

PART 2 of the interview

Last week we promised you we would bring you more details on the interview we had with the CEO of Piper's Music Consult International, Rev. Tom Bright-Davies.

The man who is considered a mentor by hundreds of established music ministers and up and coming ones, had some bold things to say which you must hear.

It was such a revealing time for us even though we have always been around this man.

It seems he always comes up with new analysis and new thoughts.

In this interview he shares with us his thoughts on the music ministry, the church and how the music ministry can take her God given place in today's world of music as a leader and not a follower who waits for unbelievers to set the pace in the music industry.

This is a whole encounter with insight and knowledge that will change and transform your life and music. Read on.

PIPER'S MEDIA (PM): Hello Sir, I count it a real privilege to talk to you today because I do know from experience that every moment shared with you leaves me making the requisite adjustments in my life and ministry so thanks once again for giving me time off your busy schedule.

REV. TOM (RT): I'm flattered and give thanks to God for His grace that works in me. You are welcome.

PM: Sir, I would wish you give me a short summary on what the music ministry is.

RT: Ministry means service so I guess it's serving through music.

PM: Is it that simple?

RT: Very simple till you determine whose service you are running.

PM: Whose service? I'm lost on that one sir

RT: I do not want us to take for granted that everyone is serving the purpose of Jesus with their music hence the answers I have given so far. You may call what you do ministry because you are meeting the needs of others with your music gift or talent.

The question is who do you represent in your music ministry? For some it is a philosophy they represent and for some it is just the art form of the industry they represent but when one represents the ministry of Jesus in his or her music it's a totally different ball game altogether.

PM: Please flow. Go on sir.

RT: If one is representing the ministry of Jesus it presupposes Jesus would have done it himself, if he were here on earth so it's very simple to understand what music ministry is, from that standpoint. A music ministry that represents Jesus is simply one that would have the same effect he would have had if he were doing it personally. Let me state here that the approach would definitely be different since we are all unique as individuals representing him. What would however be the same is the nature of the results.

Not all music would heal the sick, raise the dead and get people to walk on the sea.

Some music ministry would teach, instruct, encourage, and prophesy etc.

Whatever it is, that ministry would have the same effect Jesus had on the lives and situations of people.

PM: So how do we explain the current situation where quite a number of musicians in the kingdom do not have any visible impact to show like healing, miracles, salvation and the like?

RT: I think we need to be very careful when it comes to visible impact. Jesus said their fruit should be the measuring line. The fruit starts with the proof of a Christ-like nature as seen in a person's everyday walk. It is this personal walk and relationship that becomes evident in one's music ministry. I believe one does not have to try too hard to feel, see, hear and experience Jesus in a genuine Jesus music ministry. The manifestations of the miraculous and the supernatural are not things a genuine music minister tries to do deliberately by switching the Holy Ghost on or off like an electronic gadget. God knows how to do what he wants to do, the way he wants to, where he wants to and when he wants to. As we walk, watch and work with Him in ministry we would see and experience the power of Jesus expressed in diverse ways by the Spirit.

PM: How would you describe the Christian music industry in Ghana? What is the quality of personnel and its structure?

RT: You have asked me a very sensitive question because some of my answers may sound like I'm not being very charitable but if we in the church in Ghana would play honest and sincere we would be the first to admit it's generally very shameful with nothing much to show to the rest of the world.

PM: Sir to be candid with you I think you must have a reason to sound this hard.

RT: I told you so myself. The truth is about the most difficult thing to face. It hurts and is painful but if we accept it we would have taken one step towards recovery. When it comes to music in the church we still have the basic problems that impede the development and growth of any industry or enterprise. What am I talking about? Every industry takes off when there is investment. Now don't fast-track your mind to financial investments yet. The human resource base must be developed first and then others can follow.

PM: Are you saying that's not the case?

RT: Exactly so. From statistics available to me approximately 8 out of every 10 singers in any choir in Ghana are untrained. In addition these 8 may never buy or read any material on vocal development and may never pay to attend a workshop, let alone pay for voice lessons.

For most instrumentalists they learn from a friend who also learned from a friend from the street corner since we don't like to pay for anything of value. Due to this you can sure bet the wrong techniques and theories are passed on from one person to the other and all these find their way up the local church platform for congregational consumption. In a local church where bad singing and instrumentation is heard week by week it should come as no surprise to anyone that the congregations music intuitions would be corrupted and therefore when you invite people to join the choir it will be a reflection of what kind of diet the choir has been feeding them on, kind of a vicious cycle.

I have always said that so long as we are not excellence inclined and excellence conscious and so long as we believers want the best for free we would always be at the tail-end of the queue. No amount of confessing "I am the head and not the tail" would help us. Repentance will and I mean a turn around from our cheap ways.

PM: I'm sure you are heading for the full time and part time musician issue.

RT: You may choose to put it that way. I will rather put it as determining what is most important when you have a ten point list. It's called prioritization. For some people music is not a hobby, past time or second rate activity. Yes, some in the kingdom may relate to it only as far as receiving ministry but others relate to it from a givers perspective and

therefore the passion and degree of investment regarding it would differ. We are not all doctors, engineers, farmers and so on but may have some degree of sympathy towards those areas. I do a lot of things that are not directly singing, writing songs and producing albums but my commitment and investment in music just tells you what my priority is.

You don't expect a trained professional to trade his skill for peanuts do you?

This is the crux of the matter. In the church we expect people to render professional services in exchange for nothing or in exchange of less and for many of my colleague pastors it is a show of commitment. This is a great disregard for God's principles of justice and fairness. A laborer is worth his due or hire. That's what Jesus said. Whenever we break this principle we do so in gross disregard for his word and that's a sin.

PM: But Sir, don't you think it would be impossible to pay everyone who provides some service in the local church?

RT: That is where we miss the point I am making. Not all services take all your time. You don't pay a cab driver \$100 when he drives you for one kilometer, do you? Why would churches freely pay the church administrator? Why would they pay the security? Why does the Head Pastor receive a salary? Why does the church driver receive wages? It is simply because we believe what they are doing for the local church is of critical and vital importance to the day to day running and functioning of the church. The problem with local churches in which qualified, excellent and well trained music ministers are not receiving a salary or even a good salary is that they subconsciously believe music is not important. They believe that is supposed to be your contribution to that local church. From which scripture did they get that? Someone needs to show me. In churches like that it does not take much to realize that the music department always has problems. There is a lot of instability with membership, with equipment, with leadership personnel and most importantly the flow of the spirit. You see, most Pastors are not able to see it coming because they feel so long as somebody is behind the keyboards, drums, microphones and mixing consoles and there is a song they are singing and the congregation seems to like it they have a music department or music ministry going. This is delusion personified.

This is factual observation I have made and I'm not inventing anything.

These observations have come through the length and breadth of my work for over 25 years. I can tell you that unless there is a real good reason the Holy Spirit would restrain a truly called, anointed and purpose driven music minister from working professionally in such a local church. God is a God of order and does not mock his own principles.

The expectation of your harvest must be evident in the seed you sow else you are plainly in denial that you are deluded. If you want a biblically acceptable music ministry you must be ready to spend on it and pay for it and treat people well, with respect.

PM: You know what Sir? I'm so amazed at the things you are boldly saying and I forgot I was doing an interview (laughs and RT laughs also). So you think the church should go back to biblical order, principles and patterns.

RT: You got it. You sure got that right.

PM: Let's go back to the issue of music ministers. Would you say people in music ministry know what they are about? Do they understand their gifts, callings and talents? Are they in their right places of specialty? Your thoughts, Sir.

RT: Knowledge is progressive and no one person except God is the preserve of it. We learn a bit at a time as is relevant to our needs and where God is taking us individually. I will not stand in judgment on this count but there is also the truth of the matter that a

person's knowledge is responsible for the way he goes about what he does and the results he gets. If a man knows where God is taking him he would weigh which local church he attaches himself to. Birds of the same feather flock together and that's how God has designed it to be. Wrong knowledge when applied will certainly produce wrong results the same way as and right knowledge applied produces good results. The book of proverbs screams out almost in every chapter the high price we pay for not having the correct know-how. Knowledge is one of the catalysts of faith and without faith you cannot do the things that God wants you to do. When we don't do what God wants us to do it does not make him happy so scripture says without faith it is impossible to please God no matter how hard you try. The point I'm trying to make is that having the talent, gifting or calling is not enough to make you viable. Your knowledge of what you have been given by God and your desire to learn how to release it in the right way and place is what will get you going. These days I see a trend come up in the young ones which is dangerous. They are not patient and willing to learn. They want it all at once and at the same time. They are not passionate about getting prepared and so they step out too early and their roots are not deep enough. Many of them fall into the hands of Pastors who sometimes innocently lack what it takes to see those kids are not ready yet and use them till they are frustrated. Some are eventually relieved of their positions in the music departments of their churches and they get bitter. If Pastors were requiring that people be trained before they serve it would help. Then there are those Pastors who see a young, strong, zealous kid full of energy and looking for opportunity. They manipulate these kids use them and dump them and pick another. I deal with this stuff in counseling all the time. No wonder these kids gifts never blossom because they are in a hurry. It's not surprising they are here today and gone tomorrow. The word of God says "what God does is for forever". People with a call for music need to take time. We must understand that Lucifer was MADE. God took time to MAKE him. He didn't just show up. His outer body was MADE of precious stones. God deliberately put this here and put that there. The settings made in him were placed by God why? This was because God was putting together something to serve his divine purposes. He doesn't take us through any different a procedure. We must allow Him to make us. God is not in the business of the 9 day wonder stuff. When we allow Him he uses us to make an impact that outlives us. Ministry is not an event but a process. This is not show-biz show-time. This is about eternity. This is about life, about Jesus.

PM: You realize that sir, I did not interrupt because I think the things you have said are so powerful and if those who are in one form of ministry or the other heed to these words I believe it will be well with them.

RT: I sincerely hope they do listen

Next week we bring you the last section of the interview where Rev. Tom shares with us what new things are happening in his life and what he is doing with his own career as a songwriter, singer, recording artiste, producer/arranger and what things are coming up in his production outfit.

He will answer questions on the new styles of music he has developed like J-LIFE, J-RAP, AFRO R&B, STILL WATERS, KEY OF DAVID, P-JAM, SPIRIT & SOUL etc. For those of you looking for music production opportunities you need to keep logging on to this site. Tell a friend about the stuff you can find on this site. God is really up to some new things and no one should miss out on it. See you next week