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Chamber Symphony Three Mysteries of the Christian Faith

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERISTY
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

CHAMBER SYMPHONY
THREE MYSTERIES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

By
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Movements, Instrumentation and Duration.....	iv
Abstract	v
Significant Numbers and Their Meaning	1
Usage of Numbers in Movement I	4
Usage of Numbers in Movement II	6
Usage of Numbers in Movement III	8
References.....	11
Biographical Sketch	12

CHAMBER SYMPHONY
THREE MYSTERIES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

- MOVEMENT I:

Mystery of The Trinity: One in Essence, Three in Person

- MOVEMENT II:

Mystery of The Church: Sovereign Redemption, Chosen before Time

- MOVEMENT III:

Mystery of Marriage: Two in One Flesh, United by God

INSTRUMENTATION:

- Flute
- Clarinet in Bb
- Bassoon
- Harp
- Strings: 2, 2, 2, 2, 1 w/extension

DURATION:

Approximately 20 minutes

ABSTRACT

One aspect of the Bible that has always fascinated me is the study of Biblical numerology. That is, the study of individual numbers along with their meaning found in the scripture, both literal and symbolic. This can indeed be taken to the extreme and lead some to believe that these numbers can mystically reveal to us the future, or uncover hidden truths, which would eventually lead one to ignore the intended meaning of the text in search of some hidden meaning. However, there is a certain amount of validity in taking a close, critical inspection of the consistent usage of certain numbers in the scripture. Certain prophetic books in the Bible introduce to us a complex yet interconnected system of numerology. The book of Daniel and Revelation are examples of this. Through close inspection we can see particular usage of numbers, along with their apparent meaning, that remains consistent throughout the Bible as a whole. I have used the idea of Biblical numerology as the foundation of my thesis. This has influenced my usage of meter and frequent metric modulations, phrase lengths, the selection of pitch classes for many parts of my work, and its architecture overall. My selection of orchestra size has also been influenced by this idea. There are 13 instrumentalists + 1 vital musician often overlooked and not counted, that is, the conductor. Therefore, the number of musicians taken to perform this work is 14, or 7 + 7. Seven is a very key number in Biblical numerology, meaning divine completion, perfection, and totality.

SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS AND THEIR MEANING

The following are the important numbers that I chose to use, along with their meaning and a few Biblical references. This is to be used as a guide when the numbers' specific musical usage within the explanation of each movement is addressed. This is by no means an exhaustive list of Biblical references, but an adequate amount that communicates the significance of each particular number.

The first movement emphasizes just two of these numbers, *three and seven*, and with each additional movement more are added to those used previously. I have chosen 9 numbers to frame the architecture around because it is a multiple of *three*. This number is fundamental in this piece because it influenced my decision to have *three* movements, and the first number emphasized in the entire work is *three*.

Two – Represents support and difference

- Two cherubim guarded the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:22);
- Two spies were sent into Jericho (Joshua 2:1);
- The first marriage of Adam and Eve in the garden, and their complementarian design (Genesis 2).

Three – This signifies perfection, completion, and unity.

- Perhaps the most notable usage, this number expresses the Trinity: God the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19);
- Just as Jonah spent three days in the belly of a fish, Jesus was in the grave for three days (Matthew 12:40; see also John 2:19);
- Jesus' earthly ministry lasted three years (Luke 13:7).

Five – This number is often associated with grace.

- Jesus used five loaves of barley to feed 5,000 (Matthew 14:17);
- The usage of fives throughout the structure of the tabernacle – pillars were five cubits apart and five cubits high, the brazen alter was five by five cubits, sides reinforced by five bars on each sides (outlined in Exodus 26);
- Five Levitical Offerings (outlined in Leviticus 1-5).

Six – The Number of Man, and also of incompleteness by being one less than seven.

- Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day (Genesis 1:31);
- The sixth commandment deals specifically with human life (Exodus 20:13).

Seven – Much like three, seven represents divine perfection, completion, and totality.

- God rested on the seventh day after completing creation (Genesis 2:2);
- God's Word is pure, like silver purified seven times in the fire (Psalm 12:9);
- One can also see the clear heptatic structure throughout the Book of Revelation

Eight – Signifies New Beginnings

- Eight people survived the flood (Genesis 7:13, 23);
- Circumcision took place on the eighth day after birth (Genesis 17:12);
- There are eight New Testament writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude.

Twelve – Relates to divine government

- The 12 tribes of Israel (Genesis 29:28);
- The 12 apostles (Matthew 10:2-4);
- The construction of the New Jerusalem will be composed of many twelve's – twelve gates, twelve angels at those gates, and twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on the gates to mention only a few (Revelation 21:12-15).

Thirteen – Represents Rebellion, apostasy, & depravity

- Jesus lists 13 sins that proceed out of the heart of a carnal man (Mark 7:21 & 22);
- The word “dragon” (*drakon* in the Greek, meaning Satan), appears 13 times in the book of Revelation;
- The first occurrence of 13 in the Scripture is used to describe rebellion (Genesis 14:4).

Sixteen – Represents Love

- In 1st Corinthians, chapter 13 Paul speaks of the 16 qualities of love;
- The Book of John uses *agape* (divine love in the Greek) 16 times exactly;
- The 16th time Noah is mentioned in Genesis is when he took the animals by two, male and female, into the ark (Genesis 7:9).

USAGE OF NUMBERS IN MOVEMENT I

Mystery of The Trinity: One in Essence, Three in Person

The Holy Trinity is one of the most fascinating mysteries in the Christian faith. It is hard to comprehend One Supreme Being that is composed of three specific persons: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are distinct in roles and function, but not in equality or essence. Despite what may seem to be on the surface three separate Gods, Christianity is monotheistic, and holds that all these persons are equally God, yet they are still one.

Significant Numbers

Three and Seven

Choice of Meter

I wanted to capture the idea of the Trinity within the first movement, and to accomplish this I chose 7/8 to be a major time signature. My reasoning behind this is that there are *three* groupings within 7/8, and I preferred this meter opposed to other more obvious choices: 3/4, 3/8, or 9/8. Also, I was not only able to express the perfect number of *three* within 7/8, but also *seven* itself.

Significant Numbers' Represented in the Form

I have constructed this movement in that the phrase or sub-sections are multiples of *three* or *seven*. Also, the units of pulse within each respective phrase or sub-section are a multiple of *three* or *seven* exactly.

Significant Numbers' Influence on Pitch Class Selection

The first three bars of this movement begin with the pitch class set 11, expressed by *three* different instruments and span the distance of *three* octaves, which when totaled equal to 33, a multiple of *three*. This event then takes place twice more, for a total of *three* occurrences. In measures 4-6 a total of all the PC sets, including reoccurring PC, total to 57, a precise multiple of *three*. When string harmonics return briefly in measures 29-31 it takes place over *three* bars, and the three separate PC sets utilized are 4, 9, and 5, which when totaled

equal 18, a multiple of *three*. At the same time, when the PC are totaled one after the other the sum is a multiple of *seven*: $4 + 4 + 9 + 4 + 9 + 5 = 35$. When taking the PCs in the Harp from the last two measures, along with the sustained notes in the bassoon and violin from the third to last measure, the total comes to 81, perfectly divisible by *three*. Finally, I have chosen to only use *seven* separate pitch classes in these bars.

For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His son.

— *1 John 5:7-9, New American Standard Version*

USAGE OF NUMBERS IN MOVEMENT II

Mystery of The Church Sovereign Redemption, Chosen before Time

Orthodox Christian Theology teaches that man is unable to save himself and is destined to eternity apart from God. However, God himself, in the form of a man - namely, Jesus - was sent to the Earth to live the perfect life, yet die the brutal death that man deserves. In doing so, He became the propitiation for the sins of mankind and through that, God imputes his own righteousness to those who call upon the name of the Lord in repentance. This was my main inspiration for this movement.

Significant Numbers

Three, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, and Thirteen

Significant Numbers Represented in the Form

I have woven *three, five, six, seven, & eight* into the form of this movement, taking either a phrase or a larger section at a time. An example of this is in measures 1-18, which represents the introduction to this movement. *Six* is a multiple of *18*, with *six* representing incompleteness. Also, the total number of beats within this section is 66, a multiple of 6 exactly. All of the phrases up until measure 30 are constructed using said number.

After bar 30 every section or phrase utilizes *three, five, seven, eight*, or a multiple thereof. Similarly, each of the sections contains a number of beats that is a multiple of *three* or *five*, whereas the beats in the sections that occur before bar thirty are multiples of *six* or *thirteen*, the number representing rebellion and depravity.

Significant Numbers' Influence on Pitch Class Selection

When taking the sum of the pitch class sets extracted from the string harmonics within the first three bars the total is twenty-six, which is a multiple of *thirteen*. When this idea reappears in measure 77 the 4th violin's harmonic is altered, thus changing the PC sum to a multiple of *eight*, which is the number that symbolizes new beginnings.

The PC sum of the main theme, represented for the first time in measure 9 by the clarinet & flute, is 102, which is a multiple of *six*. In bar 19 this motif enters for a second time by the solo violin, which then totals 104, making it a multiple of *thirteen* precisely. However, when this enters for a third time in measure 36 the PC sum then becomes 99, which *three* divides evenly into. Consequently, every additional usage of this theme from bar 36 onward is a multiple of *three*. The last incipit of this motif played by the cello in bar 91-93 contains a PC sum of 24, which is *eight* multiplied by *three*.

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

– *Ephesians 3:1-12, New American Standard Version*

USAGE OF NUMBERS IN MOVEMENT III

Mystery of Marriage: Two in One Flesh, United by God

There are two major marriages portrayed in the Bible: The marriage of a man and woman, and the marriage of Christ and His Church, as seen in Ephesians 5:22-33. In fact, the former points towards the latter. The Scriptures details this as an event where the two opposites join together and become one flesh, as detailed in Genesis 2, and this in itself is designed to point toward the pinnacle marriage of Christ and the Church. This movement is meant to be celebratory, as I envision it as a type of wedding commemoration.

Significant Numbers

Two, Three, Five, Six, Seven, and Sixteen

Choice of Meter

I wanted to express with the meter two ideas that coexisted and were complementary to one another. With this in mind I decided to make 6/8 a salient feature, and use this meter to encapsulate the feeling of two metric divisions within one meter. I did this by emphasizing both the two dotted eights along side three quarter notes simultaneously.

The first example of this is in measure four. The upper strings carry the rhythm distinctive to 6/8 while the 1st cello enters in with a rhythm characteristic of 3/4. This continues to occur when the 1st violin in measure 8 picks up where the cello left off, now with the lower strings and the 1st viola bringing out the 3/4 meter. This is further explored in bars 23-29. The first three bars are notated in 3/4, yet the lower strings, along with the harp and winds, play a rhythm that is more characteristic of 6/8. This is accomplished by the placement of the accents. Similarly, the inverse takes place in measures 27-29. These bars are notated in 6/8, but with the accented parts it brings out the feeling of 3/4 within in 6/8 meter.

Finally, 5/8 bars frequently accompany the 6/8 bars as well. My reasoning behind this is two fold: when you add the number of conducted beats from 6/8 (2) and 3/4 you're left with 5; and this combination of meter occurs in sub-sets of *three*: 5/8, 6/8, 5/8; and when totaled

the sum is *sixteen*, which represents love. Therefore, when taking the design expressed by the meters the conclusion is that the *two* complementary yet distinct ideas become unified as one and are united in love by God.

Significant Numbers Represented in the Form

Because I had a larger bank of numbers to choose from the lengths of phrases or sections vary considerably from the previous movements. However, I was still particular in that I wanted the significant numbers of this movement represented in the section's lengths and number of beats. The number of measures contained in each section is *two* (*this only appears as a larger number divisible by two*), *three*, *five*, *six*, *seven*, *sixteen*, or a multiple. In addition, the numbers of beats within each of the sections are multiples of the same numbers.

The overall form of this movement also reflects one of the significant numbers: *seven*. It is a *seven-part* rondo, with the last section that is typically a repeat of A, becoming a hybrid of A, B, and C. At this point the *three* main themes of this movement are merged together, along with the rhythmic and accompaniment influences, to form a new idea altogether.

Significant Numbers' Influence on the Harmony

The harmony that characterizes most of the $5/8 - 6/8 - 5/8$ bars is constructed of two triads. The first time this appears is at the beginning of A, in measure one, and the two triads are F Major and Eb Augmented. The quality of the two chords remains the same in the second occurrence of A (measure 42); however, in measure 87 the quality shifts to minor/Major, (this time utilizing C# Minor/ B Major). In 134 the harmonies are altered yet again, this time Major/minor. The last time a shift in quality takes place it occurs in measure 150 (between F# Major/E Major), and now both sonorities are Major/Major, and remain as such through the end. After all the alterations made to these two harmonies, in the end they both merge together to form one sonority that can be broken down into two distinct triads, that are united by their Major quality.

Significant Numbers' Influence on Pitch Class Selection

When totaling the PC sets of these two harmonies previously discussed, their first appearance, in measure one comes to 35, which is a multiple of *seven*. All the other occurrences of this figure are divisible by *three*.

The PC sums of the main themes are 128, 82, and 98 respectively. All are divisible by *two*, as well as their total altogether. Additionally, 128 is also divisible by *sixteen*, while 98 is divisible by *seven*.

Finally, the sum of all the PC in the last three bars equal 80, which is a multiple of *sixteen*.

...If two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.

– *Ecclesiastes 11 & 12, New American Standard Version*

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be hold and blameless . . . This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

– *Ephesians 5:22-27; 32, New American Standard Version*

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Mohler, Albert. "Reflecting on 'The Mystery of Marriage!'" Boundless.org. <http://www.boundless.org/relationships/2010/reflecting-on-the-mystery-of-marriage> (accessed April 20, 2013).

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Academic Experience

- Master of Music Composition, Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL Spring 2013
 - Primary Instruction: Dr. Ladislav Kubik
 - Supplemental Instruction: Dr. Clifton Callender, & Dr. Mark Wingate
- Bachelor of Music Education, The University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, MS, Spring 2011
 - Primary Instruction: Dr. Nicholas Ciraldo, Dr. Gregory Fuller
 - Supplemental Instruction: Dr. Taylor Hightower, Mr. Luigi Zaninelli, Dr. James Sclater-Mississippi College, Dr. Dan Shore-Xavier University
 - GPA: 3.9
- Associates of Arts, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Gautier, MS, Spring 2008
 - Primary Instruction: Mr. Jonathan Woodward, Mr. Christopher Steele
 - Supplemental Instruction: Dr. Carlos Castilla, Mr. Kevin Fleming

Academic Awards and Memberships

- Assistantships
 - Florida State University Assistantship
- Scholarships
 - University of Southern Mississippi Choral Service Award
 - Northrop Grumman Scholarship
 - Work Study, USM School of Music
 - Elks Club Scholarship
 - Gautier Rotary Club Scholarship
- Treasurer, USM Guitar Society, Fall 2010
- Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

Teaching Experience

- Mason's School of Music, Fall 2011-Fall 2012
 - o Music Fundamentals & Theory
- Private Guitar Studio, Fall 2009-Summer 2011
 - o Age range from 15-70 years old
- Student Teaching, Spring 2011
- Gautier High School Show Band, 2007

Performance Experience

- Society of Composers
 - o April 29, 2013
 - o April 15, 2013
 - o February 24, 2013
 - o October 9, 2012
 - o April 19, 2012
 - o December 6, 2011
 - o November 15, 2011
- Composition Masterclasses
 - o Dr. Zhou Long, January 30, 2013
 - o Dr. Lansing McLosky, October 27, 2011
- USM Guitar Galas
 - o April 21, 2010
 - o Spring, 2009
- Junior Recital November 21, 2009
- Chamber concerts
 - o November 16, 2010 (Premiere of my Duo for Violin and Guitar)
 - o Guitar Quartet, April 13, 2010
 - o November 17, 2009 (Premiere of my Fantasia for Cello, Guitar and Flute)
 - o Guitar Quartet, April, 2008
- Forrest General Hospital and Cancer Center, June 7-18, 2010;
- Reception for Manuel Barrueco

- Jones County Community College Guitar Festival
 - o April 13, 2010
 - o April 13, 2009
 - o April 14, 2008
- Mississippi Guitar Festival
 - o Second Place Intermediate Category, November 6, 2010
- Provision Living Retirement Home
 - o August 25, 2009
 - o September 17, 2009
 - o November 13, 2009
- Guitar Masterclasses
 - o Frank Wallace, November 15, 2010 (Composition and Chamber music masterclass)
 - o Dr. Denis Azabagic, November 7, 2010
 - o Austin Moorhead, Spring 2009
 - o Dr. Robert Gibson, Spring 2009
 - o John DeChiaro, April 14, 2008
- FSU Chamber Choir
 - o Seasonal Concert December 12, 2011
 - o Bach Christmas Oratorio November 10, 2011
- USM Chorale
 - o Alumni Reunion Performance, November 6, 2010
 - o Concert Parkway Heights United Methodist, at October 19, 2010
 - o Southern Invitational Choral Conference, September 27, 2010
 - o Recording Session and Performance of Luigi Zaninelli's Choral Music, May 3, 4 and 6, 2010
 - o Bay Street Presbyterian, April 26, 2010
 - o American Choral Directors Association Tour, March 9-11, 2010
 - o World Premier of Edwin Penhorwood's "An American Requiem", November 15, 2010.
 - o Concert at Bennett Auditorium, September 28, 2010