



THE
JESUS MUSIC
THE SOUNDTRACK OF A MOVEMENT

Faith Guide

ABOUT THE FILM

With stirring songs of faith, love, and hope, Jesus music rose from America's 1960s counterculture movement to become a worldwide phenomenon. This fascinating documentary reveals the music's uplifting and untold story - from its humble beginnings at the Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California through its transformation into the multibillion-dollar industry of Christian Contemporary Music today.

Directed by the Erwin Brothers ("I Can Only Imagine", "I Still Believe", "American Underdog"), THE JESUS MUSIC is the definitive love letter to CCM fans that features intimate interviews with the genre's biggest stars including Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, TobyMac, Kirk Franklin, and Lauren Daigle.

With stories of trials and triumphs, the universal power of music shines through from these artists' messages of passion, sacrifice and redemption, inspiring millions of devoted listeners.



ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

You can use this resource to plan an activity for your church small group. The questions explore worship music, the artists who create it and the role it plays in our faith.

Please use whichever questions you feel are appropriate for your group. If you're meeting together in person, be sure to stay COVID-safe and check the latest guidelines.

MAKING THE JESUS MUSIC

Brothers Andrew and Jon Erwin have previously directed faith-based films including *I Can Only Imagine* (2018) and *I Still Believe* (2020). Christian music has played an important and inspirational role in their creative careers - and so making *THE JESUS MUSIC* became 'our love letter to the music that shaped the stories that we tell.'

Over a six-month period they interviewed over one hundred people in the Christian music industry, capturing three hundred hours of footage. The story that emerged in the editing room, says Andrew, was about 'the crazy trailblazers in that spirit of defiance and adventure that's existed in this music. I think it's a story that not many people know the origins of, and it's incredibly romantic and beautiful to tell that origin story.'

Because Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) is quite a young genre, Andrew observes, nobody has really taken an in-depth look at its history before. Making the film revealed connections between Christian artists across the generations, as musicians influence each other and push the genre forward. 'It's just really cool to see that that pioneer spirit that started in the seventies has been passed down one generation to the next, and it's really cool to see how interconnected it is.' fit? These people's journeys are just authentic and human.



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As for the future, he believes it's looking bright. 'One thing about this current generation that's really cool is these artists that are breaking down barriers . . . There are Christians out there that have busted out beyond the CCM genre and are doing work in the mainstream, but still singing about those things that matter to all of us.'

The directors believe that their film has something to say for all audiences, regardless of their music preferences - or even their faith. 'I think there's something universally relatable about asking the question, where does my voice fit? These people's journeys are just authentic and human. Regardless of whether you're a fan of the music or not, you'll be incredibly attracted to that rebellious spirit that forged it.'

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What different experiences of musical expression in church have your group had? See how many different styles you can identify! Which types of music have been most personally meaningful for your group and why?
2. Which of the artists featured in THE JESUS MUSIC had your group been aware of before watching the film? Or which of the interviewees did you most feel a connection with – either personally or musically? Were there any particular quotes that resonated with you?
3. Did you have views on the “Contemporary Christian Music” (CCM) world before watching the film – either positive or negative? And did the film challenge those views or confirm them?
4. What can you recall from the film about the origins of CCM in the “Jesus Movement” of the late 1960s? Was anything about this story surprising to you? How did the established churches in America react to it? What about Billy Graham?
5. The film shows very different attitudes to CCM. Televangelist Jimmy Swaggart described it as a “diabolical scheme of Satan”, and even one early CCM artist seemed to wonder whether “this music [rock n’ roll] that was born out of rebellion... could be something the Holy Spirit could use?”

Are there any styles of music that you find it hard to imagine bringing glory to God? Are some styles “holier” or more suitable for worship than others? Or is it just a matter of personal preference



6. “We have the spirit of redemption when we speak. And when we don’t say something, we say something.”

How do you understand this quote from Kirk Franklin, one of the Black artists in the film? What role could Christian music play in racial reconciliation and making the church less segregated? And why do you think so little has actually been achieved?

7. “We want these people to be somehow better than us... when they fall it reminds us of our own fallibility.”

What was your reaction to Amy Grant’s story told in the film? One of her friends described her early persona as a “demure kind of style... which is the way the church liked women”. How have you seen different standards applied to women and men in the church, and are these attitudes changing?

8. “When CCM started out, it was about trying to minister to people through music... now it really deserves to be called ‘the industry’.” “It feels like showbiz... feels like we’ve lost our way.”

What is your reaction to these quotes from the film? Does money take away from the integrity of Christian artists or the ‘purity’ of their music? Is it okay for a Christian artist to want to be successful in terms of record and ticket sales?



THE JESUS MUSIC is available to own from **13th December 2021** from the following digital platforms: Sky Store, Amazon, Apple TV, Chili, Rakuten, Virgin, Google Play and Microsoft.

PRAYER

“God has this wild way of allowing his presence to be known via rhythm, rhyme and melody... the richness of hope land upon someone’s spirit and embrace the embrace of God.”

Lauren Daigle stretches for words as she tries to describe something mysterious and beautiful. In closing, give space for those in your group to share how music – of any style – speaks to their soul like this. Close by thanking God for the gift of music and how it enriches our lives and our faith - you could use the suggested prayer below/

Dear God, thank you for all of the artists over the years who have worshipped you and expressed truth in so many different ways. Help us to experience you through their music – and through all the creative gifts that you give. Inspire us to worship you with courage and creativity, even if others judge us, and to be open to what your spirit is doing. Amen.

