

FIGHT BACK DARKNESS

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ABSTRACT

Fight Back Darkness incorporates texture and form from two genres: post-rock and ambient. Instruments such as marimba, vibraphone, piano, electric guitar, synth pads, and electronic drums come together, at times aided by *musique concrete* (a ticking clock), to create a nostalgic, relaxing, and sentimental aesthetic. This aesthetic is given a clear intent by the words of a pastor who urges his congregation to pursue a life of prayer. The music serves this message in that it is all at once urgent, reflective, and motivational, which supports the pastor's aim of having his congregation think back on their life of (or lack of) prayer, urges them to press on in prayer, and promises spiritual and moral growth as a result of prayer.

The form consists of three sections: intro, arrival, and outro. It could also be described as ABA', in that A builds to B, and A' descends from B. The intro is a slow build of multiple voices and volume that leads us to the arrival. This first section has three main voices: the voice of the pastor, the vibraphone melody, and the piano. As the intensity of the pastor rises, the volume of and activity of the voices increase, leading to the arrival. The arrival can be thought of as a sort of "drop," a release of tension, or an explosion of emotion. The concept of a "drop" is common in many styles of music, but this arrival is especially similar to arrivals in the Post-Rock genre. The last section is an outro in which the harmony changes for the first time from C and F major to A minor, which gives a sense of longing and sadness. These emotions are met with the pastor again promoting a life of prayer in order to fight back the pain and suffering. As the keyboard percussion sounds, synth pads, and pastor's voice fade away, the compositional aim is to leave the listener in a reflective and peaceful state.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all those who aided me in the creation of this piece over the last two years. This includes all the teachers who assisted my compositional growth and the friends and mentors who have aided me in my walk with Christ.

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