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# Comfort zones are slow dream killers : Amy Grant and the Christian music industry

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**COMFORT ZONES ARE SLOW DREAM KILLERS:  
AMY GRANT AND THE CHRISTIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY**

**A Thesis**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the Department of Television-Radio-Film-Theatre**

**San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**of Master of Arts**

**by**

**Kimberly M. Clark**

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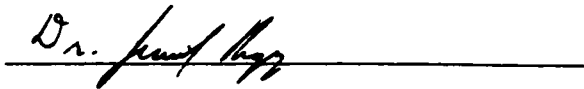
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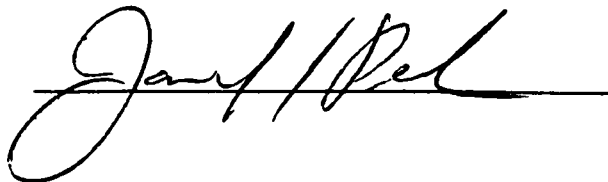
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## **Abstract**

### **COMFORT ZONES ARE SLOW DREAM KILLERS: AMY GRANT AND THE CHRISTIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY**

**by Kimberly M. Clark**

This thesis explores the mainstream and contemporary Christian music (CCM) industries, and Amy Grant's role in each. Utilizing the communication model, the paper analyzes Grant's impact on these industries and the public, providing the history of CCM, an overview of the music business today (Christian and secular), and an exploration of the objections raised by conservative Christians regarding Grant's career and personal life. Topics include image and marketing, commercialism, fame, wealth, and responsibilities of Christians as assigned by fellow believers.

Original research reveals a discrepancy between the views of vocal conservatives and the majority of the public (Christian and non-Christian), demonstrating that general audiences have positive impressions of Grant: the controversies and their related judgments, not Grant's choices, have caused greater harm to the public perception of Christianity. The paper introduces the term "Christian variable" to describe how conservative believers judge Christian public figures by religious, not professional, criteria.



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Finally, thank you to the authors of the books and articles which I used as research and may or may not have used in this final draft. Thank you to the survey respondents for their time and vulnerability. More study will come from this work and may the lessons in the following pages challenge the reader as they have the author.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

**“In history, there are no solitary dreams; one dreamer breathes life into the next.”**  
**-Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado**

**Artists throughout history have aspired to or even needed to communicate their visions to the world. It is this paper’s purpose to analyze the result of one such artist’s desire and what effect, if any, her choices have made on a specific population.**

**Amy Grant has been described as “not only one of the most influential singers in contemporary Christian music, but also a successful pop star” (Brennan). When she became a musical performer, she immediately faced a challenge: an excited, devout Christian, Grant sought an audience beyond a few other Christians; but the codes within the contemporary Christian music industry (CCM for short) dictated that Christian music was to use solely biblical language and focus on other Christians. (Note: CCM is actually part of a name belonging legally to an industry magazine, *CCM Magazine*; however, the acronym has since folded into the nomenclature of the industry it represents.) Even so, Grant jumpstarted her career by signing a record contract with Word Records, a Christian label, as a teenager.**

**Her twenty-five years as a professional singer, however, have been tumultuous and challenging; she has become a “lightening rod for criticism” (Struck). In his article, “A Chastened Singer Returns to Christian Basics,” Steve Rabey writes: “From the beginning, Ms. Grant’s career has reflected the tensions**

separating outward-looking evangelicals, who seek to reach and save the lost, from their more cautious brethren, who seek to preserve believers' holiness and moral purity."

This thesis will examine the ingredients of the debate over Amy Grant and her career – lyrical content, commercialism, fame, wealth, personal life – which reflect the historical tension between the Christian church (hereafter Church) and its desire to preserve the Christian image, its doxa, by defining the value of and place for its music in U.S. culture. It details the complex relationships between the worlds of mainstream and Christian entertainment, and the equally intricate relationships within the Christian community, revealing how they are perceived by outside eyes. Ultimately, the thesis offers significant conclusions about the image of Christianity: what truly damages it, and what does not.

The thesis analysis follows the well-established basic communication model forwarded by many communications scholars (see Jakobson, Hall, Baran, and others), which explains the communication process thus: a source encodes and sends a message to a receiver, who decodes the message and possibly provides a response to the source.

In other words, the paper first examines the sources that communicate: the CCM industry, the mainstream music industry, and Amy Grant herself. Second, it examines the "messages" sent by the addressers: the music, the expectations, the inner workings of the industries. Finally, it explores how audiences, both Christian and non-Christian, "receive" or respond to these messages, using published discourse as well as results from an original quantitative/qualitative survey. Grant's responses are also included.

Amy Grant is important because contemporary Christian music is “perhaps, the most unexpectedly popular form of sacred music in history” (Kavanaugh 239-40). Grant was the “Queen of CCM” (Sanz and Scheff 71), yet simultaneously sandwiched on secular radio between Madonna and Michael Jackson (Sandy Smith “Amy Grant Reflects”). No other Christian artist has accomplished such exposure.

Jim Chaffee, former Myrrh records executive, elaborates:

She’s [Grant’s] singlehandedly more responsible for the size of our industry than any other artist that we’ve had or any other executive that’s done anything. I mean, the career and record sales that Amy Grant has accomplished in the last twenty-five years is [sic] really responsible for what we are today. I think apart from her we would be a lot smaller industry. And that’s what’s frustrating to me because I think that a lot of the gatekeeper critics which we find sometimes in radio, retail and other things, wouldn’t have a career and wouldn’t have a job if it wasn’t for Amy Grant.

And in the mainstream world, Grant “probably did more than any other figure to put a warm and winsome public face on a growing evangelical movement often associated with anti-abortion activists, disgraced television preachers and Disney boycotts” (Rabey “A Chastened Singer”).

Grant has seventeen albums, including three Christmas albums (see Appendix A). Her music is heard on many movie and television soundtracks; she has hosted two of her own Christmas specials on network television and starred in a network special movie-of-the-week. Grant’s “Baby, Baby” was named the most played song during the 1990s by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA [see Appendix B]). She has sold 24 million

albums worldwide (the next closest CCM artist has sold eight million), has won five Grammys and 22 Dove Awards – which is the CCM version of the Grammys. She is among the very few women who have received the honorable Pax Christi award for humanitarianism from St. John’s University (see Appendix B).

In short, Grant was the first superstar of CCM, “a form that weds Christian lyrics with pop styles. Today, it’s a billion-dollar industry that touts itself as entertainment and ministry. It has record clubs, awards shows, music videos, internet chats” (Hogan “Fame”).

However, as we will discuss in detail, one definition of CCM is difficult to pinpoint, even within the industry. Christian music is also considered an oxymoron by some (Ganahl); as former editor of *CCM Magazine* April Hefner says, “I believe music is music and *people* are Christian or not Christian” (emphasis mine). Crosswalk.com writer Mark Joseph considers the use of “Christian” in front of “music” to be prejudicial, a prequalifier or disclaimer (depending on the viewer’s perspective). He equates “Christian music” with “male nurse”; just as society assumes nurses are female, so it assumes that music is not Christian (“Moving CCM”). Adding the adjective shows that we are socialized to think one way of music and entirely another when it is “Christian music.”

So in this study, it is important to clarify the use of “Christian” as an adjective. For mere simplicity of language, I will refer to “Christian radio stations” and “Christian record labels” throughout the paper; however, I only intend to differentiate the two industries, not to take sides in the debate.

Because this paper discusses the CCM industry, Christian songs are

defined here as “substantially based upon historically orthodox Christian truth contained in or derived from the Holy Bible; and/or an expression of worship of God or praise for His works; and/or testimony of relationship with God through Christ; and/or obviously prompted and informed by a Christian world view.” Christians, then, are defined as those who believe in the “historically orthodox Christian truth contained in or derived from the Holy Bible” (Gospel Music Association).

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Sources: CCM, Mainstream Music, and Amy Grant**

CCM emerged in the era of social unrest, creating a large Christian movement in pop culture. In the 1960s, the creation of the Jesus Movement (and Jesus People) – sparked by the “Generation Gap” discussed by evangelical Christian Billy Graham (Baker 23) – enabled rebellious youths, wanting a return to the basics of love and peace, to rediscover religion. During this time period, Jesus became “cool” to try (Kavanaugh 242); and as some who tried the drug and “free love” routes began to seek deeper meaning, many found Jesus – sporting the same haircut and beard as many of them – as one to whom they could relate. Two distinct groups developed in tandem.

One sector did the searching and began reading the New Testament, but did not want to affiliate with the Church per se because of its judgmental reputation and adult (and therefore antiquated) focus. The other sector consisted of young Christians, Church members, who recognized Jesus as relatable to youth.

The next natural youth-oriented step in the rebellion was music (Baker 197). The second sector of the Jesus People felt compelled and desperate to share their faith, and with their love of contemporary music and its channeling of emotion, the popular music of the day met the dual-millennial Christian religion. During the late 1960s, the Jesus movement slowly gained acceptance by some Christian denominations due to the large numbers of baptisms occurring at the



concerts. But the cautious spoke out, fearing that these youth were not being baptized to Jesus, but to the bands or the rock music – a false god:

First, the lost are reached not through music but through the preaching of the Gospel. Nowhere in the Bible do we find that music is for evangelism. Second, obedience to God does not allow us to use the world's music or methods. Third, the Apostles did not use the entertainment of the world to reach the world. Fourth, what you win people with, you win them to. If people are won through worldly things, how could they ever be expected to separate from the world as the Word of God demands? (Cloud 163)

However, justifications such as “The message may stay the same but the wrapping of it doesn't” and “Most people have discovered that music [that is, musical notes and rhythms] is only the vehicle to convey a message” made music the method of choice for reaching the youth; and hence Jesus Music or Jesus Rock formed (Spence 122). A hybrid of rock and folk productions, with lyrical content that expressed praise to God and care for the spiritual well-being of the listener, became popular and won countless new converts to Christianity.

After witnessing the success of Woodstock, Christian artists created their own music festivals to emphasize the communal Christian feeling. In this infancy, CCM broke down racial and denominational borders by including everyone in the major festivals and concerts. The common factor was not ethnicity or religious denomination, but love for the music and its message (Baker 149).

CCM also broke down barriers into the commercial, mainstream world in the early 1970s. Slowly some radio stations switched to contemporary Christian

music. Record companies (secular and Christian-run) began technically improving recordings. Various factions within the movement became systematically organized. Christian stores that focused on books renamed themselves to include “records” in their store names. Bands began to tour and major award events were created. An industry had formed in approximately six short years, commonly recognized as beginning in 1969 (Kavanaugh 243).

Simultaneously, secular artists recorded and released big mainstream radio hits featuring Jesus (such as “Spirit in the Sky”), purely because the subject was “hot” and was selling well (Baker 46-48). The previously marginalized, antiquated, stuffy, traditional Christian religion became a trendy fad in popular culture.

The Jesus Movement lost its zeal by the mid 1970s, but the new Christian sector outlived the fad. Christian musicians continued to put out music and provide concerts. The industry held its own long enough to garner its first superstar in 1977 – a high school student from Tennessee.

This high schooler, Amy Grant, was influenced by the revivalist movement in Nashville: she attended a Charismatic church and youth group where singing, dancing, and overall overt expressions of joy were the norm during church services – a completely different scene from her non-instrumental, revere-in-silence, only-move-when-asked-to-stand-or-sit upbringing in the Church of Christ denomination (Rabey “A Chastened Singer”).

A fan of popular artists of the time such as James Taylor and Carole King, Grant found that her favorite artists and radio stations did not particularly match what was going on in her young, excited and devout Christian mind. As a result, she began writing her own songs, made a tape for her parents, and soon had a

record deal, finding herself in the recording studio and on the road while attending college (Sandy Smith "Amy Grant Reflects"; Rabey "A Chastened Singer"). Amy Grant was unwittingly on the path to take the Jesus Movement from a small-scale organized system to a billion-dollar industry.

One of the artistic choices that originally garnered Grant such broad acceptance within CCM was her overtly Christian lyrics. CCM is its own music sub-culture that differentiates itself from secular music primarily by lyrical content (although the "heart" or motivation of the artist, and his or her targeted audience, are also differentiators). CCM lyrics are Christian-based, often utilizing "gospel-speak" or language extracted directly from the translated Christian Holy Bible. They are focused "vertically" – providing messages or praises from the worshipping Christian to God, or openly referencing God (Ali 41). For example, on her 1982 breakthrough album, *Age to Age*, Grant writes, "Through Your love and through the ram, You saved the son of Abraham / You were the God who really sees, and by Your might, You set Your children free" ("El-Shaddai").

In contrast, the lyrics of most mainstream or pop music are devoid of such divine praise; when they mention God, it is often to question His existence or protest His choices (e.g., "One of Us" by Joan Osborne, "Dear God" by XTC, and "God" by Tori Amos). Consequently, there was room for a middle ground between CCM and pop music. Three years after *Age to Age*, Grant broadened her lyrics to include everyday life, outside of the context of religion or Christianity. This album, *Unguarded*, enabled her crossover and brought some mainstream success. Grant spoke of this time in her life in a personal interview, saying, "I had a personal problem with...I didn't want to feel like I was being paid to

provide a testimony.” She began writing songs to “orchestrate an experience” and as a result, “it kind of started what was laughingly referred to as ‘God/girlfriend’ songs, which meant they could be either for God or they could be for a boyfriend or girlfriend – which was not really the point, but was just sort of a byproduct of that.” Generic references such as “you” and “he” (versus “You” and “He,” referring to God) became more common in Grant’s music, which caused much deliberation and speculation.

Her 1997 release, *Behind the Eyes*, for example, was completely devoid of blatant Christian vocabulary; it was considered “horizontal” – it addressed not God, but Grant’s peers. Proponents of ambiguous lyrics argue that non-specific language allows listeners to form independent interpretations; the songs appeal and relate to more people – audiences of any religious affiliation. Grant says, “To me, the real mystery of music is that it connects us to people, to an understanding, to a feeling or to some kind of truth.” According to the *Dallas Morning News*, she wanted people to say, “I relate to this” (Ave). *Behind the Eyes* even caused the GMA to amend (that is, broaden) its eligibility statements for Dove Award nominations so that the album could be included (GMA).

But not everyone was excited about the vague lyrical direction in Grant’s music. In particular, CCM and pop culture scholar William D. Romanowski, a professor of communication arts and sciences at Christian-affiliated Calvin College, argues in *Christianity Today* that “the album lacks social and religious context appropriate for a Christian performer” (45), although he goes on to say he likes the album and applauds Grant for challenging the limitations of contemporary Christian music.

Protesting the lyrical ambiguity, evangelical purists called for clear use of Christian terms by CCM artists, especially its most successful artist, Grant. One prominent musician of the Christian industry published 107 theses in 1997 denouncing ambiguous use of pronouns by Christian artists (Camp). Thesis number 41 says, "Christian music, originally called Jesus Music, once fearlessly sang clearly about the gospel. Now it yodels of a Christ-less, watered down, pabulum-based, positive alternative, aura-fluff, cream of wheat, mush-kind-of-syrupy, God-as-my-girlfriend kind of thing." These opponents scowl at the vague terms and declare the ambiguity sacrilegious and perhaps blasphemous.

These members of the Christian faith, commonly referred to as conservative Christians, believe that the Bible is literal truth and often use its Scripture to support their arguments. They adopt biblical language, which some describe as "God-talk," "Christianese," or "gospel-speak" (Norris *Amazing* 211-14; Norris *Cloister* 154-58). This parlance includes "Calling," which is a person's purpose as directed by God; "Lost," used to describe those who are not Christians; and "worldly," describing the lives that Lost people lead (promiscuity, explicit language, and debauchery, among other pleasures of the flesh, are "worldly" engagements). Many of the arguments against Amy Grant are heavily weighed by this language, which is common in the Bible, Christian circles, Christian-oriented media, and some Christian music (Separational music, which we will discuss later).

The constant pressure of others' expectations, and the "stylistic moral straitjackets" of the [CCM] genre, weighed on Grant (Harrington "Where Angels Fear"). Christian and secular media covered the controversy and made Amy Grant one of the most visible contemporary Christian music figures criticized for

making albums that crossed over to the secular market. Grant claims, "Sometimes artists change direction because of hard feelings. I like both of them (pop and gospel), so I'm not really looking to close the door either way. I'd like the freedom to do both" (DeMain). In his biography of Grant, Bob Millard summarizes Grant's career:

She has often been discussed more in terms of who she is not rather than who she is. She has made her mark by ignoring many of the time tested traditions of gospel music and its industry. Had she gone those old ways, she would never have earned her shot at the pop field, nor would some veins of gospel music have seen the popularity they enjoy today. (63)

## The Message: Lyrics, Branding, and Intertextuality

Now that I have introduced the addressers and explained their relationship to each other, I must explore their messages. In this section I will discuss the messages found in CCM and Grant's lyrics; the business of branding CCM artists, including Grant; and the blurring – the intertextuality – between this Grant brand and Grant's personal life.

After the Jesus Movement, but before CCM became a bona fide industry, CCM was called the Gospel Music Industry. The Gospel Music Association (GMA) was – and still is – an umbrella-like CCM supervising organization (it annually hosts "GMA Week," the CCM industry conference which concludes with the Dove Awards, for example). In 1979, the GMA published the *Gospel Music Encyclopedia*, and its then-executive director, Don Butler, helped explain what contemporary Christian music *does not* include: "Gospel music is truth and this truth is spoken through lyrics – lyrics that contain no pornography, no expression of illicit love affairs, no sexual promiscuity, no suggestion of drug involvement or experimentation. Instead, it puts forth pure love undefiled, brotherhood of man, respect for one another, and honesty with God and your neighbor. This is good for mankind" (Anderson and North 15).

Even so, different groups within CCM assign different purposes to their art. In their book, *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music*, Howard and Streck divide these CCM camps into categories: Separational (ministry), Transformational (art), and Integrational (entertainment).

Separational artists deliberately keep their music separate from the mainstream world. They choose to use overt, “Christianese” lyrics. They believe, as proud Christians, that they should not compromise nor cloak their religious lyrics; if the world wants them, that is, it has to take them as they are. Separational artists are often “musicianaries,” a term combining “musician” and “missionary” (Bell). Though they seek to inspire and uplift Christians, they also want to reach non-Christians and convert them; they seek to save souls.

On the other end of the spectrum are the Transformational artists. They create CCM purely for the suffering and struggle of the art of music; they seek to transform or convert listeners by the sweat and commitment poured into the music. They believe the art of music cannot be both commercially successful and honest.

An Integrational artist, Amy Grant fits in the middle of the spectrum. The Integrational artist wishes to provide musical entertainment with a Christian perspective on all aspects of human life – not only the sacred and not only the secular. Butler defends the Integrational viewpoint: “Who decreed that religion could not also be entertaining? Is it imperative that religion be sad, somber, reserved? Or may it be alive, vibrant, vital and electrifying?” (Anderson and North 11).

Indeed, some Integrational artists believe that their music offers greater conversion potential: because it tends to appeal to a broader audience, it can reach more people with its Christian message. Others do not focus on conversion; they simply want to express their life experiences through music.

In general, Integrational artists use the ambiguous language that Separatists denounce. However, they often publicly reveal and discuss their



Christianity in other ways (to be addressed further in this chapter). For example, while promoting their song, “Kiss Me” – which contains no reference to God – the members of Sixpence None the Richer appeared on *The Tonight Show* and openly discussed their spirituality (“Sixpence None the Richer”).

These categories reflect the overall controversy regarding the purpose of CCM, with the primary conflict arising between Separatist and Integrational viewpoints. The former want to be separate from the mainstream world; they quote Scripture to prove that they should be “in the world but not *of* the world” (1 John 2:15-17).

Integrational artists, on the other hand, tend to see CCM as either a redundant industry or an obstacle to the greater calling for Christians to “go out into the world and spread the Good News” (Mark 16:15). As she moved to cross her music over to mainstream audiences, Amy Grant described the situation thus: “It’s like there’s a huge mountain called the music business and this thing next to it, a little bitty saltshaker – that’s the Christian music business. My question is, how can I sing to that mountain of people out there?” (Carlisle 106).

Disputes about music within the Christian faith, however, are nothing new. The Bible is riddled with references to music and singing, both in celebration of and praise to God (see Appendix D). The Bible mentions singing and music 550 times, in 44 of 66 books; “music” and associated terms appear 75 times; “song” appears 98 times; and “sing” appears 196 times (Cloud 9).

But even though the Bible describes instruments being played and humans singing as pleasing to God, it does not describe how that music is to supposed to sound – *a capella*, chant, orchestra, rock and roll, or perhaps thrash

metal (Mitchell 61)? As Kavanaugh pointed out, “Most of today’s musical controversies have centuries-old roots” (133).

Indeed, since Christianity emerged in the first century and the resulting Bible became a life manual for Christians, the relationship between the Church and music has been a rocky one. Christians have hotly debated the appropriateness of particular instruments and musical styles, as well as suitable motivations and intentions of musical artists, throughout the ages (Frith).

Historically, instruments invented by secular artisans were first identified by the Church as non-religious; they were, therefore, vetoed for reverent use. For example, the organ was thought to house a devil in every pipe (S. Miller 133). Now it is regarded as a sacred instrument, only housed in the more traditional and conservative of Christian churches. In terms of musical style, each new generation has made its own imprint, usually by going against the previous generation’s musical model. In the late 1800s, “Hymns did shock many skeptical Christians whereas today [they] are considered ‘funeral marches’ of tradition” (S. Miller 141). Music inspired by drinking songs now fills some Christian hymnals (Routley 180). Apparently, distance from music’s original context makes hearts grow fonder; as new generations appropriate particular forms of music to express Christianity, the religious context over time erases any negative association (Mitchell 26).

Then there is the power of music. Before the Bible was written, the Greeks recognized and quantified music’s power of persuasion; Plato writes, “Let me make the songs of a nation and I care not who makes the laws” (Kavanaugh 7). To some, music *is* a religion; it gives them a heightened feeling, a euphoria. As Robert Mitchell writes, “All music is intrinsically an expression of emotion” (8).

The Church has primarily seen this power as a threat and distraction from God. Christians have debated the health of music to our bodies (S. Miller 11, 14, 21, 24, 25, 27, 52); the potential sensuality of music leading listeners to sexual misconduct (Spence 61, 64); the origin of music as a medium for summoning demons (S. Miller 29) or worship to pagan gods (Kavanaugh 24); and the ability of music to fill minds with thoughts of rebellion and shock (Spence 64). Even in the current age, Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell called Christian rock musicians “of the devil” (Burman and Walmsley).

Ter Ellingson begins his contribution in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* by describing how,

Religious believers have heard music as the voices of gods and the cacophony of devils, praised it as the purest form of spirituality, and condemned it as the ultimate in sensual depravity; with equal enthusiasm they have promoted its use in worship and sought to eradicate it from both religious and secular life. Seldom a neutral phenomenon, music has a high positive or negative value that reflects its near-universal importance in the religious sphere. (163)

The advent of contemporary Christian music has reheated this ageless debate.

Kavanaugh writes,

I have had the misfortune of seeing music – or rather, the mishandling of music – create terrible schisms in the Christian church. It sometimes seems that there are more divisions occurring over musical tastes than biblical doctrine. Today, more than ever, there is a tremendous need for believers to have a deeper understanding of all forms of Christian music. (xi)

Yet the argument rages on. What music is appropriate? How should it be used? And to whom should religious music be directed?

The debate also extends beyond CCM to the mainstream music industry. Many mainstream industry members do not allow religion-based music onto their presses or airwaves for proselytizing purposes – MTV and VH1, for instance, have declined to air overtly Christian music videos (Wetzstein). However, they do include songs that question or refute Christianity, or that incorporate religious language into secular topics. For example, the online poll that followed VH1's 2001 *Rock and Religion* program listed five choices for the "best religious-themed pop song": "Crucify" by Tori Amos, "Like A Prayer" by Madonna, "One of Us" by Joan Osborne, "Losing My Religion" by R.E.M., and Sting's "If I Ever Lose My Faith in You." In spite of a thriving religious music industry, not one song on the list spawned from CCM.

When Christian bands are allowed on mainstream stations and video music networks, it is usually because their lyrics are ambiguous. Such bands as Creed and Lifehouse offer spiritual lyrics but deny Christianity as their primary platform. In return, they gain greater airplay. Jason Wade of Lifehouse posits, "My music is spiritually based, but we don't want to be labeled as a 'Christian band,' because all of a sudden people's walls come up and they won't listen to your music and what you have to say" (Wild). Even well-known, successful Christian bands such as U2 and P.O.D. (Payable on Death) signed with secular labels; by avoiding the CCM avenue, they could speak directly to mainstream audiences without the constraints of CCM codes.

In general, non-Christians regard CCM as a feeble attempt to be trendy. After a cover article called "The Glorious Rise of Christian Pop" appeared in

*Newsweek* in 2001, the ABC program *Politically Incorrect* held a forum to discuss CCM success. The host Bill Maher fumed: "I am so incensed about this, this Christian rock. I mean, Christianity is the antithesis of rock and roll. It bothers me that they co-opt rock and roll...rock and roll is a rebellion against everything that Christianity stands for."

Other non-Christians dismiss CCM as a "naive, self-righteous, knock-off of 'real' music" (Scott 49) and "two seasons behind the curve" (Chamberlin). Some non-Christians feel the music can be "soulless" because the "missionary zeal...undermine[s] creative vision in Christian rock" (Hermes). Others, aware of the fierce debates, "worry that people in CCM sometimes take themselves too seriously...it's only pop music, here today and off the charts tomorrow...even the best song entertains only briefly, and maybe gives listeners something worthwhile to think about" (Lutes 86).

However, a few offer dissenting perspectives: "As far as I'm concerned, rock is an art form. It's a form of expression and I think that these kids should be free to express themselves whatever way they feel necessary. Rock seems to be one of those ways," says Dave Navarro (*Politically Incorrect*). Some feel that the two types of rock, though different, ultimately participate in the same discussion: "Traditional rock music questions traditional values, Christian rock promotes them...secular bands ask the questions Christian bands answer" (LaFranco and Gubernick 41).

In sum, Separational Christian music brims with serious religious themes; mainstream music deliberately avoids them. Only Integrational Christian music floats in both categories, providing both secular and religious songs, as well as music that is open to interpretation.

Understanding these distinct groups, it seems that Integrational artists have the greatest potential for success. By simply writing songs that fall into two distinct categories – or those that defy categorization – they can reach both Christian and mainstream audiences.

Amy Grant in particular navigated these dual waters brilliantly. The highest-selling CCM artist in history, Grant also gleaned great pop success. However, to analyze her real impact – the real significance of these accomplishments – we must examine the nature and practices of the music industry, both its mainstream and Christian components.

As shown above, both the secular and sacred music industries strongly identify with their individual worlds. And yet, when there is commercial potential, they do work together. As Christian music gained substantial growth and recognition from 1982 to 1985 – primarily sparked by Amy Grant's *Age to Age* (first CCM album to go Gold, achieving sales over 500,000), her multiple Grammy wins, and the first crossover-aimed album, *Unguarded* – secular companies began to take notice. Today, the majority of Christian labels are owned by secular media conglomerates (for example, AOL/Time Warner owns Word Entertainment, and BMG owns Provident Music Distribution; the exception is Salem Communications, owned and run by Christians – a parent company to several Christian radio stations in the U.S. as well as *CCM Magazine*), creating a new landscape for the CCM industry and the Christian artists themselves.

Both Separational and Integrational/crossover artists have been affected by mainstream involvement, but in different ways. Secular companies want a piece of the Separational pie without threatening their mainstream reputations.

Acknowledging the 100 million Christians in the United States as a distinct niche marketplace, secular owners are not known to tamper with CCM lyrics; they are content to allow their CCM executives to produce the music that sells (Mehle).

To sell to Separational audiences, these executives apply the JPM litmus test – they ensure that each album contains a satisfactory number of “Jesus Per Minutes” (Olsen 85). Some listeners appreciate the constant biblical focus; others, reports John J. Thompson, manager of an alternative Christian music store, “complain that retailers and radio stations seem to determine a band’s ministry by the number of times it sings the word Jesus. [Producers] are taking this art and breaking it down into these inane little parts, trying to calculate how much ministry is in it” (Olsen 85). Despite the internal disagreements, though, ultimately CCM executives make the content decisions; Separational artists need not worry that secular executives will remove or alter religious lyrics.

However, the secular world still has power in the retail arena. Mainstream retailers typically put Separational Christian music (and some Integrational music) in its own CCM section instead of categorizing the artists by musical genre. Some say the separation marginalizes the music: “The sign might as well say, ‘Nonbelievers, don’t shop here!’” (Davis). According to Jim Chaffee, CCM is exposed to less than a third of its “market potential” (Olsen 85). In her article for the *Austin American-Statesmen*, Anne Smith observes, “All musicians resist attempts to categorize their music. Understandably, they prefer not to have their art summarily labeled and stuffed in a genre bin. For Christian artists, it’s a losing battle. Whether their songs are pop, country, blues or hip-hop, if a Christian point of view is presented, that’s as far as the labeling process gets.”

Separational artists also get limited radio exposure. Perhaps surprisingly, the vast majority of church-going Christians do not listen to Christian music. “If you take all the Christian radio stations’ ratings,” reports John Styll, the former publisher of *CCM Magazine*, “it would barely equal the top station in Los Angeles” (Mehle).

To avoid categorization and reach a more substantial audience, some Christian artists sign with secular labels – which, counter-intuitively, behooves the CCM industry. Such artists can sell music through both Christian and mainstream retail outlets; Amy Grant, for instance, signed with Word Records, but also has a distribution outlet to mainstream retail and radio through Interscope/A&M Records. To promote her upcoming pop album – half owned by Word, half by Interscope – Grant must provide two sets of singles to cater to the two separate audiences (Grant; Chaffee).

This secular-sacred relationship improves CCM sales figures exponentially (see Appendix C). If an album is sold within Christian outlets – members of the Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) – while simultaneously being sold through [www.cdnw.com](http://www.cdnw.com), Target, Wal-Mart, Tower Records, and other mainstream online and retail venues, the Christian marketplace counts both sales. Therefore, if an Amy Grant CD is sold by Tower Records and simultaneously sold by Berean Christian Bookstores, CCM will take credit for the sales at both venues (Hamaker). As a result, the CCM market annually shows double-digit increases in sales (GMA) while mainstream is currently in a 13-percent slump (Gundersen).

The relationship has benefits for the artists as well. Secular involvement raises the production values of CCM recordings, packaging, marketing, touring



and merchandising with additional financing CCM budgets alone cannot match (Mehle).

Signing with secular labels also gives artists more creative freedom. John Styll notes, “The fact is, Christian radio is the weak link in the chain. Anything edgy, they get their hands slapped by the Christian community” (Mehle). For Christian radio stations – nonprofit organizations primarily supported by pledge drives and underwriting by conservative listeners, churches, and businesses – that hand-slapping is necessary to stay afloat. Operated by boards that want to make the donors content, they stay away from controversial music and musicians (Chaffee).

On the flip side, mainstream music radio stations are commercial and therefore program attractively for the advertisers and support their success with ratings. They do not cater to conservative Christians – but they too need to make money.

Indeed, there is constant pressure on Christian artists to deliver product and give the owners and stockholders return on their investments. Instead of spreading the Word first and foremost, even CCM labels are forced to shift to enhancing the bottom line. Stan Moser comments, “I would probably be more inclined to call the industry ‘commercial Christian music’ rather than ‘contemporary Christian music’” (Long “Monster” 26).

Still, some claim these business relationships have little impact. John Styll insists, “Even in Christian music, the bottom line has always been the bottom line. It hasn’t hurt the product” (Mehle). CCM commentator John Fischer agrees: “The music business – all business, for that matter – serves itself; it has to in order to stay alive.”

Justifiably or not, the CCM industry is as broad and intricate as the mainstream one upon which it is modeled. Even from its earliest days, CCM looked to the mainstream industry for a business model that would improve efficiency in delivering products to consumers. Dependent on artists, managers, publicists, booking agents, business managers, personal assistants, fan club services, record labels, recording producers, engineering staff, session musicians, backup vocalists, recording studios, final mixing studios, A&R staff (Album/ Artist and Repertoire staff oversee songwriting, recording, and product packaging), promotions and marketing professionals, distribution companies, radio program directors, concert promoters, and merchandise vendors, the CCM industry parallels the secular one in almost every business practice (GMA). By utilizing the music business model, including its marketing techniques, CCM serves a marketplace – the Christian marketplace.

Naturally Amy Grant too depends on such a network. She does not know or control all that is put to the press or decided about her career. Instead, she trusts her longtime managers (including family members and close friends) to make many decisions on her behalf – choosing, for example, the best photos from a shoot, or bringing in the most appropriate supporting musicians to make an album as good as it can be (Grant; Cooke; Chaffee).

Grant also understands the commodification machine. With touring expenses rising, she has faced economic pressure to obtain corporate partnerships that would aid major touring efforts, thereby avoiding inflation of ticket prices (Johnson). Chaffee concurs: “Most large tours without a corporate sponsorship, does [*sic*] well to break even.” Grant adds, “To me, money just

facilitates things...a person's personal life, a better show experience, a better band" (Personal Interview).

As a result, a groundbreaking entertainment marketing agreement was established between Grant and Target Stores, Inc. in 1989 (Millard 203). In this cross-promotional arrangement, Target, Inc. would subsidize a portion of the tour costs; provide retail space for exclusive CD promotional offerings; and include Grant's latest CD and image in store advertisements, including print, radio and television. In return, Grant would provide logo exposure in all tour marketing outlets (posters, print ads in newspapers, on tickets), at the show itself on jumbo screens, and on tour programs; she would sing a song for use in Target's marketing efforts ("Let the Season Take Wing"); at her shows, she would play the Target commercials featuring the song; and, in essence, she would be a spokeswoman for the department store. A Target representative explains further, "We use them [celebrities] to sell the total store... They sell the concept of Target, what the whole operation stands for" (Bagot 79).

As the demographic for the nationwide store chain matched Amy Grant's listener base, the relationship prospered and even expanded to include more Christian-based artists and eventual sponsorship of the Dove Awards. Supplementing her charity work for Christian organizations Compassion International and Habitat for Humanity, Grant also sponsors the Music Room for the Target House, which provides temporary housing for parents whose children are undergoing long-term treatment. A *Minneapolis Star Tribune* article surmises, "Amy Grant probably has received more exposure in the Twin Cities through Target ads than through her music" (Bream). Grant garnered additional commercial associations such as a "Got Milk?" ad; a Century 21 television

commercial using “The Power,” one of her openly Christian songs; a Sun Chips print ad; and endorsement of a self-help golf training video, to name a few.

In short, in today’s music industry, an artist’s success demands much more than personal talent alone (for more information on the music industry, see *This Business of Music* by Sidney Shemel and M. William Krasilovsky). Reverend Scotty Smith, pastor to Amy Grant as well as many industry executives and artists, explained in a personal interview how each artist has an entire economic system dependent on him or her, a squadron of industry professionals to support. Most artists have limited control over the products, images and branding associated with their careers. The artist is a brand, marketed to fulfill a need for a particular demographic and psychographic audience with disposable income.

Branding, however, continues to be difficult for Christian crossover artists and their promoters. Mainstream connections make it easier for crossover artists to succeed, but the gulf between Christian and non-Christian interests still exists. Michael Tedesco, director of Silvertone Records, admits, “We are aware that [radio program directors] are adverse to bands with a Christian message.” Missy Baker, a publicist for CCM industry’s Forefront Records, says, “As soon as they find out it’s Christian, I hit a brick wall.” As reported in “Rock of Ages” by the *The New Republic*, Baker keeps separate bio sheets on her groups, one for each side of the Christian wall (O’Donnell “Rock”).

So instead of promoting (or even mentioning) an artist’s faith, some mainstream marketers return to the most popular secular selling point: sex appeal. This “spiritual and sensual” marketing within CCM remains a touchy topic of debate. One 29-year veteran of the industry, having experienced several

CCM takeovers by secular labels, claims that mainstream labels have “pushed artists to use sensuality to sell spirituality” – mixing business with pleasure. Some CCM artists even claim that any focus on image (sensual or otherwise) opposes the Christian music message; to make sure they sell ministry, not celebrity, they do not allow their pictures to be used on the covers of their CDs (Blake).

Grant, however, has not eschewed these secular marketing techniques. Her highly marketable face has donned 16 of her 17 Christian, pop, and Christmas album covers. The exception is *Straight Ahead*, whose cover features a stoplight with a vertically-directed lit green arrow. However, she has also been overtly marketed as a Christian in both mainstream and Christian environments. Jim Chaffee explains that each piece of marketing material seeks to communicate “the heart of Amy” and adds, “You do not see an article, an interview with Amy, anything, that does not mention the fact that she’s a Christian artist. Never.”

## **Receivers: Christian Perceptions of CCM and Amy Grant**

The Christian community expresses multiple concerns, sometimes even outrage, regarding the mainstream entanglements of the CCM industry and Amy Grant herself.

One hot button for these critics is the industry's cold hard cash. Many decry the glitzy promotional techniques borrowed from the mainstream sector: limousines pulling up to the Dove Awards; slick-looking trade magazines; weekly reporting of sales charts; promotional cardboard stand-up displays of bands staring at consumers as they enter Christian bookstores; fancier programming for pop songs; and colorful devotional books accompanying CDs. Some camps argue that such merchandise campaigns are vital to keep up with the mainstream, to remain attractive to Christians and non-Christians alike (Mehle).

Dissenters wail, "[We]'ve created a monster" (Long 26). Protesting secular commercialism within CCM, over 60 Christian musicians signed and published a letter in the trade magazine, *CCM Magazine* (Rabey "Age to Age" 34) calling Integrational artists to come back to focused Christian music and leave behind the fame and fortune. Michael Card, a Transformational artist, says, "The follower of Jesus's music always chooses truthfulness over fame. Given the choice, we must wash feet [in servitude] not encores" (Weisman).

Reverend Scotty Smith says, "Things are always complicated when money is involved. Here they are singing about God and all of a sudden you're seeing artists with six-figured salaries. If we are being faithful, we will ask the

questions.” Smith boils it down to this: “How do we maintain good heart and good art?”

Is it wrong for Christian artists to make money? In the Christian Holy Bible, 1 Timothy 6:10 says, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” The passage pinpoints *love* of money, not earning money itself – but what does CCM truly represent?

Some believe CCM represents only a love of money. Popular televangelist Jimmy Swaggart says: “The new gospel music has nothing to do with the work of God or spreading His Word. They have the right to sing it, and I hope they make a lot of money if that’s what they want, but it has nothing to do with ministry. I’m saying it’s wrong, it’s bad” (Weisman).

Others, however, maintain that Christian music does not sell out the gospel. Eddie DeGarmo, former president of major Christian label Forefront Records, says, “We aren’t selling the gospel. What we do in the Christian music business is sell CDs. The gospel is free” (Mehle). Scotty Smith continues that some musicians emulate Jesus by living well below their means and giving thousands of dollars to help others. “Unfortunately,” he notes, “it’s those with big houses and lavish cars that often get all the attention” (Weisman). Amy Grant, who has half of the 20 top-selling CCM albums, is one who gets the attention.

Critics also distrust artists openly marketed as Christians. The author of the *Dallas Morning News* article, “Some Firms Mix Business and Religious Symbols” wondered, “Sincerity or ploy? Is publicly linking one’s spirituality to one’s own business a sincere expression of faith or simply a ploy to look like a

trustworthy company and improve the bottom line?" That is, are artists using the Almighty to gain the almighty dollar?

"In today's world, I believe the word 'Christian' is often simply a marketing term used to describe products and services – it's not necessarily indicative of a lifestyle modeled after Jesus Christ," says Bryan Belknap, creator of the Mind Over Media organization. In "Christian Schlock," Joel Miller supports Belknap's claim, denouncing the commercialism of "Christianizing" inane items by printing Scripture on, to name one real-life example, breath mints.

Among conservative Christians, fame is also suspect for more than its associated fortune. Celebrities possess the power of persuasion. They can introduce new words to the vernacular, promote new fashions or hairstyles, encourage certain behaviors or viewpoints, sell particular products. Musical artists also have influence. Consequently, celebrity musicians have double power as they speak through the music and speak as role models. Since many conservative Christians believe that "a higher moral standard applies to those who lead and influence in Christ's name, regardless of their office" (Zoba), they rigorously scrutinize the motives and choices of Christian artists, ensuring that they embody the appropriate image of "the Christian."

According to these believers, all Christians are summoned by God (and then held accountable by other Christians) to live biblical lives – obeying not only the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28) but following the Bible to the letter. Most CCM labels keep musicians in line by including a moral or lifestyle clause in their recording contracts (Chaffee; Price). Executives believe that artists' personal lives are "extremely important"; to present a consistent Christian message, artists must live according to biblical principles (Harrington "Power").



Such believers hold little respect for Amy Grant, who, in their view, presents an unacceptable Christian image and makes a poor role model. Critics have pointed to her celebrity endorsements, marketing techniques, and personal life to support their claims.

Though Target, Inc. sponsors many charitable programs and donates millions of dollars to nationwide and local community programs and schools – and though the company also underwent a preliminary injunction in 1992 for including religion and sexual preference questions in its pre-employment psychiatric tests (in support of conservative values [Goldberg 66]) – fundamentalist Christians found it an unacceptable company for a celebrity Christian to support. I witnessed them picketing Grant’s Christmas shows in 1999, holding signs and shouting. Their bone to picket was not Target, Inc., or even Grant, but the company’s corporate owner, Dayton-Hudson, which at the time financially supported Planned Parenthood organizations (“Funding Planned Parenthood”). The picketers were in the minority, and certainly baffled at least one non-Christian, who could not fathom how Christians could picket Christians at a Christmas show – Amy Grant’s Christmas concert was as white as snow as a pop show could get (Adams).

Critics also disapproved of the mainstream marketing techniques used to promote Christian artists, especially Grant. Throughout Grant’s career, Christian conservatives have rigorously protested Grant’s album covers (see Appendix E for select covers) and those music videos that presented her as too “sexy” or too “worldly” for a Christian; they felt she used her attractiveness to sell products. Bubel notes, “Amy had become the bulls eye [sic] on the ‘Christian crossover’

dart board, primarily due to her songs being accused of being too carnal or fleshy...they are about things like love and relationships and babies and stuff.”

Even the secular media called attention to Grant’s “Baby, Baby” video, in which her character flirts with an attractive, male model, “looking pretty sleek and sinful for someone with a clean-as-kitchen-soap image. ‘Christians can be sexy,’ she said with certainty, ‘What I’m doing is a good thing.’” The article goes on to mention that it is not only a good thing but a “profitable thing” (Sanz and Scheff 71).

Yet perhaps it is Amy Grant’s personal life that has caused the greatest controversy of them all. Her position of role model already suspect, Grant boiled blood again when in 1999 she divorced Gary Chapman, her husband of 16 years.

Neither Chapman nor Grant deny the rocky experiences they endured during their marriage (Rumberg 34). Close analysis of Grant’s lyrics reveals the pattern of her life; as forthright as she is in interviews and public appearances, honesty originated in her music. Her song titles through the years range from “I Love You,” dedicated to Chapman in the liner notes for *Unguarded*, to “Baby, Baby,” inspired by her daughter Millie, to the entire “Prozac and razor blades” album of *Behind the Eyes* (Sandy Smith “Amy Grant Reflects”). In “Cry A River,” Grant asks, “How do you argue with a feeling in your bones, ‘bout what is and what isn’t meant to be; some things you live with and you never let it show, like the pain I felt the day I watched you leave.” Her albums are snapshots of her life, and her lyrics reflect the difficulties in her marriage and foreshadow what would come.

And yet, the announcement of the separation in December of 1998 and divorce in 1999 sent shockwaves through Christian and even non-Christian

sectors. Christians denounced the divorce, quoting God's (translated) words in the book of Malachi in the Old Testament: "I hate divorce" (2:16). Christian radio stations removed Grant's music from their play lists; Christian bookstores pulled her product from their shelves (Chaffee). Authorities in the CCM industry made their required statements (Longino) and a collective gasp resonated through the nation's churches. Commentaries surfaced in Christian magazines: "But her dressing up and our propelling her public ministry, without taking the time for serious reflection, violates what should be the Christian conviction about the sanctity of marriage" (Zoba). John Styll ran an in-depth article featuring an interview with Grant and the subsequent letters to the editor were "less than favorable." He boils down the issue to, "Many people feel she has been disobedient to what the Bible teaches in that she doesn't have biblical grounds for a divorce such as adultery on the part of her spouse" (Mansfield). Most of the heat was on Grant and not ex-husband Chapman—possibly due to Grant's penchant for breaking Christian rules.

Others supported Grant, if not her choices. Frank Breeden, Gospel Music Association's president, publicly encouraged Grant:

I see a tremendous amount of courage on the part of Amy to forge ahead. She has been very upfront and honest and continues to grow. The messages in her songs are no less true because of her personal circumstances. The message of God survives the personal. If I can go so far as to quote Scripture, if you see someone overtaken in fault, those of you who are spiritual are supposed to restore that person. You don't shoot them in the back with arrows of jealousy and judgment. Every time we do that, we are painting little pictures of the bigger picture of God's grace and forgiveness. (Longino)

And some fellow CCM artists saw Grant's actions as ultimately beneficial for the industry. Margaret Becker comments, "The Christian (music) culture fought her tooth and nail every step of the way...her success helps everybody relax and go, 'This is life, we don't live in the 1800s'" (Boehm).

Non-Christian media found the topic not shocking in itself, but newsworthy – the Christian reaction was intriguing. After interviewing a Christian radio program director who pulled Grant's music in response to the divorce, Susan Hogan/Albach remarked, "it's a good thing [he] doesn't run a church; a whole lot of divorced Christians wouldn't get through his 'saints-only' doors" ("Amerson's Songs").

Both secular and Christian publications fueled a rumor mill, reporting sightings of Grant with country music superstar Vince Gill at suspicious locations such as the Waffle House and a Nashville Predators hockey game (Orr; Holland and Lawson). The press speculated that the two were having an affair or even secretly married (Zoba; Sanz and Scheff 72; Longino). In 2000, a year after the divorce, Grant and Gill did exchange vows; they have since had a child. Chapman has also remarried.

Many of Grant's critics are still reeling from the implications of her new romance. In May of 2002, a nonscientific questionnaire ("QuickPoll") was posted on Crosswalk.com, a web site that regularly reports news on (mostly) Christian entertainment. The poll asked site visitors whether they would purchase *Legacy...Hymns & Faith*, Grant's latest album, which commemorates her Christian roots in her twenty-five year career. The response choices: 1) "Yes, I have," 2) "Yes, I want to purchase it," 3) "No, I don't want to purchase it," and 4) "I won't purchase it because I disapprove of Amy Grant's lifestyle." The final option won

overwhelmingly with 4,487 votes (69%). “Yes, I have” came in second with 1,577 votes (24%).

Many QuickPoll respondents also elaborated their views in Crosswalk.com’s online forum. Critics feel hurt and betrayed by Grant and her career and lifestyle choices. They believe she sought fame, fortune, and success at all costs: that she sold out her Christian faith by “watering down” her lyrics (Black); adding sex appeal to her CD covers; crossing over to mainstream radio and retail; participating in corporate partnerships with pro-abortion organization funders; and releasing Christian and Christmas albums only to buy back the good graces of the Christian community – without committing to Christian music or a believer’s lifestyle. Many wanted remorse or a request for forgiveness from Grant.

“Why would you feature an adulteress on your ‘Christian’ web site?” asked one respondent. Another advised: “It doesn’t seem to be the appropriate time to be featuring Amy Grant in articles about Mother’s Day after her divorce, quick remarriage and starting a new family. We should be careful who [sic] we hold up as public figures and I think that Amy Grant with her current situation and history is not a Christian we should be putting in the spotlight. Maybe after time...but not with what has happened in the last two years. We should not ignore what she has done.” There were many variations on this theme: “We must not continue to raise divorce to an elevated status...We must call divorce what it is...sin,” and “What happened to the view that God hates divorce? Please focus your articles on Christians that are living a life consistent with the Bible, not Christians that are simply famous for the singing.” Perhaps all the

criticisms explored in this chapter can be summed up with this posting: "I AM DISGUSTED TO SEE AMY GRANT on your site!!"

Even editors of secular publications heard the outcry. After running a news story about Grant remarrying, *People Weekly* printed several letters in which readers directed their frustrations to Grant, saying "Shame on you, Amy" and "Enjoy your sin while it lasts." One of the seven letters includes "Congrats to Amy and Vince" (6).

Grant has certainly not gone unnoticed – if nothing else, she's had the effect of enraging thousands of Christians with her music and lifestyle. According to the reports of Christian press, Grant has had a strong negative effect on the image of Christianity; she has sold out her religion for fame. But what does Grant herself have to say?

## **Receivers: Amy Grant's Perceptions of the Controversies**

In 1997, the *Dallas Morning News* reported that Amy Grant's public persona has had two distinct incarnations: "First there was the shy, winsome singer whose carefully produced, overtly Christian songs such as 'Father's Eyes' and 'Live Like a Believer' launched the \$1-billion-dollar-per-year contemporary Christian music industry. Then there was the peppy pop star whose frothy tunes, brimming with synthesizers and dance beats, took the secular charts by storm and transformed her into contemporary Christian's first 'crossover' success story." (Now Grant is arguably in a third incarnation, unplugging the synthesizers and embracing the acoustic guitar.) However, the article goes on to say that Grant has decided neither of the images reflects reality (Ave).

She also disputes her general secular image as a wholesome Christian mother, wife and woman, claiming to be "much more of a down-to-earth and unkempt person than people know or may believe" (Harrington "From the Inside Out"). In an interview for this thesis, Grant laughed at every quote presented by the media about her public image.

Though Grant does not endorse the images others have given her, she has decided not to believe them or adopt them as her own; she feels that people will say what they want to say, believe what they want to believe, and there is nothing she can do about it (Personal Interview). Also in an interview for this thesis, Grant's longtime manager and close friend Jennifer Cooke described how Grant's marketing and imaging team can be as careful as possible – even writing articles themselves and providing photos for greater accuracy – but the media

still add their own twists, utilizing gossip to generate reader interest and grow their own business.

“No, I don’t feel wounded anymore,” Grant says. “Talk generates the industry. People just like talking about people, because we’re all so weird, it’s fascinating...and I don’t have a problem with people talking about me.” She is determined to maintain honesty and frankness in interviews, and has stopped trying to fulfill the agendas of others (Harrington “From the Inside Out”).

Of her alleged ambition and much-disputed crossover album, *Heart In Motion*, Grant says, “Everyone who felt close to me would know I wasn’t turning into a she-devil or something...When people say I did it to be famous, well, that just makes me want to laugh” (Connolly 39). She maintains she did not ask to be anyone’s celebrity or role model (Millard 173).

Grant also accepts the music industry for what it is. The marketing machine supports her family; she lets other industry members do their jobs while focusing on her part of the system – writing and singing songs (Cooke). “The record company tries to use the most flattering pictures that they can to sell a record or make a poster. I don’t feel like I’m out there trying to flex a sex-appeal muscle. I’m just being myself and trying to be real,” explains Grant (Bream).

As for her commercial endorsements, Grant says Target officials convinced her the commercials were meant merely to set an example of responsibility. “People do learn by example,” she says. “It kind of ups the ante on generosity” (Bream).

Grant has also answered the various accusations that have come her way since the divorce. Normally, she does not put energy into what she calls a “grass fire” (O’Donnell “Rock”), but after some time and pressure, Grant spoke out to



set the record straight regarding the divorce and eventual courtship with Gill in *CCM Magazine*. She says it never occurred to her to hide the friendship with Gill, as she saw nothing wrong with it (Orr).

“Getting a divorce, you think you know what the price is, and then you realize that you don’t just pay it once,” Grant says. “You pay it in different ways, and you continue to pay it” (Longino).

I don’t take lightly the responsibility of being a public person, of my faith, all those things. I know why God hates divorce, because it’s painful and it’s hardest on the kids and you have to kiss your history goodbye, start over. I never thought I’d wind up here. I look at the choices all along the way that were made and think, I did the very best I could and I wound up here, now. I want to stand up and say, ‘It’s not the way you think it was!’ But it doesn’t really matter. (Longino)

She realized people would make assumptions or try to put the puzzle together in some fashion but, as she calls it, “the circumstances were multilayered and complicated” (Orr). “I have to walk this path because I believe it’s the path that I have to walk, regardless of anybody’s opinion. This [divorce] has been just unbelievably humbling. But it has been healing. It makes me incredibly thankful that God is a God of second chances” (Rumberg 35).

Grant does have a few words to say on the treatment she received from her peers:

There had been a couple of times when someone would really get in my face. I remember thinking, I’m trying to do something positive here and I just pictured some guy and thought okay, when your child comes home in trouble,

with a drug addiction or pregnant, I hope you are a lot more merciful toward her than you have been toward me.

You know, if you're going to list my faults, let's get to the real meat. You ain't even scratched the surface with that stuff. Let's get real. Humanity is humanity. You want to know what my real black ugly stuff is? Go look in a mirror and everything that's black and ugly about you, it's the same about me. That's what Jesus died for. This should not be a surprise to any of us...I guess I would say, judgment is usually exercised from a distance, but in more than one instance the thing that has brought about change [in people] is compassion. Jesus led by compassion. No one is ever changed because of judgment. No one's ever healed through judgment. (O'Donnell "Rock")

Sources close to Grant say she seems like a new person in her new life, much happier and more relaxed (Wright). *Billboard Magazine* concurs: "The amazing thing is, Grant still has her head screwed on straight...not many of us would have fared as well" (Darden 39).

Though many credit Grant with getting CCM its much-desired exposure and respect, what effect has her involvement had on people personally? What have people learned about Christianity as typified by Amy Grant? Has the public attention to the controversy through the years protected the Christian image or damaged it? Has it harmed Grant's image amongst Christians and non-Christians alike?

Christians, members of the CCM industry and those who have received its messages have made their opinions known. Amy Grant has expressed her views as well. But what do non-Christians know of the debate? Has Amy Grant – and the controversies she has sparked – affected the image of Christians in outsiders' eyes? The next section of this thesis engages this larger population in the discussion.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology for the Missing Piece

#### Receivers: Mainstream Perceptions of CCM and Amy Grant

Using historical methods and the communication model, I have described Amy Grant's career and the controversies surrounding it in the Christian community. I will now describe the methodology I used to research Grant's impact upon those outside the Christian community.

Because Amy Grant is a celebrity, the general population is familiar (in varying degrees) with her music, personal life, or both. I prepared a survey for a sample of this group pertaining to Amy Grant and Christianity in general. As the participants' exposure to Amy Grant's career varied, I received a valid cross-section of perspectives.

I sent an initial mass e-mail including the survey's URL to over 200 potential participants and encouraged them to forward the e-mail, thereby reaching across the country to those unfamiliar with the project in any form. The introductory e-mail did not explicitly mention Amy Grant, but instead invited the participants to share their views on religion, fame, music, commercialism and effects on society.

The online survey was available for two weeks at: <http://www.lisa-adams.com/survey/survey.html>. The survey included four sections: Religious Background and Values, Christianity, Amy Grant, and You. Each section included descriptive, quantitative nominal questions (yes/no, number selected in a range). To limit researcher intrusion, most questions also allowed respondents to provide additional, qualitative information. Though it

asked participants for demographic information, the survey was designed not to favor or discourage participants based on age, socioeconomic status, gender, religious affiliation, educational level or geographic area.

Once the survey period was complete, I had received 148 responses. I coded the results, separating the respondents into two categories: Christian (including Protestant, Catholic, and Mormon) and non-Christian (including members of Eastern or pagan religions and those with no religious affiliation). The categories enabled me to examine the effect of Grant on non-Christians alone, as well as to compare the views of Christian respondents to the vocal conservatives who disapprove of Grant so strongly.

When coding the qualitative responses, I looked for value-laden words and then separated those who responded positively towards Grant and/or Christianity (as evidenced by words such as “like,” “non-judgment,” “respect”) and those who responded negatively (as indicated by words such as “judgment,” “hate,” “fake”). The attached Appendix F includes the entire survey and the tabulated results. Discussion of their meanings follows.

## Chapter 4

### Evaluation of the Message on Additional Receivers

In developing the survey, I included a variety of questions, knowing that some would prove supremely relevant to this study, and others would provide information and impetus for further study. This analysis focuses only on the most pertinent questions to this paper: how do receivers, both Christian and non-Christian, perceive contemporary Christian music, mainstream music, Amy Grant, and the controversies surrounding her career and personal choices? The results were often surprising, further illuminating the effects of Amy Grant's life and work.

In general, non-Christians knew or remembered less about Amy Grant than Christians. Many felt that Grant had not been newsworthy for the past decade, remembering her success with *Heart in Motion*, but knowing little or nothing about her later work (five new albums) and personal life (divorce and remarriage).

However, those non-Christians who continued to follow Grant's career described her as "Christian" and "real," one who has lived an honest life and, in doing so, has positively affected the image of Christians in music. One respondent replied, "She is who I would like to think of as a Christian." In considering the Grant-related controversies, one non-Christian survey respondent said:

They are all irrelevant to the overly positive effect she has on mainstream Christian public personalities. I think that her actions are more representative of the majority of Christians, thus enabling her to make a greater impact – the average

Christian probably does not nor cannot live up to the pious standards we would like to believe one should nor do the officers of religion (priests, nuns, etc.). If she can gracefully live a “realistic” life and deal with it in as positive a way as possible, then young girls and society as a whole can look up to her -- why can't we let that happen?

Grant's pop career and/or ambiguous lyrics may have contributed to the respondents' positive feelings. Far more non-Christians (50%) than Christians (23%) felt that Christian music should be played on Christian radio only. While an artist's religious affiliation was irrelevant to most non-Christians (75%), they did worry that Christian artists would produce “churchy” or “preachy” music. Only 6% of non-Christians felt that music should be used for evangelical purposes; some actually attributed their lack of interest in Christianity to musical evangelism! Several appreciated Grant's lack of proselytizing in her songs.

When presented with a summary of the Grant-related controversies, most non-Christian respondents felt the controversies reflected far more negatively on the Christian faith than on Amy Grant. A full 57% of non-Christian respondents reported “Judgment/Rules” as the primary message or image of Christianity:

While it does have a certain quality of faith to it, the main message/image that it has is one of a politicised organisation, extremely patriarchal in nature, that works overtime to make sure that its followers all believe, think and act in the same way...that being the support and perpetuation of a patriarchal, oppressive, exclusive rather than inclusive, we're all bad (sinners) at our core, mindset. (Non-Christian survey respondent)

Many non-Christians used this area of the survey to express why they are not attracted to the religion, and why they feel they would not be welcomed or

accepted by Christians. Many were former Christians who had negative personal experiences with Christian judgment and/or hypocrisy, and chose to remove themselves from the religion. Several paraphrased Matthew 7:3—“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” — to express their disapproval of Christian judgment.

Overall, the vast majority (91%) of non-Christians reported positive impressions of Grant, and 54% felt that Grant has had only a positive impact on the image of Christianity. 74% did assign Grant a negative impact on the United States; however, this seemingly contradictory figure reflects their dislike of her particular brand of pop music.

What do these results reveal? Ultimately, to non-Christians, it is the conservative Christian critics — not Amy Grant — that damage the image and reduce the appeal of Christianity. Grant herself is viewed as an exception — a positive, honest person in a religion based on judgment.

Christian responses to the survey were equally powerful. The results showed that in fact a minority (15%) of devout Christians believe that some or all of the criticisms of Amy Grant are justified.

On the other hand, 93% reported positive impressions of Grant, and 69% felt that Grant has had only a positive impact on the image of Christianity. When asked who Amy Grant was, the most popular answer (39%) was “Christian.” The majority described her in words such as “real,” “strong” and “living as she is Called.”

Overall, Christians approved of Christians divorcing under certain circumstances, most notably in abuse situations (90%); Christians being

presented as sexually attractive (80%); Christians marketing Christianity for profit (95%); Christian music being broadcast on both Christian and mainstream radio stations (75%); and Christian artists participating in the mainstream music industry (91%).

In general, the survey responses from Christians show a willingness to allow individuals (even Christians) to make their own decisions and lead their lives as they see fit. Support for this view comes from Romans 14:17-18: a well-known and oft-preached interpretation of this passage instructs Christians not to get caught up in the gray areas of life and fight over the nonessentials of the faith (such as the rules for eating and drinking, or – in relation to this study – whether Grant is barefoot on stage or explicitly names God in her lyrics). The focus and essence of Christianity, the passage maintains, are found in love, righteousness, peace, and joy. The same chapter “Calls” for Christians to acknowledge that they cannot understand another person’s motivations (Romans 14:6). Much of this chapter reminds Christians not to play God, especially when it causes harm to others (Romans 14:21).

Like non-Christian respondents, Christian respondents also felt that the controversies reflected more on the negativity of the Christian religion than Amy Grant herself. One Christian respondent stated, “Christians are the most critical, judgmental group of people you can find. Many seem to feel superior to everyone...usually to people who give more than they would if they could” and “It just makes me shake my head at the Christian Faith [*sic*]... We are supposed to be tolerant and forgiving.” Many Christian respondents also quoted Matthew 7:3, and especially disapproved of Christians judging each other.



Generally, Christian respondents saw the conservative outcry as a negative and damaging punch to the image of Christianity, one that prevents Christians from being enthusiastically included in mainstream American culture. Though 44% felt that Amy Grant has had a negative impact on the United States, most attributed the negativity to the Grant-related controversies and not to Grant's actions themselves.

The survey clearly shows that the majority of both groups – non-Christian and Christian – have been damaged by judgment and are adamantly against it. It also reveals another fascinating view: that people who associate themselves with Christianity open themselves up to judgment by the conservative members of the religion. The vast majority of respondents – 96% of Christians, 89% of non-Christians – believe that Grant would not have faced these criticisms if she were not a Christian. In essence, it was this one variable alone – Christianity – that mired Grant in controversy after controversy.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

So what effect has Amy Grant had? The results provide no easy answer. Grant's influence on the contemporary Christian music industry is indisputable: her popularity as both a Christian and pop artist made the industry what it is today. It is no exaggeration to state that the CCM industry would not exist (at least not in its present form) without Amy Grant.

However, Grant's impact on the industry is far smaller today. By launching the industry, Grant helped it catch the eye of mainstream companies. Their involvement changed CCM into a smaller-scale model of the secular music industry with its enormous staff, commercial interests, and marketing techniques. Today, how much impact can Grant actually have, when she herself does not make the decisions that guide her musical career? Perhaps only the image of Grant, not Grant herself, can have any impact on the world.

And to some, this image is a strong and positive one. Grant is viewed by many as an honest and likeable Christian woman. To others, she is only "just another pop star" – easily forgotten. To still others, Grant has had immense negative impact on the image of Christianity. In their view, her involvement in the commercial music industry and questionable personal choices make her a poor Christian and role model.

Image, perhaps, is the major issue. Conservative Christians seek to control the Christian image, to reject those who do not embody it to their liking. It is not within the scope of this paper to advocate or dispute that desire. However – since conservative Christians ostensibly want to win new converts to

the faith – it may benefit them to release their tight hold on the Christian image. As the survey reveals, most non-Christians – potential converts – consider the controversies surrounding Amy Grant to indicate a judgmental, uncompassionate, and unattractive religion.

Indeed, this study has revealed one great and painful agreement between those who call themselves Christians and those who do not: it is the image of what a Christian should be, the “Christian variable,” that demands that Christians live superhuman lives – or else be judged by their own. Is one born a human and then chooses Christianity as a means of managing and maximizing this humanity? Or is one born a Christian first, called to be human only when it fits Christian expectations? If we adopt the former view, we see a greater compassion for not only Grant, but those Christians around us who seek to live the best lives they can, despite human limitations. Shall we, as Erik Routley wrote in *The Church and Music*, “be drawing out the implications of the truth that the human race was born singing but was not born Christian”(11)?

If so, CCM members are in the perfect position to break down yet another wall – not unlike the wall between races at its conception in the ‘60s (external) and not unlike the walls between denominations within the church (internal) – bridging the gap between Christians and non-Christians to recognize each other as humans first.

One thing is certain: Amy Grant’s daring choices have raised fascinating questions about who we are as spiritual creatures (or unspiritual ones), as professionals – as people. Had Grant remained within the Christian comfort zones, not taking the unprecedented step to cross over into pop music, her dreams of reaching a greater, more diverse audience might slowly have died.

Perhaps our own dreams suffer the same fate whenever we refuse to explore our options – whenever we stagnate within traditional and uncompassionate stereotypes and boundaries.

## **Epilogue:**

### **For Further Study**

Further studies on this topic (and/or those that draw from this data set) are plentiful. One study might thoroughly investigate the “Christian variable” and how it affects other industries or even individual lives. Other studies could focus on CCM crossover artists who have not incurred such controversy, or Christian artists who avoided CCM altogether, directly competing against mainstream artists for success. An economic analysis could detail how CCM affects mainstream profits. Other projects could address the religious “crossover” phenomenon of both musical and nonmusical products. Another study might explore divorces (and other taboos) among celebrity Christians, which create schisms within CCM and even require CCM artists to change or end their careers (subjects might include Sandi Patty, Nikki Leonti, and Michael English). Do the ends justify the means?

A detailed historical analysis could delve into the history of the Christian church’s old vs. new debate, showing how it parallels the journey of CCM and how the same attitudes and debates that raged from biblical days are repeated generations later. A feminist study might examine the relationship between the “place” of women in the Church and the business world, also exploring the media’s treatment of Grant’s divorce – the focus on Grant over Chapman. Another feminist study could examine the differences in marketing campaigns between female and male CCM artists. Finally, a paper might analyze how CCM artists are presented in both Christian and secular media (print, television, radio, etc.), exploring similarities and differences.

**Appendix A  
Amy Grant's Discography**

<u>Year Released</u>	<u>Album Title</u>	<u>Record Label</u>
1977	<i>Amy Grant</i>	Myrrh
1979	<i>Father's Eyes</i>	Myrrh
1980	<i>Never Alone</i>	Myrrh
1980	<i>In Concert</i>	Myrrh
1981	<i>In Concert Volume Two</i>	Myrrh
1982	<i>Age to Age</i>	Myrrh
1983	<i>A Christmas Album</i>	Myrrh
1984	<i>Straight Ahead</i>	Myrrh
1985	<i>Unguarded</i>	Myrrh
1986	<i>The Collection</i>	Myrrh
1988	<i>Lead Me On</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
1991	<i>Heart In Motion</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
1992	<i>Home for Christmas</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
1994	<i>House of Love</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
1997	<i>Behind the Eyes</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
1999	<i>A Christmas to Remember</i>	Myrrh/ A&M
2002	<i>Legacy...Hymns &amp; Faith</i>	Word/ A&M

**Note: Music from Amy Grant has also appeared on many soundtracks, praise and worship albums, and other compilations; in addition, she has performed in duets (such as “Next Time I Fall” with Peter Cetera in 1988).**

## **Appendix B**

### **Selected Amy Grant Career Highlights**

- 24 million albums sold worldwide; nine platinum albums (over one million sold); one quintuple album (over five million *Heart in Motion* albums sold)
- Five-time Grammy winner, the last in 1988, plus five additional Grammy nominations
- 22 Dove awards, four-time Dove Artist of the Year
- MTV video award nomination ("Baby, Baby")
- "Baby, Baby" named the "most played" song of the 1990s (source: RIAA)
- Several humanitarian and citizen awards, including the Pax Christi award
- Named second "Most Influential" woman in Christian music by crosswalk.com in 2001
- "The First Lady of Contemporary Christian Music" as cited in *Legends in Their Own Time* by Coral Amende, 1994
- Recognized by *Billboard Magazine's* 100th Anniversary issue as having six of the top ten contemporary Christian albums of all time (*Age to Age* #1, *Straight Ahead* #3, *The Collection* #4, *Unguarded* #8, *Heart in Motion* #9 and *Lead Me On* #10)
- ASCAP's "Voice of Music" award for Grant's "unique contribution to music that has touched the spirit and soul of America" 1996
- *CCM Magazine's* Number One "Greatest Album in Christian Music" (*Lead Me On*)
- Ten of the top 20 best-selling CCM albums of all time according to *CCM Magazine* 1998
- "Amy Grant Star" on Hollywood Walk of Fame awarded 2002



**Appendix C**  
**2001 Contemporary Christian Music Sales Figures**  
**(Gospel Music Association Press Release)**

CCM has been booming financially, outselling jazz, Latin and classical music combined and rising in the percentage of album sales annually. In 2001, according to The Christian Music Trade Association (CMTA), album sales were just shy of 50 million units, establishing a new record for sales of contemporary Christian and gospel music in the United States. Album sales outpaced 2000 by 13.5 percent in a year that saw the overall music industry album sales down by nearly three percent. 2001's totals exceeded 1999's best of 46,852,000 album units and 2000's 44,031,000. Sales were up across the board, at mainstream and Christian chain and independent retailers. Mainstream retail stores saw another big increase in sales of contemporary Christian and Gospel music in 2001, selling 26,631,000, nearly three million more than in 2000 – a 15 percent increase. Christian Booksellers Association (CBA) retailers, which experienced its first decline in five years in 2000, bounced back, charting an 8-percent gain in album sales over last year. Total CBA album sales were 21,649,000. Direct and Internet sales increased to 1,685,000 units, an 87 percent increase over last year. Adult contemporary and gospel styles of Christian music are the most popular, representing 20 and 19 percent respectively of the total album units sold in 2001. Praise & Worship and rock sold equally at 13 percent.

Word, Amy Grant's label, is ranked second in distribution market share:

**2001 RECORD DISTRIBUTION COMPANY MARKET SHARE**

**(Albums and Singles)**

Chordant	39.91%	Provident	21.48%	Diamante	1.67%
Word	25.28%	Pamplin	2.48%	New Day	1.15%

## **Appendix D**

### **Biblical References to Music**

#### Power of Music:

1 Sam. 10:5-11, 18:10, 11

#### Instruments:

Exodus 15:20; 1 Chron. 15:28-29; Ps. 8, 92:3, 150:4-5; Hab. 3:19; Rev. 5:8

#### Volumes and Sounds:

1 Chron. 15:28; 2 Chron. 5:12-13, 30:21; Ps 95:1; Rev. 5:9, 14:2

#### Worshippers:

Judges 5:1; 1 Chron. 15:22, 16:5, 25:6; 2 Chron. 23:13; Ps. 150:6

#### Manner:

Exodus 15:20; 1 Chron. 14, 15:29; 2 Chron. 20:21, 23:13; Neh. 12:46; Ps. 134:2, 147:1

#### Location:

1 Sam. 10:5-6; 1 Chron. 25:6; Neh. 12:31; Ps. 149:5, 150:1; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25

#### Focus:

1 Sam. 16:23; Ps. 2, 100, 117, 138; Eph. 5:19

#### Content:

Ps. 1-3, 6, 8, 18, 38, 51, 78, 101, 105, 116, 119, 127, 131, 133-134, 136-138

#### Occasions:

1 Kings 1:34; 1 Chron. 14; 2 Chron. 20:21, 23:18, 30:21; Neh. 12:27; Ps. 81:3; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25

#### Times of Day:

1 Chron. 23:30; Ps. 92:2, 113:3

#### Postures:

1 Chron. 23:30; 2 Chron. 20:21; Ps. 28:2, 95:6

#### Moods:

2 Chron. 35:25; Ps. 33:1, 92:3

**Teaching:**

**Ps. 3, 33, 43:4, 51, 90, 98, 116, 124, 131, 144, 149; Matt. 5, 9, 13:52; John 4; Col. 3:16,  
131**

**Appendix E**  
**Selected Amy Grant Album Covers**

*Age to Age* 1982



*Unguarded* 1985



*Heart In Motion* 1991



*Behind the Eyes* 1997



**Appendix F  
Survey and Results**

Total Participants: 148

Research Period: July 15, 2002-July 29, 2002

**Religious Background and Values**

Do you practice or identify with a particular spiritual faith? If so, please list which one. If not, please explain why not.

**Christian**  
44%

**Non-Christian**  
56%

**Christianity**

Based upon your awareness of Christianity, limited or otherwise, what message or image does it present to you?

<b><u>Christian</u></b>		<b><u>Non-Christian</u></b>	
God/Jesus/Bible:	37%	Judgment/Rules:	57%
Love/Forgiveness:	32%	Love/Forgiveness:	17%
Moral Guide:	24%	Moral Guide:	13%
Judgment/Rules:	7%	God/Jesus/Bible:	13%

Do you think divorce *for Christians* is ever acceptable? Yes/No Why or why not?

**Christian**  
Yes: 90%  
No: 10%

**Non-Christian**  
Yes: 89%  
No: 11%

Should Christians ever be presented as sexually attractive? Yes/No Why or why not?

**Christian**  
Yes: 80%  
No: 20%

**Non-Christian**  
Yes: 92%  
No: 8%

In your opinion, is it acceptable for members of the Christian faith to make money marketing and offering products that express or promote Christianity (CDs, books, films, etc.)? Yes/No Why or why not? Is there any amount of money that you would consider inappropriate?

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Yes: 95%	Yes: 80%
No: 5%	No: 20%

What purpose(s) do you think Christian music should serve?  
Education/Entertainment/Evangelism/Expression of faith/Expression of self/Social Activism/Other

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Education:	15%	Education:	12%
Entertainment:	20%	Entertainment:	22%
Evangelism:	13%	Evangelism:	6%
Expression of faith:	23%	Expression of faith:	24%
Expression of self:	14%	Expression of self:	21%
Social Activism:	12%	Social Activism:	10%
Other (Worship):	3%	Other:	5%

If you believe Christian music should be used for evangelism, should Christian musicians be theologically trained, and therefore be qualified ministers? Yes/No Why or why not?

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Yes: 9%	Yes: 9%
No: 91%	No: 91%

Under what circumstances, if any, do you think members of the Christian faith should become spiritual icons or celebrities? (Theological training, life experience, success in CD sales, charity work, etc.)

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Yes, they should, under certain circumstances:	51%	Yes, they should, under certain circumstances:	61%
No, they should not, under any circumstances:	49%	No, they should not, under any circumstances:	39%

In your opinion, are there different rules or expectations for celebrities who profess the Christian faith as compared to those who don't profess a faith? Yes/No If so, why? How are the rules and expectations different? If not, why not?

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Yes: 65%	Yes: 57%
No: 35%	No: 43%

Have you ever listened to a Christian radio station? Yes/No

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Yes: 43%	Yes: 37%
No: 57%	No: 64%

On what radio stations do you think Christian music should be played? Explain your answer.

<u>Christian</u>	<u>Non-Christian</u>
Christian Only: 23%	Christian Only: 50%
Mainstream Only: 2%	Mainstream Only: 2%
Both: 75%	Both: 48%

In what music industry do you think Christian musicians should participate? Explain your answer.



<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Christian Only:	9%	Christian Only:	27%
Mainstream Only:	88%	Mainstream Only:	3%
Both:	3%	Both:	70%

Does an artist's religious affiliation influence your decision to listen to his/her music? Yes/No Why or why not?

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Yes:	27%	Yes:	25%
No:	73%	No:	75%

Do you think it is acceptable for Christian artists to sing love songs that are not directed towards God? Yes/No Why or why not?

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Yes:	100%	Yes:	96%
No:	0%	No:	4%

In your opinion, should all Christian celebrities perform charity work and/or openly support charitable causes? Yes/No Why or why not?

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Yes:	45%	Yes:	49%
No:	53%	No:	47%
Either:	2%	Either:	4%

### Amy Grant

What do you know about Amy Grant (music, faith, personal life, news, charities, etc.)?

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Christian:	24%	Musician:	29%
Musician:	23%	Christian:	22%
Crossover:	13%	Nothing:	16%
Married:	12%	Crossover:	14%

Divorced:	11%	Divorced:	6%
A Lot:	4%	Married	4%
A Little:	9%	Other:	4%
Nothing:	3%	A Lot:	2%
Other:	1%	A Little:	3%

Where did you learn this information?

Church/Family/Friends/Internet/Magazines/Newspapers/Radio/Television/  
Unknown/Other

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Church:	4%	Church:	2%
Family:	5%	Family:	3%
Friends:	15%	Friends:	17%
Internet:	6%	Internet:	3%
Magazines:	15%	Magazines:	13%
Newspapers:	10%	Newspapers:	8%
Radio:	20%	Radio:	18%
Television:	19%	Television:	24%
Unknown/Other:	6%	Unknown/Other:	12%

In your opinion, what does Amy Grant believe in or stand for? What message does she send? (You may want to consider her music, celebrity image, interviews, personal life, charity work, etc.)

<u>Christian</u>		<u>Non-Christian</u>	
Christian:	39%	Christian:	48%
Strong/ Lives as Called:	30%	Don't Know:	33%
Don't Know:	18%	Singer:	6%
Singer:	8%	Other:	13%
Other:	5%		

Has Amy Grant had any influence on how you think about people of the Christian faith? Yes/No Why or Why Not?

**Christian**

Yes: 20%

No: 80%

**Non-Christian**

Yes: 16%

No: 84%

Do you think Amy Grant has a positive or negative effect on the image of Christianity? Positive/Negative/Both How so?

**Christian**

Positive: 69%

Negative: 4%

Both: 27%

**Non-Christian**

Positive: 54%

Negative: 10%

Both: 36%

*Amy Grant has been criticized during her career for being too "worldly" (e.g. looking too sexy); for participating in the mainstream, secular music industry and selling her music in secular retail outlets; for becoming rich and famous; for removing overt mentions of "Lord," "God," "Jesus" and related terms from her lyrics; for singing "love" and "relationship" songs instead of exclusively singing songs that praise God; for divorcing her husband of 16 years and, soon after, marrying a close friend of many years who is not known to be a Christian.*

How do you feel about the criticisms about Amy Grant? Do you agree or disagree with any of them (please be specific)? Why or why not?

**Christian**

Can't Judge: 85%

Justified: 15%

**Non-Christian**

Can't Judge: 93%

Justified: 7%

Do you believe these are appropriate criticisms of a musician? Yes/No Why or why not?

**Christian**

Yes: 17%

No: 83%

**Non-Christian**

Yes: 18%

No: 82%

Have these controversies changed your opinion of Amy Grant? Of Christians? Why or why not?

**Christian**

Yes: 6%

No: 94%

**Non-Christian**

Yes: 10%

No: 90%

(48% noted it reinforces belief of Christians acting judgmental)

Personally, what do you think of Amy Grant?

**Christian**

Positive: 93%

Negative: 7%

**Non-Christian**

Positive: 91%

Negative: 9%

If Amy Grant were not a Christian, would you have a different opinion of her?  
Yes/No Why or why not?

**Christian**

Yes: 25%

No: 75%

**Non-Christian**

Yes: 19%

No: 81%

If Amy Grant were not a Christian, do you think she would have been criticized for the same reasons, in the same fashion? Yes/No Why or why not?

**Christian**

Yes: 4%

No: 96%

**Non-Christian**

Yes: 11%

No: 89%

What effect do you think Amy Grant has had on the United States, if any?

**Christian**

Positive: 56%

Negative: 44%

**Non-Christian**

Positive: 26%

Negative: 74%

**You**

Age/years:

<b><u>Christian</u></b>		<b><u>Non-Christian</u></b>	
1-20 :	0%	1-20:	3%
21-29:	39%	21-29:	51%
30-39:	34%	30-39:	21%
40-49:	16%	40-49:	11%
50+:	11%	50+:	14%

Gender:

<b><u>Christian</u></b>		<b><u>Non-Christian</u></b>	
Female:	65%	Female:	53%
Male:	35%	Male:	47%

Marital Status:

<b><u>Christian</u></b>		<b><u>Non-Christian</u></b>	
Married:	54%	Single:	28%
Single:	24%	Married:	24%
Dating:	15%	Living w/ Partner:	22%
Living w/ Partner:	3%	Dating:	21%
Divorced:	2%	Divorced:	5%
Separated:	2%	Separated:	0%

Name five of your favorite musical artists or genres:

<b><u>Christian</u></b>		<b><u>Non-Christian</u></b>	
Amy Grant Genre:	43%	Amy Grant Genre:	14%
Non-Amy Grant Genre:	57%	Non-Amy Grant Genre:	86%

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