

Let us approach this question both carefully and biblically.

In Acts 17:28 (NKJV), the Apostle Paul says:

“For in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’”

And in verse 29:

“Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising.”

This statement was made during Paul’s sermon at the Areopagus in Athens a city full of philosophers, poets, and idols. The apostle was *“provoked in his spirit”* (Acts 17:16, NKJV) because the city

was given over to idolatry. However, rather than begin with harsh rebuke, he used a redemptive strategy: he started by building rapport with his audience through their own cultural references. This approach mirrors what he later describes in 1 Corinthians 9:22 (NKJV):

"I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

When Paul quotes, *"We are also His offspring,"* he is referencing a line from a Greek poet either Epimenides or Aratus, both of whom were familiar to his audience. However, Paul did not quote this poet as an endorsement of pagan songs or secular art. Instead, he took a *partial truth* embedded in pagan culture and used it to correct their false view of God.

Was Paul Promoting Secular Music?

No. Paul's use of a poet's words was *not* an affirmation of the poet's worldview or musical expression. Rather, it was an evangelistic tool to bring clarity to the nature of God. Paul used the quote to argue that, if we are God's offspring, then God must

be living, intelligent, and personal not an idol made of gold, silver, or stone. The logic was theological, not musical.

Throughout his letters, Paul makes it clear that believers are to separate themselves from worldly thinking and influences:

Romans 12:2 (NKJV):

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

In other words, while Paul acknowledged cultural references for the sake of the Gospel, he never encouraged believers to adopt the world’s systems or practices including its music, especially when it is rooted in a worldview contrary to Christ.

Paul’s Teaching on Worship Music

Rather than promoting secular songs, Paul specifically taught that believers should sing songs that are spiritual in nature songs that glorify God, teach truth, and edify the soul.

Ephesians 5:19–20 (NKJV):

“Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Colossians 3:16–17 (NKJV):

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”*

Paul’s emphasis is on *psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs* not entertainment or secular music. His teaching makes it clear that Christian worship is to be Christ-centered, rooted in Scripture, and spiritually enriching.

Theological Summary

Acts 17:28 is an example of contextual evangelism not a theological approval of secular music.

Paul quoted a pagan poet to point people to the true nature of God, not to promote the poet's work or influence.

Scripturally, believers are instructed to sing spiritual songs that reflect the truth of God's Word and draw hearts into worship.

The Christian life is a holy calling (2 Timothy 1:9), and our music, like everything else, should reflect the Lordship of Christ.

Conclusion

There is no biblical basis to claim that Paul encouraged listening to secular or worldly music. His reference to a poet in Acts 17 was simply a bridge to share the Gospel, not an endorsement of secular art. As followers of Christ, we are called to focus on that which is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Philippians 4:8, NKJV).

Let our songs be filled with the glory of God, building us up in the faith and drawing us nearer to Christ.

God bless you.

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