in cash to Radio Seaway. Pending all regulatory approvals, Salem anticipates closing this transaction in the first half of 2001." Edward G. Atsinger III, President and CEO of Salem Communications announced, "We are pleased to be able to acquire a strong FM signal in the Cleveland market. With this agreement, Salem Communications continues its strategy of operating multiple stations in major markets, enabling us to provide a variety of programming offerings."\(^{17}\) On July 20, 2001, Salem Communications confirmed that "it has completed several pending acquisitions, including its acquisition of WFM-FM (formally WCLV-FM) in Cleveland, OH from Radio Seaway, the sale of one of its Cleveland, OH AM radio stations to Radio Seaway, and the sale of its Canton, OH

\(^{15}\) Salem Communications, *News and Public Affairs Resource Guide* (Camarillo, CA: Salem Communications, 2007), 4. It is interesting to note that the owner of the station, Salem Communications, uses these bullet-points to present a description of "The Fish" format, which does not explicitly dictate that the format should proselytize or evangelize. One could argue that only the non-consumer of a Christian-themed format believes that the format primarily functions to proselytize or evangelize. It is this misguided perception that contributes to the pre-conceived rhetoric that defines CCM.


\(^{17}\) Ibid.
FM radio station to Clear Channel." When Salem Communications finalized the purchase of 95.5 WCLV-FM, WCLV downsized its broadcast of classical music from a 31,000-watt transmitter in Warrensville Heights (located on the East Side) to a 6,000-watt tower in Avon (located on the West Side).

Salem Communications specifically targeted 95.5 FM WCLV because of its wide-range frequency and potentially large audience. The purchase and subsequent format change to the more popular CCM drew the attention of Robert Abelman, from the School of Communications at Cleveland State University. He succinctly explained, "When purchasing radio stations, the company focuses on acquiring outlets with the most powerful transmitters." A powerful transmitter, in this case 31,000 watts, alone is not infallible, and coupled with a highly unorthodox approach to introduce a new station format into another market, such as "The Fish," some could think Salem's strategic plan might be risky for the market. Yet, according to Katy Bachman of Mediaweek, "Since they went public in 1999, Salem has doubled the number of stations it owns." Bachman's reporting suggests Salem has a voracious appetite for acquiring, or perhaps appropriating, new stations and subsequently converting them into Christian-oriented formats. Atsinger (CEO for Salem) verified these maneuvers in an interview with Eric Boehlert from Billboard, "We made a deliberate strategy . . . we saw an exodus of people

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doing religious broadcasting in major markets . . . we certainly have business motivation and strategy, but we have built the company on our commitment to the format." It is that very commitment and strategy that ultimately brought CCM and "The Fish" format to Cleveland and as scheduled, the first morning show aired on July 3, 2001.

Why Radio?

Radio, as discussed in this section, is just one means to disseminate information. Since the 1980s, the AM/FM radio has been part of standard packaging in automobiles. In the modern-day car, radio's presence allows travelers to be part of the world, yet, at the same time, separate. As Charles Fitch writes, "Playing the radio while you moto-vote was a wonderful thing, allowing you to be internal and external at the same time." According to the "National In-Car Study," conducted by Arbitron in 2003, "Americans report spending an average of 15 hours a week in-car, either as driver or passenger, and perceive traffic as getting worse." Perhaps the radio, by necessity, becomes a transforming agent because of extensive time in the car coupled with aggravating traffic.

According to Arbitron, "Since 1999, radio listening has decreased both at home and at

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23 Arbitron Inc. (NYSE: ARB) is an international media and marketing research firm serving radio broadcasters, cable companies, advertisers, advertising agencies, and outdoor advertising companies in the United States, Mexico, and Europe.
work, while the in-car location has seen an increase in listenership. As Fitch continues:

You could make the music a personal experience, even singing along in the privacy of your mobile suite or be carried afar by the drama programs or news reports from around the globe.

Listening to the radio can be something truly personal. Whether listening to music or talk stations, the experience of listening is nothing less, as Fitch declares, than an "amazing sound . . . from those speakers." Interestingly enough, those speakers have transcended beyond the car stereo system and can be anywhere the Internet can be, which translates to places such as Starbucks, McDonalds, and airports. Anywhere there is WIFI, there is Internet, and anywhere there is Internet there is an immediate connection to the world.

Of course, with this immediate connection to the world and other people, one can never be isolated. As Fitch notes, "Radio is still that way."

Specific to the Christian audience, the transformation from the in-car radio listener to an anywhere listener, via the Internet and technology, is perhaps an

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27 Ibid.
28 The implication here is to suggest that the radio and pervasive technology can become a conduit to commune with God. For instance, if one is listening to the radio, then, conceivably, at least two people are present: the one listening and the one on the "other side of the radio." From this perspective, one could further deduce that since two or more are present, God is present. According to Matthew 18:20 (NRSV), "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." In essence, "The Fish" format, by design, creates an environment that is conducive for worship because two or more (the listener and the singer(s)/DJ) can potentially gather in his name.
29 Charles S. Fitch, "Radio Has a Special Place in the Car."
overarching metaphor that can signify how a to be in the world, but not of the world.

While this notion of being in the world, but not of the world is not a direct quote from scripture, it does provide a contextual understanding of sanctification as used in this dissertation. Chapter IV discusses sanctification in its contextual relationship to sin, but for now, the passage noted from scripture addresses sanctification through this text:

They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.\(^{30}\)

This passage articulates two interconnected ideas: to be sanctified is to be set apart, and to be set apart may be understood as to be in the world, but not of the world.

Additionally, this passage does not suggest the notion that one can sequester oneself from this world, which is often the viewpoint from outside the Christian culture.

"The Fish" Format

Salem Communications publishes the *News and Public Affairs Resource Guide*. Below are four bullet-points from that resource guide to highlight the radio format heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish":

- Inspirational, upbeat music that is family-friendly
- Popular sounds with lyrics that parents appreciate
- Through this popular format Salem is serving an audience that has been underserved in terms of radio coverage, especially in larger markets
- Salem currently owns and operates 13 radio stations in this format\(^{31}\)

\(^{30}\) John 17:16-19 (NRSV).

With this information, it becomes clear that this format does not intrinsically imply proselytizing or evangelizing. For instance, Katy Bachman of *Mediaweek* comments on "The Fish" format by initially describing what it is not, "Salem's syndicated format on its owned stations, is not gospel, nor is it church or prayer music."\(^{32}\) To clarify the station's position Bachman writes, "Salem claims that it doesn't preach, evangelize or proselytize."\(^{33}\) In her observation of the format, Bachman asserts, "Take away the lyrics [and] . . . listeners hear current Rock and Pop."\(^{34}\) She illustrates her point by citing several popular CCM artists: "dcTalk, Jars of Clay, Steven Curtis Chapman, Michael W. Smith, Sixpence None the Richer and Plus One."\(^{35}\) Steven Curtis Chapman and Michael W. Smith are elder statesmen in the CCM industry. In other words, for those listeners familiar with these artists, they can immediately relate to the specific Rock and Pop style that Bachman describes. Barry Alfonso, author of the *Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music*, highlighted that in 2001, the year CCM first broadcast in the Cleveland market, "Salem Communications finds growing success with "Fish" syndication format on Christian radio stations across the U.S."\(^{36}\)

Salem concentrates on "The Fish" format being *family-friendly* with *lyrics that parents appreciate*. It is, therefore, important to note that although "The Fish" may

\(^{33}\) Ibid.
\(^{34}\) Ibid.
\(^{35}\) Ibid.
broadcast CCM, it does not explicitly publicize itself as a Christian music radio station.\(^{37}\)

Furthermore, no one affiliated with the station declares it as a Christian station. Such rhetoric is not on the website nor heard during broadcasts from the station representatives and/or advertisers. Instead, the station implies its religious orientation to its listeners through its branded slogan, "Safe for the Whole Family," and their trademark logo "The Fish." The slogan and the logo combined only allude to probable content on the radio station. Current (July 2001-July 2006) and potential listeners, as they turn the radio dial to 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish," will only hear reinforcement of Salem's original branded marketing strategy that this station is "Safe for the Whole Family." If the listener is familiar with Christian symbolism, they will also recognize "The Fish" (the word and its visual symbol) as an early representation of Christ and his followers. In the marketplace, drawing a fish symbol in the sand or dirt signified to other Christians that they were safe and among fellow Christians. Today, many people display this symbol on their automobiles, and the radio station disseminates its own version.

Figure 1. 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" Logo without the branded slogan

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\(^{37}\) 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" did not proselytize the first five years of the station's existence in Cleveland, Ohio. The Disc Jockeys (DJ's) did not say anything remotely religious; however, since 2007, this is not the case. The DJ's freely say "God Bless You," and openly deliver testimonies of their faith.
During broadcasts, the station hosts, or Disc Jockeys (DJs), refer to these stickers simply as "Fish Sticks." Some of these stickers include the branded slogan, "Safe for the Whole Family," and they often imbed an image of the American Flag. In reality, the "Fish Stick" is a contemporary manifestation of the historical fish symbol. Although modernized, it retains its original function. It initially communicates, through its signification, that one is a consumer of 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" radio station. Furthermore, one who also identifies with its coded symbolism can then surmise that you are Christian. This layered association effectively strengthens the communication of the "Fish Stick": it implies a shared or similar belief system. In practice, through their sponsored advertisers, the station encourages listeners to "go and make disciples." Followers of the radio station are encouraged to mention to business owners that they heard their advertisements on "The Fish." If obedient, you will reap the rewards, e.g., discounts for the "whole family," a car from a dealer with the same "family" values, keep your "family safe" with our windows and siding, etc.

It is clear that radio is a useful medium to broadcast specific content and/or advertising to a wider audience. One interesting issue, raised during the radio buyout process is what happens to the "audience" or consumers of a radio station during that process. Robert Abelman, Communications Professor at Cleveland State University, discusses this concern in his article, "Without Divine Intervention: Contemporary Christian Music Radio and Audience Transference." In 2005 and 2006, Abelman conducted research based upon a historical seven-station radio switch. Identifying why it is monumental, he cited an article from the Cleveland Plain Dealer (July 2, 2001): "never
in the 80-year history of radio in this market have so many stations switched frequencies at once . . . and never in the midst of this confusion, has a CCM station attempted to introduce and establish itself."38 A premise for Abelman's research is simply, "this single market switch in radio frequencies provides the context for a case study analysis of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) radio."39

In his study, Abelman "explores the interaction between a CCM-formatted radio station's listenership, salient station attributes, and promotional strategies that have been identified in the literature as potentially impacting on religious and secular audience transference."40 Abelman illustrates how researchers in the communications field approach predictors of audience transference as they try to ascertain "what governs station choice, listening patterns, and audience interpretations of program content."41

Some of the startling statistics from his research reveal, "The CCM station's first ratings book in this market reflects placement in the top-15 stations for both its target and tangential audiences. Not only did it outrank the other four stations that identified 25- to 54-year-olds as their target audience, but . . . it attracted a greater share of women in all time slots and a greater share of men in most . . . the CCM station also outranked the other four stations that identified 18- to 34-year-olds as the tangential audience."42 To help codify content and format, Abelman advised, "Intimate expressions of faith are scarce in mainstream media. However, CCM stations also embrace a music-based format

38 Robert Abelman, "Without Divine Intervention," 210-211.
39 Ibid., 209.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., 211
42 Ibid., 221.
that is shared with many other formats, including Adult Contemporary, Current Hits, Pop Standards, and Country.\(^{43}\)

Abelman's research supports the fact that the CCM format is not only popular in this market, but it is successful, too. He explains that his research "shed light on the phenomenal success of CCM-formatted radio and its ability to enter new markets and attract and sustain sizable audiences from the get-go."\(^ {44}\) This ability to reinforce a station's audience during a radio frequency switch and to convince them, once the switch has been complete, to remain with the new station is quite remarkable.

According to Ableman, there are several factors, including "signal strength and inheritance effects," that lead to audience transference; however, he confirms, "signal strength alone does not explain audience transference. Stations whose formats had the greatest competition within the market did the best job of product differentiation through station branding and had highly accurate and accessible Web sites."\(^ {45}\) It is possible to understand *audience transference* as cultural appropriation of the radio station from the classical music market. For instance, in the "Introduction to Cultural Appropriation: A Framework for Analysis," edited by Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao, a definition of *cultural appropriation* is posited as "the taking – from a culture that is not one's own – of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artifacts, history and ways of knowledge."\(^ {46}\)

\(^{43}\) Robert Abelman, "Without Divine Intervention," 212.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 225.


One may surmise that a form of cultural appropriation occurs during audience transference, especially in the way that Abelman recognizes the impact of "station branding, progressive self-promotion, Web site status"\(^{47}\) while acknowledging that the "corporate ownership proved to be particularly significant factors."\(^{48}\)

Radio buyouts and purchasing of stations is certainly not an innovation in radio broadcasting as Ray Shuker, author of *Key Concepts in Popular Music*, points out, " . . . channel-switching is common in radio."\(^{49}\) However, he particularly notes "the aim of programmers is to keep the audience from switching stations."\(^{50}\) In other words, the associated phenomenon that Abelman writes about occurs when the audience complies and does not switch radio stations.

In Abelman's research, he acknowledges the initial status of Contemporary Christian Music "to have only niche appeal in the 1980s."\(^{51}\) He is adept to demonstrate the genre's impact when he writes, " . . . religious-formatted radio stations have quickly gained prominence and mainstream audience acceptance over the last few years."\(^{52}\) This statement is fully supported by Brady Kelly's Arbitron report from January 2003 entitled, "Christian Radio: Not Just a 'Niche Format' Anymore." Kelly articulates the growth in the CCM format and its associated radio stations in his report:

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\(^{48}\) Ibid.


\(^{50}\) Ibid.


\(^{52}\) Ibid.
Since 1998, average quarter-hour listening for Religious-formatted stations has grown by 35 percent, according to Arbitron statistics. This growth rate tops increases seen by every other format measured by Arbitron.\(^53\)

Kelly's tagline further illustrates the demographic impact: Christian Music Hits the Demographic Bull's Eye.\(^54\) He asserts that not only is the "... demographic appeal of Christian stations quite remarkable," but it "rivals mainstream secular stations."\(^55\) Kelly substantiates his assertion with "a compelling piece of information: 71% of the Contemporary Christian audience is in the all-important 25-54 media-buying demographic." This translates into fiscal good news for the radio stations. It means that the coveted demographic of ages 25-54 is making a conscious decision by deliberately turning the radio dial to listen to Contemporary Christian stations more than in the rival secular markets. As Kelly states, "Contemporary Christian stations are generally richer in 25-54 listeners than secular Adult Contemporary, CHR [Contemporary Hit Radio], Country, News/Talk and Oldies stations."\(^56\) Having a foothold with the target demographic is truly great news, but understanding how the station captures that specific demographic is another part of the success story.

Success and marketing go hand-in-hand; it is a direct correlation. Abelman identifies marketing and its various forms as an important indicator for audience transference. He recognizes some specific predictors that include: "Inheritance Factors,


\(^{54}\) Ibid.

\(^{55}\) Ibid.

\(^{56}\) Ibid.
Station Branding, Self-Promotion, The Web, and Station Ownership."\textsuperscript{57} Quite specifically, these aspects, according to Abelman, are "the most prominent potential predictors of religious and secular radio audience transference for new and established stations."\textsuperscript{58} With Abelman's findings and research, it is clear that both religious and secular radio benefit from specific predictors of audience transference. Similarly, Brad Kelly addresses this issue in his Arbitron report from January 2003 with the tagline "Mainstream Marketing and Programming Techniques Translate Well."\textsuperscript{59} Kelly identifies this borrowed phenomenon of "using the programming and promotion techniques of mainstream stations" as a "key part of the success at many Religious-formatted stations."\textsuperscript{60} To demonstrate how simple and effective these borrowed techniques are Kelly cites an interview with Dan Baughman, general manager of WCVO-FM in Columbus, Ohio, where Baughman discusses the "stations successful conversion from Christian Talk to Contemporary Christian."\textsuperscript{61} Kelly reveals how Baughman maneuvered, through hiring and promotion strategies, the identity of the station to a new "family-friendly" format. This success story took place in Columbus, Ohio; however, its momentum raced toward Northeastern Ohio. In reference to what was taking place two hours north, Kelly confirms that "Salem Communications' WFHM-FM in Cleveland, OH is another Contemporary Christian radio success story."\textsuperscript{62} He adds to the station's short,

\textsuperscript{57} Robert Abelman, "Without Divine Intervention," 211.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Brad Kelly, \textit{Christian Radio: Not Just a "Niche Format" Anymore}.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
but eventful history: "when the station originally went on the air, its playlist consisted largely of older songs." Despite the fact that the station first aired in Cleveland, Ohio in 2001, the older songs Kelly refers to date as early as 1996; therefore, the concept of *old* is genre specific and culturally determined. Kelly describes a fantastical metamorphosis of the station, "Since then, veteran program director Sue Wilson has changed the station's emphasis to current music and expanded its marketing efforts." It is important to note that Kelly's report dates from January 2003, and WFHM first aired in July 2001. Though it is a very short turnaround time, it clearly demonstrates motivation for the station to progress and gain a stronghold in the Cleveland market. In hindsight, it is not much of a surprise for Kelly to report "the changes [made by Sue Wilson] have improved the station's Time Spent Listening numbers and made WFHM a viable competitor in Cleveland – so much so, in fact, that WFHM's female demographics are in the top 10 for all Cleveland stations." As it turns out, this particular female demographic is vital to the radio station's longevity and sustainability.

*What is CCM?*

Overall, CCM tends to possess an "otherness" quality, and there is a certain stigma attached to the genre and its associated artists. The word *Christian*, used to identify the genre as something separate from Contemporary Music, makes CCM distinctive. Music is only one aspect of the Christian music industry; although it is a byproduct within this industry, music is vital to the identity of the industry as a whole. In

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63 Brad Kelly, *Christian Radio: Not Just a "Niche Format" Anymore*
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
a way, marking the industry using *Christian* as a way to identify the genre is an explicit demonstration of the concept of sanctification; CCM is literally set apart from the other genres with the sole use of *Christian*. In addition, before even hearing a note, CCM is the only popular musical genre that self-describes the content of its music with a label. *Christian*, as a descriptor of the genre, is usually the basis for debate surrounding the genre's definition; a unified definition of CCM does not exist.

While an agreed upon definition of CCM does not exist, there is an industry-driven initiative to clarify what CCM is and is not. Within the macro structure of the music industry, the hierarchy in the Christian music industry spans across a complex network of relationships spanning from the Gospel Music Association (GMA) to the consumer, with many viewpoints in between.

The GMA has an overarching presence in the music industry from church leaders to record company executives. As GMA states, "on behalf of its 4,000 members which include agents, artists, church leaders, managers, promoters, radio personnel, record company executives, retailers and songwriters, the GMA produces the GMA Dove Awards, which recognizes achievement in all genres of Gospel music and is the premiere television awards show for Christian/Gospel music." 66 GMA has embedded itself through various economic and cultural layers while maintaining a unifying theme of "spreading the gospel." The GMA defines Christian/Gospel Music as:

1. Not a single musical style or genre
2. Includes pop, rock, praise and worship, black gospel, R&B, hip hop, southern

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gospel, country, and more

3. Music that connects deeply with a diverse audience

GMA "serves the Christian/Gospel music community and is dedicated to exposing, promoting and celebrating the gospel through music of all styles." While the GMA's mission is broad in scope, this dissertation will examine CCM with a qualitative analysis of song texts as heard on the local radio station WFHM-FM 95.5 "The Fish."

From a seemingly broad secular perspective, *The Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopedia of Radio* describes the CCM format as "part of a growing U.S. trend of religious formats on the air, this development of the past few decades combines the basic tenants of Christianity with popular music approaches that appeal to a broader audience."

When comparing the secular perspective (*The Museum of Broadcast Communications*) with the seemingly overt religious perspective (GMA), it demonstrates the breadth and scope of the genre. The secular perspective tends to characterize the genre in a rather strict formulaic structure, whereas the more sacred-leaning perspective tends to frame the genre in terms that are more generic.

When comparing two reference resources, *The Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music* and the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music*, one finds another example of the breadth and scope of the genre. A broad-based definition for CCM appears in Barry Alfonso’s *Billboard Guide*; he simply defines CCM as "a

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68 Ibid., 6.
blending (sometimes blurring) of a faith-based message and secular pop music styles."  

Alfonso quickly indicates that his definition is "for the purposes of [his] guide." 

Alfonso characterizes CCM as running "the gamut from the blistering extreme metal . . . to the contemplative orchestral folk . . . from the giddy ska . . . to the mature gospel/pop." In the introduction, he further explains a paradox of CCM as "a sub-genre of gifted writer/artists who are too left-of-center for Christian radio and too faith-oriented for secular record companies." Alfonso's observation elucidates the extremes within the spectrum of CCM, and with that, artists potentially fall into a middle ground and tend to be artists who cross over or overlap between Christian and secular markets. Alfonso's guide and the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music* by Mark Allan Powell both reference many of the artists heard on 95.5 "The Fish."

Powell concurs with Alfonso that CCM "encompasses a wide variety of styles and genres." Some of these other genres, according to Powell, include "Christian rock . . . Christian country, Christian folk, Christian new wave, Christian punk, Christian death metal, Christian gangsta rap, and everything else imaginable." While not pioneering, Powell's words do reaffirm that *Christian* is a label specifically used to signify a particular genre, to separate it from the others. Although this label identifies the genre, it does not wholly describe it. To some, *Christian* is a very broad label that encompasses

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71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid., 9-10.
75 Ibid.
not only content, but shrouds the artist or songwriter in steep assumptions about their faith. The label *Christian* not only suggests that its artists are somehow infallible, but they become, quite literally, set apart from other artists. The demarcation of *Christian* in the label, as opposed to any other popular music genre, metaphorically draws a boundary; the ensuing battle is one the Christian artist contends with daily.

In *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music*, Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck identify four different types of CCM based upon purpose or function; therefore, for Howard and Streck, CCM has become *splintered*. They discuss in great detail certain features in the following chapters from their book:


Because these classifications of CCM, as identified by the authors, are unable to coalesce, they then consider CCM to be a splintered genre that is unable to serve all of its constituents all of the time. The fragmented world that Howard and Streck describe encompasses the expansive interpretations of CCM, and to a certain extent, how each faction (Ministry, Entertainment, Art, and Business) contributes to the overall accepted definitions of CCM.

From the perspective of songwriting, the definition of CCM is prescriptive. Paul Baloche and Jimmy and Carol Owens offer this point in the introduction of their book *Godsongs*.\(^76\) In defining the scope for their text, they begin with the premise that the

\(^76\) Paul Baloche, and Jimmy & Carol Owens, *God Songs: How to Write and Select Songs for Worship* (Lindale: Leadworship.com, 2004), 15. They clarify their stance by
reader of the book, or anyone interested in writing or selecting songs for worship, is a born-again Christian. This assumption implies that only a born-again Christian could be interested or should be interested in their text. This perspective, although limiting, is most often associated with CCM, which reinforces the perception that CCM is only relevant to a small faction of Christian denominations.

Several other songwriting texts also address the issue of CCM and how to approach writing songs within this specific genre. For instance, in Essential Songwriting, C.J. Watson suggests "the CCM genre is separate from other genres only by virtue of its subject matter: musically, anything that would work for the pop market will work here." In the "Specialty Market" chapter of Six Steps to Songwriting Success by Jason Blume, he integrates several quotes to illustrate the depth and range within the Christian music market. For instance, Jim Van Hook (Chairman/CEO, Provident Music Group) demands writing, "A worship leader should lead a life of worship, and so should a writer of songs for worship. Songs should be scriptural and anointed by the Holy Spirit in order to accomplish their purpose. But in this book we start with the assumption that this foundation has already been laid; that you, our reader, are a born-again Christian, a worshiper, dedicated to serving the Lord with the spiritual and musical gifts entrusted to you, and we want to help you improve those gifts."

77 Stephen Prothero, Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know - and Doesn't (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 205. In this context, and for the remainder of this dissertation, this is the ascribed definition for born-again: "Someone who has accepted Jesus as his or her Savior and Lord, typically in a sudden conversion experience or 'new birth.' This rather imprecise term comes from John 3:7 [KJV], where Jesus says, 'Ye must be born again.' Pollster George Barna draws a sharp distinction between born-again Christians and evangelicals, defining the former as people . . . who say they have had a 'new birth' experience and the latter as a . . . subset of born-again Christians . . . who exhibit additional criteria, including belief in Satan and the conviction that salvation comes through grace alone. This distinction has not caught on. For the most part the terms born-again Christian and evangelical are synonymous."

"Faith and subject matter cannot be an excuse for substandard writing. The thing that makes Christian music unique is its message, not its music."79 Regie Hamm (Universal recording artist/songwriter with more than 400 Christian cuts) verifies that "writing lyrics for the Christian music market requires that you either be a Christian or understand Christianity implicitly. The audience can sense insincerity and a lack of biblical knowledge and will not tolerate either one."80 And finally, Marty Wheeler (Vice President Publishing, Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing) simply states, "In the Christian market, lyrics are based on one specific book – the Bible."81 It is very interesting to see these three different perspectives from within the Christian industry: a CEO from Provident Music Group, a prolific artist/songwriter, and a Vice President of Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing. Each person has a specific function and role within the industry. The CEO wants to sell records, but does not want substandard writing; the artist/songwriter prefers authenticity above all; and the Vice President of Publishing is interested in how the songs relate to a very specific book (The Bible).

While the aforementioned songwriting texts addressed various aspects of CCM by relating them to the music industry as a whole, the secular resource Rolling Stone renders yet another perspective of CCM within the overarching industry. Christian Hoard writes that he was thankful that an Alan Jackson album he reviewed avoided that "CCM

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80 Ibid., 82.
81 Ibid., 84.
ickiness,"\(^{82}\) and Jon Caramanica initially described R.J. Helton's album "like much of [CCM], the songs . . . seem to be traditional love jams."\(^{83}\) Helton hastily added, "but look at them from the right angle and they reveal themselves as pledges of religious devotion."\(^{84}\) While the aforementioned authors offer no insight about the nature of CCM, one author from *Rolling Stone* does. Charles M. Young's keen perception regarding the CCM industry, whether intentional or not, has been noted in Powell's epic encyclopedia. Powell does not credit an author with this quote, he simply writes: "*Rolling Stone* magazine refers to contemporary Christian music as a parallel universe. That label rightly indicates that we are talking about a distinct world analogous to the realm of popular music in general."\(^{85}\) Indeed, in reviewing the *WOW 1997: The Year's 30 Top Christian Artists and Songs* compilation series album, Young intuitively wrote that CCM is a parallel universe.\(^{86}\) This insightful acknowledgement from a secular music magazine writer is monumental because Young's statement not only suggests that CCM is not a subculture, but it also implies a sense of equality with mainstream music. Few recognize this impartiality.

It is difficult to find a precise and accepted definition of CCM as a musical genre. In fact, to further develop its intricate nature, Powell suggests in his *Theological Postscript* that CCM is a subculture both musically and as it relates to Christianity as a


\(^{84}\) Ibid.


whole. He explains this further by identifying a potential "audience" of CCM based upon associated denominations. According to Powell, "the roots of [CCM] lie within fundamentalism, and a large number of the primary participants continue to be drawn from sects representing Christianity's more conservative factions." He describes said churches as having "their historical origins in America (Baptists, Nazarenes, Pentecostals, Free Methodists, and various non-denominational groups) rather than from those with origins in Europe (Episcopaliains, Lutherans, Mennonites, United Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics)." These claims, although seemingly descriptive, do not apply to the music heard on 95.5 "The Fish."

To counter Powell's claim, since The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), there has been a reemergence of evangelism within the Catholic Church through the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* (RCIA) program. Although music is not generally discussed in the RCIA program, several parishes incorporate CCM into worship services designed to target a specific audience. Designated as a *Contemporary Worship Service*, these services use CCM to attract new parishioners to the church. As a response to this need, The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland developed a program called "Vibrant Parish Life." As part of this program, the Diocese created a music CD and disseminated it to all 233 parishes that belong to the Cleveland Diocese in Northeastern Ohio. The CD includes praise and worship songs, many of which are broadcast on 95.5 "The Fish" radio

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88 Ibid.
89 The Catholic Diocese of Cleveland developed the "Vibrant Parish Life" program and the resulting CD bears the same name.
station. The religious landscape in Northeastern Ohio suggests that separate contemporary services are not exclusive to Catholic or fundamentalist churches. In fact, many mainline Protestant churches have similar services. Often the music used for these services is CCM, which features keyboard, guitar(s), drums, vocals, and an occasional string player (violin, viola, or cello).

_Why Analyze CCM?_

Although there is no consensus regarding the definition of CCM, several definitions do exist, and they are functional within each organizational structure that defines it. Furthermore, since almost all definitions suggest that CCM encompasses different styles of music, and since it would be impossible to argue that musical elements could be deemed Christian, it is vital to examine the lyrics of the songs.

To demonstrate the need to analyze CCM, a comparison of Rock and Roll may be made. In the text _Rock and Roll: Its History and Stylistic Developments_ by Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, the authors directly address the issue of "Why Study Rock?" in the introductory premise to their text. Stuessy and Lipscomb acknowledge the most trivializing answer, "Because it's there?" by simply stating: "... the question deserves a more thoughtful answer than that." 90 Yes, the question not only deserves a more thoughtful answer than that, it requires one. A similar sentiment holds true for Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). Simply because CCM exists does not wholly justify its worth for study and research, or does it? As the introduction unfolds in the

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discussion of "Why Study Rock," the authors reveal several points that systematically defend the study of Rock and Roll. First, "we must realize that rock and roll . . . is a musical style."91 Recognizing it as a musical style is not a sufficient reason to study Rock and Roll, therefore, Stuessy and Lipscomb add that it "utilizes the same musical elements . . . found in all styles of music."92 The caveat is to understand how musical elements combine to define musical style. They formulate that it is "how these ingredients are combined, in what proportions and with what characteristics [that] defines rock as a distinct musical style."93 However, from an ethnomusicological perspective, solely being a musical style does not substantiate its worth of such scrutiny and academic attention, it requires contextualization; and the authors concur, "rock and roll is more than a music style."94 They seem to indicate that the tendency, in an academic setting, may be to generalize subjectively; this can render the power of opinion or taste over a scientific approach to the study of Rock music. For instance, the authors resolve, " . . . with all musical styles, there are some good examples, some bad examples, and a lot in between."95 More explicitly, they cite two musical genres that often appear at opposite ends of the spectrum: Rock and Classical. They contend "it is as inaccurate to say that all rock is bad as it is to say that all classical music is good."96 Obviously, these musical styles and subsequent value judgments illustrate the breadth of opinion within the field.

91 Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, Rock and Roll, 1.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
96 Ibid.
The burden, according to Stuessy and Lipscomb, "should rest not on the total style per se, but on how creatively and skillfully the musical creator uses the musical resources appropriate to the specific style." In other words, the creator (singer/songwriter) and the subsequent creation (the song, complete with text) must be congruent. This point that Stuessy and Lipscomb raise in the realm of Rock music surfaces in the CCM industry under the auspices of "authenticity" or "genuineness," which, in CCM, translates into an artist's perceived Christian-ness.

While musical style is important, an equally significant factor is social influence. Stuessy and Lipscomb project, "when the final figures are in from the second half of the 20th Century, rock will undoubtedly prove to be the single most potent economic factor in the multibillion-dollar music industry." Although it seems to be an overstatement, it indicates the potential economic impact within the music industry, especially with the advent of technology. To demonstrate their point, they cite three specific arenas that Rock music influences: television, films, and commercials. Not only has Rock shaped the visually oriented industry, but the authors record Rock's impact on other music genres, "it has influenced jazz, church music, classical music, and even its own ancestors:

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97 Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, Rock and Roll, 1.
98 Many Christian artists have fallen victim to perceived Christian-ness. Amy Grant, an elder statesman of the Christian music industry, is just one example; she was ostracized because she divorced Gary Chapman, her first husband. Furthermore, in the Christian music industry, the concept of fandom is not acceptable. Because of a possible correlation to idolatry, what one considers as a "fan club" in the secular industry, in the CCM world, it is a friend club, e.g., Friends of Amy (FOA).
99 Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, Rock and Roll, 1.
rhythm and blues and country and western.”

To further illustrate its social impact, Stuessy and Lipscomb carefully cite that "rock culture's influence has been witnessed in hairstyles, clothing, language, lifestyles, and politics." As a succinct summary, "... any historian of the last half of the 20th Century must devote significant consideration to rock and roll being one of the primary forces in our society as a whole (socially, culturally, economically, politically, and musically)." A final note in their opening paragraphs is simply: "Any force that has that kind of impact on society deserves study."

The assertions by Stuessy and Lipscomb regarding Rock music systematically apply to the study of Contemporary Christian Music: CCM is, by all accounts, a musical style that has also shaped television, films, and commercials. More importantly, yet rarely cited, CCM has influenced the history of Rock and Roll. To place the impact of the Christian music industry in a contemporary context, its economic influence is patently clear to John Styll, president of the Gospel Music Association. In an article for *Contemporary Christian Magazine*, he discussed the economic impact of the music business:

In early January [2006], the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce released a study that showed that the music business has an annual economic impact of $6.4 billion in the Nashville area . . . the majority of that is from country music . . . at least 10 percent is from Christian/Gospel music. That means that Christian music is pumping several hundred million dollars into the Nashville area economy every year.

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100 Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, *Rock and Roll*, 1.
101 Ibid.
102 Ibid.
In summation, "Any force that has that kind of impact on society deserves study." While Stuessy and Lipscomb do not address the element of text or lyric in their introduction, if present, it corresponds to the "characteristic" category used to further define the style of Rock. Although they overlook Rock music lyrics, central to CCM, the lyric is the salient feature that separates it from any other musical style or genre. Therefore, one could posit that CCM, marked by its lyric content, stands as a metaphor for sanctification.

**Academic Perspectives**

In academia, Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) has not been widely researched; however, earlier in this chapter, Abelman and his significant research about audience transference were introduced. While his research addresses CCM, it is cursory to the study of music and/or culture; his research frames CCM solely in the context of radio broadcasting and communications. The information gleaned from his research provided the historical grounding of the radio station switch from WCLV to WFHM and the subsequent context of CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" in Cleveland, Ohio from July 2001 to July 2006.

Moving toward other academic perspectives relating to the study of CCM, Eric Gormly, from the Department of Journalism at the University of North Texas, addresses issues of evangelization and appropriation. In his article, "Evangelizing Through Appropriation: Toward a Cultural Theory on the Growth of Contemporary Christian Music," published in 2003, Gormly concludes "CCM plays an important role in the

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cultural life of evangelical Christians.\textsuperscript{105} To substantiate his claim, "It [CCM] provides a means of evangelizing to a younger or broader audience in a musical form that carries a greater and more generally accessible appeal."\textsuperscript{106} For the most part, Gormly's point accounts for the perceived notion that CCM provides a means of evangelization. While CCM music does potentially evangelize, some clarification is essential. From Gormly's perspective, he describes the music as "evangelizing to a younger or broader audience,"\textsuperscript{107} but younger and broader are two distinct categories. His statement implies, somewhat generically, that CCM can only target one type of demographic. Does Gormly intend that CCM can only target the youth? What about an adult fallen away from the faith? If that is his intention, which is dubious, it simply is not congruent with the teachings of Jesus. Jesus commanded the apostles, and subsequent generations in Matthew 28:19-20, to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."\textsuperscript{108} When Jesus commanded the apostles, he did not issue them age-related constraints such as: only the old and young, nothing in-between. In its simplest sense, to "go and make disciples" is to reinforce the Christian faith by bringing others in, and by encouraging the current believers to continually grow spiritually in their faith.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{108} Matthew 28:19-20 (NRSV).
In his conclusion, Gormly advocates that "[CCM] provides a musical medium for religious expression that allows its adherents to feel they are participating in the broader, secular culture although maintaining the integrity of their religious faith." As highlighted earlier, CCM is a musical medium, or genre, that generally shares similar characteristics found in Rock and Pop music, but a question arises – what does participation mean? If what the participant experiences as real participation (Gormly uses felt participation), then one develops a sense of community through the process of participation. Whether real or felt, the implication is that the process is what provides a foundational framework for Christians to be in the world, but not of the world. This process can then function to preserve faith and allow for growth in spiritual maturity, or sanctification.

Another point that Gormly makes is that CCM "fulfills historic attraction by evangelical Christians to the media of popular culture and enables participation in a potentially lucrative industry." Because he does not clarify the "lucrative industry," one can only surmise that he is referring to the entire culture industry of CCM, which is by no means exhaustive. One of the issues here is the misconception of industry; it encompasses an intricate network of symbiotic relationships: the corporate structure, the artists – singers/songwriters, and the consumers. Conceptually, Gormly refers to the "historic attraction . . . to the media of popular culture," yet it is somehow nebulous. It is not clear what the timeframe is for "historic," and it seems counterintuitive to mention

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110 Ibid., 262-263.
"historic" and "popular" in the same sentence. His argument contests that the power struggle of mainstream secular society and the Christian subculture has the potential to reverse itself. As he explains, "the subculture of evangelical Christians can resist against a dominant secular society by establishing a presence through taking possession of a cultural form and redefining it as their own, hence positioning themselves as part of and, through shaping the discourse and reforming American society from within, eventually representing the mainstream."111 While his argument may substantiate the concept of appropriation, he presents a narrow perspective that focuses solely on "evangelical Christians."

While Gormly clearly argues that CCM is the most effective means for an evangelical Christian subculture to resist dominant secular society, he really does not explore how or why this happens. He only offers a glimpse when he describes CCM as "the subordinate group . . . embedding its own meanings, is occupying a cultural form in such a way that any difference becomes difficult to discern."112 One can presume that when he writes, "occupying a cultural form," he is referring to Rock and Pop music styles. Gormly finally succumbs to the reality that "CCM now is virtually indistinguishable from its secular counterparts – only the song lyrics give any indication of the musical form's message or agenda."113 Although this may be the reality, that the only difference between secular and CCM music is the lyric content, Gormly acknowledges this difference without exploring it. Furthermore, while he presents a

112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
compelling case of cultural appropriation, he does not focus on specific symbols borrowed from secular culture and how the "Christian subculture" subsequently reinterprets those symbols to combat secular society.

Jay R. Howard, author of "Contemporary Christian Music: Where Rock Meets Religion," clearly states "CCM is representative of a large Christian subculture. The members of this subculture reject, to some degree, the values, morality and worldview of the larger society." Although Howard does not classify "larger" society, one can interpret it as secular society. With this understanding, it may not be a total rejection of secular society per se; it may actually be a conscious decision, or a choice. Rejecting secular culture could be guised merely as a method to navigate through secular culture. It functions as a screen that allows Christians to find their way through secular society without sequestering themselves from the society. Perhaps more applicable, it reiterates the idea of being in the world, but not of the world.

Howard does not eagerly accept that CCM is representative of a subculture. He identifies "the creation of their own institutions, such as a Christian music industry, members of the Christian subculture are challenging the dominant ideology of modern society. Therefore, it becomes unclear whether this is a subculture or a counterculture." He clarifies this point when he explains, "for some it is a subculture sharing in the overall values of society, such as the priority of pursuing material prosperity. For others, who find their values in conflict with the larger society, it serves

115 Ibid.
as a counterculture and a basis for resisting hegemonic dominance." It seems difficult to label the CCM industry, which is located in Nashville, Tennessee, as a subculture or counterculture. In fact, it is a subdivision of the larger music industry corporation known as the Big Three: EMI, Warner, and Sony BMG. The subdivisions are EMI CMG, Word, and Provident, respectively.

Overall, the CCM music that Howard addresses in his article is from "two prominent CCM bands, Rez and Servant." Written in 1992, the article discusses two bands that 95.5 "The Fish" would not broadcast for two reasons: their music predates the contemporary hit radio heard on "The Fish" by nearly a decade, 95.5 first broadcast in 2001, and both Rez and Servant are heavy metal bands. While Howard provides some lyric content analysis, it is unfocused and does not categorically represent the music as heard on 95.5 "The Fish." Although Howard's perspective is important because he acknowledges the value of lyric content, his brief analysis is tangential to the CCM heard on 95.5 "The Fish."

Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book progress toward a more specific analysis of CCM in their article, "Watering Down Christianity? An Examination of the Use of Theological Words in Christian Music." Although research for this dissertation began in 2001, their article published in 2004 was the first to suggest an analysis of words in Christian music. Livengood and Book set forth their premise: "[their] study

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117 Although EMI CMG is located in Nashville, TN, it reports its fiscal documentation and statistical research to EMI headquartered in London, England.
examined 5 years of successful Christian music to determine if there had been a significant change in the amount of theological language used in contemporary Christian songs." In defining their scope, "theological words were classified into three categories: explicitly, moderately, and ambiguously religious." For their study, "explicitly theological words include: Bible, baptism, Christ, gospel, holy, and Jesus . . . moderately theological words include: Amen, God, alleluia, hallelujah, worship, and Lord . . . ambiguously theological words include: the Father, pray, or prayer, spirit, the cross and salvation." Livengood and Book provide an "operational definition" for the three religious categories. *Explicitly* is "any single word, that when used in any context, would immediately be classified as religious." *Moderately* is "any single word that, when placed in a religious context, is obviously theological, and when used in secular contexts it still retains some reverence or religious feeling." They define *ambiguously* as being "a word that is often used in religious contexts, but carries no reverence or religious feeling when used in secular contexts." These "operational definitions" are too restrictive; the limitations do not permit contextual analysis. Since the focus is only a single word, it does not account for two words strung together, such as "Lord's Prayer," which according to their definition would correspond to the *moderate* and *ambiguous*.

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120 Ibid., 123.
121 Ibid., 123-124.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid., 124.
categories respectively. This method seems incongruous when the Lord's Prayer, in context, is highly identifiable with Christianity. It is recited in Catholic and Protestant worship services because, according to scripture, it is the prayer that Jesus taught in Matthew 6:9-13:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but rescue us from evil.  

According to Livengood and Book, their "operational definitions" would reject any construction of the Lord's Prayer. With these strict parameters, which negate any cultural or textual context, one wonders how they would explain an entire quote from the Lord's Prayer within a song.

While their parameters are limiting, an important benefit constructed from their study is their coding system, "[the] sex of artist and type of group were also coded. The established categories were male solo artist, female solo artist, male duo or group, female duo or group, and group with male and female members."  

While their overall model is quite useful, one could debate their use of sex. A more appropriate term would be gender, which is "a social identity that consists of the roles a person is expected to play because of his or her sex . . . our gender is something we must learn . . . females are normally socialized into the roles that lead them into a social identity as women, while

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125 Matthew 6:9-13 (NRSV).
126 Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 124.
males learn men's roles." Yet, issues of gender are nearly unexplored by the authors. In a brief summary they deduce, "when considering the data by the type of group (band or solo artist) and sex of the singer with frequency of theological words used in a song, a cross-tabulation did not show any systematic relation between the two categories." Perhaps their data could not demonstrate any systematic relation, because it only reflected an examination of single words, which omitted any contextual analysis of the words. Within the context of song form, it is probable that further examination of similar texts could elicit a different conclusion, which is the presupposition for the semiological analysis for this dissertation.

In their conclusion, Livengood and Book acknowledge some impediments to their research, preferring to contribute them to the "immaturity of the Christian music industry" and how, from their perspective, "[it] makes any systematic study of the genre difficult." According to their research, the "findings from this study indicate no systematic pattern in the total number of theological words in top CHR [Christian Hits Radio] and Christian rock songs over the past five years [1996-2002]." They raise an interesting point, even though it is unaddressed in the article: "Clearly, there are other

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128 Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 126.
129 The song forms that will be discussed in Chapters III and IV include the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus (VCVC) and the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus (VCVCBC).
131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
factors that influence the success of a Christian song such as musical style, artist, and overall subject matter.\textsuperscript{133} It seems nearly impossible to prove or disprove their posited theory about theological words when the method examines single words removed from their context by merely scanning for theological buzzwords. They do acknowledge a pitfall, which seems directly related to the lack of contextual analysis. "The researchers were not able to account for some specific lyrical elements that also help to identify a song as Christian. A few of the songs contained clear references to specific biblical passages (i.e., the story of Adam and Eve or the Last Supper).\textsuperscript{134} These examples signify biblical content from the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively, which suggests the songwriters have knowledge of the Bible, and perhaps in an historical context. Furthermore, according to Livengood and Book, "some songs actually quoted scripture. Those elements do not necessarily contain theological words."\textsuperscript{135} Certainly, one concurs that theological words do not necessarily formulate scriptural text; to confirm this, one can simply open the Bible and select a random passage, a practice known as Stichomancy or Bibliomancy.

While Livengood and Book present significant issues, their reasoning for not exploring them is unclear. For instance, they maintain they "did analyze songs from 2002 to 1996, but as [they] did so, finding the lyrics for the songs became increasingly

\textsuperscript{133} Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?.," 126.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 127.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.
more difficult. This explanation seems to suggest no aural analysis of the songs took place, and reputable sources to obtain the lyrics were unknown. An aural analysis can enable one to transcribe the lyrics, but while transcription alone cannot provide all the necessary semantic information (e.g., you with a lowercase y or You with an upper case y), it can potentially construct a suitable framework for further analysis.

As noted previously, two things literally separate CCM from any other popular music style such as Rock or Pop: they are the use of Christian as a signifier for the genre, and the type of lyric or text. Roy Shuker, in the Key Concepts in Popular Music, defines Christian Rock as "a rather loose musical style/genre, applied initially to those artists associated with the emergence of a Christian music industry established by American evangelicals (in the 1970s) as an alternative to the mainstream 'secular' entertainment business." The emergence that Shuker refers to may establish the origins of CCM, but the current CCM is not the same musical style or genre that it was in the 1970s nearly four decades ago. Shuker notes, almost as an aside, that the "Billboard magazine has a Top Contemporary Christian Music category." On the other hand, his comparison between Christian Rock and mainstream is concise: "While the beat and melody are indistinguishable from other mainstream music forms, differences are noted in the lyric content." To clarify "lyric content" Shuker describes various themes incorporated into the text such as "... personal salvation, the witnessing of one's faith, living by example,

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136 Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 127.
138 Ibid.
139 Ibid.
human frailties, rebellion, sin, forgiveness, God's love and mercy.” It is interesting to note the multiplicity of themes presumably present in CCM. Some are quite specific and directly relate to God: personal salvation, the witnessing of one's faith and God's love and mercy. Other themes seem to function as a bridge between CCM and the mainstream, because of their generalness or, perhaps more accurately, their humanness. One could certainly argue that themes such as living by example, human frailties, rebellion, and forgiveness extend beyond the parameters of purely Christian. These themes all seem to address a state of the human condition, something that transcends mere Christianity.

In this chapter, a brief history of the radio frequency 95.5 FM was explored. Its transition from WCLV to WFHM and how an audience potentially responds during the transference process was presented. The radio was presented as an important vehicle used to disseminate content to a wider audience, and with the advent of technology, it transformed the in-car listener to an anywhere listener. Given the transition from an all-classical music station (WCLV) to the newer "Fish" format (WFHM), one is able to recognize the intricate network of relations between the corporate industry and the consumer. From this binary relation between corporate and consumer, one may appreciate the notion of a target demographic. Furthermore, the target demographic is identified; one can focus on the product (CCM) and on those who consume it (the listeners). By identifying "The Fish" format as the means that transmits CCM, the various definitions of CCM were examined. While no codified definition exists, one is able to ascertain that one delineating feature of CCM is the lyric or text. Through a study

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of Rock music, it was noted that the principles could be systematically applied to the study of CCM, which substantiates an academic interest in the analysis of CCM.

Most would agree the primary difference, and perhaps the most controversial, between CCM and other musical styles is the lyric or text. The literature still lacks a contextual framework suitable for an analysis of CCM text. Gormly debated issues of cultural appropriation and evangelization in CCM, Howard acknowledged the only real difference between Rock and CCM is present in the lyric content, and Livengood and Book, while providing a useful coding system for analysis, offered an overall restrictive method. As the academic literature pertaining to CCM is surveyed, it establishes the need for a contextual semiological analysis of CCM.

Subsequently, this dissertation presents a semiological analysis of CCM song texts as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM Cleveland, OH "The Fish" radio station from July 2001 to July 2006. It posits that CCM text as heard on 95.5 "The Fish" functions as a didactic tool for sanctification, which is a process that frees man from sin. It argues that CCM text uses popular music styles and song forms to convey the message of sanctification by demonstrating the essential dyadic relationship between God and man, and reflecting how that relationship is a lifelong process.

Chapter II provides the contextual framework to analyze CCM by an initial gender analysis. Chapter III analyzes the dyadic relationship between God and man as

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141 See the Appendix for a complete list of all of the songs discussed in this dissertation. It should be noted that a specific lyricist or composer is not identified because the sources such as Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI), the WOW Songbooks, and the WOW CDs group them together under the heading of "Authors" or "Words and Music."
depicted through fifty-six songs. Chapter IV analyzes how the song form used in fifty of the fifty-six songs illustrates sanctification as a lifelong process to free man from sin.

Chapter V provides a conclusion and suggests further research avenues of CCM. It should be noted that the language used throughout this dissertation seems exclusionary, e.g., God and man, but for the sake of clarity, it should be understood that *man* is meant to signify humankind.
CHAPTER II

GENDER ANALYSIS

In reviewing the literature written about Contemporary Christian Music (CCM), the article "Watering Down Christianity? An Examination of the Use of Theological Words in Christian Music" written by Livengood and Book considers theological words used in CCM. According to their study:

They examined 5 years of successful Christian music to determine if there had been a significant change in the amount of theological language used in contemporary Christian songs . . . After coding 100 of the top songs from 1996 to 2002 in the Christian rock and Christian hit radio genres, no systematic or significant decline in total theological words was found. However, when examining the type of theological words used in lyrics, the data demonstrated that words have become significantly less explicitly Christian.¹

In 2003, Livengood and Book also performed a similar study, but instead, they examined the WOW² compilation series consisting of seven CDs (1996 to 2002). According to Livengood and Book, "the major difference between that study and this one is the songs on the WOW series are chosen by Christian record labels. The choices are not completely based on the popularity of the song among consumers."³ Livengood and Book examined only 100 of the top songs in one study and only the WOW compilation series in another study, thus limiting any true comparison of consumer-oriented (top

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¹ Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 119.
² Bill Hearn is the current president and CEO of EMI CMG. In 1994, his father, Billy Ray Hearn, formed EMI Christian Music Group (EMI CMG) and Chordant Distribution. EMI CMG in conjunction with Word Entertainment and Provident Music Group, two other prominent Christian music labels located in Nashville, created the WOW compilation series in 1995. The WOW compilation series and its corresponding songbooks are primary source materials for this research.
³ Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 122.
songs) and industry-oriented (compilation series). In contrast, the core catalog of songs defined for the semiological analysis of CCM in this dissertation is derived from the intersection of the *20 The Countdown Magazine* charts, which are consumer-oriented based upon airplay, and the WOW compilation series including the *WOW #1s*, which are industry-oriented. *20 The Countdown Magazine* acquires their chart information from Christian Radio Weekly (CRW); the process is:

Our charts are compiled and published by Christian Radio Weekly, part of the Westar Media Group in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Christian Radio Weekly (CRW) selects 50 Christian radio stations that play music in the Adult Contemporary genre. Each week, the stations submit to CRW a list of the songs they will play the following week in their current rotations, and how many times they will play each song ("spins") throughout the week. (Current rotations typically only include "brand new" songs, not classics, like "Shine" or "I Can Only Imagine" for example.) CRW then multiplies the number of spins by the size of the station's audience, coming up with the total number of "impressions" for each song and each station. Finally, all of each song's impressions are summed and the songs are ranked. This gives us a chart based upon how many people hear each song in a given week.

The *20 The Countdown Magazine* (TOP 20) charts used in this research span from 2002 to 2007 because they are based upon the number of people hearing a song in a given week. 95.5 WFMH-FM "The Fish" began to submit information to CRW in 2002. The corresponding WOW compilation series (WOW) that intersects with the TOP 20 charts spans from 2003 to 2008 and includes the 2005 release of the *WOW #1s* album. The

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4 *20 The Countdown Magazine*, hosted by Jon Rivers, is comparable to Casey Kasem's *American Top 40 Countdown Show*; Ryan Seacrest, American Idol host, is also the current host for *American Top 40* radio show.


6 95.5 WFMH-FM "The Fish" did not broadcast in Cleveland, Ohio until July 3, 2001; therefore, their first submission to Christian Radio Weekly was in 2002.
intersection of the TOP 20 and the WOW series yields an analysis of fifty-six songs and thirty-four artists.

Using Livengood and Book's coding system with some modifications, i.e., exchanging the term sex for gender, this chapter explores gender as it pertains to CCM text as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish." Gender analysis is an important first step in determining if CCM text may function as a didactic tool for sanctification. Since CCM text uses popular music styles and song forms, one can borrow from Simon Frith's remarks:

. . . in listening to the lyrics of pop songs we actually hear three things at once: words, which appear to give songs an independent source of semantic meaning; rhetoric, words being used in a special, musical way, a way which draws attention to features and problems of speech; and voices, words being spoken or sung in human tones which are themselves 'meaningful,' signs of persons and personality.

For the remainder of this chapter, the voice, and its subsequent gender identification is the focus. Specifically, by identifying the gender of the voice, it becomes an entry point to understanding rhetoric and words as posited by Frith. In essence, the gender of the voice sets the framework for everything else heard and unheard. Analyzed in subsequent chapters, the hypothesis is that a strong correlation exists between gender and CCM text. Without the initial hearing of a voice, and subsequent identification of said voice, one cannot examine further layers of communication. Furthermore, since much of the literature pertaining to CCM suggests the lyric content is the only salient feature that sets Christian music apart from other genres, then it is necessary to examine the vehicle that

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transmits lyric content, in this case, the human voice and its associated gender. Therefore, this chapter presents an analysis of gender as it pertains to CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish."

The Charts & Graphs

The initial charts in this section reflect the comparison of CCM artists and songs from the TOP 20, the WOW compilation series, including the WOW #1s album released in 2005, and the intersection of the two. It is the intersection of the TOP 20 and the WOW compilation series that provides the core repertoire further analyzed in the subsequent chapters.

Figure 2. CCM Artists Chart comparing TOP 20, WOW, and the Intersection

Figure 2 shows the CCM Artists and their representation in the five categories: Male Solo, Female Solo, Male Group, Female Group, and Mixed Group, and the
percentage in the TOP 20, WOW, and the Intersection respectively. From the chart, the data confirm that the Male Solo dominates in the TOP 20, and the Intersection with thirty-five percent, while the Male Group category dominates in the WOW compilation with thirty-four percent.

![CCM Songs Chart](image)

Figure 3. CCM Songs Chart comparing the TOP 20, WOW, and the Intersection

Figure 3 depicts CCM Songs and their representation in the five categories: Male Solo, Female Solo, Male Group, Female Group, and Mixed Group, and the percentage in the TOP 20, WOW, and Intersection. The distribution of songs is equal between the Male Solo and Male Group categories, both at thirty-eight percent. What is interesting to note, however, is the representation of the Female Solo and Female Group categories. In the TOP 20, the Female Group has the least representation with only one percent, while the Female Solo has nine percent. Comparing the TOP 20 and the WOW, the Female
Solo and Female Group categories have a higher percentage of representation: Female Solo, TOP 20 is nine percent, and WOW is twenty percent; Female Group, TOP 20 is one percent, and WOW is six percent. On both charts, the CCM Artists (Figure 2) and the CCM Songs (Figure 3), Female Solo and Female Group have a higher percentage in the WOW category and the smallest percentage in the TOP 20 category. Comparing both charts, the CCM Artists (Figure 2) and the CCM Songs (Figure 3), the Mixed Group is equal in its distribution in WOW and Intersection: in CCM Songs it is sixteen percent, and in CCM Artists it is eighteen percent. Interestingly, in the TOP 20, the Mixed Group has a smaller percentage with fourteen percent for CCM Songs, and fifteen percent for CCM Artists.

![Intersection: Artists](image)

Figure 4. Intersection Chart Gender Distribution of 34 Artists

The data in Figure 4 show the Female Group has the smallest amount of representation among the thirty-four artists with only one, while Male Solo has the most
with twelve artists. The Female Solo and Mixed Group categories are nearly equal with five artists and six artists respectively. Having ten artists, the Male Group category contains only two artists fewer than the Male Solo category. One is then able to compare the number of artists and the number of songs; Figure 5 depicts the distribution of songs in the Intersection.

![Intersection: Songs](image)

Figure 5. Intersection Chart Gender Distribution of 56 Songs

Figure 5 illustrates the total number of songs distributed among the thirty-four artists. It is clear that the Female Group again has the least amount of representation in the Song Distribution. The data show that the Female Solo and Mixed Group are nearly the same distribution with eight and nine songs respectively. The Male Group represents eighteen of the fifty-six songs and Male Solo still dominates with twenty songs. Figure 6 depicts the percentage of music in each category and its subsequent listening time.
Figure 6 provides the aural image of gender in CCM into a percentage of how much listening time is devoted to each gender. The Male Solo and Male Group account for 150 minutes, or sixty-six percent. When comparing the male categories to the female categories, the data reflect that the audience only hears the female voice for thirty-six minutes or sixteen percent of the time, and that the least heard is the Female Group, which accounts for only two percent or four minutes.

Below is a list of the artists and their assigned Gender/Ensemble Category:

**Male Solo:**
Aaron Shust, Bebo Norman, Brian Littrell, Chris Rice, Chris Tomlin, Jeremy Camp, Mark Harris, Mark Schultz, Matthew West, Michael W. Smith, Steven Curtis Chapman, TobyMac

**Female Solo:**
Bethany Dillon, Darlene Zschech, Joy Williams, Natalie Grant, Nichole Nordeman
Male Group:
Big Daddy Weave, Building 429, David Crowder Band, Jars of Clay, Kutless, Rush of Fools, Tree63, Third Day, Mercy Me, Newsboys

Female Group:
Point of Grace

Mixed Group:
Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl, Casting Crowns, FFH (Far From Home), Glory Revealed, Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh, Sixpence None the Richer

The aforementioned data convey a picture of a CCM industry dominated by both solo and group male artists. When comparing the Male to Female data, the Male categories (Solo and Group) represent sixty-six percent of the thirty-four artists while the Female categories (Solo and Group) represent only eighteen percent of the thirty-four artists. Further examination of the Mixed Group category and its gender construction also reflects a male-dominated industry. For instance, the distribution of gender in the Mixed Group category is:

- Big Daddy Weave featuring Barlow Girl – 5 Male, 3 Female
- FFH (Far From Home) – 3 Male, 1 Female
- Glory Revealed – 4 Male Vocals, 1 Female Violin
- Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh – 1 Male, 1 Female
- Sixpence None the Richer – 5 Male, 1 Female
- Casting Crowns – 5 Male, 2 Female

Among the Mixed Group category, there are six groups, which yield nine female and twenty-three male artists. The male category within the Mixed Group dominates the

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8 The WOW 2004 CD lists the song as Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh. McIntosh also has a solo career and her name appears as Sarah Macintosh on her website and MySpace page.

9 Glory Revealed is an interesting case to consider because the vocalists are all male, but the violinist is female, which is only discernable from a visual perspective. For this dissertation, Glory Revealed is categorized in the Mixed Group, although it is important to note that the female voice is not heard on this song.
female category by nearly three to one. Even if one temporarily removes Glory Revealed, Michael W. Smith, and Big Daddy Weave from this category because they do not always represent a Mixed Group, the remaining groups, FFH, Sixpence None the Richer, and Casting Crowns still reflect a male-dominated industry. That distribution is:

- FFH (Far From Home) – 3 Male, 1 Female
- Sixpence None the Richer – 5 Male, 1 Female
- Casting Crowns – 5 Male, 2 Female

In the temporarily reduced Mixed Group category, there are three groups, which yield four female and thirteen male artists; the male category still dominates the female category three to one. What the data suggest is that the Mixed Group category is then, in essence, a micro version of the macro CCM industry.

The CCM industry predominately produces male artists (solo and group) for a specific target demographic. Arbitron provides statistical data about the target demographic to radio stations and their advertisers based upon market research. Through their research, Arbitron discovered fourteen aspects of the target audience that listen to the CCM radio format. Those fourteen aspects, as listed in *Radio Today: How America Listens to Radio*, include:

1. Mostly women
2. Between the ages of 25 to 54
3. Well-educated with high incomes
   - a. Does not benefit from high at-work listening
4. Format performs best across the South and in the Plains states
5. The average age of a listener is 39
6. Near the top of scale in being married
7. Own their own home
8. Have children in the household
9. More likely to be employed as white-collar worker
10. Very likely to be in a “professional” occupation
11. Usually pay bills online
12. Visit radio station site
13. Most likely to identify themselves as Republican or Republican-leaning Independents
14. Enthusiastic department store shoppers
   a. Index high with Wal-Mart and Target – index edge toward Target

From these fourteen aspects, Arbitron provides the CCM radio stations with a bountiful supply of information. Referring back to the list, it prioritizes the gender of the target-demographic as the most important aspect gleaned from Arbitron’s research. When Arbitron begins their list with gender identification, they in essence confirm a codified structure of binary relationships; gender is either male or female. In this case, females occupy the majority of listeners in the CCM format on the radio. With this information, women represent the prime consumer, and conversely, men are the minority and are not the prime consumer. Item number two on the list highlights the target-demographic age; listeners (mostly women) are within the ages of 25 to 54. Identifying an age demographic is important because it demonstrates that the target audience is neither young adults age 18 to 24, nor the mature generation of 55 and older. This does not necessarily imply that people in those particular age groups will not listen to CCM format on the radio; but rather, it defines the age group of those who do listen consistently.

Item number three correlates level of education to income, thus pointing to the probability and potential of the consumer’s disposable income. The codified listener profile is: mostly women, age 25 to 54, and well-educated with a high income. An important caveat, as pointed out by Arbitron, is that the target demographic does not

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benefit the CCM format by listening to the radio at work. It is plausible that a well-educated woman with a high income is probably not able to listen to the radio at work for a variety of reasons; the work environment is not conducive for radio listening, or, more simply, maybe there is no convenient access to a radio at work.\textsuperscript{11} Arbitron identifies this as a potential concern for radio stations broadcasting the CCM format. To keep this type of listener loyal to the CCM format, the radio stations must address the needs of this particular listener.\textsuperscript{12} On a broad scale, where the listener resides is an important aspect, but it is not as detrimental to listener loyalty. If the station does not exist in one's consumer market, then the impact is negligible. For instance, according to Arbitron, in item number four, the CCM radio format performs well in the South and Plains states.\textsuperscript{13} It can perform well there because it already has stations located in those areas; Nashville has two CCM formatted radio stations.

Items five through eight qualify the average age of the listener as 39, with a high probability of being married, and a homeowner with children: perfect ingredients to codify as semblance of a nuclear family structure. Numbers nine and ten describe the target demographic by employment classification. The listener is more likely to be a

\textsuperscript{11} It is possible that CCM does not have a high at-work listenership because of the importance of the text.

\textsuperscript{12} During the first five years of broadcast in Cleveland, Ohio, 95.5 "The Fish" had live DJ's throughout the "work" day (from 6:00am to 6:00pm). Since 2006, the station began experimenting with different live formats. Today (2011), as of the writing of this dissertation, "The Fish" has live DJ's from 6:00am to 9:00am and 3:00pm to 7:00pm Monday through Friday.

\textsuperscript{13} It is worthy to note that Ohio is a Midwestern state and not associated with the target geographic location that broadcasts CCM, which makes the location of 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" in Cleveland, Ohio of particular interest.
white-collar worker and very likely to be in a "professional" occupation. What is articulated by omission is a binary counterpart; the typical listener is neither a "blue-collar" worker nor in a "labor-intensive" occupation. Primary consumers of CCM tend to pay their bills online and visit radio station sites, which is vital to the Internet viability of the CCM format. If consumers usually pay bills online, they are more inclined to understand the advantages of using the Internet while being keenly aware of its misuses. By identifying the target listener in terms of political leanings, it furthers the binary relationship. In this case, if the listeners identify themselves as a Republican or Republican-leaning Independent, then they are not inclined to identify themselves as a Democrat, or Democratic-leaning Independent. The final aspect reveals the shopping habits and tendencies of the target consumer. According to Arbitron, the typical CCM radio consumer is an enthusiastic department store shopper, tending toward Wal-Mart and Target, but the index edge is closer to Target. In 2005 and 2006, Arbitron listed ten popular songs in the Contemporary Christian format; below is a list with the performing artist and song title.

The popular songs in this format in 2005:

- Jeremy Camp, *Take You Back*
- Casting Crowns, *Voice of Truth*
- Chris Tomlin, *Holy Is the Lord*
- Salvador, *Heaven*
- Chris Tomlin, *Indescribable*
- MercyMe, *Homesick*
- Bebo Norman, *Nothing Without You*
- Natalie Grant, *Held*
- MercyMe, *In the Blink of an Eye*
- Big Daddy Weave & BarlowGirl, *You’re Worthy of My Praise*
The popular songs in this format in 2006:

Aaron Shust, *My Savior, My God*
Casting Crowns, *Praise You in This Storm*
Chris Tomlin, *How Great Is Our God*
Mark Shultz, *I Am*
Kutless, *Strong Tower*
Jeremy Camp, *This Man*
Third Day, *Mountain of God*
Third Day, *Cry Out to Jesus*
Matthew West, *Only Grace*
MercyMe, *So Long Self*

The above are examples of some of the songs analyzed in Chapter III and Chapter IV. It is interesting to note that from the above popular songs, there is only one Female Solo (Natalie Grant) and one Female Group (BarlowGirl – featured with Big Daddy Weave). Also of interest is the "National In-Car Study"\(^{14}\) that Arbitron conducted in 2003; a summary report of the significant findings indicates the following nine factors:

1. Americans report spending an average of 15 hours a week in-car: either as driver or passenger, and perceive traffic as getting worse.
2. By illuminating outdoor advertisings all night long, advertisers can increase audience impact by 16%.
3. In-car audiences are a vital advertising consideration in all-sized U.S. media markets.
4. A significant amount of shopping occurs on the way home from work.
5. The more miles Americans travel in-car each week, the less time they spend with television.
6. Outdoor and radio advertising are very complementary.
7. Since 1999, radio listening has decreased both at home and at work, while the in-car location has seen an increase in listenership.
8. Transit advertising and street furniture noticed by a large number of Americans in the past week.
9. Outdoor advertising and radio commercials deliver immediate results for advertisers.\(^{15}\)

Radio stations use the information gathered by Arbitron for decision-making purposes; similar reports and studies are available from their website [http://arbitron.com](http://arbitron.com).

Brad Kelly illustrates the growth in the CCM format and its associated radio stations in his Arbitron report from January 2003 entitled, "Christian Radio: Not Just a 'Niche Format' Anymore." Since 1998, average quarter-hour listening for religious-formatted stations has grown by thirty-five percent, according to Arbitron statistics. This growth rate tops increases seen by every other format measured by Arbitron.16 To further demonstrate demographic impact, one of Kelly's taglines reads: Christian Music Hits the Demographic Bull’s Eye.17 Kelly asserts that not only is the "... demographic appeal of Christian stations quite remarkable," but it "rivals mainstream secular stations."18 He confirms his assertion with "a compelling piece of information: 71% of the Contemporary Christian audience is in the all-important 25-54 media-buying demographic." This translates into great news for the radio stations. It means that the coveted demographic of 25-54 is making a conscious choice and deliberately turning the radio dial to listen to Contemporary Christian stations more than in the rival secular markets. As Kelly states, "Contemporary Christian stations are generally richer in 25-54 listeners than secular Adult Contemporary, CHR [Contemporary Hit Radio], Country,

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
Having an understanding of the target demographic is truly great news, but understanding how the station captures that specific demographic is another part of the success story.

The subsequent chapters will illustrate how CCM song text as heard on 95.5 "The Fish" functions as a didactic tool for sanctification. Chapter III presents an analysis of the dyadic relationship between God and man as depicted in the fifty-six songs. Chapter IV presents an analysis of fifty of the fifty-six songs to determine how CCM uses song form to illustrate sanctification as a lifelong process to free man from sin.

CHAPTER III

THE DYADIC RELATIONSHIP OF GOD AND MAN

The previous chapter identified the gender distribution of CCM as heard on "The Fish"; the resultant analysis establishes a suitable framework to analyze the correlation between gender roles and the voice as they pertain to CCM text. It is important to recall that Frith posited, "voices, [are] words being spoken or sung in human tones which are themselves 'meaningful,' signs of persons and personality." 1

The next two chapters will examine key aspects that relate to the process of sanctification in CCM. According to the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, sanctification is:

the realization or progressive attainment of likeness to God or to God's intention for men. It may be regarded both as a status conferred by divine grace and as a goal to be aimed at. As a biblical doctrine it belongs more to the NT [New Testament] than to the OT [Old Testament], but it presupposes the fundamental OT [Old Testament] conception of holiness. 2

The above definition allows one to understand that sanctification encompasses the key areas of this chapter and the next. It outlines a dyadic relationship between God and man via "God's intention for men" and the removal of sin by "divine grace." Furthermore, it also presents sanctification as a lifelong process of a "progressive attainment of likeness to God." For the process of sanctification to be purpose driven, it is important to understand that there must be an underlying dyadic relationship between God and man. Both God and man are essential for the process to function; some theological scholars

1 Simon Frith, Performing Rites, 159.
may argue that the relationship is not an equal distribution between God and man, but nonetheless, a relationship must exist. As one realizes that CCM depicts a dyadic relationship between God and man (Chapter III), one may then begin to recognize how CCM depicts the nature of sin and how God frees man from sin (Chapter IV). After establishing a dyadic relationship between God and man, and understanding the nature of sin, one then may begin to distinguish, through song form, how CCM communicates a message of sanctification as a lifelong process (Chapter IV).

For continuity, subsequent chapters organize the gender classifications discussed in Chapter III from least to greatest number of songs: Female Group, Female Solo, Mixed Group, Male Group, and Male Solo. The repertoire for analysis consists of fifty-six songs; although there are minor variations, such as an extended double chorus, a third verse, or an instrumental bridge that precedes the lyric bridge, fifty of the fifty-six songs use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form. Of the fifty-six songs, 100% of them contain lyric content that reflects in some way a dyadic relationship; the resultant perception is either an individual or a communal relationship between God and man. Words that indicate an individual or personal relationship with God from the perspective of man include "I" and "my," while a communal relationship from the same perspective tends to use "we," "your," or "our." Among the fifty-six songs, forty-one represent an individual or personal relationship with God while fifteen embody a communal relationship with God. Only four of the fifty-six songs denote God's perspective; because only Male Solo artists sing these songs, the signification reiterates
an anthropomorphic (human-shaped) perception of God and the belief that God has masculine attributes.

The individual/communal distribution among the different categories is:

Female Group – 1 Individual, 0 Communal
Female Solo – 5 Individual, 3 Communal
Mixed Group – 7 Individual, 2 Communal
Male Group – 17 Individual, 1 Communal
Male Solo – 11 Individual, 9 Communal

The data suggest not only a male-dominated CCM industry, but seem to indicate that a Male Solo artist has more opportunity to function as a communal leader, which is nearly twenty percent more than the Female Solo counterpart. The next section of this chapter contains further examination of the dyadic relationship of God and man in CCM text according to the gender groupings.

*Analysis by Gender Groupings*

**Female Group Category**

Point of Grace, "I Choose You" – Individual

Point of Grace is the only all-female group represented in the CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM "The Fish" with the song "I Choose You." The song form is Verse – Chorus – Verse – Chorus – Bridge – Chorus (VCVCBC). Within the song form, the text progresses from a communal relationship in the secular world to an individual relationship with God. For instance, the opening lyric in verse one focuses on the communal by using "our":

All our mind's attention  
All our heart's affection  
Every heart cry every rhyme
Everybody's worshipping something
All our life's devotion
Has been set in motion
Religions, dozen for a dime
Everybody's worshipping something

The focus begins to shift from communal to individual with the pre-chorus as it leads into the chorus, which is an antecedent/consequent structure:

'Cause that's what we were made to do oh
And I choose You

The chorus addresses a shift from communal to individual mind's attention, heart's affection, and life's devotion with a change in lyric from "our" to "my":

All my attention affection
All my devotion's for You You
Yeah Yeah
If everybody's worshipping something
I choose You

An antecedent/consequent phrase structure closes the chorus and leads into verse two, which presents the first direct pairing of You and Lord in the last line. This placement in the last line of the second verse prepares the listener with an explicit understanding that any subsequent use of You is tantamount to Lord, or God:

You are beyond conception
Defying definition
And You knew me before time
Centuries of pagans
Idols fill the nations
But You are Lord to me and mine

Therefore, upon the arrival of the pre-chorus/chorus section, the listener has come to understand the text as follows (parentheses represent the implication of God within the text):
Everybody's worshipping something
'Cause that's what we were made to do oh
And I choose You (God)
All my attention affection
All my devotion's for You (God) You (God)
Yeah Yeah
If everybody's worshipping something
I choose You (God)

The bridge section of the song is striking, because the first two lines signify predestination, or the concept that God chooses individuals for eternal life or eternal death. This section, as it provides a point of view different from other sections of the song, also further codifies the symbiotic relationship between God and man because the preceding chorus has implied the direct correlation of You as God. The bridge text is:

Before I chose You (God)
You (God) first chose me
I worship You (God)
You (God) alone are worthy yeah, yeah
You (God) are worthy

The omission of the text "If everybody's worshipping something," which previously led into the chorus, shifts the attention away from man and toward God. The last line of the bridge, "You are worthy," brings the relationship between God and man to the forefront. By replacing the antecedent/consequent lyric of the pre-chorus, it now functions as an

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3 *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), s. v. "Predestination." According to the dictionary, predestination means "God predetermines, by a deliberate self-limitation in a covenant, certain groups for a specific relationship to him . . . so that anyone born into this "chosen" lineage is a recipient of this covenant relationship." " . . . set apart for a specific purpose before birth, as a direct act of God entirely apart from lineal descent and covenant traditions." "The NT community also is then predestined to be 'conformed to the image of Christ', but no longer in the framework of a biological lineage of elect families; instead, it is a free act of God based upon his foreknowledge and love."
individual affirmation, "I choose You," as it leads into the final chorus. Using song form as a diachronic\(^4\) structure, a textual transformation metaphorically represents a change from doubt or questioning into faith:

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I choose You
All my attention affection
All my devotion's for You
'Cause everybody's worshipping something
I choose You
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In three ways, the additional text authenticate an affirmation of the preceding text. First, it isolates the *You*, as in God, from man with the use of *alone*. Second, the use of "O Lord, I choose You," represents an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and God. Finally, the three statements of "You alone deserve it" symbolically represent a Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

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You alone deserve it all of my worship
O Lord I choose You yeah
You alone deserve it all of my worship
You alone deserve it I choose You
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**Female Solo Category**

- Bethany Dillon, "All I Need" - Individual
- Nichole Nordeman, "Brave" - Individual
- Natalie Grant, "Held" - Communal
- Joy Williams, "Hide" - Communal
- Nichole Nordeman, "Holy" - Individual
- Natalie Grant, "Live for Today" - Individual
- Darlene Zschech, "Pray" - Communal
- Joy Williams, "Surrender" - Individual

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\(^4\) In the context of song form, diachronic suggests the unfolding of the form from one section to the next much like a timeline, i.e., from a verse to the pre-chorus to the chorus. Synchronic suggests the hearing of a song in a specific moment of time; it may be deemed as an aural equivalent to a photograph.
Among the eight songs in the Female Solo Category, five portray an individual relationship, and three display a communal relationship with God. All eight songs share the same song form of Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus, but with minor variations. Nichole Nordeman, Natalie Grant, and Joy Williams are represented in this category with two songs. Songs that illustrate an individual relationship between God and man share similarities in the function of the chorus; the binary construction reinforces the relationship. The three songs that portray a communal relationship between God and man share similar functions in both the verse and chorus sections.

Bethany Dillon depicts an individual relationship between God and man in "All I Need"; however, it is not clear to whom she refers until the second half of verse two. Text in verse one suggests a shared experience among females as they think about a significant other:

When the day is done
And there's no one else around
While I'm lying here in bed
You're in my heart, You're in my head
You're all I need, You're all I need

In the second half of verse one the text does not clearly explain to whom she is referring, but it provides the listener with some rationale for the hook "You're all I need":

There are a million voices
Calling out my name
But You're the one I want to hear
So make the others disappear
You're all I need, You're all I need.

Even the chorus, which also contains the hook and title of the song, does not explicitly identify the You:
You're all I need  
When I'm surrounded  
You are all I need  
If I'm by myself (oh)  
You fill me when I'm empty  
There is nothing else (oh)  
You're all I need  

By itself, the chorus does not elicit a strong correlation to God, despite the presence and repetition of the hook. Remembering text from verse one via the hook and title placement, upon further inspection of the context, one recalls characteristics of the entity to which this woman refers:

When the day is done  
And there's no one else around  
While I'm lying here in bed  
You're in my heart, You're in my head  
You're all I need, You're all I need  
There are a million voices  
Calling out my name  
But You're the one I want to hear  
So make the others disappear  
You're all I need, You're all I need.

As the verse progresses, one can recognize the potential of prayer with an inferred reference of *calling out my name*. Initially, the woman hears millions of voices calling out her name, yet the only one she wants to hear is God, and God has the power, if called upon, to make the others disappear; then the explicit message is *You're (God) all I need*. 
The second verse symbolically represents a transformation of spirit for the woman as the new day begins; with an Old Testament reference (You're still the God that opens seas), she then confirms that the entity is truly God:

When the morning comes  
And Your mercy is renewed  
There's a fire in my bones  
I'm not afraid to go alone  
You're all I need, You're all I need  
The sun on my face  
I hear You whisper loud  
You're still the God that opens seas  
Ev'ry flower even me  
You're all I need, You're all I need

Nichole Nordeman illustrates a dyadic relationship between God and man through a process of relinquishing herself to God in the song "Brave." The first chorus focuses on the intellectual capability of releasing one from oneself, which subsequently leads to a potential to change thoughts into action:

So long status quo  
I think I just let go  
You make me want to be brave  
The way it always was  
Is no longer good enough  
You make me want to be brave  
Brave, Brave

By using *I think*, the woman seems unsure of her decision, not ready to fully commit to letting go of her past and the way things have been; the important qualifier is *You* and how that *You* makes her want to be brave. One cannot fully recognize who the *You* is out

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5 This is a reference to Exodus 14:21 (NRSV), "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided."
of context; however, to the initiated, the opening lyric of verse one references the Sermon on the Mount. Specifically, Matthew 7:13, which reads, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it." The first verse in "All I Need" addresses the gate, the road, and the many who enter:

The gate is wide  
The road is paved in moderation  
The crowd is kind  
And quick to pull you in  
Welcome to the middle ground  
It's safe and sound

"Held" by Natalie Grant is a song in this category that depicts a communal relationship between God and man. The hook and title of the song function as a metaphor for the hierarchal relationship between God and man, and perhaps more specifically, how that relationship leads to salvation. The metaphor becomes a transliteration from "This is what it means to be held" to this is what it means to be saved.

The chorus is:

This is what it means to be held  
How it feels when the sacred is torn from your life  
And you survive  
This is what it is to be loved and to know  
That the promise was  
When everything fell  
We'd be held

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Matthew 5:1-7:29 (NRSV). This passage, known as "The Sermon on the Mount," is when Jesus climbs the mountain to minister to crowds of people; this section also contains The Beatitudes.

Matthew 7:13 (NRSV).
With this song, because a female is singing, a subtext of mother to child relationship exists. The third verse reflects the essential relationship of God and man using a binary construct of hands:

This hand is bitterness
We want to taste it
Let the hatred numb our sorrow
The wise hand opens slowly
To lilies of the valley
And tomorrow

"This hand" is a reference to man before salvation, while "The wise hand" is a reference to man after salvation; the chorus confirms this in the text, "This is what it means to be held." In the song "Held," there are various references to God, such as "providence"\(^8\) in verse one, and "lilies of the valley" in verse three; but a very specific reference to God is not heard until the bridge of the song with the word "Savior":

If hope is born of suffering
If this is only the beginning
Can we not wait for one hour
Watching for our Savior

"Hide" by Joy Williams, depicts a communal relationship between God and man as exemplified in verse one; the opening text is so general it applies quite literally "to anyone":

To anyone who hides behind a smile
To anyone who holds their pain inside
To anyone who thinks they're not good enough
To anyone who feels unworthy of love
To anyone who ever closed the door
Closed their eyes and locked themselves away

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Using a "laundry-list" technique in both the verse and the chorus is an interesting method to "invite" the listener into the narrative. The chorus delivers an answer "to anyone" with the text "you don't have to hide":

You don't have to hide
You don't have to hide anymore
You don't have to face this on your own
You don't have to hide anymore

Evoking one's youth with a recollection of the children's game of hide-and-seek, the second verse foreshadows the significance of the bridge section:

So, come out, come out, come out, wherever you are
Anyone who's trying to cover up their scars
To anyone who's ever made a big mistake
We all been there so don't be ashamed
A-come out, come out and join the rest of us
You've been alone for way too long

The response is clear with the chorus text, "You don't have to hide." With the innocence of a child, the bridge draws the listener into the narrative, as the solution presents itself with an implicit reference to the resurrected Christ:

And if you feel like no one understands
Come to the One with scars on His hands
'Cause He knows where you are and where you've been
His scars will heal you if you let Him

"Hide" is the only song in the Female Solo category that explicitly uses masculine pronouns, such as "He" and "His" to signify God.9

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9 Jason Blume, Six Steps to Songwriting Success: The Comprehensive Guide to Writing and Marketing Hit Songs (New York: Billboard Books, 2004), 63. Listing, sometimes referred to as a "Laundry-list," is a songwriting technique that may be used throughout an entire song; however, it is more effective if used only in the verse or the chorus.
The second song in this category by Nichole Nordeman is "Held." This song uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form as it presents an individual relationship between God and man. Use of a binary construction in the chorus text reinforces a hierarchy of God to man:

And all You ever wanted  
Only me on my knees  
Singing holy holy  
And somehow  
All that matters now  
Is You are holy holy  
Da da da  
Da da da da  
Da da da da  
Da da  
You are holy

The implied message becomes, especially through repetition of the chorus, "And all You (God) ever wanted only me (man) on my knees." Traditionally the pre-chorus text should be the same in all the verses; however, in "Holy" the text changes. For instance, the verse one pre-chorus is:

And how long how far  
What was meant to fulfill  
Only emptied me still

The verse two pre-chorus text is:

And how long how far  
What was meant to illuminate  
Shadowed me still

10 Thus far, in the Female Solo category, references to God have been gender-neutral. The only exception is in the bridge section of "Pray" by Darlene Zschech, because she incorporates a majority of the Lord's Prayer. In "Surrender" by Joy Williams, she uses the word Lord. In "Hide" by Joy Williams, the use of masculine pronouns in the bridge text clearly denotes Christ.
The slight change in text highlights the segue into the chorus because of the first line, "And all You ever wanted." In context, the words **emptied** and **shadowed** represent man as the pre-chorus leads into the chorus. The first line of the chorus uses a break in the music; therefore, the prosody between the music and the text functions as an aural signifier to God as *Holy*.

Natalie Grant has another song in the Female Solo category, which is "Live for Today." By specifically addressing the Bible as a medium to understand God, this song represents an individual relationship between God and man. The opening text sets the following scene with what one can assume is an engendered shared experience among young females:

Sittin' in my room staring at the wall  
Wonderin' about the meaning of it all  
Why is it this thing called life  
Has got me goin' crazy

The second half of verse one reflects the dyadic relationship between God and man with a binary construct of man (first half) and God (second half):

So I open up Your word and let it speak to me  
The purpose and the plan that You've designed  
Is clear to see and I believe

The last line of verse one functions as a pre-chorus, which leads into the chorus and hook of the song:

I'm gonna live for today  
I'm gonna follow in Your way  
I'm gonna let my little light shine  
Like there's no tomorrow  
I won't worry about the past  
I know my future is intact
So I'll choose to live my life one way
I'm gonna live for today

"Live for Today" is a straightforward message that correlates a relationship with God by knowing Him through His word, the Bible. By using the hook and title as the first and last line of the bridge, it stabilizes the chorus, which reinforces the signification of God as the past, present, and future.

Darlene Zschech's song, "Pray," is a communal demonstration of worship. The opening text in verse one functions as a gathering song that calls people for prayer. It focuses their attention on becoming prayerful:

We call upon Your name
Humble ourselves and pray
Move in our hearts
Move in our land
Every nation, tribe, and tongue
Will proclaim Your kingdom come

As with the petition of prayers in a church service, the chorus becomes a summation, seemingly suggesting a communal response of "Lord, hear our prayer":

We pray pray
Open the windows of heaven on us
Today we pray
Pour out Your spirit
Your wonders on earth

Further illustrating an act of worshipful prayer, verse two is a succession from verse one:

We come on bended knee
We bring an offering
Lead us in Your way everlasting
Every heart of every man will pray
Your will be done
Verse two leads as expected into the chorus, but what is interesting is the text in the bridge; it contains nearly the entire Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) taught by Jesus:

- Our Father who art in heaven
- Hallowed be Your name
- Your kingdom come
- Your will be done
- On earth as it is in heaven
- And lead us not into temptation
- Deliver us from evil
- For Thine is the kingdom
- The power and the glory forever and ever

This interpretation of the *Lord's Prayer* in the song "Pray" omits the text "Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors."\(^{11}\)

During the bridge, an all-female choir sings in the background emulating a call-and-response congregational style of singing with the lead singer. While the female sings the Lord's Prayer, the background choir interjects text that is reminiscent of the first verse, "Pray, pray, humble ourselves, we humble ourselves and pray, pray."

Along with Natalie Grant, Joy Williams has another song in the Female Solo category. Her second song, "Surrender," illustrates an individual relationship with God. The hook of the song occurs in the pre-chorus with the following text:

- Lord, in Your embrace, now I can say,
- "I surrender."

The above pre-chorus leads into the chorus; providing the listener with what it entails to "surrender":

- Everything I held so precious,

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\(^{11}\) Matthew 6:12 (NRSV). Some versions of the Lord's Prayer may use the text: "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."
Everything I kept away,
I give it up, give it up all for You.
I give it all for You.
Everything I held as treasure,
I give it all for You,
I give it all for You.

The bridge of the song reflects the dyadic relationship between God and man with the following text:

You give Your love to me;
You opened up Your heart unselfishly.
How can I not do the same for You?
I surrender, yeah!

Although the bridge contains lyric that is similar to verse two, there is an important change in the text:

In Your light, I feel a new power coming over me,
Calling me to Your surrender.
I gotta find the answer.
What is this Your love has opened up inside?
Suddenly, I cannot hide.
You give Your love to me;
You opened up Your heart unselfishly.
Lord, in Your embrace, now I can say,
"I surrender."

The change occurs between the last two lines of verse two and the last two lines of the bridge. Text in the bridge asks the question, "How can I not do the same for You"; the reply is a resounding, "I surrender, yeah!"

Among the female artists, both group and solo categories, only two songs incorporate a specific use of the word Lord: "I Choose You" by Point of Grace, Female Group; and "Surrender" by Joy Williams, Female Solo. Only one song among the female artists, "Hide" by Joy Williams, addressed the entity of God using masculine pronouns
such as He and His. While the song "Pray," by Darlene Zschech, incorporates "Our Father" in the text, its sole purpose does not function as a masculine identification of God, but rather, it signifies the importance of the Lord's Prayer within the congregational construct of worship and prayer. The Lord's Prayer, often said communally within a church service, reflects a dyadic relationship between God and man.

**Mixed Group Category**

Sixpence None the Richer, "Breath Your Name" – Individual  
Glory Revealed, "By His Wounds" – Communal  
Casting Crowns, "If We Are The Body" – Communal  
Casting Crowns, "Lifesong" – Individual  
Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh,\(^{12}\) "Lord Have Mercy" – Individual  
Casting Crowns, "Praise You In This Storm" – Individual  
FFH (Far From Home), "Ready To Fly" – Individual  
Casting Crowns, "Voice of Truth" – Individual  
Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl, "You're Worthy Of My Praise" – Individual

Regarding gender in CCM, the Mixed Group category is a microcosm of the CCM industry, because of the male to female ratio of artists. Among the Mixed Group category, it is worth noting that Sixpence None the Richer is the only group that has a female as the lead singer; the other Mixed Groups feature male vocals as the lead and the females serve as backup singers or instrumentalists.

Although all of the songs in the Mixed Group category demonstrate a dyadic relationship between God and man, only two of the nine songs illustrate an individual relationship. Not all of the songs in this category use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form; three of the songs use a Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus song form.

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\(^{12}\) The WOW 2004 CD lists the song as Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh. McIntosh has her own solo career; her name appears as Sarah Macintosh on her website and MySpace page.
form: "By His Wounds" by Glory Revealed, "Lord Have Mercy" by Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh, and "You're Worthy of My Praise" by Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl. One group, Casting Crowns, dominates the Mixed Group category with four songs: "If We Are The Body," "Lifesong," "Praise You In This Storm," and "Voice of Truth."

"Breathe Your Name" by Sixpence None the Richer portrays the relationship between God and man in the chorus section of the song:

You are in my heart
I can feel Your beat
And You move my mind
From behind the wheel
When I lose control
I can only breathe Your name
I can only breathe Your name

The use of *You* in the chorus is vague by itself; as it follows verse one, the identity of the *You* is still not clear. Only after hearing verse two does the identity become more apparent:

So many days within this race
I need the truth I need some grace
I need the plot to find my place
I need some truth I need some grace
The part of You that's part of me
Will never die will never leave
And it's nobody else's but mine

Verse two, although more detailed than verse one, still is nondescript; it contains veiled references to God in single words, such as truth and grace. The listener is drawn to the repetition of "I need the truth I need some grace" because of its placement within the verse. Finally, in the bridge of the song, one comes to realize the power of *You*: 
You'll view the list
And take Your pick
You'll view my fate
And make the choice
'Cause I'm nobody else's but Yours

All of the veiled references in verses one and two finally culminate in the bridge section of the song as a representation of the Judgment day. The last line of the bridge leads into a double chorus, with a small, yet significant change in text. "And You're in my heart" is the first line of the penultimate chorus, and the final chorus changes the first line to "'Cause You're in my heart." The resultant flow of text from bridge to chorus is heard as "'Cause I'm nobody else's but Yours – And You're in my heart"; therefore, this pairing of text confirms a dyadic relationship.

"By His Wounds" by Glory Revealed is a straightforward Verse-Chorus song form. The opening text signifies two things: God as a masculine entity and a communal relationship with God because of man's original sin:

He was pierced for our transgressions
He was crushed for our sins
The punishment that brought us peace was upon Him
And by His wounds
By His wounds we are healed

Verse two is a repeat of verse one, which signifies the importance of the text and how it relates as an essential tenet of the Christian faith. In the chorus, the focus shifts from the crucifixion to the resurrection with the message of salvation:

We are healed by Your sacrifice
And the life that You gave
We are healed for You paid the price
By Your grace we are saved
We are saved
Although the chorus presents a message of salvation, it is important to note the atypical placement of the hook within a Verse-Chorus song form; in "By His Wounds" the hook is in the verse. By placing the hook/title at the end of the verse, it almost functions as a secondary refrain; thus reinforcing a certain order of salvation as "by His wounds we are healed." At the very end of the song, the male singer poses the question, "What can wash away my sin," and the response is, "nothing but the blood of Jesus." This tagline of question and answer not only demonstrates that a relationship exists between God and man, but it also strengthens the significance of Jesus' blood for sanctification. His blood can cleanse away one's sin. This final reference to Jesus reinforces the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by shifting the focus way from communal, as represented by we are healed, to the individual, as represented by my sin.

Another song in the Mixed Group category that presents the dyadic relationship between God and man is "If We Are The Body" by Casting Crowns. In a traditional use of storytelling in songwriting, the verses describe two scenarios. The chorus, functioning as a symbolic response to the verses with its qualifying text "But if we are the body," suggests a moment of reflection on one's actions. Verse one describes a plausible situation that may occur during a church service:

It's crowded in worship today
As she slips in trying to fade into the faces
The girls' teasing laughter is carrying
Farther than they know
Farther than they know

One can reflect on the above scenario during the chorus:

But if we are the body
Why aren't His arms reaching
Why aren't His hands healing
Why aren't His words teaching
And if we are the body
Why aren't His feet going
Why is His love not showing them there is a way
There is a way

This chorus depicts the Body of Christ in a macro and micro level while confirming a male anthropomorphic construct of God. On the micro level, the Body of Christ is a direct response to the scenario presented in verse one; when the chorus returns, after verse two, one recognizes the macro level of the Body of Christ. The second verse, again a plausible situation, describes a scenario of a visitor attending a church service:

A traveler is far away from home
He sheds his coat and quietly
Sinks into the back row
The weight of their judgmental glances
Tells him that his chances are better
Out on the road

As the narrative continues in verse two, rumination about the text, "But if we are the Body…" is imminent with a return of the chorus. The bridge section of the song provides a different perspective and voice to the reflective text, "But if we are the body"; illuminating the last line of the chorus, "there is a way" with an answer:

Jesus paid much too high a price
For us to pick and choose who should come
And we are the body of Christ

While the bridge reveals "there is a way" through Jesus, it reinforces the dyadic relationship of God and man; commanding man not to confuse himself with God, and encouraging man to accept his role as the Body of Christ.
"Lifesong" is another song by Casting Crowns that represents man's relationship with God. The overall song functions as a prayer to God, embodied with the hook, "Let my lifesong sing to You." Even though the text reflects an individual relationship with God, it becomes communal during the bridge and final chorus with the addition of a female background vocalist. She is the only one to add "Jesus" to the text in the final chorus, as an ad libitum of the text from the bridge.

From verse one, the text suggests that the mind and body need to unite, as well as the overall posture of worship to God. Alliteration imbues the message in the opening text of the song:

Empty hands held high
Such small sacrifice
If not joined with my life
I sing in vain tonight

There is an interesting link between the second and third lines in verse one with life and sing; it foreshadows the significance of the title and hook of the song – lifesong. Verse two closely pairs life with sacrifice in the first two lines of text, while connecting Lord, life, and living through alliteration:

Lord I give my life
A living sacrifice
To reach a world in need
To be Your hands and feet

The pre-chorus is the same for both verses:

May the words I say
And the things I do
Make my lifesong sing
Bring a smile to You
Although the pre-chorus contains "lifesong," which is the title, it does not diminish its placement and impact in the chorus:

Let my lifesong sing to You
Let my lifesong sing to You
I wanna sign Your name
To the end of this day
Knowin' that my heart was true
Let my lifesong sing to You

The repetition of the text, "Let my lifesong sing to You," metaphorically signifies a Triune God, where You represents the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The subtext of the chorus then becomes the following:

Let my lifesong sing to You (Father)
Let my lifesong sing to You (Son)
I wanna sign Your name
To the end of this day
Knowin' that my heart was true
Let my lifesong sing to You (Holy Spirit)

With the text of the bridge, the association of the Triune God seems more recognizable:

Hallelujah hallelujah
Let my lifesong sing to You
Hallelujah hallelujah
Let my lifesong sing to You
Hallelujah hallelujah
Let my lifesong sing to You

By adding the female background vocalist to the texture and pairing the Hallelujah text with "Let my lifesong sing to You," the bridge aurally transforms from an individual to a communal relationship with God. Since the male voice is the lead vocal in the song, and the female voice is only heard from the bridge to the end of the song, it implies that the female functions as a supporting role to her male counterpart. Although the female role
may be secondary, her presence is essential to aurally depict a communal relationship with God.

Michael W. Smith, usually recognized as a solo male artist, features Sarah McIntosh, a female vocalist in his song "Lord Have Mercy"; therefore, it is categorized in the Mixed Group. Heard with a male voice, the opening text in verse one immediately demonstrates an individual relationship between God and man:

Jesus I've forgotten
The words that You have spoken

In comparison, verse two begins with a female voice singing:

I have built an altar
Where I've worshipped things of man

Both voices jointly sing the chorus, thereby reinforcing a communal relationship despite the use of me:

Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy on me
Lord have mercy
Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy on me

This song uses a straightforward Verse-Chorus song form. It also uses a solo violin in the introduction, the instrumental bridge, and after the final chorus.

"Praise You In This Storm" is the third song by Casting Crowns in the Mixed Group category. This song uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form, but with a lengthy pre-chorus section. A male voice clearly addresses God in the opening text verse one:
I was sure by now
God You would have reached down
And wiped our tears away
Stepped in and saved the day
But once again I'll say Amen
And it's still rainin'

The opening lyric demonstrates the relationship between God and man and an anthropomorphic construct of God as a superhero: able to reach down; wipe tears away, and save the day. The lengthy pre-chorus reinforces the mutually committed relationship man has with God:

As the thunder rolls
I barely hear You whisper
Through the rain
"I'm with You"
And as Your mercy falls
I'll raise my hands
And praise the God who gives
And takes away

With the words, "I'm with You," God's perspective resonates from a male voice, which substantiates a cultural belief that God is a masculine entity. Containing the title and hook of the song, the chorus reiterates the relationship between God and man:

And I'll praise You in this storm
And I will lift my hands
For You are who You are
No matter where I am
And ev'ry tear I've cried
You hold in Your hand
You never left my side
And though my heart is torn
I will praise You in this storm

"Ready to Fly" by FFH (Far From Home) is a song in the Mixed Group category, and although it depicts an individual relationship between God and man, its primary
message is awaiting The Rapture. This song uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form and incorporates the laundry-list technique in the chorus. A male voice sings a majority of the song; however, in the bridge of the song and final chorus, the background vocals are a mix of female and male voices. Since verse one focuses attention on man's readiness to fly, for contrast, verse two shifts the focus to include both God and man:

You've told me I could rise above
Like an eagle on the wind
I can glide over Your love
But I feel the pull of gravity
And it's a weight upon my shoulders
I can't stay here any longer
I've gotta be free

The chorus confirms the last line of verse two, "I've gotta be free":

I'm ready to fly
I'm ready to soar
I'm ready to leave this world behind
I'm ready to open up the door
I'm ready to fly
I'm ready to spread my wings across the sky
I'm think it's time
I'm ready to go
I'm ready to fly

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13 Barbara R. Rossing, "Journeys Through Revelation: Apocalyptic Hope for Today," Horizons Bible Study, Vol. 23, no. 3 (2010): 81. According to Barbara R. Rossing, "While the Rapture idea is not accepted as traditional church doctrine or teaching, the language used to describe it sounds biblical . . . The Rapture was invented in the nineteenth century by a British preacher, John Nelson Darby, founder of the Plymouth Brethren. Darby and preachers who have popularized his thinking today lay out for their followers a chronology that splits the traditional understanding of Jesus' return into two parts: First, they say, Jesus will come to "Rapture," or take, born-again Christians from the earth, up to heaven for seven years. Second, after seven years of tribulation for those left behind, Jesus and the Christians will return to earth."
Several phrases from the chorus, when strung together, create a secondary message that reinforces the hook of the song, "I'm ready to fly." Since these phrases break the laundry-list structure, their asymmetrical connection provides a subtext that highlights the original hook. When strung together, the secondary phrases become, "leave this world behind, open up the door to fly, spread my wings across the sky it's time to go fly."

Casting Crowns is the only artist represented in the Mixed Group category with four songs: "If We Are The Body," "Lifesong," "Praise You In This Storm," and "Voice of Truth." The fourth song by Casting Crowns, "Voice of Truth," demonstrates an individual relationship between God and man and uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form. The song specifically references Jesus three times: verse one, the bridge, and the final chorus. The first reference to Jesus suggests someone who does not yet know Jesus:

Oh what I would do to have
The kind of faith it takes
To climb out of this boat I'm in
Onto the crashing waves
To step out of my comfort zone
Into the realm of the unknown
Where Jesus is
And He's holding out His hand

The bridge provides the second reference to Jesus:

But the stone was just the right size
To put the giant on the ground
And the waves they don't seem so high
From on top of them looking down
I will soar with the wings of eagles
When I stop and listen to the sound
Of Jesus singing over me
The third reference to Jesus occurs in the final words of the song:

I will listen and believe
'Cause Jesus You are
The voice of truth
And I will listen to You, You are

The final song in the Mixed Group category is "You're Worthy of My Praise" by Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl; it uses the Verse-Chorus song form. Although the text seemingly depicts an individual relationship between God and man, especially within the context of the hook and title, "You're Worthy of My Praise," its resultant function is communal worship because of the call-and-response vocals between the male and female voices. In verse one, a male sings the first part of the text, and the female sings the second part (denoted in parentheses):

I will worship (I will worship)
With all of my heart (with all of my heart)
I will praise You (I will praise You)
With all of my strength (all my strength)\(^{14}\)
I will seek You (I will seek You)
All of my days (all of my days)
I will follow (I will follow)
All of Your ways (all Your ways)

In verse two, the roles reverse. A female sings the first part of the lyric, and a male sings the second part (denoted in parentheses):

I will bow down (I will bow down)
And hail You as King (and hail You as King)
I will serve You (I will serve You)
Give You everything (everything)
I will lift up (I will lift up)
My eyes to Your throne (my eyes to Your throne)

\(^{14}\) Although the text pattern indicates a response, in performance, no response is heard.
I will trust You (I will trust You)
Trust You alone (You alone)

The text in the chorus is a summation of the verses and symbolically unites the male and female roles as they jointly sing:

I will give You all my worship
I will give You all my praise
You alone I long to worship
You alone are worthy of my praise

The third verse combines text from both the first and second verse, but does not maintain their original engendered roles; here the male assumes the lead again while the female sings responsively (denoted in parentheses). These three lines repeat four times in this section of the song:

I will worship (I will worship)
I will bow down (I will bow down)
I will give You all of my praise (You all of my praise)

In the final chorus, the voices sing together again:

I will give You all my worship
I will give You all my praise
You alone I long to worship
You alone are worthy of my praise

Among the Mixed Group category, Sixpence None the Richer is the only group to feature a lead female singer. By adding the female voice at specific points in a song, the song is then able to shift from an individual to a communal relationship between man and God. Such examples occur in "Lifesong" by Casting Crowns, "Lord Have Mercy" by Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh, "Ready to Fly" by FFH, and "You're Worthy of My Praise" by Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl. Of the seven songs in
the Mixed Group category, only two, "By His Wounds" by Glory Revealed and "If We Are the Body" by Casting Crowns, represent a communal relationship through the written text alone.

**Male Group Category**

Tree63, "Blessed Be Your Name" – Individual  
Third Day, "Cry Out to Jesus" – Communal  
Big Daddy Weave, "Every Time I Breathe" – Individual  
Mercy Me, "Here With Me" – Individual  
Mercy Me, "Homesick" – Individual  
Third Day, "Mountain of God" – Individual  
Third Day, "Nothing Compares" – Individual  
Newsboys, "Presence" – Individual  
Jars of Clay, "Show You Love" – Individual  
Mercy Me, "So Long Self" – Individual  
Newsboys, "Something Beautiful" – Individual  
Building 429, "The Space in Between Us" – Individual  
Mercy Me, "Spoken For" – Individual  
Kutless, "Strong Tower" – Individual  
Rush of Fools, "Undo" – Individual  
David Crowder Band, "Wholly Yours" – Individual  
Third Day, "You Are Mine" – Individual  
Newsboys, "You Are My King" – Individual  

In the Male Group category, only one of the eighteen songs depicts a communal relationship between God and man, while seventeen of the songs characterize an individual relationship. Repeat artists dominate this category with more than one song: four songs by Third Day, four songs by Mercy Me, and three songs by the Newsboys. All of the songs in the Male Group category use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form with some minor variations such as a double-chorus or an extra verse.

"Blessed Be Your Name" by Tree63 depicts an individual relationship between God and man. The absence of a chorus section between verse one and verse two firmly
establishes a hierarchy between God and man. This correlation emerges from the inner text in verse one, representing God, and verse two, representing man:

Blessed be Your name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name

Blessed be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name

Although there exists a hierarchy between God and man, the chorus confirms the essential relationship between God and man:

Every blessing You pour out  
I'll turn back to praise  
When the darkness closes in  
Lord still I will say  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be the name of the Lord  
Blessed be Your glorious name

The bridge of the song further reinforces that relationship:

You give and take away  
You give and take away  
My heart will choose to say  
Lord blessed be Your name

While "Blessed Be Your Name" uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form, it deviates from the usual placement of the title, which also functions as the main hook of the song. In this song form, the title should never appear in the bridge of the song; however, the last line of the bridge contains the title and hook of the song. Since the hook and title permeate the three different parts of the song form, it becomes a
metaphor for the Triune God: in verse one it represents the Father, in the chorus it embodies the Son, and in the bridge it signifies the presence of the Holy Spirit.

"Cry Out to Jesus" by Third Day illustrates a communal relationship between God and man as it progresses from a general to specific construct in each of the verses. Addressing the listener on the broadest level possible, verse one begins:

To everyone who's lost someone they love
Long before it was their time
You feel like the days you had were not enough
When you said goodbye

The second half of verse one continues:

And to all of the people with burdens and pains
Keeping you back from your life
You believe that there's nothing
And there is no one who can make it right

Functioning as a pre-chorus, the last two lines of the verse lead directly into the chorus, which provides a solution for those who have "lost someone they love," and "people with burdens and pains":

There is hope for the helpless
Rest for the weary
And love for the broken heart
And there is grace and forgiveness
Mercy and healing
He'll meet you wherever you are
Cry out to Jesus
Cry out to Jesus

Not only does the chorus provide solutions for the above-mentioned people in the verse, it also addresses how to begin a relationship with an anthropomorphic masculine God
because, "He'll meet you wherever you are, Cry out to Jesus, Cry out to Jesus." The bridge of the song can only confirm that:

When you're lonely  
   And it feels like the whole world is falling on you

The solution is:

   You just reach out
   You just cry out to Jesus
   Cry to Jesus

"Cry Out to Jesus" illustrates the dyadic relationship between God and man by using a binary construct; it presents a problem and offers Jesus as the solution. The song is communal, not in its written word, but in whom it addresses. By using the text "to everyone" in the first line of the verse, the invitation becomes, quite literally, open to everyone.

Big Daddy Weave presents an individual relationship between God and man in the song, "Every Time I Breathe." The title evokes an image of God as being as essential to life as the air one breathes; to live you need to breathe, without it, death is imminent. The first line in the chorus, which contains the hook of the song, clarifies the dyadic relationship between God and man:

   Every time I breathe You seem a little bit closer
   I never wanna leave
   I wanna stay in Your warm Embrace
   Oh basking in the glory shining from Your Face
   And every time I get another glimpse of Your Heart
   I realize it's true that You are so marvelous God
   And I am so in love with You
   Yeah so in love with You
The remainder of the chorus personifies God using words such as embrace, face, and heart. What seems extremely odd in the chorus is the undeniably human construct of "in love." As this phrase repeats, the focus shifts away from the larger construct of a hierarchal relationship between God and man; the colloquial use of "in love" and pairing it with "You" as in God seems to demean the relationship between God and man. In essence, while the title may evoke something that is as necessary as breath, the chorus diminishes its necessity by correlating God with a human relationship. By using the human construct of "in love," it implies an alternative construct of "out of love." While the bridge may supply a certain insight into the relationship, it cannot diminish the inequity in the text of the chorus, especially in context of the song form. The bridge text in context with the final chorus:

Wrapped in Your mercy
I wanna live and never leave
I am held by how humble
Yet overwhelmed by Your Majesty
Captured by grace now I'm finding I am free
You are Marvelous God and knowing You is everything

Every time I breathe You seem a little bit closer
I never wanna leave
I wanna stay in Your warm Embrace
Oh basking in the glory shining from Your Face
And every time I get another glimpse of Your Heart
I realize it's true that You are so marvelous God
And I am so in love with You
Yeah so in love with You

Ending the song with the text of "so in love with You" seems incongruent with a hierarchal construct of God and man.
"Here With Me" by Mercy Me depicts an individual relationship between God and man from the opening text in verse one:

I long for Your embrace
Every single day
To meet You in this place
And see You face to face

The lyric continues, by asking God to show himself:

Will You show me
Reveal Yourself to me
Because of Your mercy
I fall down on my knees

As verse one transitions to the chorus, there is a break in the music, which essentially highlights the opening text of the chorus:

I can feel Your presence here with me
Suddenly I'm lost within Your beauty
Caught up in the wonder of Your touch
Here in this moment I surrender to Your love

The chorus appears four times throughout the song; after each verse, and as a double chorus at the end of the song, but it is only in the transition between verse one and the first chorus where a break in the music occurs. This becomes a significant transition that aligns with the text from verse one, "I fall down on my knees," and the chorus text, "I can feel Your presence here with me." The silence becomes an aural representation, not only of the dyadic relationship between God and man, but how man is to approach God. The causality is then, "I fall down on my knees, I can feel Your presence here with me."
In the song "Here With Me," the text as it transitions from the chorus into the bridge implies a Triune God. The last line of the chorus, "Here in this moment I surrender to Your love," leads directly into the bridge:

I surrender to Your grace
I surrender to the One
Who took my place

While the adjacent relationship between the chorus and the bridge may represent a Triune God, the placement of "I surrender" before each statement fulfills a dyadic relationship between God and man.

Another song by Mercy Me is "Homesick," which illustrates an individual relationship between God and man while portraying home as a metaphor for heaven. The chorus text questions the cliché of "home is where the heart is":

I close my eyes and I see your face
If home's where my heart is
Then I'm out of place
Lord won't You give me strength
To make it through somehow
I've never been more homesick than now

In the bridge section of the song, the text affirms that solace in Christ:

In Christ
There are no goodbyes
And in Christ
There is no end
So I'll hold on to Jesus
With all that I have
To see you again
To see you again

"Mountain of God" is another song in this category by Third Day. As the song progresses through its form, it reflects not only an individual relationship with God, but it...
also affirms a Triune God. Verse one signifies the Father with "You were there with me," verse two signifies Jesus the Son of God with "You are here with me," and the Holy Spirit is present in the bridge with "nothing can quite compare with what's in front of me."

A small change in text occurs in the chorus of "Mountain of God." The first chorus suggests a God from the Old Testament, while the second suggests a God from the New Testament. The chorus text that follows verse one is:

Even though the journey's long  
And I know the road is hard  
Well the One who's gone before me  
You will help me carry on  
And after all that I've been through  
Now I realize the truth  
That I must go through the valley  
To stand upon the mountain of God

The chorus text that follows verse two, and subsequently leads into the bridge is:

Even though the journey's long  
And I know the road is hard  
Well the One who's gone before me  
He will help me carry on  
And after all that I've been through  
Now I realize the truth  
That I must go through the valley  
To stand upon the mountain of God

Although only one word changes, the change from You to He in the fourth line of the chorus not only suggests a reference to the Old Testament and New Testament respectively, but it also confirms an anthropomorphic masculine God.
Another song by Third Day is "Nothing Compares." The hook and title of the song is a simple and straightforward summation of an individual relationship with God. The chorus text is:

Nothing compares
To the greatness of knowing You Lord
Oh no and nothing compares
To the greatness of knowing You Lord
Oh no

Since this version of the song is from a live-recorded concert performance, it contains applause and cheers, which signify the interaction between the Male Group and the audience. Especially important to this performance is the text included after verse two:

And those words that were spoken and written by the apostle Paul apply just as much to our lives today as they did two thousand years ago; that in our lives, no matter where we could go, or who we could meet, or what we could see, or what we could earn or be given to us, or accomplished, there is nothing in our lives that will ever even come close to the greatness of knowing Jesus Christ, our Lord.

In context, the lead male vocalist recites the above text, suggesting less of a concert atmosphere and more of a worship service. This transition from concert to worship seems conclusive with the last words spoken as a benediction:

May the Lord bless you
And may He keep you
And may He give you peace
God bless ya'll

"Presence" by the Newsboys is another song in the Male Group category that communicates an individual relationship with God. The message resounds in the opening text of the chorus, "Come O Lord and fill up my life with the light of Your presence." As was the case with the song "Blessed Be Your Name" by Tree63, "Presence" uses the
hook and title of the song in the verses, the chorus, and the bridge. Using the title and
hook in all three parts of the song form is highly unusual, yet in the context of this song,
it functions slightly different in each part. The hook and title occur in the pre-chorus
section of verse one:

I lift up my voice  
To the King the King of glory  
I hold out my hands  
To the One who is worthy  
I long for Your presence  
I long Lord I need Your touch

In verse two it also appears in the pre-chorus, but with some minor variations:

I long to be washed  
In the well of Your mercy  
I long to be warmed  
By the fire of Your glory  
I long for Your presence  
I long for Your healing touch

An additional line of text appears in the second chorus:

Come O Lord and fill up my life  
With the light of Your presence  
This is my heart's desire  
Oh Father come and let Your Spirit abide  
I long for Your presence  
This is my heart's desire  
It's my desire (Chorus 2 only)

The resultant song form is then a Verse 1, Chorus 1, Verse 2, Chorus 2, Bridge, Chorus 1, Chorus 2. With the text "Lord," "Father," and "Spirit," the choruses infer a Triune God while the bridge section suggests the same association by stating the hook and title three times:

Lord it's my desire
Lord You're my desire
I want to feel Your presence
I want to feel Your presence
I want to feel Your presence

The song "Show You Love" by Jars of Clay presents an ambiguous individual relationship between God and man because one could argue two different perspectives: man is addressing God, or God is addressing man. Obscuring these different points of view is the text in the chorus:

I'm gonna show you love in every language
I'm gonna speak with words that need no form
I'm gonna give you what you never had before

While the chorus text may be vague, the verses do not provide explicit confirmation of either perspective. For example, verse one is:

Speak and say the words that no one else will ever say
Love love like the world we know is over in a day

While verse two is:

And you're beautiful and I'm weakened by the force of your eyes
So shine bright to separate the truth from the lies

Although the text does not provide any specific references to God, one can surmise that it establishes some kind of dyadic relationship. According to Don Cusic, "The question of whether a band is a Christian band if the members are Christians but the group doesn't just record overtly Christian songs is answered with Jars of Clay because they embrace

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15 This song is not classified as a song from God's perspective because of its ambiguous nature. With the text "I'm," it is unclear whether God or man is speaking. In contrast, the four songs classified as God's perspective clearly reflect the "Voice of God."
The band Jars of Clay is the quintessential group that represents the Christian music conundrum. If someone listened to "Show You Love" and did not know the artist was Jars of Clay, they may not associate this song as CCM.

"So Long Self" is another song by Mercy Me in the Male Group category. The hook and title of the song, which occurs in the chorus, reflects the overall message – so long self:

So long self
Well it's been fun
But I have found somebody else
So long self
There's just no room for two
So you are gonna have to move
So long self
Don’t take this wrong
But you are wrong for me
Farewell
Oh well goodbye don't cry
So long self

Almost a parody of a "break-up" song, "So Long Self" illustrates an individual relationship between God and man with the only reference to God occurring in verse one:

Well if I come across
A little bit distant
It's just because I am
Things just seem to feel
A little bit different
You understand
Believe it or not
But life is not apparently
About me anyways

---

Another song that portrays an individual relationship between God and man is "Something Beautiful" by the Newsboys. The title and hook of the song become a metaphor for God by describing God as *something beautiful*. To illustrate how God is *something beautiful*, the chorus uses simile and metaphor construction:

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It's a voice that whispers my name
It's a kiss without any shame
Something beautiful, yeah, yeah
Like a song that stirs in my head
Singing, "Love will take us where
Something's beautiful"
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Verse two identifies ways in which *something beautiful* manifests itself:

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I've heard it in the silence
Seen it on a face
I've felt it in the long hour
Like a sweet embrace
I know it's true
It's calling out to me
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As a follow-up to the chorus, the bridge section elaborates the concept of *something beautiful* in terms that are more concrete by signifying the sacrament of marriage, which then becomes a symbol for the marriage of Christ to his church:

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It's the child on her wedding day
It's the daddy that gives her away
Something beautiful, yeah, yeah
When we laugh so hard we cry
Oh, the love between You and I
Something beautiful
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Building 429 describes an individual relationship between God and man in the
song "The Space in Between Us." This song uses You only as a signifier of God. Since the title and hook of the song reflect the dyadic relationship in terms of space, or distance, they also illustrate a hierarchal structure between God and man.

The pre-chorus section asserts the relationship between God and man through a binary construction:

Through my pride and through my shame
Into Your love into Your grace
I'm not lookin' back 'til I see Your face
I'm runnin' straight to You

The formation of adjacent text further expresses the space between, which constructs the dichotomy of man and God: my pride and my shame represent man while Your love and Your grace represent God. The chorus, as it follows the pre-chorus, directly quantifies the space between God and man as the emptiness and this division:

All I really want to do
Is to fall into the emptiness
That is the space in between us
To break this division
All I really want to do
Is to fall into the emptiness
That is the space in between us
Erase it and bring us together again

In this category, "Spoken For" is the third song by Mercy Me; it reflects an individual relationship between God and man in the pre-chorus:

Oh and I praise You
Oh and I worship You

The two-line pre-chorus leads directly into the chorus, which clearly identifies You as Christ, the risen Lord:
Covered by a love divine
Child of the risen Lord
To hear You say this one's Mine
My heart is spoken for

In the bridge section, which precedes the final chorus, we learn how one becomes "spoken for" and what it means:

By the power of the cross
You've taken what was lost
And made it fully Yours
And I have been redeemed
By You who spoke to me
Now I am spoken for

Kutless describes an individual relationship between God and man in the song "Strong Tower." Although this song uses the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form, it formulates the bridge section of the song from the pre-chorus text.

This is not a traditional construct for the bridge, but within the context of the progression of the song, the text identifies the strong tower. The first pre-chorus is:

I go running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free

The first chorus is:

'Cause You are my strong tower
A shelter over me
Beautiful and mighty
Everlasting King
You are my strong tower
A fortress when I'm weak
Your name is true and holy
And Your face is all I see
Your face is all I see

Since the first pre-chorus leads directly into the chorus, there is a resultant causality
indicated by the text:

I go running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free
'Cause You are my strong tower

Although the bridge uses the same text as the first pre-chorus, in context, as the chorus leads into the bridge, which leads into the final chorus, the meaning of the text is different. The last two lines of the chorus, the bridge, and then the first two lines of the subsequent chorus function as the secondary connection of the text:

And Your face is all I see
Your face is all I see

I go running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free

'Cause You are my strong tower
A shelter over me

The above text suggests the relationship between God and man moving from a metaphor, the strong tower, to an anthropomorphic construct of God, Your face. Using anthropomorphic language, this shift in text indicates the development of a personal or more intimate relationship with God.

Rush of Fools sings about an individual relationship between God and man in their song "Undo." The last two lines of the chorus, "You're the only One who can undo what I've become," signify the main message of the song, which infers the importance of a dyadic relationship between God and man. This song uses very specific references of what needs to be undone. In verse one, the text reveals that this person's circumstance has become a habit:
I've been here before
Now here I am again (Here I am again)
Standing at the door
Praying You'll let me back in
To label me a prodigal
Would be only scratching the surface
Of who I've been known to be

Although this person shares their misgivings with the listener, he does know where to turn and reveals it to the listener in the chorus:

    Turn me around pick me up
    Undo what I've become
    Bring me back to the place
    Of forgiveness and grace
    I need You I need Your Help
    I can't do this myself
    You're the only One
    Who can undo what I've become

The first half of the chorus describes how one becomes undone by identifying a three-step process: turn me around, pick me up, and bring me back. The second half of the chorus infers that the process requires two entities, and one is dependent on the other: I, man need You, God.

"Wholly Yours" by the David Crowder Band is an example of an individual relationship between God and man; it forms a binary construct of this relationship in the verses. Verse one establishes this construct from the beginning:

    I am full of earth
    You are heaven's worth
    I am stained with dirt
    Prone to depravity
    You are everything
    That is bright and clean
    The antonym of me
    You are divinity
To further contrast the difference between God and man, the chorus focuses on the holiness of God:

And You are holy, holy, holy  
All heaven cries  
Holy, Holy god  
Oh You are holy, holy, holy  
I want to be holy like You are

Although it is unusual to change the text of a pre-chorus, it can be effective. David Crowder Band makes use of this unusual practice in "Wholly Yours." The first pre-chorus is:

What a certain sign of grace is this?  
From the broken earth  
Flowers come up,  
Pushing through the dirt.

The second pre-chorus is:

And the truest sign of grace was this:  
From wounded hands  
Redemption fell down,  
Liberating man.

In the first pre-chorus, a question is posed, "What a certain sign of grace is this." The changes in the pre-chorus text reflect a process of thinking and using logic to ascertain the "holiness" of God.

The fourth song by Third Day in this category is "You Are Mine," which describes an individual relationship between God and man by using a binary construct. The first line of each verse conveys the frailty of man with the phrase, "it doesn't take much." Both verse one and verse three establish this frailty with the text, "for my heart to break," while verse two uses, "for me to shed a tear." The second line of each verse
demonstrates how God is separate from man; verse one's response is, "And You have
done it for what seems like the millionth time," and verse two is, "And You have done so
many things to make me cry."

The pre-chorus is the same throughout in "You Are Mine":

Sometimes I wonder why You even love me
And why You ever chose to call me "child"

The hook and title confirm man's wonderment in the chorus:

Then I remember it's by Your sacrifice I can say
I am Yours and You are mine.

Although the bridge uses the hook and title text from the chorus, "You Are Mine," it
demonstrates a different point of view in the bridge because of the absence of the text
"it's by Your sacrifice I can say I am Yours." Since the only text heard, and repeatedly, is
"you are mine," it signifies God's perspective; you (man) are mine (God's). This text, as
heard in the bridge, further confirms a different point of view because it is the only text
used, and a break in the music accompanies the text, which functions to highlight the
different perspective.

The third song in this category by the Newsboys is "You Are My King." Using a
binary construct, this song illustrates an individual relationship between God and man.
The song only has one verse, but it repeats three times, thus creating a variation on the
Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form. Verse one establishes the binary
construction:

I'm forgiven
Because You were forsaken
I'm accepted
You were condemned
I'm alive and well
Your Spirit is within me
Because You died
And rose again

While the verse establishes a binary structure, it also references the paschal mystery:

Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again. Although the title of the song is "You Are My King," its subtitle is "Amazing Love." When one knows this, it makes more sense when examining the song form. The subtitle only appears in the chorus:

    Amazing love
    How can it be
    That You my King
    Would die for me
    Amazing love
    I know it's true
    It's my joy to honor You
    In all I do I honor You

While the actual title appears only in the bridge:

    You are my King
    You are my King
    Jesus You are my King
    Jesus You are my King

The bridge, because it leads directly into the chorus, confirms the identity of amazing love as Jesus.

**Male Solo Category**

Bebo Norman, "Disappear" – Individual
Mark Harris, "Find Your Wings" – Communal
Bebo Norman, "Great Light of the World" – Individual
Mark Schultz, "He Will Carry Me" – Individual
Michael W. Smith, "Healing Rain" – Individual
In the Male Solo category, eleven of the twenty songs reflect an individual relationship between God and man, while nine depict a communal relationship. As with the Male Group category, repeat artists dominate the Male Solo category. Artists with three songs include Bebo Norman, Mark Schultz, and Chris Tomlin, and artists with two songs are Matthew West and Jeremy Camp. Although there are some minor variations of song form, seventeen of the twenty songs within the Male Group category use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form. Three songs that use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus song form are "Great Light of the World" by Bebo Norman, "My Savior, My God" by Aaron Shust, and "The Other Side of the Radio" by Chris Rice. Of the twenty songs, four denote God's perspective: "I Am" by Mark Schultz, "More" by Matthew West, and "Only Grace" by Matthew West, and "You Are A Child Of Mine" by Mark Schultz.

"Disappear" by Bebo Norman illustrates an individual relationship between God and man using binary construction. Not only does he suggest that as man disappears
God *appears*, but he also implies that man is nothing without God, hence the importance of the dyadic relationship between God and man. Verse one describes circumstances that can happen to anyone, which establishes a causality relationship with the chorus:

On a day like this  
I wanna crawl beneath a rock  
A million miles from the world  
The noise the commotion  
That never seems to stop  
And on a day like this  
I wanna run from the routine  
Run away from the daily grind  
That can suck the life  
Right out of me  

The first pre-chorus, which is the last two lines of the verse "I only know of one place I can run to," leads directly into the chorus:

I, I wanna hide in You  
The Way the life the Truth  
So I can disappear  
And love is all there is to see  
Comin' out of me  
And You become clear  
As I disappear  

The magnitude of his message resonates in the bridge with the repetition, "If I don't bring You glory":

I would rather be cast away  
Separated from the human race  
If I don't bring You glory  
If I don't bring You glory  
If I don't bring You glory
"Find Your Wings" by Mark Harris is categorized as a communal relationship between God and man because of the ambiguous use of you in the verses. It is possible to hear this song both as an individual relationship and communal because of the use of you – it can be singular or plural. If heard as singular, the song can take on a meaning that represents a relationship of father to child, but if heard communally, it can take on a meaning that illustrates a relationship between a congregation and its youth:

It's only for a moment you are mine to hold
The plans that heaven has for you
Will all too soon unfold
So many different prayers I'll pray
For all that you might do
But most of all I'll want to know
You're walking in the truth
And if I never told you I want you to know
As I watch you grow

In the whole context of the song, "fill your heart" is the only phrase in the chorus that becomes problematic for this interpretation because it is singular:

I pray that God would fill your heart with dreams
And that faith gives you the courage
To dare to do great things
I'm here for you whatever this life brings
So let my love give you roots
And help you find your wings

Despite the singular use of "heart" in the chorus, the second verse maintains ambiguity with the continued use of you:

May passion be the wind

---

17 This song has been performed in a worship service context that celebrated the graduating senior class. In this context, both meanings were applicable; the parents could relate to their own children while the church leaders could relate to the entire class as their "children."
That leads you through your days
And may conviction keep you strong
Guide you on your way
May there be many moments
That make your life so sweet
Oh, but more than memories

"Great Light of the World" is the second song in this category by Bebo Norman.
The title infers Christ because it is one of the many names for Christ from the Bible.\(^{18}\)

Through a binary construction, this song illustrates an individual relationship between
God and man. A binary construct is present in both the verses and the chorus sections of
the song; the two verses focus on the light of God and the strength of God respectively.
Two distinct pre-chorus texts confirm these two aspects of God and function as a prayer
to God. Pre-chorus one:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Come with Your light} \\
\text{And fill up my heart}
\end{align*}
\]
Pre-chorus two:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{So come with Your strength} \\
\text{And carry me home}
\end{align*}
\]

The chorus, as it follows the pre-chorus, confirms a hierarchy of God to man:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{O Great Light of the world} \\
\text{Fill up my soul} \\
\text{I'm half a man here} \\
\text{So come make me whole} \\
\text{O Great Light of the world} \\
\text{Come to impart} \\
\text{The light of Your grace} \\
\text{To fill up my heart}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{18}\) Matthew 5:14 (RSV).
References to a Triune God are present in both verses and the chorus: "Your light" in verse one, "Your grace" in the chorus, and "Your strength" in verse two.

"He Will Carry Me" by Mark Schultz illustrates an individual relationship between God and man using a binary construction in all sections of the song, the verses, the chorus, and the bridge. The opening line in the first two verses reflects the binary opposition construction: "I call You hear me" in verse one and "You're strong I'm weary" in verse two. By not following the same binary formation, verse three demonstrates how necessary God is to man:

I know I'm broken
But You alone
Can mend this heart of mine
You're always with me

The chorus confirms three things: a dyadic relationship between God and man, an anthropomorphic depiction of God, and God as a masculine entity:

And even though I'm walkin' through
The valley of the shadow
I will hold tight to the hand of Him
Whose love will comfort me
And when all hope is gone
And I've been wounded in the battle
He is all the strength that I will ever need
He will carry me

The bridge references a Triune God with a repetition of You, while maintaining a binary construct of God and man:

And even though I feel so lonely
Like I have never been before
You never said it would be easy
But You said You'd see me through the storm
Another song in the Solo Male category that illustrates an individual relationship between God and man is "Healing Rain" by Michael W. Smith. Although this song is classified as individual, it does contain elements of a communal relationship; however, the juxtaposition between individual and communal seems to suggest that not all are ready to receive the *healing rain*. The conundrum occurs in the text of the chorus:

```
Healing rain it comes with fire
So let it fall and take us higher
Healing rain I'm not afraid
To be washed in heaven's rain
```

The second line, "take us higher," is in direct opposition to the third line, "I'm not afraid."

The text suggests not only a mixed message that not everyone may experience the *healing rain*, but because of the order of the text, it also suggests that this individual has left the others behind, or at the very least, separated himself from the others. By altering the song form from Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus to a double verse at the beginning, in essence, it prolongs the expectation of the *healing rain*, which again suggests that not everyone is ready for the *healing rain*. The text for verse one and verse two:

```
Healing rain is coming down
It's coming nearer to this old town
Rich and poor the weak and strong
It's bringing mercy it won't be long

Healing rain is coming down
It's coming closer to the lost and found
Tears of joy and tears of shame
Are washed forever in Jesus' name
```

The bridge text is:
And only You the Son of man
Could take a leper and let him stand
So lift your hands they can be held
By someone greater the Great I Am

Although this song is in the Solo Male category, a choir joins Michael W. Smith for the
final chorus because it is a live version of this song. The choir sings:

Healing rain is falling down
Healing rain is falling down
I'm not afraid I'm not afraid
Healing rain is falling down
Healing rain is falling down
I'm not afraid I'm not afraid

Since the addition of the choir occurs only in the final section of the song, one could argue that its presence could become a symbolic representation of a communal relationship between God and man. Michael W. Smith sings the majority of the song and it is somewhat ambiguous; however, for purposes of classification, it depicts an individual relationship between God and man.

An overwhelming example of a communal relationship between God and man occurs in "Holy is the Lord" by Chris Tomlin. Not only does the song represent a communal relationship, but Chris Tomlin also encourages communion through an invitation in the text of the pre-chorus:

And together we sing
Ev'ryone sing

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19 For his Christmastime with Michael W. Smith and Symphony Orchestra Tour, he invited local choirs and hired local musicians to perform with him in Cleveland, Ohio (2008) and Youngstown, Ohio (2009). Interestingly, in his concert rider, he stipulates to the local contractors that the orchestra must consist of professional musicians; absolutely no church or amateur musicians are to be hired.
"Holy is the Lord" only has one verse and it instructs the listener on various postures used in prayer:

We stand and lift up our hands
For the joy of the Lord is our strength
We bow down and worship Him now
How great how awesome is He

The chorus functions as a succinct depiction of God as a masculine entity:

Holy is the Lord God Almighty
The earth is filled with His glory
Holy is the Lord God Almighty
The earth is filled with His glory
The earth is filled with His glory

In the bridge, he clarifies how "the earth is filled with His glory":

It is rising up all around
It's the anthem of the Lord's renown
It's rising up all around
It's the anthem of the Lord's renown

A second song by Chris Tomlin in this category is "How Great is Our God."

Again, he encourages a communal relationship by inviting, with the text, people to sing with him. He accomplishes this in the chorus of the song:

How great is our God
Sing with me
How great is our God
And all will see how great
How great is our God

The verses are pure descriptions of God as an anthropomorphic masculine entity. Verse one text is:

The splendor of the King
Clothed in majesty
Let all the earth rejoice
All the earth rejoice
He wraps Himself in light
And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice
And trembles at His voice

In verse two, he references God with other names that signify God, including a Triune God:

And age to age He stands
And time is in His hands
Beginning and the End
Beginning and the End
The Godhead three in one
Father, Spirit, Son
The Lion and the Lamb
The Lion and the Lamb

When the bridge section occurs, one can assume that people have joined in singing because they have been invited in the chorus section; therefore, the use of my can indicate a public affirmation of an individual relationship with God amidst a communal setting:

Name above all names
Worthy of all praise
My heart will sing
How great is our God

The first song in this category that presents God's perspective is "I Am" by Mark Schultz. This song varies the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus song form by incorporating three verses. Each verse signifies one aspect of the Triune God: verse one – the Father, verse two – the Son, and verse three – the Holy Spirit. Since a Solo Male sings this song, it signifies God as a masculine entity and depicts the dyadic relationship between God and man from God's perspective. Text in verse two encourages man to enter a relationship with God, "So come and see and follow Me you will know."
The hook and title of the song, "I Am," is present in all parts of the song form, which signifies an omnipresent God. Verse one text illustrates the Father of the Trinity by referencing the Old Testament:

I Am the Maker of the Heavens
I Am the Bright and Morning Star
I Am the Breath of all Creation
Who always was
And is to come

Verse two references the Son of the Trinity by citing acts of Jesus:

I Am the One who walked on water
I Am the One who calmed the seas
I Am the miracles and wonders
So come and see
And follow Me
You will know

Verse three illustrates the Holy Spirit of the Trinity by confirming a presence of a relationship between God and man:

I Am
I Am the Spirit deep inside you
I Am the Word upon your heart
I am the One who even knew you
Before your birth
Before you were

In the bridge, one understands more aspects of the Triune God with the signification of God's voice as an echo of "I Am":

Before the earth (I Am)
The universe (I Am)
In every heart (I Am)
Oh where you are (I Am)
The Lord of Lords
The King of Kings
The Holy Lamb
Above all things (I Am)

Toby Mac conveys an individual relationship between God and man in "Made to Love." The song depicts his progression of belief to unbelief with a return to belief. In verse one, he asks, "Whatever happened to a passion I could live for? What became of the flame that made me feel more?" The answer to his questions is given in the segue from the last line of verse one as it leads into the chorus:

And when did I forget
That I was made to love You
I was made to find You
I was made just for You
Made to adore You
I was made to love You and be loved by You
You were here before me
You were waiting o'er me
And You said You'd keep me
Never would You leave me
I was made to love you and be loved by You

The third song by Chris Tomlin in this category is "Made to Worship," which illustrates a communal relationship between God and man. The transition from the pre-chorus, "He has filled our hearts with wonder so that we always remember," to the chorus clearly depicts a communal relationship:

You and I are made to worship
You and I are called to love
You and I are forgiven and free
When you and I embrace surrender
When you and I choose to believe
Then you and I will see (You and I will see)
Who we were meant to be

The chorus does contain the qualifier of this relationship, which is "when you and I embrace surrender, when you and I choose to believe then you and I will see who we
were meant to be." The last four lines of the chorus demonstrate the steps of this causal relationship – one has to embrace surrender, choose to believe, and then, only then, will one see who they were meant to be. The bridge section also suggests a naturalist perspective that inanimate objects can praise God:

   Even the rocks cry out
   Even the heavens shout
   At the sound of His Holy name
   So let ev'ry voice sing out
   Let ev'ry knee bow down
   He's worthy of all our praise

The second song in this category that presents God's perspective is "More" by Matthew West, which demonstrates a communal relationship between God and man.

Verse one gradually introduces God:

   Take a look at the mountain
   Stretching a mile high
   Take a look at the ocean
   Far as your eye can see
   And think of Me
   Take a look at the desert
   Do you feel like a grain of sand
   I am with you wherever
   Where you go is where I am
   And I'm always thinking of you
   Take a look around you
   I'm spelling it out one by one

By using the word look in verse one it conjures an image of doubting Thomas, the one who needed to see the wounds of Christ to confirm that he was the risen Lord. While verse one presents the concept of God as omnipresent, verse two brings the relationship closer as the voice of God continues:

   Just a face in the city
Just a tear on a crowded street
But you are one in a million
And you belong to Me
And I want you to know
I'm not letting go
Even when you come undone

The chorus confirms God's unconditional love:

I love you more than the sun
And the stars that I taught how to shine
You are Mine and you shine for Me too
I love you yesterday and today
And tomorrow
I'll say it again and again
I love you more
Yeah

"Much of You" by Steven Curtis Chapman uses binary construction to illustrate an individual relationship between God and man. Both the first verse pre-chorus,

"Cause I'm just a whisper and You are the thunder," and the second verse pre-chorus,

"Cause I'm just a sinner and You are the Savior" convey a dyadic relationship between God and man with the use of binary opposites. Since the pre-chorus leads into the chorus, its function begins to shift the message of the text away from man and toward God:

And I want to make much of You Jesus
I want to make much of Your love
I want to live today
To give You the praise
That You alone are so worthy of
I want to make much of Your mercy
I want to make much of Your cross
I give You my life
Take it and let it be used
To make much of You
The construction of the chorus opens with the title and the hook of the song, which provides stability. This placement of the hook and title, because of the content, infers the permanence of God through the metaphor of beginning and end or Alpha and Omega.

Aaron Shust portrays an individual relationship between God and man in "My Savior My God." The alteration of "My Savior" and "My God" in the chorus provides stability with 12 lines: four groups of three phrases:

My Savior loves  
My Savior lives  
My Savior's always there for me  
My God He was  
My God He is  
My God is always gonna be  
My Savior loves  
My Savior lives  
My Savior's always there for me  
My God He was  
My God He is  
My God is always gonna be

The signification of the chorus text illustrates a living God, and a God that has always been: the past, the present, and the future. The pre-chorus, which only appears after verse two and verse three, suggests the time before this person knew Jesus as his Savior:

That He would leave His place on high  
And come for sinful man to die  
You count it strange so once did I  
Before I knew my Savior

Bebo Norman's third song in this category is "Nothing Without You," which describes an individual relationship between God and man by depicting that man is nothing without God. The opening two lines of each verse are an offering to God: verse one, "Take these hands and lift them up," verse two, "And take my voice pour it out,"
verse three, "Take my body and build it up," and the fourth and final verse, "Take my
time here on this earth." The bridge of the song functions as an affirmation of each
offering:

   But I love You yeah
   With all my heart
   With all my soul
   With all my mind
   And all the strength
   That I can find

The use of song form in "Nothing Without You" is interesting because it ends with a
verse instead of a chorus. This lack of a chorus at the end of the song signifies an
imbalance in this world until "all the world will see that I have nothing without You," a
reference from the chorus, is heard. The last words of the song, "I am nothing without
You" impart to the listener the greatness of God more so than in the last line of the
chorus, "I have nothing without You." The modification in text, from I have nothing to I
am nothing, resonates the impermanent nature of man and the overall message of the
song as I (man) have/am nothing with You (God).

    The third song in this category that reflects God's perspective is "Only Grace" by
Matthew West. This song illustrates a communal relationship between God and man
from God's perspective, or voice; it can assume an individual or communal connection as
God can speak to one or many. The stability of the hook and title in the chorus reflect the
strength of God; the placement of "There's only grace" as the first and last line of the
chorus symbolically position God as the beginning and end, or the Alpha and the Omega:

    There's only grace
    There's only love
There's only mercy
And believe me it's enough
Your sins are gone
Without a trace
And there's nothing left now
There's only grace

The bridge section of the song confirms the relationship between God and man:

And if you should fall again
Well get back up get back up
Reach out and take My hand
And get back up get back up
And get back up again
Oh get back up again

Chris Rice, singer/songwriter of the "Cartoons" song, sings about evangelism and an ambiguous perspective in "The Other Side of the Radio." This song reflects a communal relationship between God and man as an archetypal model of multiple meaning in CCM. In the WOW 2004 CD (Green Disc), Chris Rice writes about this song:

I was sitting at lunch with a college student friend of mine, and he mentioned something about hearing me on "the other side of the radio." I thought about that concept, realizing people turn on the radio and they hear something I've worked on and they start singing along, and in some sense we are connected by a song in the truth. There is a connection going on. Somehow this is valuable. Somehow this is being used. And that excites me.20

Initially, one can interpret the title as Chris Rice has implied in his own words accompanying the CD, as a relationship between singer/songwriter and the audience. On a separate level, because this song is heard on a Christian-themed radio format, e.g., "The Fish," the song functions as a call for Evangelism by superimposing the male voice, in

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this case, Chris Rice, with the voice of God. The masculine, or male voice becomes an indexical sign that points to God, although not meant to represent God per se. For instance, the lyric in the second chorus:

It's you and me
Singin' the same song right now
And maybe this'll bring us together somehow

The opening text of the second chorus initially suggests the "you and me" as the audience and the singer/songwriter respectively; however, one is also able to interpret this text as audience and God respectively. The multiplicity of meaning directly correlates to CCM being able to function as a didactic tool that teaches about sanctification.

Within the same song, examining the opening lyric of verse two:

Now I imagine you on the other side of the radio

Again, the multiplicity of meaning, in this instance the order changed: *I*, representing the singer/songwriter and *you* as the audience, or *I*, as in God, and *you* as the audience.

The metaphor continues:

Doin' your homework
Or drivin' with your windows down on the freeway

This text sets up the concept, again multiplicity in meaning, that either the singer/songwriter can imagine this, or God can. As the verse continues, one begins to understand from perspective:

I see you tappin' the wheel
I see you bobbin' your head to the radio

The short and repeated phrase of "I see you" still contains multiple meaning. The singer/songwriter can "see you" doing these things because he has probably done the
same while driving his car; however, from the perspective of God and to the initiated, He truly can "see you" doing things.

The song maintains this multiplicity of meaning, continuing in verse two:

Oh and it makes my day
To see that smile on your face
And in some small way
I remember my place

In the above lyric, the somewhat troublesome text is "I remember my place." Does that still maintain a theory of multiple meanings or does it solely represent man? Is it possible that it can be a reference to the singer/songwriter and to God? It appears that it references the singer/songwriter; however, it has the possibility to represent God when taken in context of the song. For instance, the last line, "I remember my place," leads directly into the first chorus:

'Cause it's you and me
Singin' the same song right now
And maybe this'll bring us together somehow

Multiple messages in the lyric continue into the third verse:

Crank up the volume
And sing at the top of your lungs with the radio
Tunin' into some Good News
And laughin' along with the DJ
We're changin' somebody's world
From the other side of the radio
Oh and it makes my day
To see that smile on your face
And in some small way
I remember my place

While the earlier verses are somewhat innocuous, it is in the third verse where the message, the "Good News" is heard. Although not typical in a Verse-Chorus song
format, "The Other Side of the Radio" weaves the title in the storyline in both the choruses and the third verse. This placement of the title reduces its impact as the hook of the song, yet strengthens the two perspectives of the radio – the singer/songwriter and DJ's on one side and the audience on the other – by "changin' somebody's world."

Jeremy Camp reflects an individual relationship between God and man in "Take You Back." The voice or perspective changes within the song form between the verses and the chorus. For instance, the pre-chorus of verse one and verse two, "Your response will always be," represents man's perspective, but when the chorus begins, one can associate the text as God's words:

I'll take you back always
Even when your fight is over now
Even when your fight is over now
I'll take you back always
Even when the pain is coming through
Even when the pain is coming through
I'll take you back

"Take You Back" uses binary construction in verse one with "You hung to make me strong though my praise was few, when I fall I bring Your name down." The bridge:

I can only speak with a grateful heart
As I'm pierced by this gift of Your love
I will always bring an offering
I can never thank You enough

As the bridge leads into the chorus, there is an alteration in the text to reflect how "You (God) take me (man) back always":

You take me back always yeah
Even when my fight is over now
Even when my fight is over now
You take me back always
Jeremy Camp illustrates a communal relationship between God and man in "This Man." The chorus can reflect a communal perspective with a plural use of you, or an individual perspective if one interprets you as singular. Either way, the chorus leaves the listener with the following question to answer:

Would you take the place of this Man
Would you take the nails from His hands
Would you take the place of this Man
Would you take the nails from His hands

Through the contextual progression of the song as it leads into the chorus, we come to understand that this man is Jesus. The bridge section confirms a communal connection with the following text:

And we just don’t know
The blood and water flowed
And in it all He showed
Just how much He cared
And the veil was torn
So we could have this open door
And all these things
Have fin’lly been complete

Brian Littrell depicts an individual relationship between God and man in "Welcome Home." An ambiguous aspect of the song is with the text father; in verse one, one can interpret father as a biological father, but in verse two, it becomes a signifier of
God, the Father. This alteration in the textual meaning occurs in the pre-chorus section: verse one, "You're never far I will be where you are and when you come to me I will open my arms," verse two, "You're never far I will be where you are and when you come to Me you can bet I will open My arms." The image that the song conjures is a reference to the parable of the prodigal son. Since the pre-chorus meaning changes with the textual alteration, the chorus assumes a different perspective as it follows verse one, representing a biological father, and verse two as it represents God, the Father respectively:

Welcome home you
I know you by name
How do you do
I shine because of you today
So come and sit down
Tell me how you are
I know son
It's good just to see your face

As the above chorus follows verse one, one hears these words as from a father to son.

When the chorus follows verse two, a shift in perspective occurs, and one now hears these words as God speaking to his son. This second chorus then takes on attributes of a masculine anthropomorphic God. The focus shifts in the bridge toward man as he anticipates his relationship with God:

So I'll be waitin' for that day
Just to feel Your warm Embrace
Your Love has shown I will never be alone
For You will welcome me home
I'll forever be for You will say to me

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Especially in context of the last phrase of the bridge, "You will say to me," the final chorus maintains God's perspective.

The third song by Mark Schultz in this category is "You Are A Child of Mine," which reflects an individual relationship between God and man. The chorus of the song is from God's perspective or from His voice. One can understand this correlation in context as the pre-chorus text moves into the chorus. The pre-chorus text in verse one, "And like a father You are near and as I listen I can hear You say," and the pre-chorus text in verse two, "And though I'm giving in to fear if I listen I can hear You say," both lead into the chorus:

You are a child of Mine
Born of My own design
And you bear the heart of life
No matter where you go
Oh you will always know
You've been made free in Christ
You are a child of Mine

"You Are a Child of Mine" clearly illustrates a relationship between God and man. The use of the hook and title in the chorus between verse one and verse two suggests stability, yet, because of the placement in the first and last lines, it actually reflects instability. It contains only seven lines, which creates an imbalance in its structure. The balance sought represents a Triune God as it symbolically restores the balance through three statements of the following text:

No matter where you go
Oh you will always know
You've been made free in Christ
You are a child of Mine
It is clear that all fifty-six songs illustrate, in some way, a dyadic relationship between God and man. Some songs depict an individual relationship and others portray a communal relationship. While all of the songs represent, to a certain degree, a dyadic relationship between God and man, not all of the songs are equal in the manner they present that relationship. For instance, through textual analysis, the data reflect that the Male Group and the Solo Male categories have more opportunities to reflect a communal relationship with God. A communal representation of a relationship between God and man suggests more of a macro structure of the church; the male roles become signified as leaders in sermon, praise, and worship. More so than the female counterparts, the textual data reflect that the Male Group and Solo Male categories are theological based in their communication. Since the voice signifies gender and the male voice is more often heard, it suggests not only a male-dominated CCM industry, but also the podium, or stage becomes male-dominated.
CHAPTER IV

SANCTIFICATION: A LIFELONG PROCESS

The previous chapter explored how Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) depicts a dyadic relationship between God and man. As discussed previously, a relationship between God and man must exist for the process of sanctification to function. Although it may be disproportionate, CCM reflected that the relationship between God and man could subsist both individually and communally.

This chapter will examine the use of song form in CCM and how it reflects the process of sanctification as a lifelong journey that frees man from sin. Since sanctification is a process that occurs over time, it is then a diachronic construct. Although a song exists as a synchronic structure, much like a photograph, it is through an inter-textual oral presentation that a song potentially emulates a diachronic structure. Within this juxtaposition of synchronic and diachronic structures, CCM uses popular music styles and song forms to convey an aural message. This resultant message can then function as a didactic tool for sanctification.

The nature of sin is an important component that is necessary to understand the process of sanctification, which does not come to fruition until one's death; it is a lifelong process with its entire vicissitudes. Sin can be understood, not from a simple binary construction of good and bad, but rather, as a complex inter-textual construction. For instance, in *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Alister McGrath writes:

For Augustine, humanity is universally affected by sin as a consequence of the Fall. The human mind has become darkened and weakened by sin. Sin makes it impossible for the sinner to think clearly, and especially to understand higher spiritual truths and ideas . . . the human will has been weakened (but not
eliminated) by sin . . . the simple fact that we are sinners means that we are in the position of being seriously ill, and unable to diagnose our own illness adequately, let alone cure it. It is through the grace of God alone that our illness is diagnosed (sin), and a cure made available (grace) . . . [sin] is something which contaminates our lives from birth, and dominates our lives thereafter. It is a state over which we have no decisive control. We could say that Augustine understands humanity to be born with a sinful disposition as part of human nature, with an inherent bias toward acts of sinning. In other words, sin causes sins: the state of sinfulness causes individual acts of sin. Augustine develops this point with reference to three important analogies: original sin as a "disease," as a "power," and as "guilt."

1. The first analogy treats sin as a hereditary disease, which is passed down from one generation to another. As we saw above, this disease weakens humanity and cannot be cured by human agency. Christ is thus the divine physician, by whose "wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5), and salvation is understood in essentially sanative or medical terms. We are healed by the grace of God, so that our minds may recognize God and our wills may respond to the divine offer of grace.

2. The second analogy treats sin as a power which holds us captive, and from whose grip we are unable to break free by ourselves. The human free will is captivated by the power of sin, and may only be liberated by grace. Christ is thus seen as our liberator, the source of the grace which breaks the power of sin.

3. The third analogy treats sin as an essentially judicial or forensic concept—guilt—which is passed down from one generation to another. In a society which placed a high value on law, such as the later Roman Empire in which Augustine lived and worked, this was regarded as a particularly helpful way of understanding sin. Christ thus comes to bring forgiveness and pardon.¹

CCM, as discussed in this dissertation, demonstrates a dyadic relationship between God and man, which can be an individual or communal relationship. The nature of sin, as depicted in CCM, relies upon the dyadic relationship of God and man because it demonstrates the necessity of God to free man from his sin. As McGrath implies, in an Augustinian construct there exists three analogies of sin: as disease, as a power, and as

guilt. CCM as heard on 95.5 "The Fish" reflects an Augustinian conception of the nature of sin; God combats these iniquities of man through God's grace as the divine physician who heals, as the liberator of man through Jesus Christ, and as the one whoforgives and pardons sin.

For the sake of continuity, this chapter will maintain the structure of organizing the analysis according to the gender groupings identified in the Gender Analysis (Chapter II). Of the fifty-six songs, 100% contain lyric content that establishes a dyadic relationship between God and man. Among the repertoire, 89% (50 of 56) of the songs use the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus (VCVCBC) song form with some minor variations, i.e., an extended double chorus, a third verse, or an instrumental bridge that precedes the lyric bridge. This chapter will examine the lyric content of the fifty songs that use the VCVCBC form and how the form metaphorically reflects the process of sanctification that frees man from the three analogies of sin: as disease, as a power, and as guilt.

**Analysis by Gender Groupings**

**Female Group Category**

Point of Grace, "I Choose You"

In "I Choose You" by Point of Grace, the text conveys the nature of sin as disease, power, and guilt. An example of hereditary disease and guilt is heard in verse one with the juxtaposition of the text, "all our mind's attention, all our heart's affection every heart cry, every rhyme, everybody's worshipping something" as it transitions into the following text in the chorus, "All my attention, affection, all my devotion's for You." The shift in
focus from our to my both signifies the acknowledgment of inheritance of sin from past generations, and the conscious decision, despite the hereditary connection, to choose God. The power of sin is present in the causal relationship text, "If everybody's worshipping something I choose You." This pre-chorus text, with the hook and title of the song, reinforces the concept of human free will. In context, human free will is a path that may lead to worldly sin or sanctification depending on one's choice. In "I Choose You," the female makes a conscious decision; based upon the belief that since people worship something, she should choose something, therefore, in this instance, she has chosen to worship God. One understands this inference of You as God because of the detailed reference in verse one:

Religions dozen for a dime
Everybody's worshipping something I choose You

What clarifies the meaning of the text from verse one is the contextual understanding of the song form. For instance, in this context, the song form guides the listener to the bridge section, which correlates the text You with God:

Before I chose You
You first chose me
I worship You
You alone are worthy yeah yeah
You are worthy

The omission of the text "If everybody's worshipping something" from the bridge section is striking; its absence brings the relationship between God and man to the forefront, which allows the world, and all of its associated sin, to fade into the background. Its exclusion forms a metaphoric correlation representing the presence of God as being the
absence of sin. The absence of the communal *our* in the chorus implies a transformation of the individual from a sinful world of man to a sanctified heaven. The shift in focus from the self and man also diminishes, as the *attention, affection, and devotion* increase toward God. The importance of this text occurring in the bridge is significant, because the function of the bridge is to present a different point of view – something not previously revealed. The last line of the bridge, "You are worthy" transmits a slightly different message, by replacing the antecedent/consequent lyric of the pre-chorus, it now functions as an individual affirmation, "I choose You," as it leads into the final chorus. Using song form as a diachronic structure, a textual change can represent a religious transformation from doubt or questioning into faith in an individual. From the context of sin, the textual change represents the relinquishing of the self to God who can heal, liberate, and pardon sin.

**Female Solo Category**

Bethany Dillon, "All I Need"
Nichole Nordeman, "Brave"
Natalie Grant, "Held"
Joy Williams, "Hide"
Nichole Nordeman, "Holy"
Natalie Grant, "Live for Today"
Darlene Zschech, "Pray"
Joy Williams, "Surrender"

In "All I Need" by Bethany Dillon, she addresses sin through the analogy of power. In the chorus, the hook and title affirm that God is "All I Need":

\[
\text{You're all I need} \\
\text{When I'm surrounded} \\
\text{You are all I need} \\
\text{If I'm by myself}
\]
Since the chorus functions as a summation, it confirms that God can liberate this woman from feeling enclosed, in isolation, or a sense of emptiness. Because it is seven lines in length, the lack of balance in the chorus symbolically represents that man is incomplete without God, thus reiterating that man cannot overcome sin by himself.

The first half of verse one depicts the woman's sense of frailty:

When the day is done  
And there's no one else around  
While I'm lying here in bed  
You're in my heart  
You're in my head  
You're all I need  
You're all I need

The summation line, which also contains the hook and title of the song, reinforces the dyadic relationship between God and man despite its imbalance of five lines. The second half of the verse one demonstrates not only the dyadic relationship between God and man, but also the desire for this woman to want God present in her life:

There are a million voices  
Calling out my name  
But You're the one I want to hear  
So make the others disappear  
You're all I need  
You're all I need

She acknowledges the possibility of sin as a million voices call out her name, but her free will encourages her to be attuned to hearing God's voice instead, because God is capable of liberating her from the power of sin. Following similar song form construction as verse one, verse two pronounces God's power of mercy:

When the morning comes
And Your mercy is renewed
There's a fire in my bones
I'm not afraid to go alone
You're all I need You're all I need

The second half of verse two elaborates God's presence with a reference to the Old Testament and how she will hear his voice:

The sun on my face
I hear You whisper loud
You're still the God that opens seas
Ev'ry flower even me
You're all I need You're all I need

While the bridge of the song, "I'm drawn to ev'rything that You do, nothing compares to You," clarifies the dyadic relationship between God and man, which further codifies the importance of God to remove sin, it also foreshadows the life to come because of its placement between the two imbalanced chorus sections.

In the song "Brave," Nichole Nordeman addresses the power of God to make her ultimately want to be brave. The text in this song becomes an exploration of sin as a hereditary disease; it is something passed down from one generation to the next. Key text that represents a generational lineage of sin includes: status quo, paved in moderation, middle ground, and vow of compromise. These inter-textual key phrases and words serve as a metaphor of how sin separates man from God:

The gate is wide
The road is paved in moderation
The crowd is kind
And quick to pull you in
Welcome to the middle ground
It's safe and sound
The portion of the verse is well balanced, because it contains six lines; the aural perception is a false sense of security – an image of sin. The listener does not suspect the true message until the pre-chorus:

And until now it's where I've been
'Cause it's been fear
That ties me down to ev'rything
But it's been love
Your love that cuts the strings

The inner position of *fear* and *love* represent sin and God respectively. On one hand, by burying this text in the middle of the pre-chorus, it symbolically reflects the tendency for man to conceal his inequities. On the other, it functions as a confession of one's transgressions, especially with the text, "and until now it's where I've been." With this confession occurring in the pre-chorus, it further establishes the significance of God; only *his love can cut the strings of fear*. The chorus functions as a summation on how to be brave, or without sin:

So long status quo
I think I just let go
You make me want to be brave
The way it always was
Is no longer good enough
You make me want to be brave
Brave brave

In the song "Held," Natalie Grant addresses the judgment of God's plan in human terms, which seems to be a more subtle form of sin. The first two verses question man's ability to comprehend God's plan and deem it as *appalling* or simply *unfair*:

Two months is too little
They let him go
They had no sudden healing

Two months is too little
They let him go
They had no sudden healing
To think that providence would
Take a child from his mother while she prays
Is appalling

Who told us we'd be rescued
What has changed
And why should we be saved from nightmares
We're asking why this happens
To us who have died to live
It's unfair

Although the verses may suggest bitterness, the chorus quickly shifts the focus away
from man and his sinful thoughts and toward God. As a summary, the chorus reiterates
how God's grace can heal emotional wounds:

This is what it means to be held
How it feels when the sacred is torn from your life
And you survive
This is what it is to be loved
And to know that the promise was
When everything fell we'd be held

The causal text "And to know that the promise was when everything fell we'd be held" is
reminiscent of correlation of sin as a hereditary connection to Adam and the theory of
original sin. While the chorus may remind the listener of original sin, its primary
function is to show that the text "this is what it means to be held" is a sign of God's grace.

Joy Williams addresses the guilt analogy of sin in the song "Hide." In this song,
the concept of guilt emerges from the various ways and reasons people hide:

To anyone who hides behind a smile
To anyone who holds their pain inside
To anyone who thinks they're not good enough
To anyone who feels unworthy of love
To anyone who ever closed the door
Closed their eyes and locked themselves away
The structure of verse one, by incorporating the listing technique, creates a hereditary lineage of \textit{anyone}. This verse reinforces a commonality of the human condition through its inclusionary construction. Verse two encourages the listener, already drawn into the message, with the opening hook:

So come out, come out, come out, wherever you are
Anyone who's trying to cover up their scars
To anyone who's ever made a big mistake
We all been there so don't be ashamed

In the chorus, the text functions as a pardon, or forgiveness from hiding, holding their pain inside, thinking they're not good enough and unworthy of love:

You don't have to hide
You don't have to hide anymore
You don't have to face this on your own
You don't have to hide anymore

While the chorus states "You don't have to face this on your own," the bridge reveals that Jesus is the one who can heal you:

And if you feel like no one understands
Come to the One with scars on His hands
'Cause He knows where you are and where you've been
His scars will heal you if you let Him

"Holy" by Nichole Nordeman uses specific contextual references to sin. She uses the verse as it advances into the pre-chorus section to illustrate this nature of sin. As an outgrowth of the song form, the chorus functions as a metaphor for the removal of sin by God because it contains the text "holy," which is the hook and title of the song. The use of questions in verse one illustrates the propensity of man to sin repeatedly:

How many roads did I travel
Before I walked down
One that led me to You
How many dreams
Did unravel
Before I believed
In a hope that was true

Since the questions are no longer spaced out as they were in verse one, the pre-chorus establishes the depth of sin and her sense of urgency to be cleansed of it:

And how long how far
What was meant to fulfill
Only emptied me still

Verse two, again, cannot fully relinquish the sin of guilt, and continues with questions:

How many deaths did I die
Before I was awakened
To new life again
How many half-truths
Did I bear witness to
'Til the proof was disproved
In the end

The pre-chorus of verse two, while similar to the pre-chorus of verse one, changes from

*only emptied me still* to *shadowed me still*:

And how long how far
What was meant to illuminate
Shadowed me still

This small change in text illustrates the process of sanctification; the binary constructs of opposites in the verses underscore the importance of God as a redeemer. While the verse and pre-chorus sections focus on the concept of sin, especially through guilt, the chorus shifts the attention to God as holy:

And all You ever wanted
Only me on my knees
Singing holy holy
And somehow
All that matters now
Is You are holy holy

Although the focus of the chorus shifts towards God, the dyadic relationship between God and man is still present; it reflects God's desire for man to be obedient to him and not a slave to sin.

Natalie Grant's song "Live for Today" conveys the message of living in the here and now – being in the present. Sin has the propensity to deter man from seeking God, but in this case, man can combat sin by spending time with God and understanding God's purpose and plan. The first half of verse one illustrates that sin can skulk into one's life through doubt and loss of control:

Sittin' in my room staring at the wall
Wonderin' about the meaning of it all
Why is it this thing called life
Has got me goin' crazy

The second half of verse one reflects the presence of God:

So I open up Your word and let it speak to me
The purpose and the plan that You've designed
Is clear to see and I believe

The chorus then becomes a straightforward summation in response to reading God's word:

I'm gonna live for today
I'm gonna follow in Your way
I'm gonna let my little light shine
Like there's no tomorrow
I won't worry about the past
I know my future's intact
So I'll choose to live my life one way
I'm gonna live it for today
Since the chorus is textually balanced, it contains the hook and the title in both the first and last lines; it also functions as an aural stability that reinforces the presence of God that can break the power of sin. The bridge section of the song confirms God's presence as it reflects the "one day at a time" approach to life:

My oh so crazy life
It's got me spinnin' round and round
Hanging upside down
Takin' one step at a time
Holding Your hand all the way
And it'll be okay

The final chorus assumes additional semantic meaning as it confirms God's presence in the bridge section.

Darlene Zschech's song "Pray" is a straightforward message of invoking God through prayer. It is interesting to note the difference in balance between the two verses. Verse one is balanced with six lines, while verse two is unbalanced with five lines:

We call upon Your name
Humble ourselves and pray
Move in our hearts
Move in our land
Every nation tribe and tongue
Will proclaim Your kingdom come

The last two lines of verse one function as the pre-chorus, and when compared to the last two lines of verse two, the text suggests God's presence is moving to the forefront:

We come on bended knees
We bring an offering
Lead us in Your way everlasting
Every heart of every man will pray
Your will be done
Instead of *every nation tribe and tongue will proclaim Your kingdom come*, the text changes to *every heart of every man will pray Your will be done*. The change in text from verse one to verse two reflects God's presence as moving in a diachronic construct both literally, with the actual change in text, and symbolically, as the song cycles through its form from verse – chorus – verse – chorus – bridge – chorus. The symbolic reflection of God's presence in a diachronic structure acquires semantic meaning that then functions as a didactic tool of sanctification.

Although a dyadic relationship between God and man is necessary for the process of sanctification, this song suggests the importance of developing a communal relationship with God through prayer. The bridge reflects communal prayer with the recitation of the following text:

```
Our Father who art in heaven
Hallowed be Your name
Your kingdom come
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven
And lead us not into temptation
Deliver us from evil
For Thine is the kingdom
The power and the glory forever and ever
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The above text is nearly the entire *Lord's Prayer*, however, it omits the text "Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors."²

From the perspective of discussing the nature of sin, it is interesting that this text is

² Matthew 6: 11-12. Some versions of the Lord's Prayer may use the text: "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."
missing, because the text directly acknowledges the sinful nature of man and reliance upon God to pardon man from sin.

Despite the omission of text, the incorporation of a majority of the *Lord's Prayer* in the bridge is perhaps the most poignant semantic setting of the text. Its placement in the bridge reflects its literal placement within a worship service, thus metaphorically creating a virtual communion with God. The final chorus incorporates a congregational style of singing, which enhances the aural connection of a church/worship context. The listener becomes aurally transfixed to a worship service in two ways: through the setting of the *Lord's Prayer* text in the bridge and the congregational style of singing in the final chorus.

"Surrender" by Joy Williams addresses the nature of sin as something that man tries to hide from God. Verse one illustrates the dyadic relationship between God and man as it reveals how God removes sin from man's life:

There are places in my heart and corners of my mind
That I've hidden from Your light
Like buried treasure deep inside of me
I don't want You to see
I keep it to myself oh no
But You give Your love to me
You open up Your heart unselfishly
Lord, in Your embrace now I can say
"I surrender."

The message of this song is quite simply to *surrender*, surrender to God. As a summation, the chorus reveals how she surrenders to God:

Everything I held so precious
Everything I kept away
I give it up give it up all for You
I give it all for You
Everything I held as treasure I give it all to You
I give it all for You

The bridge, which presents a different point of view, details how God's light and love are capable of removing her sin as she surrenders to God:

'Cause Your love is everything to me yeah
And in Your light I finally see yeah
Oh I can't hold it back
Everything I've hidden deep inside
Now I surrender surrender ooo
Lord, I surrender give it all to You

You give Your love to me;
You opened up Your heart unselfishly.
How can I not do the same for You?
I surrender, yeah!

Since the bridge is textually balanced, it aurally reinforces her acceptance to surrender to God. If the bridge were unbalanced, it would be incongruent in its message; her words would suggest one thing, yet the aural depiction would reflect hesitation and lack of commitment to her words.

Among the female artists, whether a group or solo, all of their songs depict some form of sin. What is interesting is that they all seem to focus attention more toward the power of sin, as opposed to the other two analogies of disease and guilt. The primary text reflects the dyadic relationship between God and man. It demonstrates how man, or woman in this case, needs God to liberate her by the power of grace. Alternatively, the subtext seemingly reinforces a cultural construct of a weak female, one who is powerless without a masculine counterpart.
Mixed Group Category

Sixpence None the Richer, "Breathe Your Name"
Casting Crowns, "If We Are The Body"
Casting Crowns, "Lifesong"
Casting Crowns, "Praise You In This Storm"
FFH (Far From Home), "Ready To Fly"
Casting Crowns, "Voice of Truth"

"Breathe Your Name" by Sixpence None the Richer depicts the power of sin and an incongruous relationship with God. The verse illustrates sin as complacency by depicting the monotony of everyday life:

It's ev'ry day I'm in this place
I feel this way I feel the same
It's ev'ry day I'm in this place
I feel this way I feel the same
Is it all in my head
Is it all in my head
I'll view the list and take my pick
I'll view my fate and make the choice
'Cause it's nobody else's but mine

The repetition of lines in this verse functions as an aural representation of the monotony of life; trapped in a cycle of sin. The repetition of "is it all in my head" reinforces a cultural construct of an emotional female and creates self-doubt. Demonstrating her own hubris, her solution is that she will "view the list and take [her] pick, view [her] fate and make the choice because it's nobody else's but [hers]." The first chorus that follows this verse is extremely incongruent. Because of her sense of pride, the listener is unable to believe what she says:

You are in my heart
I can feel Your beat
And You move my mind
From behind the wheel
When I lose control
I can only breathe Your name
I can only breathe Your name

Repetition of the last line creates an unbalanced section, which suggests that she does not believe her own words, and perhaps more so, that she is still sinful.

Verse two shifts the focus away from her and toward God:

So many days within this race
I need the truth I need some grace
I need the plot to find my place
I need some truth I need some grace
The part of You that's part of me
Will never die will never leave
And it's nobody else's but mine

In verse two she confesses that she needs God in her life, and more specifically, his power to liberate her from guilt. In this context, the chorus section after verse two produces a different perspective, especially when it follows the text, "The part of You that's part of me will never die will never leave and it's nobody else's but mine."

Although the chorus is unbalanced, it suggests that God's presence is beginning to take hold in her life; the process of sanctification has begun for her. The text of the bridge confirms that she has accepted God to take control of her life; she has put her human pride aside, and God will ultimately make the choice:

You'll view the list
And take Your pick
You'll view my fate
And make the choice
'Cause I'm nobody else's but Yours
The final chorus that follows the bridge is still unbalanced; however, she professes her commitment to God as the phrase, "I can only breathe Your name" is stated four times, thus signifying God as a foundation in her life.

"If We Are the Body" by Casting Crowns is a song that weaves a narrative depicting sin as a hereditary condition that can seep into one's life through complacency.

Verse one suggests that one looks no further than one's church:

It's crowded in worship today
As she slips in trying to fade into the faces
The girls' teasing laughter is carrying
Farther than they know
Farther than they know

The repetition of the last two lines implies two levels of perception: one is man and the other is God. The first refers to the worship service and the people present while the second signifies an omnipresent God who can also hear the girls' teasing laughter. The first chorus responds to this verse by questioning, "How can this be, if we are the body, the body of Christ":

But if we are the body
Why aren't His arms reaching
Why aren't His hands healing
Why aren't His words teaching
And if we are the body
Why aren't His feet going
Why is His love not showing them there is a way
There is a way

The chorus represents the balance in its structure. The eight lines signify God's presence, especially with the last line that affirms, "There is a way." However, because man has
become complacent in his role as the Body of Christ, a divide still exists between God and man.

Verse two continues the narrative with another example from a worship service:

A traveler is far away from home
He sheds his coat and quietly
Sinks into the back row
The weight of their judgmental glances
Tells him that his chances are better
Out on the road

While both verses imply man has become complacent, the main difference between the two is generational. The first verse addresses the youth, with the young girls' teasing laughter and the second verse addresses the adults, with the weight of their judgmental glances. Although these verses represent two distinct cultures within a given worship service, the youth and the adults, the message for both is in the bridge:

Jesus paid much too high a price
For us to pick and choose who should come
And we are the body of Christ

"Lifesong" by Casting Crowns depicts the nature of sin through an indirect relationship; it demonstrates how man can turn toward God as a living sacrifice. In verse one for instance, the text reveals an assumed posture to approach God:

Empty hands held high
Such small sacrifice
If not joined with my life
I sing in vain tonight

The pre-chorus, which also contains the hook and title of the song, reinforces the message of the verse as it proceeds into the chorus. The textual interplay from may in the pre-chorus to let in the chorus is especially effective. This interchange demonstrates not only
the dyadic relationship between God and man, but more specifically, it illustrates the necessary, yet fragile bond between the two:

May the words I say
And the things I do
Make my lifesong sing to
Bring a smile to You

Let my lifesong sing to You
Let my lifesong sing to You
I wanna sign Your name
To the end of the day
Knowin' that my heart was true
Let my lifesong sing to You

While the combined text of the pre-chorus and chorus resonates that man is to please God, verse two further exemplifies how man can be of service to God:

Lord I give my life
A living sacrifice
To reach a world in need
To be Your hands and feet

It illustrates how man, as God's hands and feet, can be in the world; however, he cannot be of the world as a living sacrifice.

"Praise You In This Storm" by Casting Crowns is an example of how man should praise God in both the good times and the bad. The opening text of verse one almost characterizes God as a superhero who should step in and save the day:

I was sure by now
God You would have reached down
And wiped our tears away
Stepped in and saved the day
But once again I'll say Amen
And it's still rainin'
This opening verse separates God from man, as God has to reach down to wipe man's tears away. Thus it is a metaphor for man as sinful and of God as the absence of sin. In the pre-chorus of the song, one comes to understand how God can heal through his mercy:

As the thunder rolls  
I barely hear You whisper  
Through the rain  
"I'm with you"  
And as Your mercy falls  
I'll raise my hands  
And praise the God who gives  
And takes away

Both the pre-chorus and chorus contain instructions on man's posture as he praises God. In the pre-chorus, the text is "I'll raise my hands and praise the God who gives and takes away"; in the chorus, the text is "I will lift my hands for You are who You are no matter where I am." This text in the chorus, "no matter where I am," becomes a metaphor for both man's sinful nature and God's compassion and mercy to meet man wherever he may be. The bridge section of the song confirms that God provides man with the help he needs:

I lift my eyes unto the hills  
Where does my help come from  
My help comes from the Lord  
The Maker of heaven and earth

Although repeating the bridge section breaks the traditional song form, the repetition signifies a confirmation of belief in God. The ensemble's texture is sparse during the first

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3 Revelation 21:3-4 (RSV). "... and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes."
bridge; however, as the text repeats, the texture of the ensemble increases in instrumentation and in dynamics. This shift in texture becomes an aural image of man's transformation from unbelief to belief in God; it represents the beginning of the sanctification process. The chorus then signifies the past, present, and future of man. The repetition of each chorus guides the listener through a diachronic construct of his own history.

**Male Group Category**

- Tree63, "Blessed Be Your Name"
- Third Day, "Cry Out to Jesus"
- Big Daddy Weave, "Every Time I Breathe"
- Mercy Me, "Here With Me"
- Mercy Me, "Homesick"
- Third Day, "Mountain of God"
- Third Day, "Nothing Compares"
- Newsboys, "Presence"
- Jars of Clay, "Show You Love"
- Mercy Me, "So Long Self"
- Newsboys, "Something Beautiful"
- Building 429, "The Space in Between Us"
- Mercy Me, "Spoken For"
- Kutless, "Strong Tower"
- Rush of Fools, "Undo"
- David Crowder Band, "Wholly Yours"
- Third Day, "You Are Mine"
- Newsboys, "You Are My King"

"Blessed Be Your Name" by Tree63 depicts the Triune God through the first three verses, which culminate in the remembrance of the paschal mystery in the fourth verse. Each chorus functions as a summation of the previous two verses and acquires a different level of semantic meaning each time, thus creating an overall song form of VVCCVVCBC.
The first two verses portray a God from the Old Testament and his dominion over the land, water, desert, and wilderness:

Blessed be Your name  
In the land that is plentiful  
Where Your streams of abundance flow  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be Your name  
When I'm found in the desert place  
Though I walk through the wilderness  
Blessed be Your name

The final two verses portray a God from the New Testament personified as Jesus and the Holy Spirit:

Blessed be Your name  
When the sun's shining down on me  
When the world's all as it should be  
Blessed be Your name  
Blessed be Your name  
On the road marked with suffering  
Though there's pain in the offering  
Blessed be Your name

The organization of the verses suggests a diachronic construct as it relays the history of the Bible from Old Testament to New Testament. The micro construction of each verse contains both an antiphon and response of "Blessed be Your name," which is also the hook and title of the song. While the title usually appears only in the chorus in the VCVCBC song form, this song places the title in every component of the song form, i.e., the verse, the chorus, and the bridge.

The placement of the hook and title in the chorus occurs in the second half of the chorus, which depicts the process of sanctification:
Every blessing You pour out
I'll turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in
Lord still I will say
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name
Blessed be the name of the Lord
Blessed be Your name

The text *I'll turn back* and *still* signify a time continuum, which in turn alludes to the process of sanctification as existing in a diachronic structure. The separation of *Lord* from *blessed* in the chorus depicts the literal separation between God and man through the power of sin. For a brief moment in the bridge, metaphorically, the text signifies the unity of God and man, who are no longer separated by the power of sin. This occurs when the title appears in the bridge, the text that precedes the title is *Lord* and the resultant text is "Lord blessed be Your name." The proximity of *Lord* to *blessed* in the bridge signifies three things: the dyadic relationship between God and man, the separation of God and man through sin, and the power of God to free man from sin. The complete text of the bridge codifies the function of the bridge as a symbolic representation of God's power:

You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord blessed be Your name

The diachronic construction between the pre-bridge chorus, the bridge, and the post-bridge chorus signifies a daily affirmation of faith, which leads to the process of sanctification as a daily removal of sin.
"Cry Out to Jesus" by Third Day invites the listener into the world of God by addressing everyone in the opening line of the song:

To everyone who's lost someone they love
Long before it was their time
You feel like the days you had were not enough
When you said goodbye
And to all the people with burdens and pains
Keeping you back from your life
You believe that there's nothing
And there is no one who can make it right

While there is a visual balance in the structure of the verse, two sections of four lines, the aural depiction imbeds space between the text goodbye and the second section of the verse. Before the song continues, this break in the structure allows the listener to reflect on the word goodbye as it relates to the opening section of the verse. The last two lines of verse one lead directly into the chorus. This creates no time for reflection, but rather action. The contrast of the space between the two sections metaphorically represents man without God. While the immediate flow from the end of the verse into the chorus signifies God's ability to heal, liberate, and pardon man's sin. The verse seamlessly moves into the chorus as it references the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount:4

There is hope for the helpless
Rest for the weary
And love for the broken heart
And there is grace and forgiveness
Mercy and healing
He'll meet you wherever you are
Cry out to Jesus
Cry out to Jesus

---

4 Matthew 5:1-11 (NRSV).
In contrast to verse one, verse two contains nine lines of text grouped into four and five lines respectively:

For the marriage that's struggling just to hang on
They've lost all of their faith in love
And they've done all they can to make it right again
Still it's not enough
For the ones who can't break
The addictions and chains
You try to give up but you come back again
Just remember that you're not alone in your shame
And your suffering

When comparing the two verses, a break exists after the text *enough*, which creates the same position for reflection. Similarly, the space metaphorically indicates the separation between God and man. The difference between the two verses is that a space also exists after the text *suffering* before it leads into the chorus. In essence, verse two gives the listener twice as much time to pause and reflect upon the text, which metaphorically establishes a moment to silently reflect upon one's sin. After the silence, the chorus begins and assumes a new level of semantic meaning, because of the previous break, thus encouraging the listener/sinner to think about the hook and title of the song - "Cry Out to Jesus."

If the message was not clear in the second chorus, the text in the bridge encourages the listener/sinner to act upon the message of the hook and title of the song:

When you're lonely
And it feels like the whole world is falling on you
You just reach out
You just cry out to Jesus
Cry to Jesus
The song breaks the traditional form of VCVCBC by transitioning into a final verse before the double chorus concludes the song:

To the widow who suffers from being alone
Wiping the tears from her eyes
For the children around the world without a home
Say a prayer tonight

Before the final double chorus, a break occurs on the text *tonight*. This break, much like the break in the first and second verse, causes a third and final moment for reflection in silence. Although the third verse is four lines long, it does not fulfill a sense of balance because it is shorter than the other two verses and the break before the final double chorus. These elements combine to signify sanctification as a lifelong process and that God will "meet you wherever you are [and give] hope for the helpless, rest for the weary... love for the broken heart... grace and forgiveness [and] mercy and healing."

Even the title, "Every Time I Breathe" by Big Daddy Weave, begins to illustrate the process of sanctification. In verse one, the text is a balanced binary construction of two sets of three lines. The first three lines focus on man while the second three bring God into the forefront:

I am sure all of Heaven's heard me cry
As I tell You all the reasons
Why this life is just too hard
But day by day without fail
I'm finding everything I need
In everything that You are to me

The last line of verse one, because of the order of the *You* and *me*, denotes an earthly construct that focuses more on man and less on God. Although the chorus' length, which
is two lines longer than the verse, is an atypical construction for the song form, it creates a favorable balance that begins to shift the attention toward God and away from man:

Every time I breathe You seem a little bit closer
I never wanna leave
I wanna stay in Your warm Embrace
Oh basking in the glory shining from Your Face
And every time I get another glimpse of Your Heart
I realize it's true that You are so marvelous God
And I am so in love with You
Yeah so in love with You

The chorus summarizes an anthropomorphic (having human attributes) construct of God in terms of man's language by using words such as *Embrace*, *Face*, and *Heart*. This construct occurs in the first five lines; however, in the final three lines of the chorus, there exists an aural separation between man and God with the placement of *I*, and the last *You*. While the chorus may be comforting in its praises of God, the division between the *I* and the *You* signifies the space that exists between man and God in this life on earth.

In contrast to the verse and chorus, the bridge is the only section of the song that begins with God as the focus:

Wrapped in Your mercy
I wanna live and never leave
I am held by how humble
Yet overwhelmed by Your Majesty
Captured by grace now I'm finding I am free
You are Marvelous God and knowing You is everything

When one hears, "Captured by grace now I'm finding I am free" in the bridge, it reiterates the message of being "in love" with God through the power of God's grace and forgiveness.
While "Here With Me" by Mercy Me depicts an ability to feel God's presence, perhaps the prevalent implication of the song is the necessity for man to surrender to God. The last line of the chorus, as it transitions into the bridge, specifically represents surrendering to a Triune God:

I surrender to Your love (last phrase from the chorus)
I surrender to Your grace
I surrender to the One
Who took my place

In verse one, the construction focuses on longing for God, but in verse two, the tone shifts to an understanding that God is omnipresent. While both pre-choruses contain the act of falling down on one's knees because of God's mercy (verse one) and because he is holy (verse two), the two verses represent two different stages of faith. The textual difference between the two verses magnifies man's longing for God by incorporating a break after verse one before the initial chorus. By contrast, the second verse immediately flows into the chorus with an elision of the text, "I can feel Your presence." This seamless transition from the second verse into the chorus signifies man's potential to be close to God through the repentance of sin. The textual shift from verse one to verse two depicts not only the act of repentance through posturing down on one's knees, but provides an answer to "why repent," which is due to God's mercy. The text of verse one illustrates man as seeking God, while verse two confirms man's knowledge of God. Functioning as a summation for each verse, the chorus depicts the immediacy of God's love by juxtaposing God's love for man as man surrenders to God:

And I can feel Your presence here with me
Suddenly I'm lost within Your beauty
Caught up in the wonder of Your touch  
Here in this moment I surrender to Your love

Another song, "Homesick," by Mercy Me offers hope and strength when someone 
one loves dies. The title and song text clearly resonate the cliché of home is where the 
heart is, but perhaps with a different twist of home as a signifier of heaven. While the 
song topically deals with death and dying, it also functions as a metaphor for God's desire 
for man to be in His home, the Kingdom of heaven, yet man separates himself from God 
because of his own iniquities.

Verse one opens with an acculturated sentiment shared among people mourning 
the loss of a loved one:

You're in a better place  
I've heard a thousand times  
And at least a thousand times  
I've rejoiced for you  
But the reason why I'm broken  
The reason why I cry  
Is how long must I wait to be with you

The repetition of "a thousand times" highlights the notion of "a better place" and 
therefore, "I've rejoiced for you." In contrast, the text "the reason why," which appears 
twice in verse one and again in verse two, underscores man's tendency to search for 
reasons as opposed to embracing faith.

The first chorus text functions as a summation of man grieving for the person who 
has passed, and by answering the cliché, it transitions toward asking God for strength to 
cure his homesickness:

I close my eyes and I see your face  
If home's where my heart is
Then I'm out of place
Lord won't You give me strength
To make it through somehow
I've never been more homesick than now

The text in verse two directly asks God for help to understand His ways. The third use of "the reason why" also appears in this verse; however, it is more focused toward understanding God as opposed to its placement in verse one:

Help me Lord
'Cause I don't understand Your ways
The reason why I wonder if I'll ever know
But even if you showed me
The hurt would be the same
'Cause I'm still here
So far away from home

The last line of this verse signifies home as heaven, and the listener begins to identify with the person asking God for help. In context, one begins to understand that a difference exists between home/heaven and what homesickness entails. In verse one, homesickness is missing the person who has passed, and in verse two, homesickness is feeling far away from God.

As the song transitions into the bridge, the text codifies the significance of God as a path to reunite with those who have died, or perhaps more succinctly, it represents the communion of saints:

In Christ
There are no goodbyes
And in Christ
There is no end
So I'll hold on to Jesus
With all that I have
To see you again
To see you again
This text affirms not only a belief in God, but also an immediate motivation for believing in God as a means to "see you again."

The final chorus represents the presence of a Triune God as the text states "won't You give me strength to make it through somehow" three times:

And I close my eyes and I see your face  
If home's where my heart is  
Then I'm out of place  
Lord won't You give me strength  
To make it through somehow  
Won't You give me strength  
To make it through somehow  
Won't You give me strength  
To make it through somehow  
I've never been more homesick than now

Through each repetition, the textual emphasis shifts from give me strength in the first group to won't You in the second group, and to make it through in the final group. The pause before the final line of the song seems to function as a moment to reflect upon "the reason why," which was stated twice in verse one and once in verse two. The answer is, "I've never been more homesick than now."

Third Day depicts a lifelong journey towards sanctification in the song "Mountain of God." The construction of the song reflects the past, present, and future in verse one, verse two, and bridge respectively. The coda of the song uses text from verse two, which represents Jesus and reflects the journey as a day-by-day process. Verse one text represents the past:

Thought that I was all alone  
Broken and afraid  
But You were there with me  
You were there with me
And I didn't even know  
That I had lost my way  
But You were there with me  
Yes You were there with me  
Until You opened up my eyes I never knew  
That I couldn't even make it without You  

Verse two text represents the present:  

As I travel on the road  
That You have led me down  
You are here with me  
You are here with me  
I have need for nothing more  
Oh now that I have found  
That You are here with me  
Yes You are here with me  
And I confess sometimes I lose my way  
But You are always there  
To bring me back again  

The pre-chorus in verse one and verse two are different texts that reflect different stages of faith. Verse one pre-chorus represents the beginning, "Until You opened up my eyes I never knew that I couldn't even make it without You." In contrast, the second pre-chorus illustrates the importance of repentance, "And I confess sometimes I lose my way but You are always there to bring me back again."  

The chorus text depicts the journey from past to present. The text in the fourth line of the chorus changes; the text in the first chorus is You, and in the second and third chorus it is He:  

Even though the journey's long  
And I know the road is hard  
Well the One who's gone before me  
You will help me carry on  
And after all that I've been through  
Now I realize the truth
That I must go through the valley
To stand upon the mountain of God

Altering the text in the fourth line signifies the acceptance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The second chorus leads into the bridge, which represents the future; it suggests the relinquishing of possessions as a means to become closer to God:

Sometimes I think of where
It is I've come from
And the things I've left behind
But of all I've had
What I've possessed
Nothing can quite compare
With what's in front of me
With what's in front of me

The song closes with an abridged text from verse one. The altered text represents a transformation from the past, *You were there with me*, to the present, *You are here with me*. This modification in the text not only signifies God's presence from the past to the present, but it depicts the process of sanctification as a diachronic structure:

I thought that I was all alone
Broken and afraid
But You are here with me
You are here with me

"Nothing Compares" is another song by Third Day that emphasizes the message of knowing God. The text in verse one focuses on sensory imagery:

Well I've heard all the stories
And I've seen all the signs
Witnessed all the glory
And tasted all that's fine

Using heard, seen, witnessed, and tasted in the verse highlights the difference between God and man. By using a binary construction, the text represents the sinfulness of man in
each verse and the holiness of God in the chorus. The chorus emphasizes the importance of knowing God:

Nothing compares  
To the greatness of knowing You Lord  
Oh no and nothing compares  
To the greatness of knowing You Lord  
Oh no

Verse two focuses on the sinful nature of man:

I see all the people  
Wasting all their time  
Building up their riches  
For the life that's fine

The bridge of the song sharpens the message of the chorus, "nothing compares to knowing You Lord," as it shifts the focus to the present:

And I find myself just living for today  
'Cause I don't know what  
Tomorrow's gonna bring  
So no matter if I rise or fall  
I'll never be alone woah no  
Not alone

In "Presence," the Newsboys depict the process of sanctification as an ongoing desire to feel God's presence. Verse one clearly depicts man as he lifts up his voice and holds out his hands as gestures to feel the presence of the Lord:

I lift up my voice  
To the King the King of glory  
I hold out my hands  
To the One who is worthy  
I long for Your presence  
I long Lord I need Your touch

The chorus reinforces a Triune God using the words Lord, Father, and Spirit:
Come O Lord and fill up my life
With the light of Your presence
This is my heart's desire
Oh Father come and let Your Spirit abide
I long for Your presence
This is my heart's desire

With a sense of longing for God to remove sin through the water and fire of God, verse two functions as an act of contrition:

I long to be washed
In the well of Your mercy
I long to be warmed
By the fire of Your glory
I long for Your presence
I long for Your healing touch

In the second chorus, the extra line added at the end, "It's my desire," affirms the gesture of repentance as it leads directly into the bridge. The text in the bridge functions as a verbal communion, as if he is speaking directly to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as (denoted in parentheses):

Lord it's my desire
Lord You're my desire
I want to feel Your presence (Father)
I want to feel Your presence (Son)
I want to feel Your presence (Holy Spirit)

The song finishes with a double chorus, but incorporates the chorus that follows verse one and verse two respectively, to include the additional "It's my desire" text as heard in the second chorus.

"Show You Love" by Jars of Clay uses repetition of the hook and title to reiterate the message of showing love. While much of the song is ambiguous, because it is not clear if it is from the perspective of God or man, the two verses do provide the most
imagery. Using alliteration for emphasis, verse one suggests that the one speaking has a voice, or perspective, which is quite different from everyone else:

Speak, and say the words that no one else will ever say
Love, love like the world we know is over in a day

Verse two uses a binary construction of opposites to depict the separateness between God and man represented as truth and lies respectively:

And you're beautiful, and I'm weakened by the force of your eyes
So shine bright to separate the truth from the lies

The chorus functions solely as a summation to each verse as it emphasizes showing love by speaking and giving. While repetition alone may suggest a strong potential of showing love, the overt use of "I'm gonna" actually detracts from the message; it implies only the future, without regard for the past or present. Although the chorus incorporates a strong hook and correlation to the title, the use of the text "I'm gonna" in context seems to negate the existence of a Triune God:

I'm gonna show you love in every language
I'm gonna speak with words that need no form
I'm gonna give you what you never had before

Mercy Me depicts sanctification as a process that begins with saying goodbye to the self in the song "So Long Self." Somewhat humorous, the text imbues a "break-up" approach to sin, especially in the chorus, which almost implies the "it's not you, it's me" cliché:

So long self
Well it's been fun
But I have found somebody else
So long self
There's just no room for two
So you are gonna have to move
So long self
Don't take this wrong
But you are wrong for me
Farewell
Oh well goodbye don't cry
So long self

While levity may be the chosen method for delivering the message in this song, it still conveys how sin intimately controls man; it tries to convince him that it would be a loss to remove sin from his life.

Verse one begins the dialogue with sin as the song unfolds:

Well if I come across
A little bit distant
It's just because I am
Things just seem to feel
A little bit different
You understand
Believe it or not
But life is not apparently
About me anyways
But I have met the One
Who really is worthy
So let me say

Verse two continues the conversation as it personifies sin:

Stop right there because
I know what you're thinking
But no we can't be friends
And even though I know
Your heart is breaking
This has to end
And come to think of it
The blame for all of this
Simply falls on me
For wanting something
More in life than all of this
Can't you see
This verse seems to reference original sin with the text, "And come to think of it the blame for all of this simply falls on me."

Verse one of "Something Beautiful" by the Newsboys immediately illustrates the sanctification process through a sense of daily restoration:

I wanna start it over  
I wanna start again  
I want a new beginning  
One without an end  
I feel it inside  
Calling out to me

The first three lines of this verse indicate the active participation by man, who almost as an act of contrition, wants to begin again. As an affirmation that Jesus is the way to a new beginning, the juxtaposition of the text beginning and end is also reference to Christ.

To represent the Holy Spirit, the final two lines function as a pre-chorus:

It's a voice that whispers my name  
It's a kiss without any shame  
Something beautiful, yeah, yeah  
Like a song that stirs in my head  
Singing, "Love will take us where  
Something's beautiful."

Since the pre-chorus leads directly into the chorus, it also confirms that the Holy Spirit is present in this individual as a voice, a kiss, and a song.

In everyday living, verse two encourages the listener to seek something beautiful, which is a metaphor for God:

I've heard it in the silence  
Sent it on a face

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5 Matthew 26:47-50 (NRSV). Perhaps the "kiss without any shame" is a reference to Judas and his betrayal of Christ.
I've felt it in the long hour
Like a sweet embrace
I know this is true
It's calling out to me

Heard after the second chorus, the bridge uses imagery of a wedding as a metaphor for God's love of his church:

It's the child on her wedding day
It's the daddy that gives her away
Something beautiful, yeah, yeah
When we laugh so hard we cry
Oh, the love between You and I
Something beautiful

In the bridge, the texture is sparse, which emphasizes the symbolic comparison of the bride and groom with the church and Christ. Although one hears the chorus after the bridge, the song breaks traditional form; it ends, not with a repetition of the chorus text, rather it uses the bridge text as the final chorus.

Building 429 depicts sanctification as a process in "The Space Between Us." The title, which also functions as a hook of this song, immediately suggests a separation between God and man. Both verses address the nature of sin, while the chorus emphasizes how man, with the help of God, wants to erase the space that separates them.

Verse one invites God to examine man's heart:

Look at my heart again
Look at the mess I've got it in
I'm learning to trust in You
To know that You'll see me
Through my pride and through my shame
Into Your love into Your grace
I'm not lookin' back 'til I see Your face
I'm runnin' straight to You
Verse two explores the authority of God to see man's inequities, yet he will continue to demonstrate love and grace:

My life's an open book  
Nothing is hidden when You look  
You break through my boundaries  
Revealing my insecurities  
But through my pride and through my shame  
You show me love You show me grace  
I'm not lookin' back 'til I see Your face  
I'm runnin' straight to You

While the pre-chorus text, the last four lines of each verse, functions to lead into the chorus, the text is different in each verse. In context, one perceives a process is unfolding between the first and second pre-chorus. The first pre-chorus uses the text "through my pride and through my shame into Your love into Your grace," whereas the second pre-chorus text is "but through my pride and through my shame You show me love You show me grace."

The chorus serves as summation to unify the song by incorporating key phrases and words, yet one word, *again*, demonstrates man's fallible nature:

All I really want to do  
Is to fall into the emptiness  
That is the space in between us  
To break this division  
All I really want to do  
Is to fall into the emptiness  
That is the space in between us  
Erase it and bring us together again

In context, the bridge functions as a transition between the two chorus sections. The text suggests a transformation is taking place:

Here I am sayin' I need You
I know I need You
Here I am
I’m comin' to meet You
'Cause I want to see You

The bridge text affirms three things: I verbally announce that I need God, I acknowledge in my mind that I need God, and I am coming to meet God. When the chorus follows this text, the last line removes the word *again*, which symbolically reflects God as pardoning sin. As God pardons sin, he brings man closer to him.

"Spoken For" by Mercy Me, as the title implies, signifies the seal of Baptism.

This song breaks traditional song form structure because it includes the title in the verse, the chorus, and the bridge. Verse one and verse two both contain the same pre-chorus, the last three lines, without any changes to the text. The first three lines of each verse are different:

Take this world from me
I don't need it anymore
For I am fin'ly free
My heart is spoken for
Oh and I praise You
Oh and I worship You

While the verse one seems to indicate a desire to remove sin from one's life, verse two implies a different stage in the process of sanctification:

Now I have peace
That I've never known before
I find myself complete
My heart is spoken for
Oh and I praise You
Oh and I worship You
The chorus functions as the summation for both verses as one understands what "spoken for" means:

- Covered by a love divine
- Child of the risen Lord
- To hear You say this one's Mine
- My heart is spoken for

Although the chorus provides the summary, the bridge contains the most detail. Breaking traditional form, the bridge consists of six lines, which is the same length as each verse:

- By the power of the cross
- You've taken what was lost
- And made it fully Yours
- And I have been redeemed
- By You who spoke to me
- Now I am spoken for

While a double chorus follows the bridge, there are two additional lines included to end the song. The final words heard, "Take this world from me I don't need it anymore," are from the verse one. By including this text, it implies that God and man are both involved in the process of sanctification: God is the one to "take this world" away, because man realizes he does not need this world anymore.

"Strong Tower" by Kutless depicts God with the hook and title of the song. In context of the song form, a clear progression of faith occurs. For instance, verse one uses imagery of wandering in the desert and stranded in the valley, which positions it to be a reflection of the differences between man and God:

- When I wander through the desert
- And I'm longing for my home
- All my dreams have gone astray
- When I'm stranded in the valley
- And I'm tired and all alone
It seems like I've lost my way
I go running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free

While verse one focuses on man until the pre-chorus, which is the last two lines, verse two brings God into focus by the third line:

In the middle of my darkness
In the midst of all my fear
You're my refuge and my hope
When the storm of life is raging
And the thunder's all I hear
Now I'm running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free

The chorus, clearly functioning as a summation, reiterates the differences between God and man using a binary construction of opposites:

'Cause You are my strong tower
A shelter over me
Beautiful and mighty
Everlasting King
You are my strong tower
A fortress when I'm weak
Your name is true and holy
And Your face is all I see
Your face is all I see

The song breaks traditional song form when it uses the pre-chorus text from verse one as the bridge text:

I go running to Your mountain
Where Your mercy sets me free

A double chorus ends the song; however, the additional two lines added to the final chorus are a modification. This minor change functions as a confirmation of faith with
the inclusion of the word yes. The last two lines heard are "Your face is all I see, yes, Your face is all I see."

"Undo," by The Rush of Fools, focuses primarily on God as the arbiter for man's iniquities; he has the power to undo man's sins. With the opening text, verse one implies the habitual nature of man to sin:

    I've been here before
    Now here I am again (Here I am again)
    Standing at the door
    Praying You'll let me back in
    To label me a prodigal
    Would be only scratching the surface
    Of who I've been known to be

Both verses include a pre-chorus, but one word changes from verse one to verse two; from prodigal to hypocrite. The last two lines of the pre-chorus, "would be only scratching the surface of who I've been known to be," not only imply the depth of his sin, but perhaps, those who bore false witness against him, too. Verse two describes how man avoids God and attempts to conceal his sin:

    I focused on the score
    But I could never win
    Trying to ignore
    A life of hiding my sin
    To label me a hypocrite
    Would be only scratching the surface
    Of who I've been known to be

Both verses are seven lines in length, yet the aural illusion is one of stability. This imbalance between text and an aural sense of stability further exemplifies how man's

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6 Interestingly, "Undo" by Rush of Fools is one of the few songs to actually use the word sin in the text.
sinful nature can turn him away from God. In contrast, the message of the chorus focuses solely on the redemptive power of God.

The chorus of "Undo" incorporates the title in two strategic places, the beginning of the second line, and the middle of the last line:

Turn me around pick me up
Undo what I've become
Bring me back to the place
Of forgiveness and grace
I need You I need Your help
I can't do this myself
You're the only One
Who can undo what I've become

*Undo*, heard the first time, is a metaphor for asking God for forgiveness, the second time, the text affirms that God is the only one to provide guidance and direction.

"Wholly Yours" by the David Crowder Band purposefully alters the text in the chorus to depict a transformation. Highly unusual for song structure, the first chorus is only four lines and does not include the title:

And You are holy, holy, holy
All heaven cries, "Holy, holy, God."
Lord, You are holy, holy, holy.
I wanna be holy like You are.

In comparison, the second chorus incorporates the homonym of *holy* and *wholly*, the second references the title:

You are holy, holy, holy.
All heaven cries, "Holy, holy, God."
Oh, You are holy, holy, holy.
I wanna be holy, holy, God.
So, here I am, all of me.
Finally ev'rything.
Holy, holy, holy.
I am wholly, wholly, wholly Yours.
I am wholly, wholly, wholly Yours.
I am wholly Yours.

Differences between the two choruses bear witness to the transformation of the person singing. The homonym of *holy* and *wholly* could be missed by the casual listener; however, there are clues to the transformation of the character. With the text of "So, here I am, all of me. Finally ev'rything," one can understand this as the person giving himself up to Christ. Confirmation of this change occurs during the homonym exchange of text in the chorus from *holy* to the *wholly*. The character has recognized that God is holy; therefore, the character relinquishes himself to God and subsequently responds with the affirmation of "I am wholly Yours."

The first pre-chorus is:

What a certain sign of grace is this?
From the broken earth
Flowers come up,
Pushing through the dirt.

The second pre-chorus is:

And the truest sign of grace was this:
From wounded hands
Redemption fell down,
Liberating man.

In the first pre-chorus, a question is posed, "What a certain sign of grace is this." The changes in the pre-chorus reflect a process of thinking and using logic to ascertain the "holiness" of God. The alteration in text from *a certain sign* to *the truest sign* functions in two ways: it transforms from *a sign* (general) to *the sign* (specific) and the alteration of
the word *certain* (analytical or reason) to *truest* (faith). Changes in text from *a* to *the*, and *certain* to *truest* confirm that a process is underway.

When comparing the two verses, verse one is eight lines, while verse two is only three lines. Verse one uses a binary construction of opposites to depict man and God:

I am full of earth  
You are heaven's worth  
I am stained with dirt  
Prone to depravity  
You are ev'rything  
That is bright and clean  
The antonym of me  
You are divinity

By pairing the opposites in verse one, the focus is on man's sinful nature, yet the last line directs man toward God reflecting the process of sanctification. In contrast, verse two focuses the attention on God and his redemptive power:

You are ev'rything  
That is bright and clean  
And You're covering me with Your majesty

The difference in length between the two verses aurally represents the relinquishing of oneself to God by leaving the burden of sin, as reflected in the text (dirt, earth, depravity, antonym of God), behind.

"You Are Mine" by Third Day uses the dyadic relationship between God and man to illustrate man's sinful nature as doubt. The first two lines of the chorus reiterate this message:

Sometimes I wonder why you even love me  
And why you ever chose to call me child
While these first two lines suggest doubt, the last four lines function as a confirmation of faith:

Then I remember  
It's by your sacrifice  
I can say that  
I am yours and you are mine

Although "You Are Mine" is the title and hook, the opening text for each verse, "it doesn't take much," functions as a secondary hook. The combination of man's frailty in the verses compared to God's sacrifice in the verses functions as an aural illustration that codifies the necessary dyadic relationship between God and man. Interestingly, because of its contextual ambiguity, one could argue that the bridge text is either God's perspective or man's perspective. What makes it significant, however, and perhaps arguing more in favor of God's perspective, is that the text is only "You are mine" stated four times. In traditional song structure that follows a verse – chorus – verse – chorus – bridge – chorus form, the title should only appear in the chorus. In this case, it contains only the title. It further highlights the bridge text, because half of the verse does not lead directly into a chorus. When these elements combine, it draws attention to the part of the form that is different. Therefore, in "You Are Mine," it seems more plausible that the bridge represents God's perspective.

Verse one and verse two are both eight lines, verse three is only four lines and is a repeat of the first four lines of the verse one text. The difference in text length aurally represents a sense of being incomplete, which resonates with the phrase, "and You have
done it for what seems the millionth time." This phrase seems to suggest man's sinful nature and his tendency to repetitively sin.

By depicting a binary construction of opposites between God and man, "You Are My King" by the Newsboys signifies the sinful nature of man in verse one:

I'm forgiven
Because You were forsaken
I'm accepted
You were condemned
I'm alive and well
Your Spirit is within me
Because You died
And rose again

While the first four lines present opposite pairings between forgiven and forsaken, accepted and condemned, the last four lines focus on God as the redeemer. These four lines represent the message of the Paschal mystery of death (because You died) and resurrection (and rose again).

As it shifts the focus to God's love, the chorus summarizes the paradox of man's forgiveness through God's forsakenness:

Amazing love
How can it be
That You my King
Should die for me
Amazing love
I know it's true
It's my joy to honor You
In all I do I honor You

Interestingly, the chorus also has a binary construction that reflects man's tendency to struggle with faith. The first half queries the logic of salvation through the sacrifice of
Jesus Christ. In the second half, the text acknowledges this truth and encourages one to honor God, not from feelings of guilt but from a joyful heart.

**Male Solo Category**

Bebo Norman, "Disappear"
Mark Harris, "Find Your Wings"
Mark Schultz, "He Will Carry Me"
Michael W. Smith, "Healing Rain"
Chris Tomlin, "Holy Is the Lord"
Chris Tomlin, "How Great Is Our God"
Mark Schultz, "I Am"
Toby Mac, "Made to Love"
Chris Tomlin, "Made to Worship"
Matthew West, "More"
Steven Curtis Chapman, "Much of You"
Bebo Norman, "Nothing Without You"
Matthew West, "Only Grace"
Jeremy Camp, "Take You Back"
Jeremy Camp, "This Man"
Brian Littrell, "Welcome Home"
Mark Schultz, "You Are A Child of Mine"

"Disappear" by Bebo Norman immediately illustrates the concept of sanctification with the title. When used as the hook in the chorus, it denotes the importance of finding God through the relinquishment of the self:

I, I wanna hide in You
The Way the Life the Truth
So I can disappear
And love is all there is to see
Comin' out of me
And You become clear
As I disappear

The chorus identifies Jesus through the text, "The Way the Life the Truth," which then clarifies the You (God) become clear as I (man) disappear. Since the chorus text is seven lines, it symbolically suggests the process of sanctification as incomplete by aurally
representing an imbalance in the structure. The summation of the chorus textually illustrates a cycle of change, or rebirth, which occurs over time. Hiding in God as a mechanism to remove sin, God removes sin through the power of love, and man becomes more like God as his sin is removed.

Both verses reference a mundane secular life and use a pre-chorus to lead directly into the chorus. Verse one contextualizes a specific day, but verse two suggests a broader lifelong perspective:

On a day like this
I wanna crawl beneath a rock
A million miles from the world
The noise the commotion
That never seems to stop
And on a day like this
I wanna run from the routine
Run away from the daily grind
That can suck the life
Right out of me

Verse one uses alliteration to connect ideas together aurally, such as million/miles, noise/never, and run/routine/run. The third pairing of run/routine/run is especially interesting, because it seemingly suggests a command to run away from the routine run. With this understanding of the third pairing of alliteration, verse two presents an exploration of what the routine signifies:

I don't want to care
About earthly things
Be caught up in all the lies
That trick my eyes
They say it's all about me
I'm so tired of it
Bein' about me
Further comparison also reveals that the verse one is much longer than verse two. Since verse one is longer, it aurally symbolizes the entrapment of the routine and how it ensnares man as a manifestation of sin. Verse two is shorter, which aurally symbolizes removing sin through the process of sanctification.

The bridge presents a different perspective that unifies the themes in the verses and the summation of the chorus:

I would rather be cast away
Separated from the human race
If I don't bring You glory
If I don't bring You glory
If I don't bring You glory

The statement of the text, "If I don't bring You glory," three times functions as a prayer of affirmation as it acknowledges the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"Find Your Wings" by Mark Harris suggests a conversation between a parent and child, but can metaphorically symbolize the relationship between God and man. Since a male artist sings the song, the implied context is a father speaking to his child, again, if the text can also represent the relationship between God and man, then it reinforces a masculine anthropomorphic God. While this song does not address sin per se, the chorus suggests a life filled with God through the power of intercessional and communal prayer:

I pray that God would fill your heart with dreams
And that faith gives you the courage
To dare to do great things
I'm here for you whatever this life brings
So let my love give you roots

"He Will Carry Me" by Mark Schultz delays the chorus by two verses, which aurally represents the separation between God and man through sin. The delay
structurally functions to guide the listener clearly to the chorus and hook of the song.

This transition from two verses to the chorus demonstrates God's absolution of man's sin:

And even though I'm walkin' through
The valley of the shadow
I will hold tight to the hand of Him
Whose love will comfort me
And when all hope is gone
And I've been wounded in the battle
He is all the strength that I will ever need
He will carry me

Verse three is not paired with another verse and it aurally represents a bridge between God and man through the process of sanctification:

I know I'm broken
But You alone
Can mend this heart of mine
You're always with me

This text in verse three epitomizes God as healer, the one who can mend man's broken heart. While this verse leads directly into the chorus, the chorus then segues into the bridge. The text in the bridge alludes to the Triune God as it states You three times:

And even though I feel so lonely
Like I have never been before
You never said it would be easy
But You said You'd see me through the storm

"Healing Rain" by Michael W. Smith uses a binary construction of opposites to illustrate not only the dyadic relationship between God and man but also their separation by man's sinful nature:

Healing rain is coming down
It's coming nearer to this old town
Rich and poor the weak and strong
It's bringing mercy it won't be long
Healing rain is coming down
It's coming closer to the lost and found
Tears of joy and tears of shame
Are washed forever in Jesus' name

Jesus' name cleanses the four pairs of opposing text: rich/poor, weak/strong, lost/found, and joy/shame. While the first two verses use binary opposites to illustrate man's sinful nature, verse three functions more as a direction to God's people:

Lift your heads let us return
To the mercy seat where time began
And in your eyes I see the pain
Come soak this dry heart with healing rain

The chorus dramatizes the opposites of rain and fire; both symbolically represent elements used to cleanse man from sin:

Healing rain it comes with fire
So let it fall and take us higher
Healing rain I'm not afraid
To be washed in heaven's rain

The song breaks traditional song form structure because it uses the title in all three verses, as well as in the chorus. To further construe the hook and title of the song, two verses precede the first chorus and the overt use of the title aurally creates ambiguity. In the chorus, a shift occurs from communal to individual. This shift occurs from the second to the third line of the chorus with the text, "So let it fall and take us higher healing rain I'm not afraid." The transformation from us to I'm aurally represents man as sanctified; he is set apart from the others. The third line of the third verse resonates a similar message with the text, "And in your eyes I see the pain." To underscore this interpretation of a sanctified man, the final words of the song are "I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid."
"Holy Is the Lord" by Chris Tomlin is a straightforward praise song that uses repetitionaurally to replicate the process of sanctification from an inception to an affirmation of faith. The first verse functions as the invitation:

We stand and lift up our hands  
For the joy of the Lord is our strength  
We bow down and worship Him now  
How great how awesome is He  
And together we sing

This verse segues into the chorus, which summarizes God's holiness:

Holy is the Lord God Almighty  
The earth is filled with His glory  
Holy is the Lord God Almighty  
The earth is filled with His glory  
The earth is filled with His glory

As the chorus transitions into the second verse, which is nearly the same as verse one, a different layer of semantic meaning exists with the addition of the last line:

We stand and lift up our hands  
For the joy of the Lord is our strength  
We bow down and worship Him now  
How great how awesome is He  
And together we sing  
Ev'ryone sing

As this verse invites everyone to sing, it functions as an affirmation of faith as everyone sings the subsequent chorus. After the second chorus, the bridge confirms God's communal presence among his people:

It is rising up all around  
It's the anthem of the Lord's renown  
It's rising up all around  
It's the anthem of the Lord's renown

As the bridge leads into the final chorus, it functions as closing communal prayer.
Similar to "Holy Is the Lord," "How Great Is Our God," also by Chris Tomlin, is another straightforward praise song that reflects upon the greatness of God and his various manifestations, i.e., the alpha and the omega, the lion and the lamb, and the Triune God:

The splendor of the King
Clothed in majesty
Let all the earth rejoice
All the earth rejoice
He wraps Himself in light
And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice
And trembles at His voice

Verse one begins with anthropomorphic imagery of God as a King clothed in majesty, but quickly changes to the metaphor of God as light. In verse two, the text depicts the various names and metaphors that describe the greatness of God:

And age to age He stands
And time is in His hands
Beginning and the End
Beginning and the End
The Godhead three in one
Father Spirit Son
The Lion and the Lamb
The Lion and the Lamb

The chorus, while functioning within the song form as a summary, invites the listener to join in the singing and praise of God:

How great is our God
Sing with me
How great is our God
And all will see how great
How great is our God
The bridge text not only confirms the greatness of God, but it also confirms man's commitment to God:

Name above all names
Worthy of all praise
My heart will sing
How great is our God

It is interesting to note that the title and hook of the song seem to signify religious pluralism, yet for its purpose here, it identifies this God as our God. While it may acknowledge the existence of other Gods, this song contextually reflects upon the greatness of our God as the God who is worthy of all praise.

"I Am" by Mark Schultz is sung from God's perspective by a male artist, and thus reinforces a masculine anthropomorphic construct of God. The song form is a verse-verse-chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus structure; all components use the hook and title. Although unconventional, the fortification of the hook and title throughout the song serves as an aural symbol that signifies an omniscient God. Each verse illustrates different aspects of the Triune God: Father in verse one, Son in verse two, and the Holy Spirit in verse three:

I Am the Maker of the Heavens
I Am the Bright and Morning Star
I Am the Breath of all Creation
Who always was
And is to come

Verse one seamlessly segues into verse two with the hook and title, "I Am":

I Am the One who walked on water
I Am the One who calmed the seas
I Am the miracles and wonders
So come and see
And follow Me
You will know

Verse two uses a brief pre-chorus, which is the last line, "You will know." This last line leads directly into the chorus, which answers the pre-chorus text, "You will know" with "I Am":

I Am the Fount of Living Water
The risen Son of Man
The Healer of the Broken
And when you cry
I Am your Savior and Redeemer
Who bore the sins of man
The Author and Perfecter
Beginning and the End
Yes I Am

The chorus depicts Jesus' perspective as it identifies God as the healer, savior, and redeemer. While a chorus traditionally functions as a summary of material in the verses, this chorus carries additional meaning as it highlights the role of Jesus as the "risen Son of Man" and the one "who bore the sins of man."

Although similar in construction to the other two verses, the third verse focuses on the role of the Holy Spirit:

I Am the Spirit deep inside you
I Am the Word upon your heart
I Am the One who even knew you
Before your birth
Before you were

As the bridge presents a slightly different perspective, it also incorporates the hook and title of the song. Instead of beginning the text with "I Am," in the bridge, this text

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7 Matthew 17: 9 (NRSV).
appears as an echo after each statement. This not only represents an omniscient God, but because of its construction, it aurally replicates the concept of God as omniscient, as the text "I Am" seems to weave through each line of text as an elision. This technique used in the bridge seems to foreshadow a completed sanctification process:

Before the earth (I Am)  
The universe (I Am)  
In every heart (I Am)  
Oh where you are (I Am)  
The Lord of Lords (I Am)  
The King of Kings (I Am)  
The Holy Lamb (I Am)  
Above all things (I Am)

Interestingly, the micro construction within each verse seems to signify the Triune God as it states "I Am" three times in the first three lines of text.

The structure of "Made to Love" by TobyMac uses two verses; verse one depicts the sinful nature of man as complacency:

The dream is fading, now I'm staring at the door  
I know it's over, 'cause my feet have hit the cold floor  
Check my reflection, I ain't feelin' what I see; it's no mystery  
Whatever happened to a passion I could live for?  
What became of the flame that made me feel more?  
And when did I forget

The last line of verse one, "And when did I forget," leads directly into the chorus as it identifies what it is that man forgot:

That I was made to love You,  
I was made to find You  
I was made just for You  
Made to adore You  
I was made to love and be loved by You  
You were here before me  
You were waiting o'er me
And You said You'd keep me  
Never would you leave me  
I was made to love and be loved by You

The title "Made to Love" explicitly identifies man as a creation of God; whose purpose is to love. As the chorus summarizes the significance of the title, one is able to reflect upon its meaning and, if so moved, take action. Verse two is an example of how sanctification becomes a constant process, one that necessitates a daily affirmation of faith. This verse depicts the sanctification process as an allusion of a boxing match. Even in this context, the fighter still believes in God; in fact, in this informal context, he refers to God as Daddy:

The dream's alive with my eyes opened wide  
Back in the ring, You've got me swinging for the grand prize  
I feel the hate is spittin' vapors on my dreams  
But I still believe  
I'm reachin' up, reachin' out, reachin' over  
I feel a breeze cover me called, "Jehovah."  
And Daddy, I'm on my way, 'cause I was made to love

After the second chorus, the bridge text affirms faith in God as the text symbolically reflects the giving of oneself to God, both in terms of material things and spiritually:

Anything I would give up for You  
Ev'rything I'd give it all away  
Anything I would give up for You  
Ev'rything I'd give it all away  
Anything I would give up for You  
Ev'rything I'd give it, I'd give it all away, oh yeah

The statement of the text three times in the bridge suggests a prayer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
The TobyMac song "Made to Love" addresses the concept of man as a being created to love. The Chris Tomlin song "Made to Worship" presents a similar idea, but through more formal language, it seems to address a specific audience. The TobyMac song is fitting for one who is new to the faith, whereas the Chris Tomlin song speaks directly to one fully initiated as a Christian. "Made To Worship" uses inclusive language in the chorus as it depicts a communion of faith with the text *You and I*:

You and I are made to worship  
You and I are called to love  
You and I are forgiven and free  
When You and I embrace surrender  
When You and I choose to believe  
Then You and I will see  
(You and I will see)  
Who we were meant to be

The text of the chorus not only uses inclusive language of *you* and *I*, which implies a communal relationship between God and man, but it provides clear instructions in an antecedent/consequent format. The first three lines formulate the construct of man through creation (made to worship), purpose (called to love), and explanation (forgiven and free). The next three lines identify the theory of *when* (embrace surrender and choose to believe) then we will see. In the last two lines of the chorus, it affirms the belief and takes it one step further. Not only will *you and I* see, as a metaphor for belief in God, but also *you and I* will see our full potential as creations of God.

The verses contrast textually; verse one focuses attention on God as creator:

Before the day before the light  
Before the world revolved around the sun  
God on high stepped down into time  
And wrote the story
Of His love for everyone
He has filled our hearts with wonder
So that we always remember

In verse two, the focus shifts to man and aurally signifies the process of sanctification because it is shorter in length than verse one:

All we are and all we have
Is all a gift from God that we receive
Brought to life we open up our eyes
To see the majesty and glory of the King
He has filled our hearts with wonder
So that we always remember

Each verse uses the same pre-chorus text, the last two lines, which lead into the chorus.

The bridge text shifts the message to praising God by crying, shouting, and singing, which functions as a verbal testimony of God's power and love:

Even the rocks cry out
Even the heavens shout
At the sound of His Holy name
So let ev'ry voice sing out
Let ev'ry knee bow down
He's worthy of all our praise

"More" by Matthew West is another song that uses a male artist to represent God's perspective. This formulation, a male artist singing from God's perspective, reiterates a masculine anthropomorphic construct of God. Verse one opens a dialogue with God:

Take a look at the mountain
Stretching a mile high
Take a look at the ocean
Far as your eye can see
And think of Me
Take a look at the desert
Do you feel like a grain of sand
I am with you wherever
Where you go is where I am
And I'm always thinking of you
Take a look around you
I'm spelling it out one by one

This verse segues into the chorus, and the title and hook revolve around God's love for man simply stated as "More":

I love you more than the sun
And the stars that I taught how to shine
You are Mine and you shine for Me too
I love you yesterday and today and tomorrow
I'll say it again and again
I love you more
(Yeah)

Verse two briefly acknowledges man's sinful nature, yet the overall message is how man, in spite of his inequities, still belongs to God:

Just a face in the city
Just a tear on a crowded street
But you are one in a million
And you belong to Me
And I want you to know
I'm not letting go
Even when you come undone

The text in the bridge imparts a message to man that he can be an agent of evangelization because he shines in the world for God:

Shine for Me
You shine for Me
You shine on you shine on
You shine for Me

The statement of "Shine for Me" three times signifies the Trinity, three persons in one as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A triple chorus finishes the song; the first two contain
the same text as the first chorus. Using a different text in the final chorus highlights God's love for man and serves as a reminder to man that he shines for God:

And I see you and I made you
And I love you more
Than you can imagine
More than you can fathom
I love you more than the sun
And you shine for Me

While it is unusual to have a triple chorus for this song form, potentially lengthening the song too much for radio airplay, it functions in this instance as a final summation of the dyadic relationship between God and man based upon love.

"Much of You" by Steven Curtis Chapman is one of the few songs in this repertoire that uses the word Jesus. The two verses in this song use a binary construction of opposites: whisper/thunder and sinner/Savior respectively, for the last two lines leading into the chorus:

How could I stand here
And watch the sun rise
Follow the mountains
Where they touch the sky
Ponder the vastness
And the depths of the sea
And think for a moment
The point of it all
Was to make much of me
'Cause I'm just a whisper
And You are the thunder

Verse one uses nature as a metaphor for God, and verse two focuses on the crucifixion of Christ:

And how can I kneel here
And think of the cross
The thorns and the whip
And the nails and the spear
The infinite cost
To purchase my pardon
And bear all my shame
And think I have anything worth boasting in
Except for Your name
'Cause I am a sinner
And You are the Savior

The chorus, functioning as a summary of the verses, reinforces the title and hook of the song:

And I want to make much of You Jesus
I want to make much of Your love
I want to live today
To give You the praise
That You alone are so worthy of
I want to make much of Your mercy
I want to make much of Your cross
I give You my life
Take it and let it be used
To make much of You

It is interesting to note that the chorus, while summarizing the overall concept of the title, actually contains a prayer to relinquish oneself to God in the last three lines: "I give You my life, take it and let it be used to make much of You." The bridge, which occurs between two choruses, also uses the title and hook, but the message transforms from an individual perspective to a communal one:

This is Your love oh God
Not to make much of me
But to send Your own Son
So that we could make much of You
For all eternity
If one understands this shift from individual to communal at this critical point in the song, then one can reinterpret the meaning of the chorus as a communal activity. This final chorus becomes an affirmation of faith through an invitation of congregational singing.

"Nothing Without You" by Bebo Norman functions as a prayer asking God to use man to glorify God because he is nothing without God. Because the title appears in the verses and chorus, this song breaks traditional song form and reinforces the magnitude of the hook and title, e.g., that man is nothing without God. A chorus does not separate the first two verses. This song represents a deconstruction of the Body of Christ, because each verse focuses on a different aspect of man, first the hands, the voice, and then the body:

Take these hands
And lift them up
For I have not the strength
To praise You near enough
See I have nothing
I have nothing
Without You

And take my voice
And pour it out
Let it sing
The songs of mercy I have found
For I have nothing
I have nothing
Without You

The chorus uses the ethereal representation of the self through the construct of man's soul. While the chorus functions as a summary of the material in the verses, in this case, the chorus also acquires a different level of semantic meaning as it addresses man's soul versus man's body:
And all my soul needs
Is all Your love to cover me
So all the world will see
That I have nothing without You

Verse three focuses on the body and how it can be a metaphorical offering to God:

Take my body
And build it up
May it be broken as
An offering of love
For I have nothing
I have nothing
Without You

The bridge text presents an entirely different perspective that allows man to relinquish himself to God through heart, soul, mind, and strength (representing the body):

But I love You yeah
With all my heart
With all my soul
With all my mind
And all the strength
That I can find

This song finishes with a fourth verse instead of the traditional ending using a chorus. By drastically changing the song structure, and not finishing the song with a chorus, the summarizing feature of the form, it aurally illustrates an incomplete process of sanctification. Until man understands, both mind and spirit, and believes he is nothing without God, sanctification will not come to fruition.

Matthew West's song, "Only Grace" is another song that uses a male artist to sing from God's perspective. In this case, it seemingly functions as a personal conversation between man and God. Verse one acknowledges man's sinful nature, but as it leads into the chorus, it also assures the forgiveness of sins:
There is no guilt here
There is no shame
No pointing fingers
There is no blame
What happened yesterday
Has disappeared
The dirt has washed away
And now it's clear

The chorus reiterates the removal of man's sin through grace, love, and mercy:

There's only grace
There's only love
There's only mercy
And believe me it's enough
Your sins are gone
Without a trace
And there's nothing left now
There's only grace

The eight lines of the chorus function as a metaphor for God as the beginning and the end. As they occur in the first and last lines of the chorus, the hook and title placement aurally encircles the concept of "Only Grace." Verse two portrays a rebirth or renewal as man steps forward into his new life:

You're starting over now under the sun
You're stepping forward now
A new life has begun
Your new life has begun

When comparing verse one and two, it is clear that verse one is twice as long. Aurally, this imbalance signifies the space diminishing between God and man.

While the bridge text confirms man's tendency to habitually sin, it also reinforces God's redemptive qualities, as he encourages man to "get back up and get back up again." The final section of the song repeats the bridge and final chorus, so the resultant song form is
verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus, bridge, chorus; this alteration to the form reinforces the redemptive message in the bridge:

And if you should fall again
Well get back up get back up
Reach out and take My hand
And get back up and get back up
And get back up again
Oh get back up again

"Take You Back" by Jeremy Camp is an example of a song that incorporates God's perspective in the chorus. The verses present man's perspective. Because a male artist is singing, and as they lead into the chorus, the chorus reinforces the construct of a masculine anthropomorphic God. Each verse depicts different aspects of man's inequities, but the pre-chorus text assures that God's response will always be to take man back:

The reason why I stand
The answer lies in You
You hung to make me strong
Though my praise was few
When I fall I bring Your name down
But I have found in You
A heart that bleeds forgiveness
Replacing all these thoughts
Of painful memories
But I know
Your response will always be

The last two lines of the verse, functioning as a pre-chorus, lead directly into the chorus, which then denotes God's voice and perspective:

I'll take you back always
Even when your fight is over now
Even when your fight is over now
I'll take you back always
Even when the pain is coming through
Even when the pain is coming through
I'll take you back

The structure of the chorus suggests a Triune God. Through the three statements of the hook and title, "I'll take you back," it signifies a different person of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Verse two illuminates God's forgiveness of sin through grace:

You satisfy this cry
Of what I'm looking for
And I'll take all I can
And lay it down before
The throne of endless grace
Now that radiates what's true
I'm in the only place
That erases all these faults
That have overtaken me
But I know that
Your response will always be

The bridge text is interesting because of its double meaning of pierced. It is using the word pierced, as a reference to the crucifixion of Christ, and reinterpreting it to symbolize how the gift of God's love pierced man:

I can only speak with a grateful heart
As I'm pierced by this gift of Your love
I will always bring an offering
I can never thank You enough

The chorus that follows the bridge changes text to reflect man's perspective. This shift in text affirms man's understanding of the depth of God's love and redemption:

You take me back always yeah
Even when my fight is over now
Even when my fight is over now
You take me back always yeah
Even when my pain is coming through
Even when my pain is coming through
You take me back always
Even when my fight is over now
Even when my fight is over now
You take me back always
Even when my pain is coming through
Even when my pain is coming through
You take me back

This final chorus functions in two different ways. It clarifies that God will take man back even when he sins and his fight is over, or when his pain is coming through. It also confirms that sanctification is a lifelong process that relies upon a dyadic relationship between God and man.

In "This Man" by Jeremy Camp, he asks the direct question, "Would you take the place of this man?" in the chorus:

Would you take the place of this Man
Would you take the nails from His hands
Would you take the place of this Man
Would you take the nails from His hands

One learns more about who this man is in each subsequent verse. Verse one describes the passion of Christ, leading up to and including the crucifixion:

In only a moment truth was seen
Revealed this mystery
The crown that showed no dignity He wore
And the King was placed for all the world
To show disgrace
But only beauty flowed from this place

Verse two describes the meaning of the crucifixion of Christ:

He held the weight of impurity
The Father would not see
The reasons had fin'lly come to be to show
The depth of His grace flowed  
With ev'ry sin erased  
He knew that this was why He came

The bridge text provides a different perspective, relating the crucifixion in a modern day construct:

And we just don't know  
The blood and water flowed  
And in it all He showed  
Just how much He cared  
And the veil was torn  
So we could have this open door  
And all these things  
Have fin'ly been complete

Interspersed between the two verses and the bridge is the chorus' text, which keeps asking the question, "Would you take the place of this Man?" Because a male artist sings this song, it seems to acquire a different level of meaning; it would not bear the same meaning if sung by a female artist. As each verse describes this man in more depth, it seems to suggest one of Christ's apostles is asking the question.

"Welcome Home" by Brian Littrell uses the song form structure to modernize the prodigal son story from the Bible. It uses the double meaning of father to indicate a biological father and as a metaphor for God, the Father. This ambiguity of father, best interpreted in the pre-chorus sections of each verse, leads into the chorus. Verse one begins as the main character leaves home to seek a better life:

When I left home to be who I am  
Some people said no way  
But I laid it all down gave ev'rything  
In my head rang the words that my father said  
You're never far I will be where you are  
And when you come to me
I will open my arms

Verse two portrays God, the Father, seemingly speaking to Jesus:

When I look at you holdin' my heart
I will give to you all that I have
Son I know there'll be times
You will feel all alone
I will share with you the words my Father said
You're never far I will be where you are
And when you come to Me
You can bet I will open my My Arms

The chorus, which summarizes the material in the verse, seems to have a different connotation as it progresses through the song. When heard after verse one, it seems to present the perspective of a biological father; after the second verse, it presents God's perspective as embracing the prodigal son:

Welcome home you
I know you by name
How do you do
I shine because of you today
So come and sit down
Tell me how you are
I know son
It's good just to see your face

The bridge text, heard between two chorus sections, illuminates a different perspective; it functions as an affirmation of faith in God:

So I'll be waitin' for that day
Just to feel Your warm Embrace
Your Love has shown I will never be alone
For You will welcome me home
I'll forever be for You will say to me

The last line in the bridge segues into the final chorus, which clearly confirms that God will welcome his child home in heaven. The structure of this song uses the double
meaning of father and home to signify God and heaven respectively. In addition, this construction illustrates the process of sanctification as beginning on earth, with one's biological father, and ending in heaven with God, the Father. The final text of the song resonates the opening text of verse one, "When I left home to be who I am some people said no way." Its placement at the end of the song aurally illustrates sanctification as a lifelong process dependant on a dyadic relationship between God and man.

"You Are A Child Of Mine" by Mark Schultz is another song that presents God's perspective in the chorus of the song. Since a male artist sings this song, it reinforces a masculine anthropomorphic construct of God. Verse one begins by describing the power of sin over man by creating doubt:

I've been hearing voices telling me
That I could never be what I wanna be
They're binding me with lies
Haunting me at night
And say there's nothing to believe
Somewhere in the quietness
When I'm overcome with loneliness
I hear You call my name
And like a father You are near
And as I listen I can hear You say:

While the first half of verse one focuses on the power of sin, the second half imparts knowledge of something more to the listener. Using the metaphor of father for a biological father, and God, the Father, the pre-chorus text leads directly into the chorus:

You are a child of Mine
Born of My own design
And you bear the heart of life
No matter where you go
Oh, you will always know
You've been made free in Christ
You are a child of Mine

The repetition of the hook and title in the chorus in the first and last lines aurally signifies the seal, between man and God, placed upon a child during baptism.

The second verse, almost in reverse order, signifies man's tendency to fall to the temptation of sin; however, the pre-chorus reminds man that, "If I listen, I can hear You say . . . ":

> And so I listen as You tell me who I am  
> And who it is I'm gonna be  
> And I hang on every word  
> Knowing I have heard I am Yours and I am free  
> But when I am alone at night  
> That is when I hear the lie  
> You'll never be enough  
> And though I'm giving in to fear  
> If I listen, I can hear You say

The bridge text used in this song is the statement of, "I am calling" four times, the "I" is understood as a representation of God. The song repeats the bridge and a final chorus with the addition of the second half of the chorus text:

> No matter where you go  
> Oh you will always know  
> You've been made free in Christ  
> You are a child of Mine

The addition of these last four lines reiterates God's promise that man is indeed a child of God.

It is clear that fifty songs use the verse-chorus-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus song form to illustrate, in varying degrees, how CCM uses song form to symbolize metaphorically the process of sanctification by reflecting it as a lifelong process to free
man from the three analogies of sin: as disease, as a power, and as guilt. Although fifty of the fifty-six songs use this song form, not all of the songs are equal in how they depict the process of sanctification. Yet, it is undeniable that CCM uses a diachronic structure (the unfolding of the song form) within a synchronic moment (the song itself) to aurally depict the sanctification process as a lifelong journey that frees man from sin.
CHAPTER V

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE

Social Interaction

In the study of ethnomusicology, there have been pioneers who forged the beginnings of the field and outlined methodologies and scientific procedures for future generations of ethnomusicologists. Alan P. Merriam is one such pioneer. As the author of *The Anthropology of Music*, Merriam advocates a synthesis of anthropology and musicology in order to adopt a philosophy of music as a human phenomenon. He argues the position that man is not unique in the sense of his spatial history except that he has created for himself a concept of culture, "man's cumulative learned behavior."¹

Ethnomusicology, by its nature, is an interdisciplinary field. It must be for the sake of its own survival in academia; it is an inclusive field that borrows and adapts procedures from other disciplines. Merriam addresses this idiosyncrasy: "Music can and must be studied from many standpoints, for its aspects include the historical, social, psychological, structural, cultural, functional, physical, psychological, aesthetic, symbolic, and others."² Using Merriam as a model, one understands ethnomusicology as an academic field of knowledge that idealizes a cumulative result of combining other disciplines of research and sciences for purposes of discovering new relations in music. His summation is, "If an understanding of music is to be reached, it is clear that no single

² Ibid., 31.
kind of study can successfully be substituted for the whole." Merriam's summation would suggest that the analysis conducted by Livengood and Book does not contribute to the field of ethnomusicology. Their approach focused on the lyric as a construct of single words removed from the overarching context of song form. It is clear that ethnomusicological pioneers, such as Merriam, have laid this foundation; therefore, it is unnecessary to continue reinventing the philosophical underpinnings of the field. Instead of reinventing, scholars need to acknowledge those who codified the field and then forge ahead, building on their legacies.

Merriam presents a foundational definition and scope of the ethnomusicology field when he writes, "Music is a uniquely human phenomenon which exists only in terms of social interaction; that is, it is made by people for other people, and it is learned behavior." He then clarifies, "It does not and cannot exist by, of, and for itself; there must always be human beings doing something to produce it. In short, music cannot be defined as a phenomenon of sound alone, for it involves the behavior of individuals and groups of individuals, and its particular organization demands the social concurrence of people who decide what it can and cannot be." Perhaps being aware of technological advances, Michael B. Bakan offers a more contemporary approach that expands upon Merriam's foundation. He presents five propositions for exploring world music:

Proposition 1: The basic property of all music is sound

4 Ibid., 27.
5 Ibid.
Proposition 2: The sounds (and silences) that comprise a musical work are organized in some way.

Proposition 3: Sounds are organized into music by people; thus, music is a form of humanly organized sound.

Proposition 4: Music is a product of human intention and perception [HIP]

Proposition 5: The term music is inescapably tied to Western culture and its assumptions.

The fourth proposition, Music is a product of human intention and perception forges into the twenty-first century because it challenges mere social interaction. It suggests a deeper level of communication that occurs during the process of interaction. As Bakan states, "it [HIP] (1) privileges inclusiveness over exclusiveness and (2) emphasizes the idea that music is inseparable from the people who make and experience it." Bakan's propositions are included here because they are more apt to accommodate technological underpinnings of music, such as the radio and Internet as used in this dissertation. Furthermore, the descriptor – product – as used by Bakan seems to open a dialogue. It allows for discussion about consumerism more so than when Merriam describes music as a product of human behavior. This is not to undermine the importance of Merriam's contribution to the field; rather it enhances the theory so it is more applicable in the twenty-first century.

By challenging the notion of social interaction as it applies to CCM, it raises questions about the worship experience. More specifically, when one listens to the radio...

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7 Ibid., 4-5.
can it be a form of worship? Can a community form through the airwaves? While there is no absolute answer, it is best to start from the perspective that CCM texts are fundamentally polysemic. The texts share themes and motives that can lead to a multiplicity of meaning. One example from the fifty-six songs that directly addresses the function of the radio is "The Other Side of the Radio" by Chris Rice. The title alone prompts inquiry. Rice briefly explains the inspiration for this song on the WOW 2004 (Green Disc):

I was sitting at lunch with a college student friend of mine, and he mentioned something about hearing me on "the other side of the radio." I thought about that concept, realizing people turn on the radio and they hear something I’ve worked on and they start singing along, and in some sense we are connected by a song in the truth. There is a connection going on. Somehow this is valuable. Somehow this is being used. And that excites me.  

Rice addresses the conundrum of the radio. From his vantage point as a singer/songwriter, he can see how the radio is a portal for connectivity. He also recognizes that it is "valuable" and "being used." What Rice describes is the intention of the songwriter to communicate with the audience, and specific to CCM, it is the connection by a "song in the truth." Rice's perspective is exactly what Bakan outlines in his fourth proposition: Music is a product of human intention and perception. One can see how the radio can relate to worship from this inside perspective of the singer/songwriter. CCM, as broadcast on the radio, is an active means to disseminate a call for evangelism because of the perceived interaction with the artists and the DJ's.

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9 Michael B. Bakan, World Music: Traditions and Transformations, 4-5.
While one can agree the DJ's are presumably live on-air, the artists singing are usually not live in-studio. Yet, Rice insists that a relationship between the singer/songwriter and the audience can exist. His song, "The Other Side of the Radio," is proof of this phenomenon.

The opening lyric of the second chorus initially suggests the "you and me" as the audience and the singer/songwriter respectively; however, one is also able to interpret this lyric as audience and God respectively. In addition, because "The Fish" format broadcasts this song, the song acquires additional semantic meaning as a spiritual unity with other Christians. The multiplicity of meaning relates directly to CCM's ability to function as a didactic tool that teaches about sanctification. Intrinsic to "The Fish" format, it can be argued that God is present: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."\(^\text{10}\) In essence, "The Fish" format, by design, creates an environment that is conducive for worship because two or more (the listener and the singer(s)/DJ) can potentially gather in his name. The radio itself becomes a metaphor for the binary construction of opposites: seen and unseen, or perhaps more precisely, heard and unheard.

*Intention and Perception: Industry and Consumer*

In a way, Merriam could argue against an analysis of music heard on a radio station, such as discussed in this dissertation, given his parameters for ethnomusicology, "Music . . . which exists only in terms of social interaction."\(^\text{11}\) Perhaps his contention

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\(^\text{10}\) Matthew 18:20 (NRSV).

would be a lack of "social interaction," and he might posit that listening to the radio is a passive activity. First, to counter this notion, one can refer to Simon Frith's observations that "Radio listening and television watching are exactly simultaneous activities..." and second, Bakan's fourth proposition can enter the discourse. Based upon his binary supposition of intention and perception, his fourth proposition facilitates interaction. While Bakan himself does not go into this detail, in theory, three levels of interaction, or perhaps more accurately, communications do exist in Bakan's fourth proposition.

1. I (intention) + P (perception) = Communication
2. I (intention) + NP (no perception) = Partial Communication
3. NI (no intention) + P (perception) = No Communication

The above model can apply specifically to the analysis of CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" with an understanding of intention as it relates to the binary construction of artist and consumer.

1. I (artist intends CCM) + P (consumer perceives CCM) = Understood Communication
2. I (artist intends CCM) + NP (consumer does not perceive CCM) = Consumer Miscommunication (from the perspective of consumer)
3. NI (artist does not intend CCM) + P (consumer perceives CCM) = Industry Miscommunication (from the perspective of industry)

From the above representation, when applied to the study of CCM, number 1 illustrates a complete transaction of an understood communication. Number 2 illustrates a miscommunication between the artist and the consumer. The consumer becomes

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accountable for the miscommunication because of the lack of cultural understanding of the artist's intent. In number 3, a miscommunication also occurs, but here the industry is responsible. It suggests that the industry does not understand its consumers, and it may be misleading them; the mere production of a product is not the same as a culturally relevant product. Numbers 2 and 3 suggest the need for the industry to understand its intended target-demographic. Quite simply, the consumer does not understand the product in number 2, and the industry does not understand its consumer in number 3.

The data from Chapter II (Gender Analysis) reflect these misunderstandings and miscommunications between the industry and its consumer. For instance, Figure 2 represents the gender distribution among the fifty-six artists and categorizes them by the TOP 20 (consumer-driven), WOW albums (industry-driven), and the subsequent intersection of the two. According to the data, the consumers choose to listen to solo male artists (35%), but the industry's production of solo male artists is drastically lower (24%). When examining the data from the female solo category, the industry promotes female solo artists, but the consumer prefers other categories. Overall, the female group category is the least preferable for the consumer and the industry promotes the male group category the most.

These comparisons reveal that the industry does not understand its consumers. Interestingly, EMI-CMG drew the same conclusion in 2008 when they created a new position entitled Manager, Consumer Research and Understanding.13 "EMI CMG, the

market leader in the Christian Music Industry, is seeking a qualified candidate . . . This role exists to maximize sales of all EMI Christian Music Group products by working across all divisions to drive a deeper understanding of our consumers into the organization and champion the integration of that understanding into our product, sales, and marketing strategies and executions.”

The primary responsibilities for this position include:

- Work with SVP [Senior Vice President] and internal divisional "customers" to develop/deploy overall CMG consumer research process.
- Build a research database and regularly deliver insightful findings and recommendations to CMG.
- Lead development of a "fan-base profile" and "target audience profile" for each artist including demographics, lifestyle, psychographics, affinity brands, etc.
- Manage design, deployment and communication of ad hoc research projects as defined.
- Manage budgetary items effectively and efficiently, to ensure company assets are utilized in accordance with EMI policy and are aligned with the CMG and Divisional Strategic Plans.
- Act as day to day liaison with EMI Corporate regarding research.
- Act as day to day liaison with NPD and other research vendors.
- Manage purchasing responsibilities effectively and efficiently, to ensure company assets are utilized in accordance with EMI policy and are aligned with the CMG and Divisional Strategic Plans.  

Within two months of this posting, EMI CMG hired someone with experience in statistical analysis to assume this new position. Since the CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" from July 2001 to July 2006 used for this dissertation predates the position in EMI Marketing: Manager, Consumer Research and Understanding. Bill Hearn is president and CEO of EMI CMG. In 1994, his father, Billy Ray Hearn, formed EMI Christian Music Group and Chordant Distribution. EMI CMG, Word Entertainment, and Provident Music Group formed the WOW compilation series in 1995. This series and its associated songbooks are primary source materials for this research.

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15 Ibid.
creation of this position at EMI CMG, a post-July 2006 analysis, to determine if the Manager of Consumer Research and Understanding at EMI CMG has been effective in understanding its consumer's needs, is warranted.

What's in a Song

To approach a purpose and reason to study song texts of any given culture, Merriam provides some guidance, "One of the most obvious sources for the understanding of human behavior in connection with music is the song text." Song texts can provide an immediate connection with a culture. Albeit, not a totality of understanding a given culture, but certainly song texts can provide a window through which one can begin to recognize significant sociological characteristics of a given culture. Merriam explains, "We can say . . . that not only are music and language interrelated in the formation of song texts, but also that the language of texts tends to take special forms. Therefore, we should expect that the language of texts would have special significance and would function in special ways . . . in song the individual or group can apparently express deep-seated feelings not permissibly verbalized in other contexts."

Specifically related to Merriam's remarks, CCM does provide information about the given culture and how that culture may not be able to express the same sentiments in everyday language. Using song form as a medium to transmit the song texts, CCM is able to express the beliefs from within the culture that are otherwise not transmitted. From the fifty-six songs, the primary example is the depiction of God. For instance, only

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17 Ibid., 190.
male artists sing songs that reflect God's perspective. While in everyday discourse one may not necessarily verbalize this construct of a male anthropomorphic God, but, in the context of song form, the message is clearly conveyed. The male voice singing from God's perspective can do nothing else but reinforce the construct of a male anthropomorphic God. The songs among the fifty-six that specifically represent this perspective are as follows:

"I Am," Mark Schultz  
"More," Matthew West  
"Only Grace," Matthew West  
"You Are A Child Of Mine," Mark Schultz

While only four songs depict God's perspective, none of the fifty-six songs construct God's image as anything different from a masculine anthropomorphic representation.

In Nichole Nordeman's song "Brave," she presents another example of how CCM can express sentiments not permissible in other contexts. For instance, even the title "Brave" suggests a construction of binary opposites. If one is not brave, then one is a coward. However, the concept of cowardice is usually not associated with engendered female roles, yet, in the song she conveys the sentiment of "cowardly" through its binary opposition of "brave." In the song, she expresses the things that keep her from being brave, things that otherwise highlight her weakness. Although in normal conversation she probably would not say, "I am small and I speak when I'm spoken to," it is acceptable in the context of the song.

From the male group perspective, "Every Time I Breathe" is an example of how text in song is different from everyday communication. For instance, several of the
sentiments sung, (e.g., every time I breathe, I wanna stay in Your warm embrace, I am so in love with You, wrapped in Your mercy, captured by grace) are not usually associated with the engendered male roles. In everyday communication, an engendered male typically would not engage in language that verified his emotions.

To illustrate the interaction between male and female, an examination of the mixed group category provides insight into the social structure. In Chapter II (Gender Analysis), the distribution of gender in the mixed group category is:

- Big Daddy Weave featuring BarlowGirl – 5 Male, 3 Female
- FFH (Far From Home) – 3 Male, 1 Female
- Glory Revealed \(^{18}\) – 4 Male, 1 Female (violinist)
- Michael W. Smith featuring Sarah McIntosh – 1 Male, 1 Female
- Sixpence None the Richer \(^{19}\) – 5 Male, 1 Female
- Casting Crowns – 5 Male, 2 Female

From the above distribution, it is clear that this category is male-dominated, and one can recognize that this category represents a micro version of the macro CCM industry.

When analyzing the song text and its associated gender, one discovers clearly defined social roles. For instance, only one group (Sixpence None The Richer) from the Mixed Group category features a lead female singer – a small percentage when considering the total number of songs (9) in the Mixed Group category.

Since Casting Crowns represents four of the nine songs in this category, taking a closer look at their songs is worthwhile: "If We Are The Body," "Voice of Truth," "Lifesong," and "Praise You In This Storm." All four songs by Casting Crowns use the

\(^{18}\) Although Glory Revealed is categorized as a mixed group, one should note that the female voice is not heard in this song.

\(^{19}\) Sixpence None the Richer is the only Mixed Group that features a lead female vocalist.
same song form – the Verse-Chorus-Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus. Below is a
distribution of the female voice and its use in these four songs:

"Lifesong" – bridge and final chorus
"If We Are the Body" – final chorus only
"Praise You In This Storm" – second and final chorus
"Voice of Truth" – not present

Regarding song texts, Merriam concludes:

Song texts . . . provide a number of insights into questions of primary concern to
students of human behavior. The area of music-language relationships is
important to the ethnomusicologist and the linguist, as well as the student of
poetry, for music influences language and language influences music. Given the
fact that language in connection with music tends to have special features, it is not
surprising to find that song texts provide a framework for permissive language
behavior. One of the song forms in which this is most clear-cut is the topical
song, of which there are a number of varieties. We find as well that song texts
reveal a number of problems of a psychological nature, as they concern the
individual and also the society at large. Texts reflect mechanisms of
psychological release and the prevailing attitudes and values of a culture, thus
providing an excellent means for analysis. Mythology, legend, and history are
found in song texts, and song is frequently used as an enculturative device.
Finally, songs lead as well as follow, and political and social movements, often
expressed through song because of the license it gives, shape and force the
moulding of public opinion. Song texts provide the student of human behavior
with some of the richest material he has available for analysis, but their full
potential remains to be exploited.20

As discussed in Chapter II, 100% percent of the songs reflect a dyadic relationship
between God and man; this mirrors Merriam's point "that song texts reveal a number of
problems of a psychological nature, as they concern the individual and also the society at

Among the fifty-six songs, the dyadic construct can represent either an individual or a communal relationship. The psychological nature, as applied to CCM, represents the individual concerns between God and man, and the communal concerns between God and his church. Below is a distribution among the fifty-six songs of the individual and communal relationships:

- **Female Group** – 1 Individual, 0 Communal (100% Individual, 0% Communal)
- **Female Solo** – 5 Individual, 3 Communal (62.5% Individual, 37.5% Communal)
- **Mixed Group** – 7 Individual, 2 Communal (77.7% Individual, 22.2% Communal)
- **Male Group** – 17 Individual, 1 Communal (95% Individual, 5% Communal)
- **Male Solo** – 11 Individual, 9 Communal (55% Individual, 45% Communal)

From the above distribution, the data demonstrate that forty-one of the fifty-six songs reflect an individual relationship while only fifteen of the fifty-six reflect a communal relationship. The male category has the most representation overall, with nearly an equal distribution among the twenty songs between the depiction of an individual and communal relationship. Overall, the distribution between the depiction of an individual and communal relationship suggests that the solo categories, whether male or female, are more apt to present a communal relationship, as opposed to the counterpart categories of the group. What is fascinating about this implication is its framework to understand man's relationship with God: an individual (female solo or male solo) portrays a communal relationship and conversely, a group (mixed or male group) portrays an individual relationship. Furthermore, with the given data one can surmise that the female

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group has no tangible platform to represent or to present a communal relationship with God.

In Chapter I, "The Fish" format directly relates to Merriam's statement: "song is frequently used as an enculturative device."\(^{22}\) "The Fish" format purports, as signified by its branded slogan, to be *safe for the whole family*. This implies that CCM as heard on 95.5 "The Fish" provides a framework for the process of enculturation, which usually begins during infancy. As parents and immediate circle of influence share their way of doing things, it usually becomes one's first experience of enculturation. Social anthropologists would argue that this is the first tier of learning.

Another pioneer in ethnomusicology, Bruno Nettl, writes, "A cliché about musical scholarship . . . divided scholars into historical musicologists, for whom music changes, and ethnomusicologists, whose emphasis is on what remains constant."\(^{23}\) He contends, "If indeed one can distinguish, in their attitude toward change, between the historical musicologist and the ethnomusicologist, it may be this: historical musicologists wish to know what actually happened; ethnomusicologists, what (typically or normally) "happens."\(^{24}\) A question arises regarding the emergence of a new-to-the-region music through the appropriation of a radio station frequency. For instance, "The Fish" format brought its product (CCM) to Cleveland, Ohio in 2001, but it was not through an influx of people who carried CCM with them. In this case, CCM would not necessarily reflect


\(^{24}\) Ibid.
itself as an agent of change (musicological) or a product of continuity (ethnomusicological), but a hybrid of sorts – the station frequency stayed the same, but its content changed. Although Merriam might not agree with the premise for this dissertation, due to a lack of "social interaction," Nettl might be in support of it when he writes, "We can throw away all disciplinary labels and admit that all of us want to learn about the past, its connection with the present and future."25

CCM arrived in Cleveland, Ohio on July 3, 2001 via the 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" radio station. Chapter I traced the transition of this radio station from an all-classical music format (WCLV) to "The Fish" format (WFHM) and the importance of an in-car listener adapting to an anywhere listener via technology. The two previous chapters provided a semiological analysis of CCM. Chapter III provided an analysis of the song texts to establish how CCM represents a dyadic relationship between God and man, and Chapter IV provided an analysis of the VCVCBC song form (used in 50 of the 56 songs) to understand how CCM aurally depicts sanctification as a lifelong process to free man from sin. Livengood and Book were unable to deduce, "when considering the data by the type of group (band or solo artist) and sex of the singer with frequency of theological words used in a song, a cross-tabulation did not show any systematic relation between the two categories."26 One could argue that, as discovered in Chapter II (Gender Analysis), a correlation between gender and lyric content does exist. While Chapter II does not reflect an examination of single words, because that model does not account for

26 Megan Livengood and Connie Ledoux Book, "Watering Down Christianity?," 124.
any contextual analysis, the breakdown of artists in the TOP 20 (See Figure 2), which is consumer-driven, reflects 66% (Male Solo and Male Group combined) of the total artists. In examining the context of songs in those categories, with that percentage in mind, one discovers that the male artists (solo or group) tend to be more God-oriented in their language. Furthermore, within the context of the fifty-six songs, only male artists sing from the perspective of God. The data demonstrate a connection between gender and lyric content; together they reinforce the construct of a masculine anthropomorphic God.

Although the primary function of this dissertation was to present a semiological analysis of CCM as heard on 95.5 WFHM-FM "The Fish" (Cleveland, Ohio) from July 2001 to July 2006, an interesting outgrowth is the incorporation of technology as the transmitter of content. This new technology forces one to think in new ways about the world. It challenges one to reconsider what it means to interact socially. In this case, the radio station serves as a gateway that allows social interaction to occur. In particular, "The Fish" format allows CCM to function as a didactic tool that teaches about sanctification as a lifelong process that frees man from sin. While depicting the essential dyadic relationship between God and man, CCM also uses song form to illustrate aurally the process of sanctification.
APPENDIX

Female Group


Female Solo

"All I Need" (Bethany Dillon) by Bethany Dillon, Dave Barnes, and Ed Cash, © Alletrop Music, Birdwing Music, and No Gang Music Publishing, 2004


"Live to [for] Today" (Natalie Grant) by Natalie Grant, © Nat-In-The-Hat Music, 2002.

"Pray" (Darlene Zschech) by Darlene Zschech, © Extravagant Worship, Inc., 2003


Mixed Group

"Breathe Your Name" (Sixpence None The Richer) by Matt Slocum, © Squint Songs and My So-Called Music, 2002.

"By His Wounds" (Glory Revealed) by Mac Powell and David Nasser, © Consuming Fire Music, Meaux Mercy, and Redemptive Art Music, 2007.

"If We Are the Body" (Casting Crowns) by Mark Hall, © SWECS Music and Club Zoo Music, 2003.
"Lifesong" (Casting Crowns) by Mark Hall, © SWECS Music and Club Zoo Music, 2005.


"Praise You In This Storm" (Casting Crowns) by Bernie Herms and Mark Hall, © Word Music, BanaHama Tunes, SWECS Music, and Club Zoo Music, 2005.

"Ready to Fly" (FFH) by Jeromy Diebler, © New Spring, 2003.


"You're Worthy of My Praise" (Big Daddy Weave/BarlowGirl) by David Ruis, © Maranatha Praise and Shade Tree Music, 1991.

Male Group

"Blessed Be Your Name" (Tree63) by Beth Redman and Matt Redman, © Thankyou Music, 2002.

"Cry Out to Jesus" (Third Day) by Brad Avery, David Carr, Mac Powell, Mark Lee, and Tai Anderson, © Consuming Fire Music, 2005.


"So Long Self" (Mercy Me) by Barry Graul, Bart Millard, Jim Bryson, Mike Scheuchzer, Nathan Cochran, and Robby Shaffer, © Simpleville Music and Wet As A Fish Music, 2006.

"Something Beautiful" (Newsboys) by Peter Furler and Paul Colman, © Songs of the Pea Sea and FB Holden Music, 2006.

"Space in Between Us, The" (Building 429) by Jason Roy and Jim Cooper, © Dayspring Music, 2003.

"Spoken For" (Mercy Me) by Bart Millard, Jim Bryson, Mike Scheuchzer, Nathan Cochran, Pete Kipley, and Robby Shaffer, © Simpleville Music, Songs from the Indigo Room, and Wordspring Music, 2002.


"Wholly Yours" (David Crowder Band) by David Crowder, © Worshiptogether.com Songs and Sixsteps Music, 2005.


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**Male Solo**

"Disappear" (Bebo Norman) by Chad Cates and Jess Cates, © New Spring and Right Bank Music, 2004.

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"He Will Carry Me" (Mark Schultz) by Dennis Kurttila, Mark Schultz, and Sampson Brueher, © Kurttila Songs, Be Together Music, and Crazy Romaine Music, 2003.


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