



“Should Black Entrepreneurs Listen to Gospel Music?”

Entrepreneurs must remain positive if they are to be successful. They must adopt a positive perspective in their business planning, and they must execute their plan energetically. Their positive energy must be so powerful as to persuade a walk-away client to return voluntarily to the negotiating table and make a purchase.

How do you build such positive energy? By feeding yourself affirmative thoughts and by performing affirmative acts. Therefore music that sings of unworthiness, of anticipated hardships, and of a “pray, wait, and see” attitude is not for a successful entrepreneur.

No matter how catchy the tune or energizing the beat, today’s Gospel music that is rife with the just mentioned lyrics should be avoided.

Today, I listened for about an hour to one of the many gospel music stations that one can find on the Internet these days (WHAL 95.7 Memphis, Tennessee). Although I had contemplated this issue before, for the first time I received a clear signal that the Gospel music being played contained the seeds of failure.

Within that hour, I heard eight songs that espoused the following sentiments: We are all sinners who are unworthy of the great things that life has to offer; we should expect to confront barriers to future success; and God will work a miracle if we simply pray, believe, and wait on God. In fact, we are told that we have a right to expect miracles because we are God’s children.

These lyrics are consistent with “prosperity gospel” without the requirement of seed sowing. However, these lyrics are inconsistent with the Black American tradition, the reality of life itself, and they are lyrics of failure.

By our very nature, Black Americans are working people. Give a Black man or woman a job to do and the authority to get it done, and they will work from “can’t see in the morning to can’t see at night” making things happen. Like Hiram Abiff, they may say a prayer in the morning for success and a prayer of thanks at night before they close for the day. In the interim, however, they will work.

The history of successful Black Americans is not one of holding a hand out, but of working to create success.

This life attitude is the foundation that undergirds the work of great Black Americans: e.g., Sojourner Truth, Rev. Richard Allen, Carter G. Woodson, George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King, Dr. Ben Carson, and Dwayne Wade. They may have had a practice of asking God for help, but they were certainly no slackers in working to create success.

Music is an important part of the Black American tradition. However, music that is played on Gospel music stations all across the nation, which is filled with negativity and that instruct us to “hope, wait, and see,” is the wrong music for Black entrepreneurs—for all Black people for that matter.

In a period when there are so many concerns in the Black Community, we need to maintain a positive future outlook and not be continuously bombarded with the idea that we will face hurdles. In addition, we don’t need to be fed a diet of “faith without works.” Rather we should recognize that “hope is no strategy,” and that we need to strategize how to work to improve our condition as opposed to awaiting a miracle from God.

How can we be assured that this is God’s intent? Because, in the *Holy Bible*, *Ephesians* 3:20, it is written, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” Too often we hear quoted the first portion of this verse, “...exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” What we seldom hear is “according to the power that worketh in us.” In other words, if we don’t work, then there will be no abundance.

Consequently, we should be careful about allowing ourselves to be under the rein of Gospel music stations that play “unworthy,” “doomsday” and “pray, wait, and see” music. If we continue to consume this type of diet, then we will poison our otherwise positive mind and produce failure.

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