

What Is Southern Gospel Music?

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Over the years I have been asked, "What is Southern Gospel Music?". That is an interesting and challenging question. You could ask 100 people that question, and probably come up with as many answers.

SGM has many facets to it. Number one, SGM is about the "Gospel".... The Good News of Jesus Christ! Songs may be about heaven, the day you got saved, or the struggles of everyday life. It may deal with your victories, defeats, and your determination to stay in the battle.

There is a rich history of Southern Gospel Music. The term SGM has not always been around. But, as a way to distinguish itself from other types of Gospel Music, the label got attached to it. Gospel Music, in general, has many labels as well, like Contemporary, Black, Country, Rap, etc.

SGM "purists" would like to say that the music is basically 4 guys and a piano. Others say it is the quartets, as well as family type groups. SGM, in my opinion, as progressed over the years. And, that is a great thing! Yes, I love to listen to the old Speer Family and the old Blackwood Brothers. I totally enjoy the early sounds of SGM! I enjoy the SGM of the 70's when it started branching out. Proof of that was the music of the Downings, Imperials, and the Oak Ridge Boys. Since that time, SGM has been evolving into what it is today.

This is what "I" consider SGM today. The good old fashioned singing of the Inspirations, all the way to the more Contemporary side of SGM like the Gaither Vocal Band. It includes the youthful sounds of the Talley Trio and Crabb Family. We have great soloists like Ivan Parker, Janet Paschal, and Carroll Roberson. We have the soulful black SGM, like Lynda Randle, Charles Johnson & Revivers, and the Reggie Sadler Family. There is the country side of SGM, like David Patillo, the Issacs, and Jessica King. Let's not forget the bluegrass SGM, like Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver. And, I am just starting to touch the surface of what is considered SGM!

One exciting aspect of SGM is that it isn't going away! Young people still get attracted to it! Many of today's newer artists are from the younger generations. That is great news for those of us who love and treasure SGM!

Yes, I enjoy many other genres of music. I still enjoy the Eagles, George Jones, Styxx, and Queen! But, 99% of the time I want to hear me some good Southern Gospel Music! I'm not ashamed of the label of Southern Gospel. Some people don't want to have THAT label! Well.... Okay.... Whatever! You call it whatever you want for yourself. I'll take my Southern Gospel Music and be THRILLED with it!!!!!!!