

THE WORSHIP LEADERS MANUAL



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STUDY GUIDE

The following questions and practical exercises will help you apply what you learn in each chapter of the Worship Leaders Manual.

Chapter 1: The Essence of Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will gain a deeper understanding of the Biblical basis for worship; identify the importance of the presence of God in worship and define and describe the essence of worship.

Reflection:

1. Which aspect of God's character is most meaningful to you? His love, mercy, justice, holiness, compassion, morality, gentleness, etc? Why?
2. Read Luke 18:9-14. What does this passage say about the proper approach to God in worship?
3. Read Revelation 5:1-14. What reasons are found here for worshipping God?
4. Read Exodus 19:16-25. What effects does the presence of God have on nature and on people?
5. Read Exodus 34:29-35. What does the passage say about God? What does it mean to be in God's presence?
6. Read Luke 9:28-36. What does the passage say about God? What is the effect of the presence of God on people?
7. Pretend that King Jesus posted a list of all in your church who served him well during the last month. Would your name be included? Why or why not?
8. What changes would be made if Christ became your permanent house guest? In other words, what would it be like if you became more and more aware of the presence of Christ in your home?

Exercises:

1. Write out a definition for worship in your own words.
2. Imagine for a moment that Jesus visited a church service in a visible form. What effect would it have on the worshippers: Singing? Praying? Listening to the Preaching? Relating to Others? Standards of Holiness? Willingness to Serve? Witnessing to Others? Pre-service Preparation?
3. List advantages and disadvantages of Christ being physically present in your congregation.
4. Read Ephesians 5:19. Choose a hymn or chorus and sing it often through the day. Record the results of the exercise on your spiritual life.

Chapter 2: The Experience of Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will gain a deeper understanding of the experience of worship; identify patterns of worship and learn the importance of expectancy in worship

Reflection:

1. Some say that in a worship service: the Worship Leader is the Actor, the People are the Audience and God is the Prompter. Others say: the People are the Actors, God is the Audience and the Worship Leader is the Prompter. Which of the two patterns does your worship service reflect? How can your worship service more closely resemble the second pattern? How can we help worshippers view themselves as actors and not spectators?
2. Read Psalm 100. What is the fitting way to enter into God's presence? Is there a sense of progression in worship in the Psalm?
3. When you worship what do you expect God to do in response to your worship?
4. What is the most recent memory you have of going to church on a Sunday morning expecting to encounter Jesus Christ?

Exercises:

1. Work out the typical pattern of your worship service.
2. Ask people gathering for worship what they expect to experience during the service.
3. Consider preaching a series on expectancy in worship.
4. Develop an expectant atmosphere at worship services.

Chapter 3: The Elements of Worship**Objectives:**

As you work through this chapter you will explore the elements of worship that were used in the New Testament church; in the early churches; down through the ages; and in the church today.

Reflection:

1. What elements of worship, used in the New Testament, should be added to the list?
2. Read the second-century description of worship. List the elements of worship they used. Make an outline of their worship service.
3. What are some of the elements of worship mentioned in Revelation 5?

Exercises:

1. Consider your worship service. What elements of worship are included?
2. Take two of your worship elements, namely the Lord's Supper and Baptism, and work out a creative way to use them. Take a moment to reflect on how difficult it is to change key practices in the church.

Chapter 4: The Ministry of Worship Leader**Objectives:**

As you work through this chapter you will gain an understanding of the need for a worship leader; the leader's qualifications and preparation.

Reflection:

1. Would you say that worship leaders are born or made?
2. What would you say is the most important qualification for a worship leader?
3. What three areas of David's preparation were lacking in 1 Chronicles 13:7-12? (Compare this passage with 1 Chronicles 15:1,2,13)
4. How do your musicians relate to the guidelines mentioned for the role of musicians in this chapter?

Exercises:

1. Look at the list of preparation needed for a worship service, put together a preparation check list to ensure that worship is well prepared.
2. The next time you are in a worship service see if you can identify what paradigm the worship leader is using: are they trying to lift people up to God; bring God down to people or celebrate the God who is present among his people?
3. Using the guidelines in this chapter on how to Facilitate an Encounter with God apply the principles in the next worship service that you lead; ie. create space in which God and people can relate to each other; connect with God yourself as you lead; listen to God for his leading while you are leading; work at being inclusive of your whole audience; give control of the intimate part of worship over to God's Spirit; act as a mediator between God and people; and invite people to engage with God who is among them.

Chapter 5: The Ministry Team in Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will learn about the rewards of team ministry; the role of the church leadership; the role of the worship leader; the role of the musicians; the role of the worshippers; and relationships in the team.

Reflection:

1. Read 1 Chronicles 16. What preparation went into the service? What role did the worship leader, people and the musicians each play?
2. Which view of the goal of worship leadership does your church hold to? Is it the ideal? Would it be possible to have a balance of the three goals?
3. What would you consider the essentials for effective worship team ministry?
4. What are some ways of communicating to the congregation their role in worship?

Exercises:

1. Consider developing a worship team ministry in your local church. Put together a proposal that includes a motivation and a strategy for implementing team ministry in worship.
2. Work at ways in which you can improve the amount and quality of communication between various members of the worship team.
3. Develop a set of guidelines for team ministry in your churches - you may choose to base it on the structure of the example presented at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 6: The Ministry of Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will learn how to develop themes and outlines for worship; how to add creativity to worship; how to set goals for worship; how to check if your worship is balanced; how to evaluate worship; how to make better use of songs in worship; and how to bring change in worship.

Reflection:

1. According to what criteria should a worship service be evaluated? Are the following suitable as a basis for evaluation: Is the worship word-based and was it theologically sound? Is the reading of the Word of God central to the worship service? Is the worship Christ-centered? Is the worship balanced? Is the leader enthusiastic and genuine? Is the leader a sole performer or do they involve others? Did the worship engage the people in an encounter with God? In what ways were the congregation allowed to participate? Did the worship leader in any way distract the worshipper? Was there a clear theme to the worship service? Was there a sense of purpose and direction in the worship? Did the elements of worship chosen fit in with the theme and mood?
2. Should a local church have goals for worship?

Exercises:

1. Discover a structure or worship outline in the following passages: Isaiah 6:1-9; Psalm 96; Luke 15:11-32; Phil 2:1-11; 1 John 4:9-12,19.
2. Does your church have a standard worship pattern? What is your pattern? Include all the major movements normally included in a worship service.
3. Use one of the creative worship outlines in this chapter to develop a worship service. Be sure to adapt it to your context and use songs that will be meaningful to your congregation.
4. In your upcoming worship services make use of, or develop your own, creative ways to involve people in worship - consider using one of the participatory responses; some form of visual creativity; some way to make singing have a greater impact; ways to creatively involve people in prayer; and drama and poetry.
5. Develop a set of goals for your worship ministry.
6. The next time you lead, ask one or two people to give you constructive feedback afterwards.

Chapter 7: Trends in Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will discover contemporary and future trends in worship as 'predicted' by various authors.

Reflection:

1. Read through the various insights into future trends presented by the different authors.
2. Do other trends not included in these articles come to mind?
3. Do any of the trends mentioned make you feel uncomfortable? Why do you think this is so?

Exercises:

1. Develop a master list of ten or twenty key worship trends in the future.
2. Under each trend, identify one or two responses your church needs to make in that regard.

Chapter 8: Diversity in Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will learn how to integrate the audience in worship, including different age groups; generations; commitment levels; worship styles; and culture groups.

Reflection:

1. Which area of diversity has this chapter challenged you to deal with?
2. Is it possible to provide worship experiences in which diverse groups are catered for meaningfully?

Exercises:

1. Talk to some Christian youth in your church to discover what they feel of worship services.
2. Try to picture yourself as an outsider who attends church for the first time. How does it feel?
3. Consider developing a worship service that is targeted at seekers.
4. Identify your own primary worship language and consider how many your church is providing for.

Chapter 9: Children in Worship

Objectives:

As you work through this chapter you will learn how to involve children in worship: understand the development of children and worship; songs for children in worship; leading children in worship; prayer and children in worship; creativity and children in worship; and outlines for children in worship.

Reflection:

1. How does the saying, "Children should be seen and not heard" relate to Jesus' words in Luke 18 and Matthew 21?
2. How can understanding the developmental stages of children help in making worship more meaningful for children?
3. Why is it important for children to attend, and to be involved in, the Sunday morning worship service?

Exercises:

1. Think of some creative ideas for leading children in worship – share them with ministry leaders.
2. Work on practical ways in which you can demonstrate that you have a real concern to include children in your worship services?
3. Identify all the ways in which your worship must change to make it more meaningful for children.

Chapter 1

THE ESSENCE OF WORSHIP

John 4:23,24 says that God is looking for worshippers not for workers or just for worship. Do you enjoy worshipping God? Is it your life's obsession to worship your creator? It should be, because the reason you exist is to worship God. You have been: *Created to Worship God* (Isaiah 43:7); *Chosen to Worship God* (1 Peter 2:9); *Called to Worship God* (Psalm 95:6); and *Commanded to Worship God* (Revelation 14:6,7).

The Westminster Catechism asks, "What is the chief end of man?" And answers, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." In Psalm 149:2-4 we learn that worship is God's enjoyment of us and our enjoyment of him: "Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation." It should be clear that growing in understanding worship and learning how to worship correctly is an important pursuit for believers - even more so for leaders, who help others become worshippers.

1. A DEFINITION OF WORSHIP

In some ways worship defies definition, it can only be experienced. But, like every experience in life, we need to give it a definition to help us understand the experience and enter into it more fully.

A. The English Word

The English word *worship* comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word, "Weorthscipe" (ie. worth ship). It is a recognition of, and a response to the worth of God. When we value the worth of someone we usually do something to demonstrate their worth. Psalm 96:8 says, "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts". This passage suggests that those who value God are the one bringing offerings!

B. The Biblical Words

The words used in the Bible for worship reveal the meaning of worship.

(1) Old Testament Words - there are two main Hebrew words: (a) *Shachah* - which means to bow down, Prostrate; and (b) *Abodah* - which means to serve a superior.

(2) New Testament Words - there are two main Greek Words: (a) *Proskuneo* - which means to come forward to kiss the hand, as an act of adoration; and (b) *Leitourgia* - which means to serve.

Notice that worship has a dual aspect: (1) An *Attitude* of the heart; and (2) *Actions* of service. The definition of worship presented by Ralph P. Martin, shows the two aspects: "Worship is the dramatic celebration of God in his supreme worth in such a manner that His 'worthiness' becomes the norm and inspiration of human living."

Worship can be compared to two lovers responding to each other. It involves:

- (1) **Undivided attention** - Aware of each others presence, focusing on each other
- (2) **Expressing feelings** - "I love you"; "I love being with you, you're perfect"
- (3) **Expression of commitment** - "I'll love you forever"; "I'll care for you"
- (4) **Actions that express love** - Kiss, hug, holding hands, and sex in marriage

From Isaiah 6:1-8, a passage called "a classical example of worship", we discover that worship involves: **(1) Revelation** (v1-4) - God reveals Himself and Isaiah became aware of God's presence; and **(2) Response** (v5-8) - Isaiah responds to the presence of God.

Revelation/Awareness

*In the year that King Uzziah died, **I saw** the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. 2 Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. 3 And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." 4 At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.*

Response

*5 "Woe to me!" **I cried**. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." 6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7 With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." 8 Then **I heard** the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And **I said**, "Here am I. Send me!"*

Notice the phrases in the text that I have marked in bold letters – these verbs show how much of an active participant Isaiah was in the encounter with God: **I Saw** (awareness of God's presence – particularly his holiness and exaltation); **I Cried** (confession of sin – followed by the receiving of pardon); **I Heard** (God's proclamation is heard by the prophet); and **I Said** (Isaiah dedicates himself to fulfil God's commission).

Another way to understand worship from Isaiah 6 is to see a three-fold vision that is involved: (1) a Vision of God; (2) a Vision of Self and (3) a Vision of the Lost. This could be stated as (a) a journey upward; (b) a journey inward and (c) a journey outward. These three movements should be reflected in a worship experience.

We can conclude our discussion on the essence of worship by suggesting the following definition of worship: "*Worship is becoming aware of God's presence and responding to His Presence.*" With the concept of the presence of God being so fundamental to worship, it makes sense to seek to gain a fuller understanding of the Presence of God.

But, before we move on, consider the following definitions of worship that I have gathered (it would be helpful if you analysed each one to see what insights are presented):

A.W. Tozer: Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient mystery, that majesty which philosophers call the First Cause, but which we call our Father which art in heaven.

J. Oswald Sanders: Worship is the loving ascription of praise to God for what he is in himself and in his providential dealings. It is the bowing of our innermost spirit before him in deepest humility and reverence. Worship is the adoring contemplation of God as he has been pleased to reveal himself in his son and in the Scriptures.

Evelyn Underhill: Worship is the total adoring response of man to the one eternal God self revealed in time.

Donald Hustad: Worship is a full confrontation with the self-revealed God of the Scriptures with ample opportunity to respond. Worship is any and every worthy response to God.

Kenneth Gangel: Worship is the total response in which spiritual, emotional and physical factors tune together to draw attention to the heavenly Father.

Langdon Gilkey: Worship is a response to the presence of God, or reaction to the appearance of the Holy.

Paul Richardson: Worship is time spent in active awareness of the presence of God.

Graham Kendrick: Worship is God's enjoyment of us and our enjoyment of him. Worship is a response to the father/child relationship.

James White: Worship involves the assembly of God's people deliberately seeking to approach reality at its deepest level by becoming aware of God in and through Jesus Christ and by responding to this awareness.

Jack Hayford: Worship is the pathway and the atmosphere for people to discover their royal calling in Christ, their high destiny in life, their fullest personal worth and their deepest human fulfillment. Worship is a means by which God's presence can be realised consistently. Worship is an opportunity for man to invite God's power and presence to move among those worshipping him.

Dr Vernon Grounds: Worship involves awareness of God, awe in his presence, adoration of him because of his excellencies and acts, and affirmation in praise of all he is and does.

Leslie B. Flynn: Worship is giving to God the glory, praise, honor and thanks due him, both for who he is and for what he has done.

Warren Wiersbe: Worship is the believer's response of all that he is – mind, emotion, will and body – to all that God is and says and does. This response has a mystical side in subjective experience, and its practical side in objective obedience to God's revealed truth. It is a loving response that is balanced by the fear of the Lord, and it is a deepening response as the believer comes to know God better.

Judson Cornwall: Worship is an attitude of heart, a reaching towards God, a pouring out of our total self in thanksgiving, praise, adoration and love to the God who created us and to whom we owe everything we have and are. Worship is the interaction of man's spirit with God in a loving response.

A.P. Gibbs: Worship is the overflow of a grateful heart, under a sense of divine favour.

Jo King: Worship is a response to God. It is loving God in the presence of others and loving others in the presence of God.

Alasdair Verschoyle: Worship is the deep intimate adoration of God that includes celebration and declaration. Worship is the ascription of worth to the one who is worthy, it is an experience with God, and it is a spontaneous response to God's character. Worship is an individual's personal response to the revelation of God in the midst of his people.

Richard Foster: To worship is experience reality, to touch life. It is to know, to feel, to experience the resurrected Christ in the midst of the gathered community. It is breaking into the shekinah (glory) of God, or better yet, being invaded by the shekinah of God.

Robert Bailey: Worship is the acknowledgement of God's supreme worth. Worship is prayer to and praise of the almighty God that fills us with joy at who he is and transforms us into a living fellowship with him in the very essence of life.

William Temple: To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God. All this is gathered up in that emotion which most cleanses us from selfishness because it is the most selfless of all emotions – adoration.

Franklin Segler: Christian worship is man's loving response in personal faith to God's personal revelation of himself in Jesus Christ. Worship is man's communion with God in Christ, this conscious relationship being effected by the Holy Spirit in the spirit of the worshipper.

Ralph Martin: Worship is the dramatic celebration of God in his supreme worth in such a manner that his 'worthiness becomes the norm and inspiration of human living.

Dr R.A. Torrey: Worship is adoring contemplation of God.

John MacArthur: Worship is giving honour and respect to God.

Bob Mumford: Worship is a personal encounter.

Don Nori: Worship is our joyous response to God's manifest presence. The goal is ruling and reigning

with him, allowing Jesus the Lord to manifest himself in our flesh in this life.

Rob Frost: Worship is the opportunity for busy people to touch the eternal, for sinners to glimpse the holy, for broken people to be enfolded in his perfect love. Worship is moving beyond our self-centered lives to meet the one who created us for something better.

Lawrence Richards: Worship involves the response of God's people attributing worth to God for who he is by nature.

Robert Webber: Worship is a personal meeting with God in which we honour, magnify and glorify him for his person and actions.

Anon: True worship is that exercise of the human spirit that confronts us with the mystery and marvel of God in whose presence the most appropriate and salutary response is adoring love.

Erik Routley: Worship is routine punctuated by festivity. Worship is an occasion when the heart is liberated to love and the mind to think.

Thomas Emswiler: Worship is the celebration and affirmation of God's love in the world.

Ronald Allen: Worship is an active response to God whereby we declare his worth. To worship God is to ascribe to him supreme worth for he alone is worthy.

J.N. Darby: Worship is the honour and adoration which are rendered to God by reason of what he is in himself, and what he is for those who render it.

Clement of Alexander: Worship is celebration. All of life is a festival: being persuaded that God is everywhere present on all sides, we praise him as we till the ground, we sing hymns as we sow the seed, we feel his inspiration in all we do.

Anon: Worship is a lifelong process of knowing and being known by God.

Ben Patterson: To worship is to ascribe worth to God, to bow down and serve God, to engage in ritual drama – the story of God's mighty acts of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Krister Stendahl: Worship is being confronted with a sense of wonder, a sense of our sin, a seeking of purging and purification and a summons to service.

Duane Arnold: Worship is to engage in Christ's praise, not our pleasure; his purposes, not our plans; his redeeming life, not our fallen experience; his eternal truth, not our temporal prosperity.

Anon: Worship is response to God resulting in service to people.

Lyla White: Worship is our active response to God and his goodness.

Roger Pittelko: Worship is a recognition of the majesty of God.

Ronn Huff: Worship is an active ascribing of worth to God in the body of Christ.

A.H. Strong: Worship is formal communion between God and his people – God speaks to man and man to God.

E.F. Harrison: Worship is pure adoration, the lifting up of the redeemed spirit towards God in contemplation of his holy perfection.

Gaines Dobbins: Worship is the interruption of our daily routine to recognise the supreme worth of God, to praise him for his goodness, to meditate on his holiness, to renew devotion to his service.

Carol Mundy: Worship is a response to God's presence – loving him for who he is.

Michael Cassidy: Worship involves allowing the sheer majesty, greatness and goodness of God our

father to break in on our inner beings and draw them out in worshipful adoration.

Tom Inglis: Worship is a continuous consciousness of God's presence and continuous response to God. Worship is the outpouring or overflowing of the whole being, spirit, soul and body, under a sense of divine favour in the presence of God.

Geoffrey Wainwright: Christian worship involves an encounter in which God speaks to us and gives us the tokens of his love, and in which we offer to him our praise and thanks, seek his forgiveness and renew our commitment, ask for his help and entrust our future to him.

John Wimber: Worship is the love making expression between the bride (body of Christ) and the groom (Jesus Christ). Worship is love freely given to God it is the expression of awe and respect to God.

Carl Tuttle: Worship is a desire to know God, to stand in his presence, to meet with God, an expectation of God to dwell among his people. Worship is coming before God with expectancy to see his manifest presence. Worship is to revere and pay homage to God, the act of profound adoration, to give God the glory due his name, to bow down before him, to fall at his feet, to be as a puppy at his masters feet, to turn towards and kiss, lifting up our hands in absolute surrender, drawing near to God, blessing and ministering to him, to be in fearful awe, giving ourselves over to him in loving affection and to do so in spirit and honesty.

Bruce Leafblad: Worship is that process in which we make God first in our lives.

Barry Liesch: To worship God is to fall down before him and to serve him. Worship is the act of declaring to God his worth, affirming who he is and what he has done, and responding to him in praise, adoration, thanksgiving and awe.

Raymond Bailey: Worship is the ordered expression of love of God through the total person. Worship is human loving reaction to God's loving action - the Creator acts: the creature responds.

R.G. Rayburn: To worship God is to ascribe to him the worth for which he is worthy.

J. Thompson: Worship is a service offered to God not only in terms of temple worship but of service to one's fellows. In order to offer this 'worship' to God his servants must prostrate themselves and thus manifest reverential fear and adoring awe and wonder.

W.E. Vine: Worship is the direct acknowledgment to God, of his nature, attributes, ways and claims, whether by the outgoing of the heart in praise and thanksgiving or by deed done in such acknowledgment.

Frank Colquhoun: Worship is man's recognition of the 'worthship' of God. It is man's attempt to give to the Lord the glory due to him as creator and redeemer. Worship is an obligation, an activity and a response.

Sally Morgenthaler: Christian worship is not only offering all that we are to a Holy God. It is the intentional response of praise, thanksgiving, and adoration The God, the One revealed in the Word, made known and accessible to us in Jesus Christ and witnessed in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. In real worship, we carry on an exchange of love with the God who is present, the God who speaks to us in the now, who has done and is doing marvellous things.

For me the best way of describing worship is: "Worship is becoming aware of God's presence and responding to His presence with verbal or active expressions of love and devotion."

Reflect on the definitions and complete the following sentence:

Worship is...

2. THE PRESENCE OF GOD

As we walk through the Bible you will discover that the concept of the presence of God is so prevalent that it can be considered a unifying theme in Scripture.

A. The Presence In The Bible

The Presence of God is one of the Bible's most foundational truths. If we could only get to know, to sense and relate to the God who is present within us every moment of every day, our worship would be revolutionised. The following overview of the Bible's teaching on the presence of God is helpful:

(1) Creation - The Scriptures open up with God present "in the beginning," as the Creator of the world (Genesis 1:1). This Creator God is preparing a place in which to place His created masterpiece, Man. Once the process was complete we read of how God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:28). Man, made in the image of God, heard God say, "Now, live in my presence and worship me - for that is your chief end. Increase and fill the world with worshippers."

(2) God's Name - In the Second Book of the Bible we read of the God who appeared to Moses and revealed His name as, "Yahweh" (Exodus 3:11-15), from the verb "to be" - describing God as the God who is present, living among his people (Numbers 35:34). The people of Israel knew that God was present by the symbols of the pillar of cloud by day, the Pillar of fire by night, (Exodus 13:21) and the Glory of God that filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34).

(3) Localised - This God who was present chose to identify His presence with specific places: (a) *The Mosaic Tabernacle* (Exodus 25:8,22; 40:34); (b) *The City of Jerusalem* (Deuteronomy 12:4-7; 2 Chronicles 6:5,6); and (c) *The Temple of Solomon* (2 Chronicles 5:1; 6:1,2).

(4) Universal - The local manifestation of God's presence did not mean that God was only in one place at any given time. We speak of God as omnipresent. Dr. Rex Mathie once said: "All of God is everywhere present all of the time". (See Psalm 41:12; Jeremiah 23:23,24). J. Oliver Buswell, said: "Everything in the universe is immediately in the presence of God". In Psalm 139:7-11 we read of the joy and security that comes when the believer knows that God is present, while in Amos 9:1-4 we read of the unbeliever's terror and inability to hide from the God who is present to judge.

(5) Promised - Throughout the Old Testament we read this promise of God, "I will be with you" (Genesis 26:3; Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5,9; 1 Kings 11:38; Isaiah 43:1,2,5; etc). The God who is present has promised to be with His people. It is interesting to note that each time one of God's people was facing a difficult or challenging situation, they heard God promise his presence to them. Some examples include: Isaac worrying about survival (Genesis 26:3); Jacob afraid of Laban (Genesis 31:3); Moses afraid of Pharaoh (Exodus 3:12); Joshua overwhelmed at his task of leading the people into the promised land (Joshua 1:5); Gideon afraid of the enemy (Judges 6:16); Jeroboam afraid of ruling (1 Kings 11:38); Jehoshaphat afraid of the enemy (2 Chronicles 20:17); and Jeremiah overwhelmed at his calling (Jeremiah 1:8).

(6) Prophets - The prophets all experienced the presence of God and made reference to the God who is present among his people (see for example: Isaiah 7:14; Jeremiah 1:8 and Haggai 1:13).

(7) The Word - The Hebrew word for *presence* is often translated *Before Him*, and means literally, "Before the face or under the eyes of." When someone's gaze is fixed on another person they are in each others presence. So we have a God whose face is turned towards His people. Our God is present in the sense of looking on to be actively involved.

Summary: The presence of God is a key concept in Old Testament. Through Creation and by his very Name we meet the God who is present. While God is universal he chose to localise his presence - in the tabernacle, temple and Jerusalem - to teach people how to relate to him - yet he lived with His people wherever they were. He repeatedly promised to be with his people!

(8) In the Gospels - The Gospel of Matthew presents Jesus as the King who is God present with us. Matthew begins with Jesus' birth where Jesus is presented as "Emmanuel," which means "God with us" (1:23). In the middle of his book he recalls Jesus words, "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (18:20). He concludes his gospel with the Great Commission and Jesus' words, "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (28:20). John in his gospel introduces Jesus as the Word, who is God (1:1), who became flesh (1:14), who is the only begotten

God (1:14) and who reveals the Father (1:18). For John, the presence of God is clearly revealed in Jesus as he often speaks of the Glory connected with Jesus, reminding his readers of the Glory of God that was revealed in the Old Testament temple (1:14; 2:11; 11:40; 12:41; 17:1-24).

(9) In the Believer - Jesus introduced the concept of God living in man. He said, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:15-18). God lives in the believer - who is referred to as the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19 "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you").

(10) In the Church - While the individual is called a temple in the New Testament, the church is also spoken of as the Temple of God (2 Corinthians 6:16 "For we are the temple of the living God"). Paul says that God's people are "being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22).

(11) In the New Jerusalem - We read in Revelation 21:3 that in the new heaven and new earth God's presence will be known in a much greater measure than at present: "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them." (21:3). We also read in an Old Testament prophecy that the name of the city will be "Yahweh Shammai" (Ezekiel 48:35) which is translated as: "The Lord is There".

Summary: God's presence in the New Testament was manifested in the Lord Jesus. God has taken up permanent residence within the life of the believer and the church universal is the temple of God. We eagerly await our final destination - a place where God's presence will be known most intimately!

B. The Problem Of Unawareness

But why does the reality of God Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, living inside of us, not impact us as much as it can and should? The problem is that we are unaware of the presence of God. As Christians we tend to live "underneath the radar." We are unaware that God is always with us.

(1) Why are we unaware of God's presence? James Denney, in *The Death of Christ*, says: "Sometimes I envy the Catholic priest. They carry a crucifix around all the time. I need a reminder of the cross of Christ because I forget so easily what Jesus did for me through his death for us." There are at least three reasons for our lack of living with an awareness of God's presence: (a) *God is invisible* - we don't usually perceive God with our five senses; (b) *God is crowded out* - our hectic and busy schedules make us neglect him; and (c) *We do not discipline ourselves to think of God* - we are content to check in with God at church or in devotions.

(2) Biblical examples of being unaware - Among other instances, we find the following references to Biblical characters who were unaware of God's presence in their midst: (a) *Jacob* (Genesis 28:10-17); (b) *Emmaus disciples* (Luke 24:13-16, 30,31); and (c) *Jesus' disciples* (John 21:4,7).

(3) The rewards of awareness - If we could live in awareness of God's presence we would experience: (a) *Intimacy* - when we interact with God we grow closer to him (Psalm 63:6-8); (b) *Security* - when we know that God is with us we will not be afraid (Psalm 16:8; Isaiah 43:1f); and (c) *Holiness* - when we spend time in God's presence we are conformed into his likeness (Acts 4:13; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

C. Praise: Tuning Into The Presence Of God

The solution to this lack of awareness of the presence of God lies in tuning into the presence of God. If we can learn to be aware of God's presence, learn to relate to the God who is always with us then worship will become a life-style and we will grow in Christ-likeness.

David, the Psalmist learnt to live with an awareness of the presence of God. We read these words of David in Psalms 16:8, "I have set the LORD always before me." It says literally, "I keep the Lord continuously in prominence". Again in Psalm 63:1-8 when David was out in the wilderness, far from the temple, he worshipped the God who was present. He had a spontaneous relationship with God because he was continually aware of the presence of God.

We need to practise the presence of God. But how do we do this? One thing is certain, as Brother Lawrence points out in *The Practice of the Presence of God* - it is not something that comes naturally.

We will only learn to experience God's presence as an ongoing reality through much conscious effort and discipline. The following ways to practise God's presence are suggested:

- (1) Remind yourself of the reality of God's presence** – throughout the day we are to find ways to jog our memories that God is with us.
- (2) Decide to talk to God continuously** – we must make a conscious decision to communicate with God as much as possible throughout the day.
- (3) When you forget God is with you, confess and continue with him** – we must not allow condemnation to fill out hearts when we realise we have forgotten God – just confess and continue.
- (4) Do everything, even common tasks, for the Lord** (Colossians 3:17,23). If we can condition ourselves to see everything we do as done for God, we will be able to include him in our whole lives.
- (5) Take control of your senses and let them direct your mind to God** – we need to use the senses that we normally use to experience our world (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch) to direct our attention towards God.
- (6) Make it your aim to experience God continually** – we need to come to a point where we purpose in our hearts to increase our awareness of God's presence and consciously decide to experience God as much as we possibly can.

D. Worship: Response To The Presence Of God

Praise is the word used to describe the act of confessing the attributes of a person. When we rehearse in God's presence the greatness of His being we begin to sense that he is indeed present! When we are aware that God is truly present we are able to move from praise into the expression of worship. It is vital that we are aware of His presence because worship is not done "from far off," it is the personal response from our hearts to the presence of God. While we should be cautious about drawing too strict a contrast between the two phrases: praise and worship, there is some value in seeing a distinction: (1) Praise is an expression of what God has done (Psalm 28:6) while worship is a response to who God is (Psalm 29:2); and (2) Praise is tuning into God's presence (Psalm 95:1-5) while worship is responding to God's presence (Psalm 95:6-7).

3. A DESCRIPTION OF WORSHIP

While defining worship is a helpful, though difficult exercise, it is also helpful to describe what is involved in worship:

A. Celebration

Psalm 145:3-7 reveals that in worship we celebrate the mighty acts of God as we joyfully recount His dealings with us. As we remember all he has done for us and in us, we celebrate his goodness.

B. Life-Style

In Acts 4:13 we see what a profound impact the presence of Jesus had on the disciples. God's presence has an effect on our lives. Flowing out from our relationship with God, our worship response is to offer our lives as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1). Hebrews 13:15,16 shows that our worship includes: **(1) Thankful praise** ("a sacrifice of praise"); **(2) Unashamed witness** ("the fruit of lips that confess His name"); **(3) Compassionate service** ("do not forget to do good"); and **(4) Generous giving** ("to share with others"). If we are not worshipping through the week with our lips and our lives it is hardly likely that we will worship on Sunday in church. God is looking for worshippers who will be sold out to a life-style of praise and worship.

C. Response

In Isaiah 6:5-8 we discover that worship is a response to God's presence and to His presents. In worship we respond in gratitude to God for who he is and what he's done (Revelation 5:9-10). Clement of Alexander shows something of what a life can be when lived in awareness of God's presence and actively responding to God's presence: "All of our life is a festival, being persuaded that God is everywhere present on all sides, we praise him as till the ground, we sing hymns as we sow the seed, we feel his inspiration in all we do."

D. Dialogue

Worship involves two-way communication between God and people. God speaks to us and we respond by speaking to him. In fact worship is *Trilogue* because in worship: **(1) We minister worship to God** (this is *adoration* which involves thanksgiving, praise and worship. **(2) God ministers to us** (this is *admonition* which involves the Word and the Witness of the Spirit). **(3) We minister to each other** (this is *affirmation* which involves sharing and prayer). Colossians 3:16 shows these three dimensions: "Let the **word of Christ dwell in you** richly as you **teach and admonish one another** with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual **songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.**"

E. Participation

Worship is not a spectator sport. It involves the "active" celebration of God by the participants. We saw how that in Isaiah's experience he was an active participant and not a passive spectator in the encounter he had with God. In the next chapter we will discover that in worship, God is the Audience, the people are the Actors and the worship leader is the Prompter. There is no room for arm-chair observers in worship; no room for thousands of spectators sitting in the stands watching the "match" - everyone is meant to be down on the playing field.

Chapter 2

THE EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP

Imagine for a moment that Jesus arrived at a Sunday morning service in a visible, human form. What impact would his presence have on the singing; praying; relating; holiness; listening and witnessing? Spend time reflecting on each area before you continue reading. On the basis of what we explored in chapter 1 we must conclude that Jesus is always present with us. He also promised to be with us when we gather in His name (Mathew 18:20)! So all of the ways in which we think of his visible presence impacting our worship service should apply all the time.

1. A PICTURE OF THE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

A. The Drama Of Worship

The Danish philosopher, Kiekegaard, compared worship to a dramatic production. In worship, it often seems as though the worship leader is the actor and God is the prompter, whispering in his ear, telling him what to do next. The congregation listens and, at the end, they "applaud" if they like the way they've led worship, or throw things (grumble or complain) if they don't. But Kiekegaard said that is all back to front. Rather, God is the audience, the congregation are the actors and the person leading worship is the prompter, simply keeping the production going. So when we come together to worship, we come not to observe but to connect fully with God.

B. The Dimensions Of Worship

According to Colossians 3:16 ("Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.") there are three dimensions in which our worship services minister:

(1) The Vertical Aspect of Worship - the Worshipper Communicates with the Lord

Why should we devote time and energy to worshipping God?

* *To minister to the Lord* - The most important reason for worship is to bless and glorify God. The question to ask after a service is, "Was God pleased with our sacrifice of praise?" and not, "Did we enjoy the time of worship?"

* *To realise the manifest presence of God in our midst* - There are different degrees to which God manifests his presence. (See Matthew 18:20; Psalm 22:3; 2 Chronicles 5:13,14; Exodus 33:14-16).

* *To provide an opportunity for God's power to be released in His church* - Luke 5:17 shows that in the presence of God his power is revealed. Worship gives God, in his sovereign will, an atmosphere of freedom to work, and it prepares people to become recipients of God's blessing.

* *To provide an atmosphere for the gifts of the Spirit to be manifested* - It is usually only after worship that the spiritual ministries begin to operate. It is not that God is unwilling to speak prophetically to His people at the beginning of the service, but we are not usually ready to minister in the gifts of the Spirit.

* *To open up channels of communication between us and God* - The worship service is an opportunity to confess sins, open our hearts to the Lord and receive cleansing and renewal from God.

(2) The Horizontal Aspect of Worship - the Worshipper Communicates With Others

The following interpersonal dynamics of worship are highly significant:

* *The feeling of unity within a body of believers is enhanced* - Observing a fellow believer committed to worshipping the Lord with all their heart is an experience that produces a sense of unity and affinity.

A Church that worships with all their heart, soul, mind and strength is moving ahead for God with an extraordinary sense of unity.

* *The opportunity to confess and profess faith before others* - Confessing the name of the Lord in the service increases our boldness and faith to declare his name before unbelievers. As we lift up our voice in the congregation the Lord will increase our ability to vocalise our faith before unbelievers.

* *The declaration of the glory of God before unbelievers* - The unsaved do visit church services and it is an excellent opportunity for them to see the reality of the glory of the Lord. Psalm 108:3 shows that it is clearly not God's intention for His praises to be confined to the ears of believers. When God manifests His presence in the midst of His people, unbelievers will be apprehended by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit and drawn to the Lord. As people experience the reality of God they are drawn to him! (see 1 Corinthians 14:24-25).

* *The creation of a platform for the sermon and rest of service* - Praise ploughs the soil of our hearts so that we are prepared to have the seed of the Word of God implanted. Hearers are more open to hear the Word of God after a time of praise and worship than before.

(3) The Inward Aspect of Worship - the Worshipper is Personally Affected

The ways in which the worshipper is changed within include:

* *A release into an uninhibited expression of praise and worship* - One of the goals of worship is to see introverted worshippers released in their expression of love and adoration to the Lord. We should strive according to Matthew 6:10 to see worship "on earth as it is in heaven," where it is free of any pride, inhibition, sophistication or pompous dignity. We can discover some of this freedom in this life.

* *A reinforcing of spiritual truth within the individual* - Worship is a time to teach and reinforce spiritual truth according to Colossians 3:16. As we sing scripture we are memorising the Word of God. The songs, rich in theological and doctrinal meaning, help to build us up.

* *A means to express heart-felt attitudes often difficult to express* - The songs becomes a meaningful expression from our hearts to the Lord as we echo the words of the great song-writers of this age and past ages.

* *A birthing of a heart for holiness within the individual* - Psalm 115:4-8 teaches that we become like that which we worship. As we worship the Lord we are changed into His likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18). We have the promise from 1 John 3:2 that when we see the lord we will be like him - when, in worship we catch a vision of the Lord like Isaiah, Daniel and John, we will become like him! As we draw close to the all-holy God we will inevitable be changed into His likeness.

* *A life of worship is inspired in each believer* - In 1 Chronicles 9:33 we read that the Levitical singers ministered before the Lord twenty-four hours a day. For us, New Testament Levites, this is the pattern. We are called to continually offer up the sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15).

* *A readiness for new things God is wanting to do* - Psalm 50:23 says, "He who sacrifices thank offerings honours me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God." Worship softens our hearts and sensitises us to the Holy Spirit. We need to be attuned to the gentle promptings of the Spirit in order to follow him - worship fine-tunes our heart to the Lord. Our aim is to be worshippers. Our goal is to minister to the Lord and to one another, to experience His glorious presence and to remain sensitised to His voice.

2. A PATTERN FOR THE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Isaiah 6 is a classic experience of worship. Under King Uzziah, Judah experienced prosperity second only to Solomon's reign. But the prophet had just learned of the death of their earthly king and as he enters the temple his eyes are lifted away from the earthly situation to eternal realities. He sees God, enthroned in holiness, and the excellence of his glory fills the whole earth. As Isaiah set his focus on God, he received a visual experience of God's glory, ushered in by the presence of the Seraphim. Isaiah suddenly becomes conscious that he is not able to stand in the presence of this holy God. The

response of confession from his heart to the holiness of God was met with the inflow of cleansing and renewing power and the result is a new commission to service.

This experience of Isaiah's gives us a pattern for our encounter with God.

- A. Revelation (v 1) - God reveals himself to his people.
- B. Adoration (v 2) - God's people respond in awe of God's character.
- C. Confession (v 5) - God's people confess their sin before a Holy God.
- D. Forgiveness (v 6,7) - God forgives his people their sin.
- E. Proclamation (8a) - God proclaims a message to the cleansed audience.
- F. Dedication (v 8b) - God's people express a desire to be used by God.
- G. Commission (v 9a) - God commissions his people to service.

3. A PLEA FOR EXPECTANCY IN WORSHIP

Think for a moment about what you expect God to do when you worship him? If the pattern for worship suggested by Kiekegaard is accurate and we take one aspect a step further - the part where the audience responds at the end (by applause, hissing, throwing things, etc) - then how should we expect God, the audience of our worship, to respond? I do not in any way wish to imply that we are in a position to demand from God, but simply, in faith, to expect that he will respond to our worship. We do not worship to get a response - worship is not an "open sesame", but we can be assured that when we truly worship, God will, according to his sovereignty, respond.

The following are Biblical examples of what we can expect of God:

- A. God Listens Actively - Jeremiah 33:3
- B. God Changes Lives
 - * Transformation - 2 Corinthians 3:18
 - * Conviction - Isaiah 6:5
 - * Purification - Isaiah 6:7
 - * Commission - Isaiah 6:8
 - * Reconciliation - Matthew 5:23f
- C. God Changes Situations - Psalm 149:6-9
- D. God Makes Himself Known - Matthew 28:17-19; Acts 2:11; 13:2-5
- E. God Makes His Plans Known - Joshua 5:13-14
- F. God Breaks Spiritual Bondage - 1 Samuel 16:14-23
- G. God Breaks Physical Bondage - Jonah 2:9
- H. God Makes His Presence Clear - 2 Chronicles 5:13f

Chapter 3

THE ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

In worship we express the following attitudes: *adoration*, *gratitude*, *repentance*, *neediness*, *submission*, and *commitment*. The elements of worship are the means by which these attitudes are expressed. For example *adoration* is expressed in praise; *gratitude* is expressed in thanksgiving; *repentance* is expressed in confession; *neediness* is expressed in dependence; *submission* is expressed in surrender; and *commitment* is expressed in obedience.

1. WORSHIP ELEMENTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The New Testament gives few examples of what happened when the early church met for worship. One is found in 1 Corinthians 12:26: "What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church". Even here not all possible elements are included. This passage does, however, stress the *purpose* behind the use of elements ("the strengthening of the body"), and the importance of *participation* in worship ("everyone has a...").

The following elements can be identified in the Epistles:

- * Scripture Readings - 1 Timothy 4:13; Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27
- * Instruction, Preaching and Edification - 1 Timothy 4:13; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 14:26
- * Hymns, Psalms and Spiritual Songs - Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:2
- * Prayer - Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 2:1,2
- * Responsive sayings, Amen, Maranatha, etc - 1 Corinthians 14:16; 16:22; Romans 10:9
- * Offering - 1 Corinthians 16:1,2
- * Physical Actions - Raising hands (1 Timothy 2:8) Holy Kiss (Romans 16:16)
- * Physical Prostration - 1 Corinthians 14:25
- * Breaking of Bread - Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 11:20f; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14
- * Exhortation and Encouragement - Hebrews 3:13; 10:24
- * Open Confession - of sin (James 5:16); of faith (Romans 10:9; 1 Timothy 6:12)
- * Dedication and Commitment - Acts 2:37f
- * Benedictions and Doxologies - 1 Corinthians 1:3; 16:23; Ephesians 1:3
- * Prophecy, Revelation and Discernment - 1 Corinthians 14:6; 12:10
- * Tongues and Interpretation - 1 Corinthians 14:23
- * Healing - 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30

2. WORSHIP ELEMENTS IN THE EARLY CHURCHES

In Clement's personal letter to the church of Corinth, written about A.D. 96, there are a number of exhortations concerning various worship elements:

- * Read and revere the Word of God
- * Repent and confess sins
- * Show humility before God's majesty
- * Proclaim the Word of God
- * Acknowledge the Holy Spirit in their presence
- * Give offerings for the support of workers
- * Prayer

The first full worship outline is found in Justin Martyr's Apology (dated 140 A.D.): "And on the day called Sunday there is a meeting in one place of those who live in the city or the country, the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits. When the reader has finished, the president in a discourse urges and invites (us) to the imitation of these noble things. Then we all stand together and offer prayers. And, as said before, when we have finished the prayer, bread is brought and wine and water, and the president similarly sends up prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability, and the congregation assents, saying the Amen; the distribution, and the reception of the consecrated elements by each one, takes place and they are sent to the absent by the deacons"

This worship service included the following elements:

- * Reading and Proclamation
- * Congregational Prayer
- * The Lord's Supper
- * Prayer and Thanksgiving
- * The Amen
- * Offering

3. WORSHIP ELEMENTS THROUGH THE AGES

A swing from a relatively free form of worship to a rigid ritualism and fixed liturgy occurred during the third and fourth centuries. Medieval worship was a reversal to the Old Testament priestly system, with certain customs of the mystery and pagan religions added. In the fifteenth century with the reformation came a reaction against the medieval form of worship. After the reformation the non-conformist churches discarded fixed liturgy and adopted a style of worship that emphasised the spirit rather than the form. Their services included preaching, active participation, singing of hymns and the observance of only two ordinances (Baptism and Communion). Contemporary worship over the past century has stressed spontaneity, experience and subjective involvement.

4. WORSHIP ELEMENTS TODAY

A list of elements, by no means exhaustive, follows:

- * Music and Singing
- * Prayer - adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, intercession
- * Scripture - reading, praying, meditating, preaching, sharing
- * Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- * Call to Worship
- * Offering of Gifts
- * Affirmation of Faith
- * Receiving New Members
- * Congregational responses, ie. Amen, Maranatha, Jesus is Lord
- * The Miscellaneous Period: notices, welcome, etc
- * Symbols - Architecture, cross, Bible, pulpit, baptismal pool, Lord's table, visual arts
- * Silence
- * Actions - standing, clapping, shouting, raising hands, kneeling, bowing

In order for a worship service to be effective there must be a smooth flow between various elements. Worship can be compared to either a freight train or a passenger train. In *freight train worship* the sequence of events is stilted and obvious. Every event or worship element is announced. The content of the worship time is haphazard with no apparent theme to connect the songs, prayers, etc. This is often caused by too much silence or not enough talking to connect items. In *passenger train worship* there is a logical unfolding drama that takes place. Worship here is intellectually, emotionally and spiritually continuous. The content of the songs, readings and prayers all contribute to the theme. There are no jarring emotional shifts. The elements are seen as building blocks designed to point the worshippers to God. The sermon is a natural part of the service.

Chapter 4

THE MINISTRY OF WORSHIP LEADER

William Hendricks wrote *Exit Interviews*, in which people who had left the church were interviewed. In answering the question: "Why is church attendance declining?" he says: "*Perhaps the most common complaint was that worship services were boring. It was not that these gatherings were not interesting; they were not worshipful; they did little to help people meet God.*" He goes on to say that the most significant benefit of a worship service is connecting with God. "People expect to find God in church. And why not? If you can't find God in a church...where can you find him?"

The ministry of a worship leader is critical in creating an environment in which people will encounter and experience God. People are looking for an encounter with God – especially today where people want to connect with God. Douglas Coupland, a secular author, wrote in *Life After God*, "When I was younger I used to worry so much about being alone - of being unlovable or incapable of love. As the years went on, my worries changed. I worried that I had become incapable of having a relationship, of offering intimacy. I felt as though the world lived inside a warm house at night and I was outside, and I couldn't be seen - because I was out there in the night. But now I am inside that house and it feels just the same." "Now - here is my secret. My secret is that I need God - that I am sick and can no longer make it alone. I need God to help me give, because I no longer seem to be capable of giving; to help me be kind, as I no longer seem capable of kindness; to help me love, as I seem beyond being able to love." People want to encounter God - not just hear about him! The worship leader is critical to this.

1. THE NEED FOR A WORSHIP LEADER

While every situation may not demand the presence of a worship leader (ie. a small gathering, or informal home meeting) a large gathering necessitates the role of a worship leader. The following are the benefits of having a worship leader:

A. Congregation Unity

Strong leadership is essential for maintaining unity within a group. The worship leader plans the whole service and the songs and other elements will flow according to his central theme - the result is focus and direction in the worship.

B. Rhythmic Unity

A worship leader unites the congregation and the musicians in a steady and consistent rhythm. Their role is to determine and maintain the correct rhythm. When songs flow from one to the other they need to set the new tempo. It seems clear that the role of the worship leader is essential in worship.

2. THE WORSHIP LEADER'S QUALIFICATIONS

Here is a list of qualifications that should serve as a guideline in appointing worship leaders or qualities for the worship leaders to continually strive to reveal in their lives:

- * A worshipper - a daily submission to the Lordship of Christ
- * A deep and proven spiritual walk
- * A knowledge of the church worship style and songs
- * An acceptable level of musical ability - "Play skilfully" (Psalm 33:3)
- * A good reputation in the fellowship
- * Able to function as part of a team
- * A proper attitude to the church leadership
- * A commitment to the position
- * An enthusiastic and friendly personality

3. THE WORSHIP LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- * Direct the worship – to set the course and pace.
- * Set an example – to show the way, not point.

- * Correct – to keep attention focused on God.
- * Prepare – to prepare the theme, songs, scripture, overheads, etc

4. THE WORSHIP LEADER'S PREPARATION

Preparation for the worship leader is both long-term and short-term: some are on-going and others take place prior to every service. It is more than making up a list of songs for the Sunday Service.

A. Spiritual Preparation Throughout The Week

A regular and disciplined prayer and study life is essential, because ministry to God comes before ministry to people. If we are far from the Lord in the week we will not be able to lead people into a sense of God's presence during the service.

B. Spiritual Tuning Before The Worship Service

Set aside a time on Saturday night or Sunday morning to draw close to the Lord. There is no time to "tune into the Lord" once we are standing before the people. It is essential that there is no hurrying before the service - make a commitment to be at the venue long before the start of the service.

C. Vocal Tuning Before The Worship Service

That early morning "frog in the throat" must be exorcised before you stand in front of the people. Warm up the vocal chords by singing a few songs in a low key and gradually get higher, or do singing vocal exercises, if you know how!

D. Determine The Message To Be Delivered

In the week check with the preacher to determine the passage of scripture and the burden God has laid on their heart to preach. This information could help in the selection of a theme.

E. Inform The Musicians Of Songs Selected

Call the necessary people to hand over the list of songs to be practised. Do not arrive on Sunday morning with a list of five hymns that you expect the band to play. Make sure they have ample time to practise during the week.

F. Practical Details To Prepare

The following will ensure confidence and efficiency in leading worship:

- * Have information available at a glance - Outline, Song numbers, etc.
- * Ensure all equipment is ready - ie. Overhead, sound system, etc.
- * Check and read through Scripture references
- * Gather notices and ensure you understand them
- * Make sure all the participants understand their roles

Remember these words of Charles Spurgeon, "The man who guides others into the presence of the King must have journeyed far into the King's country and looked upon his face."

5. THE WORSHIP LEADER'S ROLE

There are three different perspectives on the role of the worship leader: (a) *Bringing God down to His people*; (b) *Lifting people up to God*; or (c) *Helping people celebrate the God who is among them*. On the basis of the foundation we established for worship (ie. the presence of God) we must conclude that the worship leaders cannot bring God down, because God is universally present all the time. While there is a sense in which the worship leader helps people to focus on God, we should be rightfully concerned about leaders who think they must get people into an emotional state in order to worship God. The most correct view is the third one, which sees the role of the worship leader as helping people to experience God who is among them.

It follows then that the goal of the worship leader is *to bring the congregation into a corporate awareness of God's manifest presence and to facilitate an appropriate response*. The role of the worship leader is to help people together become aware of God and to make an appropriate response to his presence.

The following guidelines will help worship leaders to help people experience God's presence in church:

A. Encourage People to Prepare for Worship

We read in Acts 4:1-22 of how Peter and John were arrested and jailed for having preached about Jesus' resurrection (vs 1,2). As the authorities interrogated them they were amazed at their boldness (vs 13). They could not argue with the testimony of the man who Peter and John had healed (vs 14). So they decided to release the disciples urging them not to speak any more about Jesus. Obviously they were not going to keep quiet. The first thing that Peter and John did was to go to church (vs 23). I believe that they were prepared to go to church because they had been living for God the whole week. Leaders must teach people to practise God's presence during the week and live a lifestyle of worship.

B. Teach People to Expect to Encounter God

In Acts 4:23 we discover that as Peter and John came together with the other believers there was real sense of excitement and anticipation. They knew that they were going to meet with God. Otherwise they would have gone into hiding out of fear. God did not disappoint them - he met with them (vs 31)! We must teach people that as they prepare to meet with God they must believe that connecting with God is possible. They need an expectant attitude.

C. Help People to Participate in Worship

In Acts 4:24-30 we discover a number of ways in which people participated in worship:

(1) They Gave Glory to God (vs 24) - they came in *humility* (they confessed their sins); they came in *gratitude* (their two pastors had just been released from Jail); and they came in *worship* (humbly bowing to kiss His feet in worship).

(2) They Listened Intently to the Word (vs 25-26) – we should encourage people to bring a Bible to church; to ask the Holy Spirit to apply its truths to their lives; to read the Scriptures for themselves; to take notes.

(3) They Focussed on Jesus (vs 27-28) – they did not worry so much about who was upfront and whether their favourite songs were sung...their attention was directed at Jesus.

(4) They Prayed for Empowerment (vs 29-30) – they prayed in praise and not in pity; they prayed for power not for protection; and they prayed with confidence not with cowardice.

D. Facilitate an Encounter with God

A worship leader can assist the meeting of people and God by:

- * Giving God and people space in which they can relate to each other.
- * Being personally connected to God.
- * Being sensitive to God and his directing during the worship.
- * Being sensitive to people – there is usually diversity of ages; cultures and spiritual levels.
- * Releasing control of the service – elsewhere we explore how leaders are to get and lose control.
- * Fulfilling a role as mediator between God and people.
- * Inviting people to engage with God who is among them.

PRINCIPLES FOR LEADING WORSHIP

1. Spend time before the service in prayer and preparation. Obey the leading of the Spirit. Ask the church leadership how long you have at your disposal.
2. Be relaxed, smile and show genuine enthusiasm. Inspire the people to take their minds off themselves and centre their thoughts on Christ.
3. Announce songs clearly and repeat the location. Know the key the song is to be sung in.
4. Don't be a choppy leader (fast, slow, fast). Several songs with the same theme, key and tempo will move the people into unity and true worship. Unless the Lord directs otherwise, start the service with faster songs, then move into slower worship songs.
5. Don't make people stand for too long. Alternate sitting, standing, kneeling as expressions of worship.
6. Don't scold the people. Inspire by exhortation, as the Lord directs, but don't preach between songs or fill up the gaps with idle words.
7. After intense worship - wait - don't move too fast - silence is not harmful. Let God minister to his people and let them respond to God.
8. Know when to quit. The best time is at the spiritual peak of the service. Silently step back from the pulpit, yielding it to the preacher.
9. Remember, obey the Spirit. Every service is different!

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADING WORSHIP

1. Make a clear and definite start - begin by confidently taking control of the service.
2. Watch out for dead spaces - thorough preparation will help with the flow.
3. Use Scripture in worship - build your theme around Scripture and creatively use it.
4. Make offering a part of worship - ie. as a response or a sign of commitment.
5. Plan prayer in the service: opening, pastoral, offering, intercession, etc.
6. Check the direction of the songs: testimony, praise, worship, etc. Increase intimacy throughout.
7. Use a variety of music: old and new choruses; old and new hymns, local and foreign songs.
8. Use creative ideas to involve people - find fresh ways to do old things.
9. Try to involve the use of senses: sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.
10. Reflect societal events in worship by referring to what has happened during the week.
11. Reflect the theme of the sermon in worship by coming at the topic from a different angle.
12. Lead naturally into the sermon - avoid ending the 'worship' time before the message.

Chapter 5

THE MINISTRY TEAM IN WORSHIP

The ministry team in worship is comprised of the following: the worship leader; the pastor/leadership; the musicians/singers; the congregation; the overhead operator, the sound engineer, etc.

1. THE REWARDS OF TEAM MINISTRY

A. Safety and Help

The team is a support to the worship leader. Often we are not sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and we need the back up of others who are tuned into the Lord. A one person show will not bring about an effective ministry within the body of Christ.

B. Strength and Unity

One leader may have a good ministry in worship, but the effectiveness of that ministry will be multiplied and enhanced through the joint efforts of a team functioning in unity under that leadership. We need more than leaders with a unique anointing on their lives: we need those leaders to be supported by a team in order that the effectiveness of their ministry might increase.

C. Growth and Maturity

The team exists to develop new members or worship leaders. It is a spiritual greenhouse where new leadership is given a safe and healthy context to grow and mature. It is God's desire that every member becomes a minister (Ephesians 4:11f) - and involvement in worship is one context in which people should be allowed to minister.

2. THE ROLE OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP

There are three views of the goal of leadership in worship: **(1) Historical church traditionalism** aims to see aesthetics in its order, architecture and music. **(2) Evangelical traditionalism** aims to prepare the audience to hear the saving power of God's Word. **(3) Pentecostal traditionalism** aims to respond spontaneously to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Each has an element of truth but the pursuit of one will exclude the others.

The following three roles for church leadership can be identified:

A. Provide Oversight, Vision And Motivation

The worship team comes under the pastors' oversight, since the pastor is ultimately responsible to God for church affairs. The pastor must provide the group with vision and motivation. While they may not be involved in the "nitty-gritty" operations of the team, they provide the guiding force for the while team.

B. Provide A Model Of Worship For The People To Follow

The pastor needs to be a worshipper, because a worshipping pastor will birth a worshipping church! The congregation will watch the pastor to determine whether they support the direction in which the worship leader is moving. If pastors are responsive to the Lord during the worship they will do more to influence the congregation than the musicians, singers or worship leader combined. The time of worship is not an opportunity for the pastor to be checking if someone made it to church, or catching up on reading sermon notes nor discussing the order of service with associates. It is a time to be worshipping the Lord together with the people.

C. Provide The Encouragement The Team Needs

The pastor supports the ministry by giving public support and encouragement to those involved. They must affirm those who minister in worship and music by continually showing appreciation and understanding.

3. THE ROLE OF WORSHIP LEADER

This role of the worship leader was explored in depth in chapter 2. There we stated that the role of the worship leader is to bring the congregation into a corporate awareness of God's manifest presence and to facilitate an appropriate response.

4. THE ROLE OF MUSICIANS

The Bible gives a clear pattern for team ministry. The musicians have a key function in helping the church follow the overall Biblical pattern, so that it accomplishes its spiritual goals.

God's pattern for choosing leaders is based on the "proving principle" found in 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:10 and 1 Thessalonians 5:21. Choice is made on the basis of the candidate's track record. Are they faithful in attendance? Do they have a surrendered life and a servant spirit? Are they sensitive to the voice of God?

Character and life-style are more important than skill and ability. As their position entails being placed before the people they are vulnerable to pride and the praise of men. Those in supportive music ministry must die daily to the flesh and wait submissively on God to determine His will and direction.

God's standards for musicians are clear, even regarding their musical ability.

There are minimal standards for the "worshipping orchestra". They must:

- * Be a worshipper
- * Be a worshipper on their instrument
- * Have a heart for God and a consistent life-style
- * Have a desire and a divine calling to lead others into worship
- * Be recognised by the leadership as being called of God
- * Be joined to the local body before taking on a public ministry
- * Pass the test of basic musical proficiency

5. THE ROLE OF WORSHIPPERS

The scriptural principle of following comes from the words of Christ, "Follow me." The word *follow* from the Greek "akalouthos," means "one going in the same way." There is incredible potential in worship when people begin to "go in the same way." Of utmost importance in worship is a submissive attitude in the heart of the worshipper to follow the appointed worship leader for that particular worship service.

God's response to the obedient worshipper is the personal manifestation of His presence (John 14:21). The worshipper needs a heart that longs to follow Christ and a will that co-operatively submits to local church leadership.

Another word for "follow" in the Greek is "mimeomai," which is where we get the word "mimic". We are exhorted to imitate God and His appointed leaders (Ephesians 5:1; 1 Corinthians 11:1). We become aware of God's presence by trusting the gift of God in the appointed leader for that service and imitating their actions and follow their directives.

6. THE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE TEAM

It is essential that there is unity between the worship leader and the rest of the ministry team. An effective worship leader will be particularly sensitive to the senior pastor and the direction God is giving. Worship leading is not the place for the person who is independent and wanting to do his own thing. In Psalm 133 we are told that unity and the anointing are interdependent; where his people are in unity, God commands His blessing.

Three ingredients are vital to enhance the relationships in the team:

A. Respect

Through mutual respect a strong bond of interdependence can be established. If the spirituality and sensitivity of the worship leader is doubted they should not have been appointed to the position. If the pastor does not respect the leader, the pastor will continually interrupt, veto or pre-empt the leader's

desires and method's. If the worship leader does not respect the pastor, the leader will have difficulty working in line with the leadership's direction.

B. Consideration

The pastor will gain nothing by running roughshod over the leader. When it is necessary for the pastor to step into the worship, the worship leader should not have hurt feelings or embark on a pity party. Usually differences of approach between pastor and worship leader are a matter of personal preference and not spiritual superiority. If they have different ideas about the direction that a service should take, each should have consideration for the other.

C. Communication

Amos 3:3 says, "Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?" There is nothing that will cause a relationship to break down as quickly as a break down in communication. Honest, loving communication will resolve differences. The pastor should ask questions of the worship leader, such as: "How do you feel about our worship lately?" or "Have you been enjoying leading worship?" or "How well do you think we have been working together?" and "Are you fulfilled in your ministry?"

7. THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TEAM

Each church should consider developing a written set of requirements for team members. Sandy Lawrence of Fellowship West, Alabama gave the following requirements for a team:

Our Purpose:

1. To manifest the character and nature of God; to be conformed to the image of the Son of God
2. To encourage and exhort others to praise, adore, and worship God through our life-style and example
3. To be a part of the corporate man that God is raising up in this day to reveal and express the nature and character of God upon this earth
4. To minister unto the Lord and unto His people through praise and worship
5. To allow the fire of God to cleanse us and purify us enabling us to be pure vessels of honor to the praise of His glory
6. To minister together, as a team, by the Spirit of God, submitting ourselves to him and one another
7. To encourage, teach and train others in the body of Christ to praise and worship God
8. To minister through the authority of Jesus Christ to the nations (Rev. 2:26)

Each Worship Team Member Should:

1. Be a worshipper
2. Know they are called to minister through praise and worship
3. Be a servant. Worship team members should have a servant's heart and a submissive spirit to the Lord and to the leadership that God has established
4. Be one who is faithful to the vision that God has given
5. Be one who is increasingly sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit
6. Be one who is able to show forth God's praises in Biblical expressions of worship (lifting hands, clapping, singing, dancing, singing or playing a 'new song', playing an instrument, composing, drama, creating banners, etc.)
7. Be one who is teachable - willing to be taught - willing to learn and grow in the Lord as well as grow in musical abilities
8. Understand that our goal is not to perform, entertain, or draw glory to ourselves
9. Realize that this is a priestly calling, requiring commitment to the Lord, to the local fellowship, and the leadership of the local fellowship
10. Have a growing understanding of the operation of the covenant relationship among worship team members and the fellowship as a whole
11. Faithfully participate in worship rehearsals, and regular assembly of the local fellowship

Be Responsible:

1. Faithfulness to God's calling for your life is vital in the maturing process of the believer.
2. Keep your word. If you say that you will do something, be faithful to do it.
3. Be on time for rehearsals, times of instruction, prayer, etc.
4. Be a faithful and responsible member of the local fellowship.

Keep The Bond Of Unity In Love:

1. Speak edifying words to and of one another.
2. Love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)
3. Have the attitude of Jesus. (Phil. 2:3-11)
4. Appreciate the gift of God in one another.
5. If you have a problem or disagreement with someone, go to that person and in love, talk it over and pray it through until peace reigns.

Life-Style

1. You are called to allow the life of God flow through you daily.
2. Allow the Father to teach you how to give thanks in everything. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
3. Be a praise to His name. Live a life of praise and worship.
4. Learn to praise and worship on your instrument. Spend time alone with God, growing in intimacy in your relationship with him.
5. Learn to intercede, worship, and prophesy on your instrument, through song, or through dance.
6. Singers: Sing unto the Lord a new song. Sing Scripture. Sing your intercession. Sing and prophesy. You will become more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit as you do these things.

Chapter 6

THE MINISTRY OF WORSHIP

This chapter deals with the more practical dimensions of developing the worship service.

1. PLANNING A WORSHIP SERVICE

The following stages are suggested for planning a worship event:

A. Determine the Focal Point

Before you look for favourite songs to include, you must identify what will be the unifying factor that will guide the event. What will stand over the selection of songs, scriptures, etc? Guidelines on how to select or develop a theme around which the service is built will be explored in more detail under point 2. It probably needs to be clearly stated up front, that this stage must be surrounded by prayer. It is all too easy to leave God out of this stage. Then spend some time exploring the theme. Be sure to look at the theme from different angles and do a bit of back ground reading or scripture research to gain a fuller understanding of the theme.

B. Select Relevant Resource

Once you have identified your theme, you can start to select the content of your worship service. Only now should you start to select songs, Scripture readings and other elements of worship. More attention will be given to this section under point 3.

C. Design a Sequence of Events

This is the stage where the worship outline is fully fleshed out. The order in which each movement is included, and the specific elements used, must be carefully considered and placed in an order that is logical and progressive. The worship event should be a logical, unfolding drama and not a selection of loosely strung together items.

D. Check the Content and Flow

You have now in front of you a nearly final worship service. Take some time to think through the whole worship event and consider how suitable each element is that you have included. It may be helpful to come back to this stage a day or two after you have done your initial work, so you can look at it with fresh eyes. Ask yourself questions like, "How will I move from that item to the next? Should I move that item earlier or later into the service? Are there too many new songs? Is there a wide variety of scriptures and other elements that the whole congregation will relate to? Are there any jarring emotional shifts that people will have to make?" These kinds of questions will help you to fix up potential weaknesses - remember you only have one shot at using this outline! You will also find it helpful to run through any musical transitions to check whether they will work - make adjustments sooner rather than later.

E. Evaluate for Participation

The final step is to evaluate your "programme" for the upcoming worship event according to the level of participation that will be required of the worshippers. Remembering that worship is not a spectator sport, but a participatory event in which each contributes as fully as possible, spend some time working through the outline to identify all the ways in which people will participate. Take each worship element and ask yourself how you could use it to facilitate audience participation. It will involve a bit more preparation to have others read, share or act, but this is necessary for worship to be a truly participatory event.

2. THEMES IN WORSHIP

A central theme should run throughout the worship service, that will determine the choice of worship elements. The worship leader must not try to use as much resource as possible, but rather seek to encourage meaningful fellowship with God through the use of appropriate material. A theme is more

than a title - a title is descriptive, but a theme presents a principle and reveals a purpose. The theme provides the path of thought through which the participants move to the climax of the service.

Where does a worship leader get a theme from? **(1) Felt need** - the theme may grow out of a need within the congregation (ie. to express dependence on God; to confess sin; to intercede for the mission of the church; to pray for guidance in decision making; etc). **(2) Special event** - the theme may arise from special events on the church calendar, such as Christmas, Easter, etc. **(3) Church experiences** - the theme may be taken from a special experiences in the life of the body. **(4) Sermon topic** - the theme may be linked to, or taken from, the subject of the sermon. **(5) God's heart** - the theme may flow from what the worship leader senses God is wanting to say to his people. In all these instances, the theme should flow from scripture. The choice of a passage of scripture as an anchor point is essential for biblical worship.

As you use a theme in worship, I would suggest the following guidelines: **(1) Ask God to reveal the theme to you.** You need to come to the worship service knowing that you are operating under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Knowing that you have God's blessing on the direction you are taking will bring a sense of purpose and authority to your leading. **(2) Introduce the theme naturally.** Avoid stating a theme at the start of the service. Rather find a way to naturally reveal the focus of the worship event. The wrong way to introduce a theme is by saying: "My theme for worship this morning is...". A better way is to say, "This morning as we worship God, I want you to experience something of the warmth of God's love for us his chosen people." **(3) Link your content to the theme.** Once you have introduced your theme makes sure that every element, as far as possible, is linked to the theme. Show, in a natural way, how the songs, reading and other creative components all relate to the theme. **(4) Don't overplay the theme.** There is a danger in overstating the theme and overdoing the link between elements. It should be obvious but not over-stated.

3. OUTLINES FOR WORSHIP

To develop the theme the worship leader uses an outline. This will ensure that the worship service has a sense of direction and purpose. The outline will reflect the structure that the service will assume.

A. Developing A Pattern

We have already mentioned Isaiah 6 as a pattern for worship. But it must be remembered that Scripture does not prescribe one pattern for worship.

Von Ogden Vogt suggests the following pattern:

- * Presentation - a vision of God as one offers oneself for worship
- * Penitence - a sense of humility on the divine presence bringing confession
- * Exaltation - expressing in praise the person and works of God
- * Illumination - the soul receives light before continuing on the path of life
- * Dedication - the soul enlists for further service

Seidenspinner speaks of three movements in worship:

- * Adoration of God
- * Communion with God
- * Dedication to God

The Vineyard Fellowship uses a five-phase worship pattern for guiding their worship service:

(1) Invitation - This is a call to worship. The songs used in this stage address the people and draw their attention to worship. This may include a mixture of Scripture readings and singing.

(2) Engagement - The people are beginning to draw near to God. The lyrics of the songs should speak about God. This is the praise stage.

(3) Exaltation - Here the people sing out with enthusiasm in response to key words in songs, such as great, majestic, worthy, reigns, etc.

(4) Adoration - The enthusiasm gradually subsides and the melody has a smaller range. The key words are 'you' and 'Jesus'.

(5) Intimacy - This is the quietest and most personal part of the service. It is where we address God as Abba or "Daddy". This is the "Kiss" in worship - the Greek word for worship (proskuneo) means "to come towards to kiss." This stage ends with a close-out chorus or hymn that leads out of intimacy and prepares for the next stage in the service.

B. Developing An Outline

The task of the worship leader in selecting an outline is similar to the task of the preacher. A theme or text should be selected according to the direction the service is to take, and the text should be analysed to determine its message, natural outline, and its flow of thought. Comments earlier in this chapter regarding developing the worship service apply here as well.

C. Selecting An Outline

As a guideline the following outlines are presented. They may be used, adapted or serve as examples as you develop your own outline:

(1) Praise and Thanksgiving - 1 Chronicles 29

- (a) Call To Worship
- (b) Offering - vs 1-9
- (c) Give Thanks - vs 10-13
- (d) Confession - vs 14-16
- (e) Prayer - vs 17-19
- (f) Worship - vs 20

(2) God is Exalted on High - Isaiah 6:1-9

- (a) Praise The Exalted God - vs 1-4
 - (b) Worship The Exalted God - vs 5-7
- Prayer: Confession and Worship to the Exalted God
- (c) Serve The Exalted God - vs 8-9

(3) Children of God - Matthew 5 & 6

Praise: For our relationship to God
Reading: Matthew 5:43-48
Share: What it means to be in God's family
Worship: The God we are related to
The Family Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13
Give each person/couple/group a section to pray through

(4) Lamentations 3:19-24

- (A) Remember Past Difficulties - vs 19,20
- (B) Recall Present Mercies - vs 22-24
- (C) Receive Future Hope - vs 21

(5) Jesus, the Light of the World

Read: John 8:12 Worship Jesus the Light of the World
Songs: about Jesus the Light
Read: John 9:1-7 The Light gives sight to a man born blind
Prayer: for light to bring guidance, clarity, insight, comfort, etc.
Read: John 12:35,36
Prayer: To express love and devotion to the light of the world

(6) Love - 1 John 4

- (a) We Celebrate The Love Of God - 4:9-10
 - (b) We Express Our Love To God - 4:19
- Prayer: To express love and devotion to God
- (c) We Express Our Love To One Another - 4:11-12
- Read: 1 John 3:17 Love is shown practically
Sharing: needs and burdens with one another in pairs
Prayer: Pray for one another's needs in the pairs

(7) Light to the Nation - Psalm 96

- (a) A Command To Declare God's Glory - vs 1-6
 - (b) A Call To Come And Worship God - vs 7-10
 - (i) Give Praise
 - (ii) Bring Offerings
 - (iii) Enter The Temple
 - (iv) Worship The Lord
 - (c) A Challenge To Take Worship To The Streets - vs 10-13
- Prayer: For the extension of God's Kingdom in South Africa

(8) Expressing Thanks and Gratitude to God

Read: Luke 17:11-19
How can we best express our gratitude to the Lord?
Read: Colossians 3:16 - sing songs that express gratitude.
Prayers: to express gratitude
Testimony: to express thankfulness

(9) Sharing the Good News - Mark 1

- (a) Introducing The Good News - 1:1-3
 - (b) Face-To-Face With The Good News - 1:9-11
- Prayer: of worship to Jesus
- (c) See The Effects Of The Good News - 1:29-34
- Let's bring our needs before Jesus and hear good news.
- (d) Follow The Example Of The Good News - 1:35
- Prayer: Thanks for salvation
- (e) Recognise The Worth Of The Good News - 1:40-45
- Let's bring our offering as a response to Jesus' worth
- (f) Commissioned To Spread The Good News - 16:15,16

(10) The World - Psalm 89:11-17

- (a) A Declaration Of The Worth Of The Creator - vs 11-13
- (b) A Desire For The World To Know The Creator - vs 15-17a

(11) The Hymns of Worship - Revelation

- (a) Worship God As Creator - Revelation 4:9-11
- (b) Worship God As Redeemer - Revelation 5:9-12
- (c) Worship God As Victorious King - Revelation 11:15-18
- (d) Worship God As Conqueror - Revelation 19:1-3,6,7

(12) Praise the Lord - Psalm 150

- (a) Where God Should Be Praised - vs 1
- In His sanctuary - the temple of grace
In the heavens - the temple of power
- (b) Why God Should Be Praised - vs 2
 - (i) For His deeds
 - (ii) For His being
 - (c) How God Should Be Praised - vs 3-5
- Instruments - wind, string & percussion; dance
- (d) Who Should Praise God - vs 6
- All of God's creation

(13) The Lord Reigns

- (a) The Lord Reigns Over The World - Nehemiah 9:6
- Prayer: Praise for the sovereign rule of God
- (b) The Lord Reigns In Our Lives - Ephesians 3:14-21
- Prayer: Submission to the rule of God in my life

(14) Worship Involves Meeting God - Exodus 34:4-8

- (a) The Real Encounter With God - vs 4-5
- (b) The Revealed Worth Of God - vs 6-7

Moses met God who is: (i) Merciful, (ii) Truthful and (iii) Just.
 (c) A Response Of Worship To God - vs 8
 Moses responded with admiration of God's excellence
 Moses responded with exaltation of God's excellence

(15) Worship in Holiness

(a) We Worship A Holy God - Psalm 29:1,2
 (b) We Worship By The Holy Spirit - John 4:23,24
 (c) We Must Be Holy - Psalm 24:3,4
 The way to holiness: 1 John 1:9
 Prayers: of confession - for cleansing

(16) Worship in the Face of Difficulty - Psalm 57

David's Situation: King Saul is in hot pursuit of David to kill him. David takes refuge in a cave and takes the matter to his God.

The Solution: (a) David goes to God for help - vs 1; (b) David expresses trust in God - vs 5; (c) David gives the problem to God - vs 6; (d) David declares victory in God - vs 7; and (e) David praises God's greatness - vs 8f.

A Worship Experience: Get the worshippers to think of their problem (a situation, hassling sin, problem person) and then begin to worship through their problem. (a) Ask God for help; (b) Express confidence in God; (c) Explain the problem to God in prayer; (d) Declare victory over the problem; and (e) Praise God in song, prayer and testimony.

(17) A Worship Encounter - 1 Chronicles 16

Context: King David brings the Ark of the Presence back into Jerusalem. The Ark was a symbol of God's presence (Exodus 25:22) but Israel believed they had a "God in a box", so God allowed the Philistines to capture the ark. When the lesson was learnt God resumed His manifestation of power from the Ark and its return was an occasion for joy & praise.

(a) Preparations For Worship - vs 1-6
 (b) Praise To The Wondrous God - vs 8-15
 (c) Praise For The Acts Of God - vs 16-22
 (d) Proclaim The Glory Of God - vs 23,24
 (e) Proclaim The Worth Of God - vs 25,26
 (f) Response Of Worship - vs 27-35: From the people 28-29 and from all creation 30-35
 (g) A Final Shout Of Praise - vs 36

An Alternate Outline:

(a) A Call To Worship God - 1 Chronicles 16:31-34
 (b) A Call To Give Thanks - 1 Chronicles 16:8-12
 (c) A Call To Praise God - 1 Chronicles 16:23-27
 (d) A Call To Offer Gifts - 1 Chronicles 16:28-29
 (e) A Response Of Worship - 1 Chronicles 29:11-13

(18) Philippians 2

(a) A Call To Unity - 2:1-4
 Songs of reconciliation
 (b) A Call To Focus On Jesus - 2:5-9
 Songs about Jesus' Incarnation, Crucifixion and Exaltation
 (c) A Call To Confess Jesus As Lord- 2:10-11
 Songs that celebrate Jesus' lordship
 Result: God is glorified - Phil 2:11b
 Challenge: Re-dedicate yourself to reflect God's glory.

(19) Praise the Lord - Psalm 111

(a) An Invitation To Praise - vs 1
 (b) Praise God's Greatness - vs 2-4a
 (c) Praise God's Goodness - vs 4b-9
 (d) A Response Of Worship To God
 In a quiet prayer tell the Lord that you love him!
 (e) Worship Commended - vs 10

(20) The Heavenly Worship Service - Revelation 4 and 5

An Invitation To Worship God -Revelation 4:1,2

(a) A song about the Attributes of God: who He is.

Revelation 4:8 His holiness, lordship, power and eternity

We begin by celebrating the things we know about God.

(b) A song about the Mighty Acts of God: what He has done.

Revelation 4:11 God made, owns, sustains everything

We celebrate that our God is the creator of all the universe.

(c) A song about the Accepting Work of God: how He redeemed us.

Revelation 5:9-10 Acceptance through redemption or reclamation

We celebrate: our acceptance by God is based on the lamb's love.

Prayers of gratitude

(d) A song of Ascription: thanksgiving/praise for the worth of God.

Revelation 5:13 Great values are ascribed to God, ie Praise, Honour, etc.

We celebrate a God who is worthy to be praised.

(21) Knowing Jesus in the Storms of Life - Mark 4:35-41

Read: Isaiah 43:1,2

Songs: About the Presence of Jesus

Read: Mark 4:35-41

Think Of A Storm In Your Life Right Now (vs 37)

Do not accuse Jesus of being disinterested. His purpose is to take you to the other side (vs 35). The sense of His absence may well be to test your faith and may be an opportunity for him to reveal Himself to you.

Sing: Songs that express confidence/trust in Jesus

Get To Know Jesus In The Storms Of Life

Prayer: To express faith in Jesus.

(22) Presenting a Petition to God - Isaiah 37:14-20

Read: Isaiah 37:14-20

(a) Take The Problem To God - vs 14a

Worshippers are encouraged to write out their request on a piece of paper.

(b) The Act Of Prayer - vs 14b

They spread the letter out in God's presence.

(c) The Actual Prayer - vs 15f

a. Express the sovereignty of God in the situation (v 16)

b. Ask for the mercy of God (v 17)

c. Clarify the situation to God (v 18,19)

d. Ensure your motive is the vindication of God's glory (v 20)

(d) The Answer From God - vs 21f

(23) God is Worthy of Praise - Psalm 47

(a) A Call For Rejoicing - vs 1-4

(b) A Call For Praise - vs 5-9

Praise Sharing: People say, "I praise the Lord because he is..."

(c) A Response Of Worship

To the God who gives Joy/To the God who is worthy of praise

Prayer: To tell God he is worthy of our praise

(24) Giving Glory to God - Isaiah 24:14-16

Glory: Excellence on display. To bring glory is to recognise worth.

Illustration: You watch a game of rugby. One player stands out. After the game you meet him and start to rehearse in his presence all that he did. You don't change the game/his performance, but you bring him glory. Let's Rehearse in God's Presence:

(a) The Greatness Of His Person - Psalm 138:1-5

(b) The Wonder Of His Works - Psalm 111:1-3

(c) The Glory Of His Son - John 1:14; Hebrews 1:3

(25) God Answers Prayer

Reading: Daniel 3 (Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego) (selected verses)

Express Confidence in God Despite what we See Around us

Songs:

Reading: Elijah on Mount Carmel 1 Kings 18 (selected)

Our Confidence is Based on What we Know of God

Songs:

(26) A Heart for Africa (The King of Africa)

Reading: Psalm 97:1-6

Song: Men Of Faith Rise Up And Sing

Prayer: Invocation

Medley: Jesus, River Of Life To Our Thirsty Land; Who Can Match Your Greatness

Responsive Reading: Psalm 68 – Have one side say *You are the God of Africa* after each verse

Medley: Oh Our Lord And King; I Will Exalt My God The King

Prayer: Intercession for Africa

Song: We Lift Up Our Eyes

Prayer: Adoration

(27) God is Beyond Compare

Hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

Overhead Fill-in: What characteristic of God do you treasure? Which is most significant to you?

Medley: Bayethe; Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the Highest

Spontaneous Readings: Scriptures about God being beyond compare

Medley: Shout to the Lord all the Earth; There is None Like You; I Worship You Almighty God

Prayer:

Medley: I Stand in Awe; I Extol You

(28) Expressing Desire for God

Songs: I Will Exalt My God The King; Shout To The Lord

Reflect on the things that we desire – food, shelter; security; but there is one think that is above all else – to live for God, to live in a way that will honour him; and that will bring him glory. To know him as fully as is humanly possible! Let's express our desire to God in this time of worship.

Readings: Psalm 73:25; Isaiah 26:8

Songs: All I Once Held Dear; Standing In Your Presence; This Is My Desire

Asking God to Strengthen our Desire: So often we find that our desire is not for God not the things of God – Romans 7:18-19

Song: Stir My Heart

What does God desire from us? Psalm 51:6; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8

(29) Drawing Close to God

Song Item: Draw Me Close to You

Prayer: Invocation

(a) An invitation: James 4:8

Medley: Come On And Celebrate; All Creatures Of Our God And King

(b) A Promise: Psalm 145:18

Medley: I Just Want To Be Where You Are; Only By Grace Can We Enter

(c) A Path: Hebrews 10:19-22

Prayer: Confession

Song: Draw Me Close To You

(d) A Correction: Isaiah 29:13

Song: All To Jesus I Surrender

(30) Worship God the Creator

(a) Praise the Creator

Reading: Psalm 95:1-3 (in unison)

Song: Praise To The Lord, The Almighty, The King Of Creation

Spontaneous Readings: God is Creator - Nehemiah 9:5-6; Revelation 4:11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16-17

Medley: Ah Lord God Thou Hast Made The Heavens; Mighty Is Our God

Responsive Reading: Psalm 136 (by the singers)

(b) Worship the Creator

Reading: Psalm 95: 6-7 (in unison)

Medley: Fairest Lord Jesus; I Was Made To Praise You; I Extol You

Reading: Revelation 4:9-11 (Worship God as Creator)

(31) God Cares for Us

Responsive Reading: Psalm 68 - You are the God of Africa

Medley: Jesus, River Of Life To Our Thirsty Land; Who Can Match Your Greatness

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 32:9-12

Share: God repeatedly used the Eagle as an analogy of his care for his people. (I then showed a video of Black Eagles caring for their young. We played the song: Giver Of Grace while we watched it).

Share: The parents provide the following for the eaglets: (1) Protection from predators; (2) Provision of food; and (3) Instruction to Fly/Feed. Focus on God as the one who cares for his people.

Song: There Is None Like You

Prayer: Thanks for God's care

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:29-31

Video Snippet: show a video of eagles flying - play the song: Eagle's Wing in the background

God's Desire For Us: That we will rise and soar like an eagle

Song: The Power Of Your Love

Prayer:

Song: Come Breath Of Life

(32) Holy Ground

Reading: Exodus 3:1-6

(a) Stepping onto Holy Ground

Medley: This Is Holy Ground; We Are Standing On Holy Ground; Be Still For The Presence

Reading: Joshua 5:13-15

(b) Ground is Holy Because a Holy God is Here

Song: Holy, Holy, Holy

Listen to Song: This Is The Place from Spring Harvest 1998

(c) Respond to God on Holy Ground

Song: I Just Want To Be Where You Are

(d) Living on Holy Ground

Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Song: In The Presence Of A Holy God

God's desire is that we are blameless - pure and holy.

Prayer: Intercede for God to make us holy!

(33) Jesus as Lord and Friend

(a) Worship Jesus as Lord

Scripture: Philippians 2:10-11

Song: O Our Lord And King

(b) Worship Jesus as Friend

Scripture: Matthew 10:32; Romans 5:11; John 15:13-15

Medley: What A Friend We Have In Jesus; Just Let Me Say How Much I Love You; Jesus, Lover Of My Soul, Jesus I Will Never Let You Go; Friend Of Sinners

Prayer: Adoration

(34) Jesus Lover of My Soul

Prayer of Invocation:

Medley: We Want To See Jesus Lifted High; Lord I Lift Your Name On High

Scripture Readings: Revelation 1:6; Ephesians 5:2; Romans 8:37,3; 1 John 4:10,11,19

Medley: Jesus, Lover Of My Soul, Let Me To Your Presence Fly; Jesus, Lover Of My Soul, All

Consuming Fire; Jesus, Lover Of My Soul, Jesus, I Will Never Let You Go

Scripture Reflection: John 13

Prayer of Adoration:

(35) Victory in Jesus

Reading: How Jesus has triumphed over sin and death! Colossians 1:19-22

Song: I Heard An Old, Old Story (Victory In Jesus)

Reading: Focus on Christ as tempted yet without sin, a Saviour who understands (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Song: What A Friend We Have In Jesus

Prayer: To Adore the Sinless Saviour

Medley: Before The Throne Of God Above; In The Presence Of A Holy God

Prayer: To Experience Victory over Sin

Song: Lord I Come To You (The Power Of Your Love)

(36) Obey Your Thirst: Quench it in Christ

Medley: My Life Is In You Lord; Jesus, Life And Hope To Heal Our Land

Refer to the Sprite advertising campaign - "Obey your thirst!"

Reading: Psalm 42:1,2

Song: Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

Reading: John 4:13,14

Medley: O Let The Son Of God Enfold You; Giver Of Grace

Reading: John 7:37,38

Prayer: Intimacy

Medley: Your Eye Is On The Sparrow; I Just Want To Be Where You Are

Prayer: Intercession

(37) Shout to the Lord

Song: Far And Near

(a) Shouting in the Old Testament: In Worship (1 Chronicles 15:28); In Warfare (Joshua 6:20)

(b) Shouting in the New Testament: At triumphal entry (Luke 19:36-37); In heaven (Revelation 7:9-10)

(c) Why should we shout in worship? It is not because God is deaf, but to express the intimacy of our emotions to God. Shouting is able to release our worship to God in a way that touches the core of our being. There is a place for shouting in worship - let's not leave all the shouting for heaven!

Song: Men Of Faith

Responsive Reading: Revelation 19:1-7

Corporate Shout: "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!"

Medley: Shout To The Lord; Prince Of Peace

(38) The Character of God (Psalm 145)

Prayer Reading: Psalm 145:1-2 ("Hear it as a prayer")

Song: I Will Exalt My God The King

Responsive Reading: Psalm 145:3-7 (Divide into left and right)

Song: Who Has Laid The Earth's Foundations

Corporate Reading: Psalm 145:8-10

Song: Oh Our Lord And King

Reflection: Think of all the ways in which God's character is shown in Psalm 145:1-10.

Medley: Great Is Your Faithfulness; Thank You For Your Mercy

Prayer:

Song: I Sing Praises To Your Name

(39) The Mercy of God

Reading: Matthew 20:30-34

Response: God has shown me mercy by...

Spontaneous Readings: Psalm 9:13; Psalm 41:4; Psalm 51:1; Psalm 57:1; Psalm 119:132

Song: Thank You For Your Mercy

Reading: Luke 18: 10-13

Song: Only By Grace Can We Enter

Reading: Ephesians 2:4

The ultimate expression of mercy is found in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Song: Jesus Christ, I Think Upon Your Sacrifice

Prayer:

(40) Jesus Reigns

Reading: Revelation 19:11-16

Medley: Jesus Shall Reign; The Lord Reigns

Prayer: Adoration

Medley: Oh Our Lord And King; Say It Loud

Corporate Reading: Psalm 71:16-19

Medley: Lord Be My Vision; Lord Of Lords; We Declare Your Majesty

Prayer: Focus on the God who reigns

(41) God Of The Future

Reading: Revelation 1:12-18; 22:13 - If anyone needed comfort in the face of an uncertain future, it was the early Christians. The revelation of Jesus that John saw brought the confidence they needed to face the future. Are you uncertain about the new year? Don't be afraid - God is not only the God of the past and the present...he is also God of the Future.

Medley: Sure Foundation; I Will Exalt My God The King

Reading: Romans 8:38-39

Songs: Because He Lives I Can Face Tomorrow; O God Our Help In Ages Past

Reflection: What is the worst fear you have about the new year?

Medley: Praise The Name Of Jesus; Jesus What A Beautiful Name

Reading: Jeremiah 29:11

Song: God Will Make A Way

(42) The God of the Tabernacle

(a) Approaching the Tabernacle

Reading: Exodus 17:33f (show picture of tabernacle on overhead transparency). Say: The appropriate way to approach God is with praise and thanksgiving.

Medley: I Will Enter His Gates; We Bring The Sacrifice Of Praise

(b) Entering the Inner Sanctuary

Reading: Exodus 40:34-35

Medley: Be Still For The Presence Of The Lord; In The Presence Of A Holy God

(3) Encountering the God of the Tabernacle

Reading: Exodus 29:42-43

Medley: One Bended Knee I Come; We Declare Your Majesty; Holy Lord Most Holy Lord

(d) Becoming a Tabernacle

Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1; Ephesians 2:22 (It is amazing to think that the God of the temple wants to transform our lives into a temple in which he lives in all His holiness).

Song: Lord Prepare Me To Be A Sanctuary

(43) Moving Closer to God

(a) Decide to Journey to God

Medley: I Will Enter His Gates; I Love To Be In Your Presence

(b) Remove the Barriers Between You and God

Medley: Create In Me A Clean Heart (Holiness); On Bended Knee I Come (Humility)

(c) Close the Gap Between You and God

Medley: I Just Want To Be Where You Are; As The Deer; Shout To The Lord

(44) Psalm 139

(a) God is All Knowing (Omniscient - Knows All)

Read: Psalm 139:1-6

Medley: I Stand In Awe; I Extol You

Prayer: Thank you God that you know everything

(b) God is All Present (Omnipresent - Is Everywhere)

Read: Psalm 139:7-12

Medley: Be Still For The Presence Of The Lord (Vs 1); We Are Standing In Your Presence

Prayer: Thank you God that you are everywhere all the time

(c) God is All Powerful (Omnipotent - Can Do Anything)

Read: Psalm 139:13-14

Medley: Ah Lord God; I Worship You, Almighty God

Prayer: Thank you God that you are all powerful!

(45) People Who Met God

(a) Jacob Met the Present God

Reading: Genesis 28:10f - The God who is present!

Song: Be Still For The Presence Of The Lord

(b) Moses Met the Moral God

Reading: Exodus 3:1-6; 34:5-7 - The God who is merciful, gracious, truthful, just and forgiving!

Song: Great is Your Faithfulness

(c) Joshua Met the Mighty God

Reading: Joshua 5:13-15 - The God who is mighty!

Song: Mighty Is Our God

(d) Isaiah Met the Holy God

Reading: Isaiah 6:1-9 - The God who is holy!

Song: Holy, Holy, Holy

(e) Ezekiel Met the Glorious God

Reading: Ezekiel 1:4-9, 22-28 - The God who is glorious!

Song: Shine Jesus Shine

(f) Peter Met the Divine-Human God

Reading: Matthew 16:13-17 - The God who took on human form!

Song: Meekness and Majesty

(g) You met the _____ God.

How have you encountered God? Spend a moment in quiet reflection as you think of how God has revealed himself to you.

Song: Shout to the Lord

(46) Save me, O God!

Reading: Psalm 54 - "Save me, O God!" This is the most basic prayer. It matches my need with God's action. 'Save me from my sins' and 'Save me from the sins of others' - make a whole person of me.

Song: Sure Foundation

Spontaneous Readings: Save Me (use scriptures that refer to God saving his people)

Song: O God Our Help in Ages Past

Share: God has saved me from...

Prayer Reflection: God, I need You to save me from...

Medley: Blessed Be the Name of the Lord; Lord I Lift Your Name on High; Forever Grateful

(47) The Cross

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

Song: The Cross has Said it All

Share: To me the cross means *substitution* (Jesus died in my place); *propitiation* (Jesus turned God's wrath away from me); *redemption* (Jesus paid the price to set me free); *justification* (Jesus declared me not guilty of sin) and *reconciliation* (Jesus reconciled me to God).

Medley: Lord I Lift Your Name on High; Forever Grateful

Silent Reflection: When I think of God's amazing love, I...

Song: Jesus Christ (Once Again: Thank you for the Cross)

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:13-18

Song: Jesus, What A Beautiful Name

(48) The Wisdom of God

Song: I Will Exalt My God The King

Corporate Reading: Daniel 2:20-22

Share: God is Wise. To be wise means to possess qualities of intelligence, insight, and good sense. Having a good grasp of philosophic or scientific knowledge, understanding and learning, with the capacity to properly apply that which is known. God is wise!!!

Spontaneous Readings: God's Wisdom (Jeremiah 10:12-15; Daniel 2:20-22; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Corinthians 1:18-21; Ephesians 1:3,7,8)

Prayer: Lord, all wisdom and understanding is the outflow of Your essence, for You are the source of all that can be known. I praise Your intelligence and I magnify Your knowledge. Your knowledge is infinite and Your wisdom supreme. You are truly the only wise God.

Medley: Immortal Invisible; Our God Is An Awesome God

Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-21

Medley: Salvation Belongs To Our God; You Are Beautiful Beyond Description

Reading: Romans 11:33-36

Song: In The Presence Of A Holy God

Reflection: To Me the Wisdom of God means... (Overhead fill-in)

Reading: Ephesians 1:3,7,8

Song: All I Once Held Dear

(49) The Greatest Gift (Christmas time)

Reading: Galatians 1:3-5

Prayer:

Medley: O Come Let Us Adore Him; Come On And Celebrate; Lord I Lift Your Name On High

Reading: Galatians 4:4-7

Medley: Give Thanks With A Grateful Heart; Forever Grateful

Reading: John 3:14-18 *The greatest God (the greatest lover) so loved (the greatest degree) the world (the greatest company) that He gave (the greatest act) His one and only Son (the greatest gift) that whoever (the greatest opportunity) believes (the greatest simplicity) in Him (the greatest attraction) shall not perish (the greatest promise) but (the greatest difference) have (the greatest certainty) eternal life (the greatest possession).*

Song: Jesus What A Beautiful Name

Prayer:

(50) Celebrating Lent

Call to Worship: Psalm 95:1-3

Songs: Lift Up Your Heads; All Hail King Jesus

Prayer and Acknowledgement of God

Reading: Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 95:6-11

Share: Lent is forty days of intense spiritual discipline (rooted in history: Moses' forty years in the desert and Christ's forty years in the wilderness). A time of spiritual renewal to new life through repentance of sin. The original idea was to give up a sin that is exercising power over your life. After reviewing, and identifying a sin to give up, and checking any other areas in which the evil one may be involved in my life, I turn my back on the power and influence of evil and yield my whole self to Christ as Lord of my life, to rise with him in the resurrection at Easter (Lent is a time of symbolically entering the tomb).

Questions: Am I slipping back into the old ways? Is the devil making some inroads into my life? How has Satan deceived me once again?

Quiet Reflection:

Readings: 1 John 1:8-10 (Confession of Sin and Words of Forgiveness)

Song: Jesus Take Me As I Am

Reading: Matthew 5:6

(51) The Life of Jesus

Reading: 1 John 4:9

(a) Jesus' Birth (1 John 4:10)

Medley: Come On And Celebrate; My Life Is In You, Lord

(b) Jesus' Death (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Medley: Jesus Christ (Once Again); My Jesus I Love Thee

Prayer:

Communion

Song: This Is My Desire

(c) Jesus' Resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17)

Medley: All Heaven Declares; Crown Him With Many Crowns

(d) Jesus' Return

Song: When We All Get To Heaven

(52) The Impact of the Resurrection

(a) A Call to Worship the Risen Lord Jesus

Song: Crown Him With Many Crowns

Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (Jesus' Post-Resurrection Appearances)

Medley: We Are A People Of Power; Celebrate Jesus Celebrate

(b) People who Met the Risen Lord Jesus: Scripture reveals what the resurrection meant to people who met the risen Lord Jesus: Mary - Joy for Sorrow (John 20:11-18); Emmaus Disciples – Hope for Despair (Luke 24:13-29); Thomas - Faith for Doubt (John 20:24-29).

Reflection: What does the resurrection mean to you? To me the resurrection means...

Song: I Believe In Jesus

(c) More People who Met the Risen Lord Jesus: Scripture reveals what the resurrection meant to people who met the risen Lord Jesus: Jesus' Disciples - Peace for Fear (John 20:19-20); Fishermen: Success for Failure (Luke 24:13-29); Peter: Forgiveness for Failure (John 20:24-29).

Reflection: What does the resurrection mean to you? To me the resurrection means...

Have you Met the Risen Lord Jesus?

Medley: You Laid Aside Your Majesty; All Heaven Declares

Prayer of Adoration:

(53) God's Love for the World

(a) God's Love for the World Sent Jesus - *For God so loved the world that he sent His Son*

Song: Lord I Lift Your Name On High

(b) God's Love for the World Secured Salvation - *Shall not perish but have eternal life*

Medley: Salvation Belongs To Our God; Shine Jesus Shine

Prayer: Gratitude for Salvation

(c) God's Love for the World Sends People - *That whoever believes* (Romans 10 - How will they...?)

Song: Let The Chimes Of Freedom Ring

Prayer: Commitment to Tell Others

Song: Song For The Nations

(54) God Among Us, Incarnate, Identifying

Refer to Song: One of Us by Joan Osborne - What Joan got right...God WAS one of us!

Spontaneous Readings: Jesus as a Real Person (Revelation 1:13-14; Philippians 2: 6-8; Hebrews 2: 17, 18; Romans 8:3; Romans 8:3;

Medley: Celebrate; Lord I Lift Your Name On High

Video: Jesus as Human (use clips from the Visual Bible or Jesus Movie that show Jesus as human)

Share: If Jesus is a real person...so what? What does it mean to you?

Medley: Forever Grateful; All Heaven Declares; Jesus We Enthroned You

(55) Worship and Serve the King

(a) Worship the King

Reading: Isaiah 6:1-4

Medley: Lift Up Your Heads; All Hail King Jesus; Jesus We Enthroned You

(b) Submit to the King

Reading: Isaiah 6:5-7

Song: Great Is Your Mercy

(c) Serve the King

Reading: Isaiah 6:8-9

Song: The Greatest Thing

(56) Thanksgiving

Quote: Plutarch in 100AD said: "The worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart."

Reading: The Psalmist in Psalm 100 said: "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations."

Medley: We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise; I Will Enter his Gates With Thanksgiving in My Heart

Prayer:

Quote: Christina Rossetti in 1850 said: "Were there no God, we would be in this glorious world with grateful hearts: and no one to thank."

Hymn: Now Thank We All Our God

Share: Turn to the person next to you and express appreciation to them for something.

Prayer: Now, turn to God and thank him for something.

Medley: Give Thanks With a Grateful Heart; I Was Made to Praise You

Reading: The Psalmist says in Psalm 103: "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us

as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him."

Hymn: There is a Redeemer

(57) Thanks for Life

Reading: Genesis 2:7 - The First Creation

Reading: Ephesians 2:1 - The New Creation

Medley: Come On And Celebrate; My Life Is In You Lord

Reading: Nehemiah 9:6

Response: Gratitude for the Life God gave us!

Song: Father I Thank You For All That You've Done

Reading: Colossians 3:1f

Song: Lord I Come To You, Let My Life Be Changed

Response: Commit our Lives fully to God - The appropriate way to express thanks for life!

Prayer of Commitment:

Song: Take My Life And Let It Be

4. CREATIVITY IN WORSHIP

Worship is not a gimmick for coercing something from the worshippers. Innovative worship forms are not a means of pumping new spirit into a decaying institution. Authentic worship is an occasion for enabling people from all walks of life to experience a sense of the presence of God in the company of other believers, and to respond appropriately. Altering the order of worship weekly will be of little use if the worship is theologically and biblically unsound. But, the goal of authentic worship may not be achieved unless some variety and freshness are incorporated into the worship experience on a regular basis. Worship leaders should consider the following areas of creativity: participatory responses, visual creativity, creative use of song, creative prayer, drama and poetry, overhead fill-ins, and multimedia presentations.

A. Participatory Responses

To involve people in worship use a Psalm as a responsive reading, such as Psalm 136, or sing a song like "The Victory Chant". Reading scripture can be done creatively, ie. if the passage lends itself to being dramatised, different readers can take character parts. The congregation could play a certain part while the leader reads the narrative.

Examples:

(1) God Is Worthy Of Praise

I call to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I am saved from my enemies. 2 Samuel 22:4.

For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. 1 Chronicles 16:25.

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. Psalm 145:3.

For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. Psalm 96:4.

(2) His Love Endures Forever - Psalm 136

Give thanks to the Lord for He is good *His love endures forever*

Give thanks to the God of Gods *His love endures forever*

Give thanks to the Lord of Lords *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who performs mighty miracles *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who made the heavens *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who made the earth *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who made the sun to rule the day *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who made the moon and stars to rule the night *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who remembered our utter weakness *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who saved us from our enemy *His love endures forever*

Praise Him who gives food to every living creature *His love endures forever*

Give thanks to the God of heaven *His love endures forever*

(3) Psalm 34

Have alternate sides each speak out a verse in turn.

(4) You are The God of Africa – Psalm 68

May God arise, may his enemies be scattered *You are the God of Africa*

May the righteous rejoice before God *You are the God of Africa*

God is a father to the fatherless and a defender of widows *You are the God of Africa*

God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing *You are the God of Africa*

You give abundant showers, O God; you provide for the poor *You are the God of Africa*

Praise be to you, O Lord our Saviour, who daily bears our burdens *You are the God of Africa*

You give power and strength to your people *You are the God of Africa*

Praise be to God! *You are the God of Africa*

(5) God is Beyond Compare

For who in all of heaven can be compared with God? What mightiest angel is anything like him?

"With what in all of heaven and earth do I compare? Whom can you find who equals me? Will you compare me with an idol made lavishly with silver and with gold? They hire a goldsmith to take your wealth and make a god from it! Then they fall down and worship it! They carry it around on their shoulders, and when they set it down, it stays there, for it cannot move! And when someone prays to it, there is no answer, for it cannot get him out of his trouble."

How great you are, Lord God! We have never heard of any other god like you. And there is no other god.

"With whom will you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One. Look up into the heavens! Who created all these stars? As a shepherd leads his sheep, calling each by its pet name, and counts them to see that none are lost or strayed, so God does with stars and planets!

Who would not fear you, O King of nations? (And that title belongs to you alone!) Among all the wise men of the earth and in all the kingdoms of the world there isn't anyone like you.

There is salvation in no one else! Under all heaven there is no other name for men to call upon to save them.

May people all over the earth know that the Lord is God and that there is no other god at all.

(6) God the Creator

Blessed be your glorious name. You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you. Nehemiah 9:5-6.

You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being. Revelation 4:11.

There is only one God, the Father, who created all things and made us to be his own; and one Lord Jesus Christ, who made everything and gives us life. 1 Corinthians 8:6.

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:16-17.

(7) Jesus Loves Us!

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father--to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

Revelation 1:6.

Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:2.

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:37,39.

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:10,11,19.

(8) The God of Mercy

O Lord, see how my enemies persecute me! Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death. Psalm 9:13.

O Lord, have mercy on me; heal me, for I have sinned against you. Psalm 41:4.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Psalm 51:1.

Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed. Psalm 57:1.

Turn to me and have mercy on me, as you always do to those who love your name. Psalm 119:132.

(9) Psalm 145:3-7

All: Great are you Lord; and most worthy of praise; Your greatness no one can fathom

Left: We will commend your works to the; next generation

Right: We will tell of your mighty acts

Left: We will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty

Right: We will meditate on your wonderful works

Left: We will tell of the power of your awesome works

Right: We will proclaim your great deeds

All: We will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness

(10) Jesus Died For All

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:8-11.

God our Savior wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men. 1 Timothy 2:3-6.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16.

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 17.

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26-28.

(11) Jesus Our Saviour

The LORD lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior! Psalm 18:46.

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. Luke 2:11 & Matthew 1:21.

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. Titus 3:4-6.

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 1 John 4:14.

(12) The Wisdom of God

God made the earth by his power and wisdom. He stretched out the heavens by his understanding. Jeremiah 51:15.

Oh, what a wonderful God we have! How great are his wisdom and knowledge and riches! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his methods! For who among us can know the mind of the Lord? Who knows enough to be his counselor and guide? Romans 11:33-34.

In a loud voice they sang, "Worthy is the Lamb - the Lamb who was slain. He is worthy to receive the power, and the riches, and the wisdom, and the strength, and the honor, and the glory, and the blessing." Revelation 5:12.

How can men be wise? The only way to begin is by reverence for God. For growth in wisdom comes from obeying his laws. Praise his name forever. Psalm 111:10.

Other verses: Jeremiah 10:12-15; Daniel 2:20-22; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Corinthians 1:18-21; Ephesians 1:3,7,8.

B. Visual Creativity

Use banners, overheads or posters to illustrate the theme or key movements in the worship.

C. Singing Creatively

(1) Change the words of songs - ie. "God Is So Good" can be sung a second time as "God, You're So Good," or, "Praise The Name Of Jesus" as "I Praise Your Name..." and then, "We Praise Your Name..."

(2) Different groups sing verses or parts of the song – this is not just to give one group a chance to rest, but to allow people to reflect on what is being sung.

(3) Sing a worshipful song without music - ie. "I Just Want To Praise You"

(4) Link songs together on a certain theme - Inform the people of the medley; announce the next song during the brief gap between songs while the instrument lower their volume and sing the first phrase with confidence. Songs that link the best have the same tempo, mood, theme and key.

(5) Modulate the pitch of the songs - Singing comes alive when the key of the song is raised a semi-tone at a time.

D. Praying Creatively

Here are some ideas for creativity in prayer: (1) Give people an opportunity to speak a phrase while the congregation is encouraged to pray it through. (2) Let the people get together in small groups where they are sitting for group prayer. (3) Have the worshippers pray for one another, ie the people pair up and pray for each other.

E. Drama and Poetry

Worship leaders should be on the lookout for drama or poetry that relates to the theme. Here are some examples:

(1) Hailing The Chief

(This drama can be enacted; read by one person or with different readers reading different roles)

Narrator: He sat at his desk in the Oval Office, waiting. He waited, even though there was a stack of letters to sign, a cable to read, a press conference to prepare for, a briefing with the cabinet to attend, a tea for an ambassador in the Rose Garden.... Looking up from his schedule, he smiled. Yes, there was a lot to do. But first some people were coming some very important people. At least he thought they were very important. That was why he kept inviting them to come to the Oval Office and talk with him. He longed to hear what was in their hearts and minds, to talk about how they felt, what they needed, how they could help him accomplish his goals.... "Mr. President," said a voice on the intercom. "They're here, sir." "Ah," he said. "Send the first one in, please." He leaned forward on the edge of his chair, waiting. The door opened, and a housewife ushered herself into the room. Without acknowledging the President's smile or outstretched hand, she plopped down in a chair. Then she shut her eyes tight.

Housewife: (in a nasal, singsong voice) *"Dear Mr. President, thank you for the world so sweet, thank you for the food we eat, thank you for the birds that sing, thank you, sir, for everything. Goodbye."*

Narrator: Before the President could say a word in response, the woman opened her eyes, got up, and walked out the door. He sighed. Why did it always seem to go like this? He pushed the intercom button. "Next, please," he said. The door opened, and in came a stout man who wore a tuxedo. Again the President's hand was ignored.

Stout Man: (clasping hands, looking at ceiling, speaking in loud monotone voice)

"O thou chief executive who art in the White House. O thou in whom so much doth constitutionally dwell, upon whose desk hath been placed a most effective blotter; incline thine ear toward thy most humble citizen, and grant that thy many entities may be manifoldly endowed upon the fruitful plain.... And may thy thou dost harkeneth whatly didst shalt evermore in twain asunder"

President: "Excuse me, but what...?"

Stout Man: “Goodbye,”

Narrator: Said the man, seeming not to hear, and walked out. The President sighed again. “Next, please,” he spoke into the intercom. This time when the door opened, there seemed to be no one there. Then the President looked down and saw a man crawling through the doorway on his hands and knees.

Crawling Man: (blubbling) *“Oh, Mr. great and awful President”. “I am but a disgusting piece of filth in your presence. No, I am less than that! How dare I enter here? How dare I think that you would do anything but grind me into the floor?”*

President: “Please, get up. You don’t have to do that. I want to talk with you.”

Crawling Man: *“I deserve only to be squashed under the weight of your mighty desk. I could never have gotten an invitation to talk with you. It must have been a mistake. How can you ever forgive me for breaking in like this? Oh, I’m so sorry, so sorry, so sorry....”*

Narrator: Still on his hands and knees, he crawled out. The man’s groaning faded down the hall. The President shook his head, then slowly pushed the intercom button. “Next,” he said, sounding tired. In moments a young man entered. He was wearing headphones and bobbing up and down to the music of his pocket stereo.

Young Man: *“Hey, Prez, What’s happening? Nice place you’ve got here. I’m, like, so glad we could have this little chat, you know? You’re not bad for an old dude, I guess. You don’t bother me, I won’t bother you, okay? Well, I’ve gotta go. Hang in there.”*

Narrator: He walked out. The President drummed his fingers on his desk. “Next, please,” he said wearily. An elderly man marched in, staring at a piece of paper in his hand. He, too, ignored the President’s greeting.

Elderly Man: *“Mr. President, I want there to be a parking space waiting for me when I go downtown this afternoon. Not a parallel parking space, either, but one I can drive right into. Not one with a parking meter. You can see to it that none of those meter maids gives me a ticket. Now, this is important! Speaking of important, how do you feel about my program to feed the hungry? Would you like to have a part in....” “And another thing! I lost my best golf club. A putter. Can’t remember where I put it. Now, you find it for me, will you? Got to have that club before Saturday. I know you can do it. Goodbye.”*

Narrator: With that the old man got up and shuffled out the door. The President slumped in his chair. “Next,” he said. There was a pause. At last a young woman entered slowly. She looked like a sleepwalker – eyes nearly shut, jaw slack, her feet dragging. She yawned and slid into a chair.

Young Woman: *“Dear...Mr....President..., I know I should talk to you when I’m more ... awake ... but I’ve got so many things to do ... So ... sleepy... There was something I was going to say ... What ... was it I was going to say ... uh ... !”* (starts to snore).

Narrator: The President buzzed his secretary, who stepped in, “Could you help this young lady out?” he asked, sighing again. “Certainly, Mr. President,” said the secretary as she helped the dozing girl to her feet. The President gazed sadly out the window. “How many do we have left?” he asked. “I’m sorry, sir,” the secretary said. “But as usual, most of the people you sent invitations to said they were too busy to talk. They had to watch TV, wash the car, do the dishes...” “Oh,” said the President, dejected. “Isn’t there anyone out there?” “There is one, sir,” she said. “But you wouldn’t want to talk with him.” “Why not?” “Because he’s just a child, Mr. President” The chief executive shrugged. “May as well show him in;” he said. Moments later a little boy entered shyly. He looked around the room, his eyes wide.

Little Boy: “Are ... are you really the President?”

Narrator: The President smiled. “I really am,” he answered, offering his hand. The little boy reached up and shook it. Then he sat down, folded his hands in his lap, and waited. The President watched,

amazed, as the boy sat politely for nearly a minute. "Isn't there ... something you want to tell me?" the President asked finally. "Something you have to recite, or ask for, or say?" The little boy looked down for a moment, thinking. Then he looked up.

Little Boy: *"Yes. I guess there is."*

Narrator: "Well, what is it?" the President asked.

Little Boy: *"Thank you for inviting me. That's all."*

Narrator: When the President heard that, he couldn't seem to say anything for a while. All he could do was smile. But then they talked and talked and talked for the longest, most wonderful time.

(2) The Moabite And The Tabernacle

A Moabite gazes down on the tents and tabernacle of Israel from a lofty height. Attracted by what he sees, he descends to the plain and makes his way toward the sacred enclosure surrounding the tabernacle - a high wall of dazzling linen reaching over his head. He walks around it until he comes to the gate, where he sees a man.

"May I go in there?" he asks, pointing through the gate to the bustle of activity in the tabernacle's outer court.

"Who are you?" demands the man suspiciously. Any Israelite would know he could go in there. "I am a man from Moab," the stranger replies.

"Well," says the man at the gate, "I'm sorry, but you cannot go in there. The law of Moses has barred the Moabites from any part in the worship of Israel until the tenth generation."

The Moabite looks sad. "What would I have to do to get in there?" he pleads.

"You would have to be born again," replies the gatekeeper. "You would have to be born an Israelite. You would need to be born of the tribe of Judah, perhaps, or of the tribe of Benjamin or Dan." Says the Moabite, "I wish I had been born an Israelite of one of the tribes of Israel." As he looks more closely, he sees one of the priests, having offered a sacrifice at the bronze altar and cleansed himself at the brazen basin, go into the tabernacle's interior.

"What's in there?" asks the Moabite. "Inside the main building, I mean."

"Oh," says the gatekeeper, "that's the tabernacle proper. Inside there is a room containing a lampstand, a table, and an altar of gold. The man you saw is a priest. He will trim the lamp, eat of the bread on the table, and burn incense to the living God on the golden altar."

"Ah," sighs the man of Moab. "I wish I were an Israelite so that I could do that. I should love to worship God in that holy place and help to trim the lamp, to offer him some incense, and to eat at that table."

"Oh, no" says the man at the gate, "even I could not do that. To worship in the holy place one must be born of the tribe of Levi and of the family of Aaron."

The man from Moab sighs again. "I wish I had been born of Israel of the tribe of Levi or the family of Aaron." Gazing wistfully at the closed tabernacle door, he says, "What else is in there?" "There's a veil," replies the informant. "It's beautiful, I'm told. It divides the tabernacle in two. Beyond the veil is what we call 'the most holy place,' the Holy of Holies."

The Moabite shows more interest than ever. "What's in the Holy of Holies?" he asks.

"A sacred chest called the Ark of the Covenant," answers the gatekeeper. "It contains holy memorials of our past. Its top is made of gold, and we call that the Mercy Seat because God sits there between the golden cherubim. You see that pillar of cloud hovering over the tabernacle? That's the shekina glory cloud. It comes to rest over the mercy seat."

Again a look of longing shadows the face of the man from Moab. "Oh," he cries, "if only I were a priest! I would love to go into the Holy of Holies and gaze upon God and worship Him there in the beauty of holiness."

"Oh, no!" says the man at the gate. "You couldn't do that even if you were a priest! To enter into the most holy place you would have to be the high priest of Israel. Only he can go in there, nobody else, only he."

The Moabite's heart yearns once more. "Oh," he cries, "if only I had been born an Israelite of the tribe of Levi of the family of Aaron. If only I had been born a high priest. I would go in there every day. I would go in three times a day. I would worship continually in the Holy of Holies."

The gatekeeper looks at him again and once more shakes his head. "Oh, no!" he says, "You couldn't do that. Even the high priest of Israel can go in there only once a year, and then only after the most elaborate preparations, and even then only for a very little while."

Sadly the Moabite turns away. He has no hope in all the world of ever entering there.

(3) A Letter from God

Dear Friend

As you got up this morning, I watched you and hoped you would talk to me, even if it was just a few words, asking my opinion or thanking me for something good that happened in your life yesterday, but I noticed you were too busy trying to find the right outfit to put on and wear to work. So I waited.

When you ran around the house getting ready, I knew there would be a few minutes for you to stop and say hello, but you were too busy. At one point you had to wait fifteen minutes with nothing to do except sit in a chair.

Then I saw you spring to your feet, I thought you wanted to talk to me, but you ran to the phone and called a friend to get the latest gossip. I watched as you went to work and I waited patiently all day long. With all your activities I guess you were too busy to say anything to me. I noticed that before lunch you looked around, maybe you felt embarrassed to talk to me, that is why you didn't bow your head. You glanced three or four tables over and you noticed some of your friends talking to me briefly before they ate, but you didn't. That's okay, there is still more time left, and I have hope that you will talk to me even yet.

You went home and it seems as if you had lots of things to do. After a few of them were done you turned on the TV. I don't know if I like TV or not, just about anything goes there & you spend a lot of time each day in front of it, not thinking about anything-just enjoying the show. I waited patiently again as you watched TV and ate your meal, but again you didn't talk to me.

As you did your homework I waited again, as you did what you had to do. At bedtime I guess you felt too tired. After you said goodnight to your family you plopped into bed and fell asleep in no time. That's okay, because you may not realize that I am always there for you. I've got patience more than you will ever know. I even want to teach you how to be patient with others as well. I love you so much that I wait everyday for a nod, a prayer, a thought or a thankful part of your heart.

It is hard to have a one-sided conversation. Well, you are getting up again and once again I will wait with nothing but love for you hoping that today you will give me some time. Have a nice day!

Your friend, God

(4) Look up at the sky! By Rob Frost

Look up! Look up at the sky!
Who created all those stars you see!
The One who leads them out like an army.
He knows how many there are.
He calls each one by name.
His power is so great, not one is ever missing!

Look up at the sky!
Stop putting yourself at the centre of your world.
See the greatness of God
And you'll see everything in true perspective.

Look up at the sky!
Lift your heart above the synthetic

And glimpse One so much greater.
His glory is reflected in the changing sky
His greatness and majesty are beyond compare!
He made the universe and all that's in it.
His power can't be measured
Nor His glory imagined.

Look up at the sky!
To whom can the holy God be compared!

F. Overhead Transparency Fill-ins

Use an overhead transparency and add in comments from worshippers. A suitable graphic can be added to the overhead that relates to the topic. Here are some statements that I have used to get people to think deeply on some issue:

- (1) God is...
- (2) God has blessed me by...
- (3) To me, the tearing of the temple curtain means...
- (4) When I think of Jesus as human I...
- (5) To me the *wisdom* of God means...(use any attribute of God in the place of *wisdom*)

G. Multimedia Presentations

As technology becomes more affordable, worship leaders should consider making use of slide presentations to project the words of songs, and incorporate video and images into worship. These should be closely related to the theme and aim to help the worshippers make a deeper connection with God, and not just to dazzle people with their use of technology.

5. SETTING GOALS FOR WORSHIP

It is critical that there is a long-term vision for worship within the local church.

The goals for worship should be:

A. Tangible

Precise goals will be easier to reach. Remember, "If you don't care where you are going, any road will take you there."

B. Communicable

Goals need to be written to enable clear understanding. People should go through the planning stage together to ensure common understanding.

C. Achievable

The long-term goals should be divided into short-term goals to ensure that they are achievable.

D. Definitive

Lay out the goals, step-by-step, showing how they will be achieved. Outline what action is necessary to reach the goal at each stage.

E. Flexible

Circumstances change continually. As soon as support for a project or programme starts to decline we should begin to re- evaluate. Goal setting is only dangerous when we stop looking at the goals to refine them.

Examples of goals for worship include:

- * To get people to take their eyes off the leader and fix them on the Lord
- * To reproduce worshippers in the congregation - a life-style of worship.
- * To develop a system for learning new songs more effectively.

6. BALANCE IN WORSHIP

David Blomgren has listed the following theological imbalances in worship today:

- A. An overemphasis on the *relational* at the expense of the *reverential* in our approach to God.
- B. An overemphasis on the *immanence* of God at the expense of the *transcendence* of God.
- C. An overemphasis on the *anthropocentric*, or man-centred aspect at the expense of the *theocentric*, or God-Centred aspect.
- D. An overemphasis on *love* at the expense of *holiness* in our approach to God.
- E. An overemphasis on *edification* at the expense of *exaltation*.

The key to a healthy, dynamic, worshipping church is balance. Keeping the above aspects in tension will ensure true worship.

7. EVALUATION OF WORSHIP

Worship forms are often repeated mindlessly. Some aspects of the worship may be biblically inaccurate or theologically unsound. In order to ascertain the authenticity of worship and how accurately it speaks to the needs of the congregation, worship must be periodically evaluated. Two primary questions should be raised when evaluating worship. Firstly, is it theologically sound? Secondly, is it engaging the people in a genuine encounter with God? Several approaches will help to gain accurate answers to these questions.

A. Honest Reflection By The Worship Leadership Team

The worship leader, church leadership and musicians should reflect honestly on the design and content of the worship services. Ongoing evaluation is vital to develop a growing experience of God in the church.

B. Select A Group Of Lay Persons To Evaluate Worship

A group of lay persons should be selected to assist in worship evaluation. The group should be representative of the whole worshipping body - ie. all ages should participate. They should meet regularly to provide continued input, to devise new forms of worship and ensure that all are united in the vision for worship.

C. Invite The Entire Congregation To Participate

A third possibility is to invite the entire congregation to evaluate worship through written questionnaires. Brief evaluation forms could be completed at the end of morning worship services. Evaluation forms could be mailed to members, to be returned by post or the following Sunday.

D. Worship Dialogue Sessions For Open Discussion

Following a lunch or tea after a worship service, a time for discussion could be scheduled for the congregation to express itself on the form and content of the worship. The team needs to be comfortable enough to encounter objections without becoming defensive and objectionable themselves. While some may view it as a time for personal complaints, most will use it as an opportunity for honest reflection. A facilitator for the open discussion is essential - someone who can ask good questions to keep the discussion on track. The positive suggestions should be incorporated into the worship experience at the earliest opportunity.

E. Post Worship Self-Evaluation

The worship leader who has just led worship will have feelings about how the time of worship went. These thoughts, which may range from feelings of elation to depression, need to be verbalised to some other members of the worship team. The following are some reasons why the leader may feel that his leading was unsuccessful:

(1) An Attempt To Introduce New Worship Forms Too Quickly - The leader should remember that people are slow to change and will not respond with total eagerness the first time a new form of worship is introduced. Sharing with another leader will confirm this reality. The leader should determine to be slower in introducing new concepts, forms or songs and encourage other leaders to also be introducing similar changes. This will help to reinforce what is being learnt.

(2) A Natural Response To Blessing In Ministry - The prophet Elijah had no sooner experienced the power of God on Mount Carmel than he takes off into the wilderness in a state of depression (1 Kings 18,19). This was not an isolated incident, but is the reality of the strain of ministry. Worship leaders must expect these feeling after a great time of ministry. The way to recovery includes a time before the Lord where His affirmation is sought and His re-commissioning heard.

(3) An Incorrect Response Desired - If the worship leader desires to be patted on the back or verbally praised for having skilfully led the people in worship they may be disappointed when that response is missing. The desired response should be the knowledge that people have been successfully moved from where they were into the sensed presence of the Lord where they heard God's word and went away changed. Even that change may not, at least initially, be visible to the eye, but take the form of inward change which will affect the heart or an attitude.

I have included a worship evaluation form on page 99 for you to adapt and use in your context.

8. SONGS AND WORSHIP

A. Teaching New Songs

Why learn new songs? Scripture calls us to "sing a new song to the Lord" (Psalm 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; etc). This is not simply for the sake of novelty! New songs are beneficial because they keep us out of a rut, bring us a new sense of freshness and enthusiasm, force us to think about what we are singing, expand our worship vocabulary and help us capture what God is saying to the body at the time.

(1) The Way to Teach New Songs - Here are some suggestions for teaching new songs:

- * Explain the Song - Make sure that the message of the song is clearly understood.
- * Use Visual Aids - An overhead, word in the bulletin, etc.
- * Teach the Band - It is essential that the band know the song thoroughly.
- * Learn the Melody - When a song is taught incorrectly it is difficult to re-teach it later.
- * Involve the Choir - Have the choir sing the song as an item and then let people join in.
- * Limit New Songs - Don't teach too many new songs in a service, 2 or 3 at the most.

(2) The Place to Teach New Songs - When new songs are first introduced, the people have to take their eyes off the Lord and concentrate on the task of learning the new tune. It is crucial to find the appropriate place to teach new songs:

- * Avoid teaching a new song during an intimate time of worship
- * Teach a song during the early stage of the service
- * Teach a group of individuals in the congregation, choir, cell group, youth, etc
- * Follow a new song with a well-known song to restore a sense of familiarity

(3) The Follow up of New Songs - Don't repeat a song too often at the first learning. Go over the song a few times and then move on. Come back to it the following week and continue to reinforce it periodically until it is quite familiar. Do not become discouraged if a song does not "take" the first time, some songs need to be repeated a few times before the people really take to them. Keep a balance of repetition without singing new songs to death!

B. Medley Selection

In selecting a medley of songs make sure that the songs flow according to their:

(1) Theme - The songs should centre around a similar subject, ie. exploring an aspect of the character of God (the Fatherhood of God, Jesus our Saviour, etc.)

(2) Direction - Try to ensure that the direction of the songs flow. The worshippers need to sing to God throughout the medley and not switch between songs that address God, speak about God and are addressed to each other.

(3) Rhythm - It is extremely difficult to get songs that have a different rhythm to flow together. A Latin feel song such as "I Am A New Creation" won't flow naturally into "I Will Enter His Gates", even though they are in the same key. The band will need to break the old and enter the new rhythm to make the transition. Keep slow songs together and fast songs together (to link a fast song to a slow song you can repeat the chorus of the fast song at a slow pace and then start the slower song).

(4) Key - Selecting songs in the same key will make the work of the musicians much easier as they move from song to song. An experienced musician will be able to modulate between different keys with ease, but some musicians cannot. Musicians need to be informed in advance about medley choices or key changes.

C. Master Song List

One of the basic tools of the worship leader is the master song list. Such a list is invaluable during preparation as well as during the service. A glance at the master list of songs will enable the worship leader to take a different direction, select an appropriate closing song and have freedom in leading.

(1) Designing a Master Song List - There are a variety of ways to prepare a list of songs that the congregation know. The list should broadly be divided into fast and slow songs, ie Praise and Worship songs. Under this division the songs can also be divided according to their keys, this will enable song medleys to be selected. A further sub-division can be used with songs listed according to their topic.

(2) Updating the Master Song List - Song lists can be kept on computer so that they can be updated as new songs are learnt. This should be the responsibility of an individual who will periodically produce updated copies for the team to work from.

9. MUSICAL EXCELLENCE IN WORSHIP

There is much talk these days about "excellence" in leadership and Church music. Many believe that we have a "stewardship mandate" to excel. But possibly it is more for human than divine reasons, that we need to excel. Someone has likened our giving to God the most excellent music we can produce to the little boy who brings home a drawing in Grade two. His mother tells him how wonderful it is, and after gazing proudly at the childish scribble, she places the work onto the fridge door to be frequently admired. Even the best we can offer to God is no more than just a "scribble" to him. So from God's perspective whether our music is at its best or worst is irrelevant. But for us it makes a tremendous amount of difference. It is difficult to worship when the music is shoddy or the leader is unprepared or unable to lead effectively. We should aim to excel in leading worship because of what it does for us, in helping us to worship God. The more the leader knows about music, the better able they will be to lead others in worship. There are some definite things that the leader can do to develop musical ability and quality.

A. Develop Singing Skills

Voice lessons will increase the leader's vocal projection and control. An attractive singing voice should be practised. The worship leader who is able to sight-read music will be able to lead the melody of songs confidently and correctly. Because people follow what the leader is singing, it is important for the melody line to be carried by the worship leader and the harmonising left to the singers. When the leader makes a habit of "soloizing" over the microphone the people find it difficult to know which notes they are supposed to be singing. By singing the melody accurately and properly, the worship leader will help newcomers to learn the songs quickly and correctly. When a song gets started in a wrong key, and people are growling or straining, the leader should consider stopping the song and getting the musicians to select a better key.

B. Develop Communication Skills

The worship leader must be aware of the need to communicate clearly with the people and with the musicians. Communication with the band must be maintained throughout the service. This is done with eye contact, a nod or pre-determined hand signals. While the leader should lead the band, they should also be sensitive to where the musicians are. Expecting the band to start a song while they are about to enter into the chorus of that song is foolish. The leader should rather end his prayer or thoughts at a more appropriate time and flow into the song in a much more natural fashion.

C. Develop Rhythmic Skills

The wrong rhythm can destroy the effectiveness of a song. Where a song has gaps between lines such as, "I Love You Lord, And I Lift My Voice", it is very tempting to want to lead prematurely into the next line. This is called "anticipating the next phrase." Some leaders have developed this as a style. They sing the next line moments before the congregation does, so that the people know who the leader is. This style keeps the people watching the leader all the time and hinders them from worshipping the Lord. By maintaining rhythmic stability, we show the people that we will hold every line out to its full rhythmic value. It is crucial to learn how to initiate a correct rhythm from the start of a song. With some practise, together with the musicians, the correct rhythm will be found and agreed upon by all. When a song is started in a wrong tempo, there will be a heaviness to the singing. The leader can set the correct rhythm by the following: (1) motion to the drummer to pound out the correct rhythm; (2) make quicker hand movements; and (3) clap out the faster or slower rhythm. If none of these work there is nothing wrong with simply stopping the song after the first time through or before the chorus and saying, "Let's sing that a bit slower." Do not try to place the blame on anyone, simply ask for a change of tempo and continue. Be careful of introducing a sudden tempo change in worship. The transitions need to be made with extreme care and forethought. Most worship services require only one major tempo change - when moving from the praise songs to the worship songs.

D. Develop Relational Skills

The worship leader must be an encourager. People need encouragement to worship and the musicians need to be encouraged and shown appreciation for their commitment. Rather than finding fault with what the musicians do, the leader should take time to encourage them for their availability and efforts.

Musicians and people who are affirmed will respond more readily to the leading of the worship leader, but a critical leader will alienate the people they desperately need to relate to closely.

10. CONTROL IN WORSHIP

The task of the worship leader can be summarised with these words: "get control - then lose control".

A. Getting Control

The art of "getting control" speaks of "direction" and "being in charge" and not about manipulation. The leader takes control of the service in order to relax the people with the knowledge that someone is in charge. The leader who gets up and says, "Please pray for me, this is my first time at leading worship, and I'm terrified," has lost it before they even begin. The people will not be worshipping, but continually peeking to see how the leader is doing. The leader takes control to get the service moving in a specific direction. The people may be discouraged and need to be encouraged to praise God despite how they are feeling. People need to be led – leaders must lead people in the worship!

B. Losing Control

Whereas praise can be stimulated by an enthusiastic leader, worship is a response in the human spirit to God's Spirit. No amount of stimulation from the leader will cause the people to worship if their hearts are not right before God. So the worship leader needs to learn to lose control so that the Holy Spirit can bring the right response from the hearts of the worshippers. There are ways that the worship leader can let go of control over the service: (1) back away from the microphone and worship God; (2) allow songs to flow in a medley without speaking; (3) encourage people to respond as God leads them; and (4) go to your knees in prayer and worship. It is essential that we give to God the liberty he needs to be able to work in the hearts and lives of people.

11. BRINGING CHANGE IN WORSHIP

In order to meet the challenges of developing a worship ministry in a local church, worship leaders will need to learn how to bring change without losing the congregation. The following guidelines will help:

A. Create An Environment For Change

The following characteristics must be present: Change friendly churches adjust easily. Think process not right and wrong. Accept and be honest about failure. Be future-friendly. Make use of consultants.

B. Remodelling The Worship Program

Develop a clear philosophy and aims. Get collaboration. Get a core sold on the change first. Collect feedback to bring ownership. Give options for changes. Link changes to past successes. Tell stories with word pictures. Take two years to fully execute. Consider a six month trial period. First sell people on the mission.

C. Determine The Right Time To Change

Three components must be in place before change is introduced: **(1) Dissatisfaction**; **(2) Desire**; and **(3) Direction**. There are three times when change is needed: (a) when you reach a numerical threshold; (b) when new opportunities are found; and (c) when there is change in the community.

D. Knowing What Changes To Embrace

Check your demographics. Be careful of mixing aims as it usually brings failure. Identify abilities and stick to areas of strength. Remember you can't reach everyone – target! Commit to the change process.

E. Understanding The Change Process

It can't really be stopped. Be a driver, not a victim of change. Remember that everyone hates change, but people must move. Expect paradigm shifts, collisions and adaptations to take place. Identify and address people's fears. Prepare for the zone where the old is gone but the new is not quite ready yet.

Chapter 7

TRENDS IN WORSHIP

The following unedited collection of articles reflect something of where diverse writers are suggesting worship is heading in the new millennium:

1. FUTURE TRENDS IN WORSHIP BY LAMAR BOSCHMAN

Excerpted from two articles by LaMar Boschman Ministries, P.O. Box 130, Bedford, TX 76095.

(1) From Passive To More Active Worship - We are learning that worship is not something done "for" us but "by" us. The Lord is the only audience and we all are the worship priests. The platform ministries are merely the prompters and facilitators for the congregational worship.

(2) Movement Toward More Spontaneity - An increasing number of leaders see the importance of extemporaneous expressions of worship, allowing people to use their own words and sometimes their own melodies to express their exalting of the Lord.

(3) More Vertical Focus In Worship - Singing "to" the Lord brings a "face-to-face encounter more than singing songs "about" him. Worship renewal comes with a visitation with the Lord and not just a visit with others.

(4) A Greater Desire For Christ-Centered Worship - Some come to a worship service because they need a word, or a blessing. If that is our only pursuit it can lead to a humanistic man-centered, rather than Christ-centered worship. Church leaders are re-evaluating their mission statement asking "why do we gather on Sunday?"

(5) An Increased Hunger To Worship Privately - More and more believers have a desire to develop a life-style of worship, focusing on spiritual zeal and passion for God.

(6) More Interest In Historical Worship - Evangelical and charismatic leaders are taking a look at the liturgies that have been used by the Church for two millennia. There is a convergence of worship styles that are rooted in Scriptures, been developed through history and are mixed with a passion for God's presence.

(7) A Desire For The Presence Of God - Many Christians are longing for spiritual impetus in their worship and a dissatisfaction with a worship service that is routine and lacking of spiritual power. Worshiping churches seek to develop a worship that is open to the presence of God, aware of mystery and committed to participation of all.

(8) Worship Used In Evangelism - Taking worship outside of the walls of the church is changing our paradigm of worship.

(9) More Culturally Relevant Worship - As ethnic groups continue to migrate, worship in our churches will change as well. The church will try to follow the cultural music mix of their community if they desire to be effective in reaching them with contemporary worship.

2. FACING THE POSTMODERN CULTURE BY ROBERT E. WEBBER

What Lies at the Heart of Postmodernism, and How Can We Prepare to Meet It? By Robert E. Webber, Th.D. From the September-October, 1998 issue of Worship Leader. Used with permission from Worship Leader magazine. For subscription information, phone 1-800-286-8099. © 1998 CCM Communications, Nashville, Tennessee.

Within and without academic circles, the going buzz word of the day is the term "postmodern". But what postmodern means and the implications of that meaning are very much up for debate. In this article, I

want to jump into the discussion and probe the changes that will take place in worship as we continue to move into the postmodern era. Postmodern means "after the modern era," which ended somewhere in the 1980s. Other expressions to describe this new period of history include post-Christian and post-Constantinian. The argument is that culture is in a time of transition from the modern era of the enlightenment into a new era that can not be positively identified. Hence the word "postmodern."

(1) Living in a Time of Change - We all recognize that we live in a time of enormous change. We are surrounded by scientific, economic, philosophical, political and communication change, to mention just a few of the more obvious changes that are taking place. The Church and its entire ministry, especially worship, is undergoing significant changes at an extremely rapid pace. The best way to prepare to meet these changes is to understand what is taking place. Knowledge of the forces that are reshaping culture is indispensable to an intelligent and intentional approach to worship in the 21st century. What lies at the heart of postmodernism is the shift from a mechanistic, static and rationalistic world view to a vision of reality that has found a new place for mystery, for a dynamic understanding of life, and for a view of an expanding creation rather than a fixed, mechanical world.

(2) Culture Impacts Worship - Culture always makes an impact on the way we worship. Byzantine worship reflects the platonic-mystery influence of the early church period; Roman Catholic worship reflects the Aristotelian-institutional influence of the Medieval Era; reformation worship reflects nominalism with its emphasis on individualism; 17th and 18th century worship reflects the rationalism of the day; and 19th century worship reflects the emotionalism of the romantic era. Many of the differences that we experience in today's worship are due to the cultural influences that have shaped past worship styles. All the former approaches to worship compete today for the hearts and minds of God's people. And among these approaches to worship, our time has shaped worship into the image of contemporary pop culture. It is one more approach to worship contending with all the others. But what of its future? Will it survive as an approach to worship forged and fixed in the culture and style of the 1980s, or will we be able to move into the 21st century with a style of worship that reflects the new postmodern world in which we now find ourselves? Changes in the style of worship from one era to another are legitimate and useful, but the vitality of the classical Christian message endures, and the validity of the four-fold pattern or structure of worship is intact. Therefore much of my probing will have to do with the impact the postmodern world has on the style of worship.

3. TRENDS IN GLOBAL WORSHIP BY FRANK FORTUNATO

Charting the Progress Toward the Realization of Revelation 5:13.

Revelation four and five has some awesome statements of worship. The curtain of heaven has been rolled back and John has been ushered on stage where he sees a five-act drama of worship at the very throne room of heaven. He gropes for language describing the indescribable, especially the final act in Rev 5:13 where he somehow hears the sounds of eternity: "every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them" (TEV: all creatures in the whole universe) singing "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!" History is moving steadily toward that grand symphonic never-ending worship from all redeemed creation. Recent years have seen astonishing developments in worship worldwide. There are many trends that can trace this global praise emerging from every tribe and nation. Here are a few of them:

(1) Renewal Of Worship In Our Churches - Back in the 50s and 60s A.W. Tozer wrote prophetically about worship as "the missing jewel of the church." Over the last few decades the jewel has begun to take on luster. As God's people grow in their love for Jesus a renewal in worship usually emerges. In the Western world this has spawned an abundance of excellent books, tapes, seminars, etc. Hymnals, chorus books, recordings, and a host of other accessories are now available, in English, and increasingly in other languages. Courses on worship are becoming available in various Christian institutions, including a doctoral program on worship now available at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard Illinois near Chicago. The worship renewal has circled the globe and affected nearly all streams of Christianity, liturgical, traditional, and contemporary; Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant; evangelical and charismatic.

(2) Reawakening Of Indigenous Culture - In the midst of the growing global family, people are longing for and discovering their ethnic roots. Believers long to express their love for Jesus in their

own "heart" culture and language. Someone coined the phrase: "a person should not be expected to undergo a cultural lobotomy to become a worshiper." Wheaton College Music Chairman Howard Best describes it this way: "God wants to hear the whole world in its countless tongues and amazingly diverse musics making praise after praise. God accepts not only the offerings of a highly trained choir, but also the song of the arrow maker in Brazil." I received some email recently from New Zealand worship leader David Garratt who shared: "A recent article in Time spoke of the revival of Celtic music in Ireland as part of a searching back into the roots of one's past. People are not going to be content with second hand music. They want their own. The same thing is happening with worship around the world." The Garratts and other missionary musicians and missionary artists conduct workshops, training believers to write songs, play instruments, use dance and find other worship expressions that are native to their own culture. Of course it takes much discernment in dealing with sensitive cultural issues. The Fellowship of Artists for Cultural Evangelism (FACE) reports about an unredeemable dance in Bali that depended on evil spirit possession. A believer took up the challenge to create a dance to symbolize the Holy Spirit, but using Balinese-style movement. This communicated a Christ-centered message and contributed to Balinese culture. March for Jesus leader Tom Pelton comments, "Satan is poised and ready to exploit cultural differences to bring violence and destruction. The church must be prepared for the challenge by being a place of reconciliation that gives dignity to all peoples."

(3) "Bi-musical" Missionary Musicians - Along with the reawakened indigenous awareness, a truly remarkable new breed of musicians is being raised up--the Christian ethnomusicologists, who move into unreached peoples to help these groups develop their own vernacular music and worship expressions. These music missionaries not only become bi-lingual but also bi- musical, learning how to hear, notate, and compose music in non- Western music systems. Often this means learning to play local musical instruments. SIL has been at the forefront of this, although several other mission groups are involved as well. Sophisticated computer programs help these specialists to analyze the music down to minute details so that scale systems can be formed and eventually notated as a whole new music system. As the translators get the Word into print, local musicians take passages like the Psalms and compose their own music in their own vernacular style. The results have been startling. Paul Neeley of SIL reported about a workshop in Africa for translators and composers from Ghana, Nigeria and Togo. About 120 new Scripture songs in dozens of languages were composed and recorded. Tom Avery, another leading SIL ethnomusicologist studied the music of the Canela tribe in Brazil and eventually composed twenty original Canela hymns. One Canela with tears in his eyes shared: "The translators gave us the book which God speaks to us, and now your friend Tom gave us the songs in which we can speak back to him." Reading several years of the SIL Ethnomusicology Newsletters leaves one breathless and in awe of what God has done through these music servants around the world.

(4) Worship Musicians Joining Church Planting Teams - Along with ethnomusicologists going to various unreached peoples around the world. God is also raising up musicians and artists to join church planting teams, to help emerging groups of believers in unreached people groups develop their own worship and artistic expressions. Frontiers and Pioneers missions organizations are just two of several missions groups focusing on raising up these servants to humbly assist church planting efforts. Pioneers will soon send two families to Ghana to complete a digital recording studio to encourage and affirm African musicians coming to Christ to get their worship songs recorded and distributed to local congregations. YWAM for many years recognized how the arts can often reach people faster than any other way and therefore added artistic training to their discipleship programs. Their University of the Nations recently combined their Fine Arts and Performing Arts Schools in a renewed effort to prepare a generation of artists to evangelize around the world. YWAM and many other groups are realizing Ronald Allen's dictum that "the arts not only reflect culture but help to shape it."

(5) Globalizing of Western Culture - Simultaneous with the resurgence of indigenous culture has also been the relentless dissemination of western pop culture that pervades much of the world today, especially the urban world. Along with British and American and Australian pop music traversing the globe there has been a vast spread of contemporary worship songs as well. For years Jimmy Owens, renowned Christian composer, has traced this with great excitement. He has described what the Beatles and subsequent rock groups did to popularize Western pop sounds as something that ultimately the Holy Spirit was allowing so that our collective ears could get tuned to a whole genre of music style (harmony, rhythm, and melody, etc.) from which much of our present- day contemporary worship has emerged. As Fuller missiologist Peter Wagner has traveled to far flung places around the

globe hearing similar song structures of worship in all cultures he goes so far as to call this contemporary praise music "the international sound of the Holy Spirit."

(6) Blending Of Cultures – This has naturally led to another trend both in the wider culture and also within the church, of the blending of ethnic and Western styles. Secular musicians helped popularize this cultural mix with instruments and rhythms from various countries weaved into music arrangements. Worship ministries like Integrity's Hosanna! music released "blended" worship recordings from different parts of the world. A tribal group heard an early Integrity recording. They listened over and over, learned the songs, went back to their village and made instruments to emulate the sounds on the tape. They fashioned an organ out of bamboo and put together a bottle, a can and fishing line to make something that sounded like a violin. They played every tune on the album worshipping God with their own instruments and adding their own cultural style, creating their own "blended" tribal sound. As the world's cities become melting pots of cultural diversity, the churches in these places are beginning to reflect this rich diversity. British producer Les Moir describes the "blended" services at London's Kensington Temple and "the world sound" he hears with people from 110 nations worshipping together as a foretaste of heaven.

(7) Recordings Of Worship Songs - Recent years have seen an incredible output of recorded worship music from around the world. As the cost of recording equipment and sophisticated synthesizers and other instruments has dropped, little recording studios have sprouted world wide, often in homes or churches. During the USSR days, Russian praise tapes were smuggled into Russia, helping spiritually starved Russian believers learn songs of praise. Recordings disseminated in cultures especially where there are few Christians have helped scattered groups of believers to find a common identity through the common repertoire of worship songs. Christian musicians are at the forefront capturing modern recording technology for the Kingdom. A British musician recently prepared an assortment of songs and hymns and saved them as digital files that he then downloaded to several of us in different parts of the world. We then took those files that had been electronically transferred to our computers from the cyberworld, and played them back in worship times on our own digital synthesizer equipment.

(8) Worship Is Evangelism Is Worship - While the use of music has been recognized as a powerful tool for evangelism, the Body of Christ is learning more and more how vital worship also draws people to Jesus. The Church on the Way in Van Nuys California has seen thousands come to Christ before the sermon, and following the times of worship. Songwriter Gerrit Gustafson teaches that the gospel is a call to worship and that the fruit of the gospel should be worshipers. (1 Peter 2:9, Romans 15:16). He then explains that evangelism will naturally spring out of worship (Acts 13:2) and describes worship evangelism as "wholehearted worshipers calling the whole world to wholehearted worship." Evangelistic crusades worldwide now include extended times of worship. As unbelievers see believers responding to God in worship they are attracted to him. They experience God present as he inhabits their praises. Sally Morgenthaler, author of the book *Worship Evangelism* writes: "Believers in heartfelt worship can present a three- dimensional model that entertainment and apologetics cannot." Illustrations abound to confirm that. Over the last fifteen years Michele and Tonio Romeo have planted 25 new churches in the harbor town of Naples. In the first phase 15-20 people enter the area to hold worship services or simply make music in the piazza with no sermon. After two months they add preaching and friendship evangelism to the gatherings, which has led to the planting of the churches. Leighton Ford describes workers with the India Evangelistic Mission ministering among tribal groups. They would often ask neighbors if they could use their homes for a time of worship. Instead of preaching to them they held worship and prayer services, which deeply impressed the families and opened them to listen much more readily to the presentation of the gospel. For over twenty years the OM mission ships have held International Nights using drama, music, dance, mime, and preaching in a great multi-media celebration of God's grace. Large numbers of people have come to faith in Christ who were attracted by the power of these "festivals of praise."

(9) Networking Of Worship And Arts Ministries - Recent years has given birth to a variety of ministries whose purpose is to partner with other ministries to make the greatest impact for the Kingdom. Fellowships of musicians, painters, dancers, actors, have formed on several continents. One example is the Creative Arts Europe fellowship, which helps Europeans develop Biblical perspective on the arts and ways that the church can be salt and light on a post- Christian continent. Artists are realizing the potential of networking as stated in the Singapore '89 Manifesto: "for the sake of the lost...we have dared to pray and dream of what might happen if autonomy of churches and ministries

could be balanced with significant partnership." One of the newest partnerships is the AD2000 Worship and Arts Resource Network (Track). Realizing that the goal of global evangelization is to present worshipers to the Lord from every people group, the Track seeks to serve existing ministries and initiatives by promoting an international network of information and resources on worship and artistic communication to the Body of Christ. Building on the AD2000 motto of "a church for every people and the gospel for every person" the Track has a vision to see "a worshipping church for every people."

(10) The Global Marches For Jesus - One of the most exhilarating snapshots of global worship has been the Marches for Jesus that now cover most of the earth. The Marches call Christians of all denominations to unite and take the joy of knowing Jesus beyond the church walls and into the streets with prayer and praise. The marches are described as "joyful and extravagant celebrations" to the Lord Jesus. Only Jesus could be worthy of such a worldwide offering of praise. The Marches help to demonstrate that the Body of Christ is made of many congregations but is truly one church. Starting with one small band of believers from a London local church the Marches have grown in size to millions that cover the earth. At one march in Sao Paulo, Brazil 2,500,000 marched!! In Russia many people reported that they were healed of heart diseases and other ailments during the Moscow March. In Rwanda, members of the warring Hutu and Tutsi tribes marched side by side carrying banners that read, "No divisions in Jesus--We are all the same." In Argentina a national radio network broadcast the three hour event to the whole nation. In New Caledonia people were marching who had just become believers at the Billy Graham Global Mission. They were "joining in with the family of God in another worldwide event that was bringing His people together in unity." British worship leader Graham Kendrick, who led the original March back in the 80s shares of a vision he had during a time of worship in London. "I saw the earth as if viewed from space, spinning on its axis, its continents, oceans and islands clearly defined. But then hundreds of threads, each a different color, appeared from out of the nations, arcing out, upward and around the earth, converging about it. I looked to see whether a design had emerged out of the weaving of the threads. To my joy, on the underside, visible from the earth, was the face of Jesus. I knew immediately that the multicolored threads represented worship rising to the Lord from believers of every nation, people, tribe and language. The different colors represented the unique gifts of worship that flowed from the nations, a beautiful variety of expressions. The love gifts of millions of hearts lent color and distinctiveness by the contexts of vastly different cultures."

And so the crescendo of global worship continues to build, foreshadowing that moment when we will join the great multitude of Revelation 7 "that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb...And they cried out in a loud voice...and fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God..."

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4. TRENDS EMERGING ON THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP SCENE BY STEVE SMITH

Today many worship leaders across the United States are witnessing a fresh power of the Holy Spirit that is being released in corporate worship. They say throughout the church a new song is arising out of that form of music we in the church affectionately call "praise and worship." Newcomer worship musician Darrell Evans calls it "the new song of God." Veteran worship leader and songwriter Bob Fitts calls it an "international, trans-denominational phenomenon." Ministries Today recently interviewed five worship leaders from around the country to determine what God is doing in corporate worship and to identify the general trends that are emerging. Included in our interviews are:

* Bob Fitts, an internationally known worship leader and composer who pioneered the School of Worship for Youth With a Mission in Hawaii.

* Holland Davis, a worship leader and pastor for 19 years who works with Maranatha! Music in California.

* Nancy Gordon, a Tempe, Arizona-based songwriter and arranger with 30 years of church music-ministry experience.

* Jeff McQuilkin, a music pastor who has served churches in four states as musician, songwriter and worship leader.

* Darrell Evans, songwriter and worship musician on Hosanna! Integrity's recent recording Let The River Flow who heads River Flow Ministries in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Each person we spoke with believes there is a fresher wind of worship than ever before blowing over the church, bringing in its breeze spiritual intimacy, evangelism, unity, healing - even a change in the music itself. Ministries Today explores these trends and records insights from these leaders about what they see on the musical horizon.

(1) A New Intimacy with the King - Perhaps the most important key to experiencing God's presence among us is our longing for the Lord Himself. More than ever God is placing a hunger in believers for greater intimacy in their relationship with Christ, worship leaders say. Darrell Evans believes many Christians are weary of worshiping "the great King who is far off." "Hearts are longing for the great King who is right here," he says. The fragrance of worship that draws others to him, worship leaders say, is born in repentant hearts that overflow with a love for God and ultimately for others. An essential ingredient, Evans believes, is "a childlike heart" - something he admits is a difficult hurdle for many Christians, including himself, to overcome. "We can be so dignified. There was a time you'd never find me dancing or shouting," Evans says. But as he became willing to trust and seek the Lord more, Evans says God started freeing him from what others would think about his expressions of intimacy with his heavenly Father. "I learned there is such freedom in letting go of yourself and having a childlike heart before God. That kind of heart doesn't care about what society thinks is appropriate for worship. "I've got pictures in my mind of being with the Lord in a field, and He's swinging me around. And I'm thinking, Nothing else matters." More and more, says Evans, the church is beginning to understand that worship is "simply you enjoying God and him enjoying you." At the same time, the Lord also is "broadening the base of worship philosophy" in the church, suggests Bob Fitts. "We're all a little bit cliquish when it comes to determining what worship is and isn't. We tend to find what we like and stick with it," Fitts says. "But I think, in a broad sense, God is preparing us as a church to feel comfortable no matter what the setting is [such as formal vs. informal]. "There are many heritages and many expressions. There's a real beauty in that, and I think we're beginning to see that. God wants us to honor the different expressions we have and not prefer one at the expense of others." Nancy Gordon agrees enthusiastically: "When we focus on him, the messages that we sing and speak will flow directly from him. Our entire countenance, then, is portraying His love." The deeper work of intimate relationship with the Father that is occurring today through worship is not a new phenomenon, proposes Jeff McQuilkin. It's a continuation of a trend begun earlier this century. "Whereas the preaching of the Word has been the focal point of the church over the past few years - and it should be crucial - we've seen praise and worship take a more dominant place in times of gathering. "While the focus on the Word is about us receiving from God, praise and worship is largely about us ministering to God as kings and priests [see Rev. 5:10; 1 Pet. 2:9]. I think this trend is part of God's preparation for the church to be that kingdom of priests." Throughout history, concurs Fitts, the churches that have influenced the body of Christ and society the most- from Martin Luther's era to the present - have embraced praise and worship. "You can track their influence with the songs sung there and birthed there," Fitts says. "In many cases, it led to renewal. Praise and worship is an investment in the body life of a church. "Worship and praise is about affirmation; it brings attention to the good things of God. In the process, as we meditate on those things which are good, we tend to find the good things in others rather than [sitting] in judgment and criticism."

(2) A Supernatural Sound of Evangelism - As a worship leader with a heart for the world's many people groups, Fitts attempts to minister in four new countries each year. During a spring tour that included former Soviet bloc nations, he marveled at the dramatic move of God among worshipers. In the Czech Republic, for example, churches that had been closed under the Communists' rule are now filled with people who are "extremely open" to worshiping the living God, he says. And worship in Asia, particularly, is bringing about an increased harvest. "Asian churches are growing, and there is a great hunger," Fitts reports. Last November while ministering in Singapore, Fitts says 10,000 worshipers were lined up at 2 p.m. for a worship concert scheduled for 7 p.m. "I believe we're being swept up in a wave of international praise and worship. The purpose is this - God is preparing for every kindred and tribe to worship before him," Fitts explains. Says McQuilkin: "I believe God is putting a special anointing on worship in these last days and a new sound into the music - one that eventually will be

heard in the highways and byways, drawing in the harvest of souls." On several occasions during his ministry, McQuilkin says he has seen worship pierce the heart of an unsaved person and cause that person to respond to an invitation for salvation. He adds, however, that the church has not seen nearly the amount of power in worship that it will see in the future. "I believe there is a fresh anointing coming that will literally destroy yokes without a word ever being preached," he says. Says Holland Davis: "The most powerful worship I've ever experienced has been in churches that are actively involved in winning the lost. There is joy in those churches, and that joy is expressed through powerful worship." All over the world, acknowledges Fitts, people are crying out for more, and God is honoring that.

(3) A Force Behind Unity - Perhaps the most significant impact of recent worship renewal has been, and will continue to be, increased unity in the body of Christ. "Denominational differences are beginning to disappear," says Gordon, "and I feel that contemporary worship music is the largest contributing factor." The success of latter 20th-century movements such as Vineyard, Calvary Chapels and Willow Creek has helped empower emerging leaders in mainline denominations to introduce contemporary worship into their churches. Even though musical styles and expressions vary, there has been a sweeping paradigm shift, says Davis, in the importance of worship in both independent-evangelical and mainline churches. Why? "Because people are not looking for a religious ritual but for a real encounter with the living God," he says. "When people encounter God, the result is authentic worship." Fitts believes the unity being inspired by contemporary worship is transcending denominations. "Across the board, it's happening. I come from a fairly conservative evangelical background, and that's where the biggest things in worship are happening, especially on the campuses."

(4) A Common Ground for Healing - The increasing priority on such wholehearted worship, leaders say, also will continue to impact restoration of relationships among families, races and cultures. "God is impacting our culture this very minute with an incredible outpouring of grace," says Davis. "Families are being reconciled, racial divisions are being healed, husbands are returning home to their families, people are being added to the kingdom of God. As congregations become awakened to the life of God that is theirs through Jesus, worship becomes the next logical step to expressing that life." Racial and social healing, especially among men, are examples of how worship is influencing U.S. society, Davis points out. Worship is a prominent element of the Promise Keepers rallies for men, for example. Observes Davis: "Men have become awakened to the Spirit of God through worship."

(5) A Source of New Music - The "new song arisin'," as Evans declares in the opening cut from his album *Let the River Flow*, won't be a sound that can be packaged or manufactured. Rather, he and other worship leaders believe it will be a "fresh, supernatural sound - not necessarily musical - that will strike a chord with those who are willing to hear it." "It's been my prayer that the music of heaven would soon overtake the world," Evans says, "and I think we're beginning to see that happen." Davis believes God is freely distributing inspiration to songwriters and worship leaders at all levels. He expects to see a new wave of custom recordings made by local churches and worship leaders crisscrossing the church. "I firmly believe that God is giving songs to worship leaders in local churches," he says. "Today you can set up a fairly decent eight-track studio for around \$5,000. Technology is such that an average musician can buy a CD-writer and software that allow him to master his own compact disc and produce quality music at a budget price. "The result is that worship music is coming closer to matching the music of the culture: fresh, cutting-edge and exciting." McQuilkin further urges worship leaders to listen carefully to the latest offerings from praise and worship labels and to choose songs according to "the heartbeat of God for the church right now." "I do find songs that I like, but I have to look hard for them," McQuilkin says of current praise and worship releases. "However, the renewal that has swept the church in the last few years is the best thing that has happened to praise and worship music in some time." A Spirit-planted desire for more of God will in some cases transcend musical styles. For example, on Evans' *Let the River Flow* - a "worship" album - the music is rock-oriented without the orchestrations and choir backups typical of most successful Integrity recordings. The lyrics are penetrating, focusing on total surrender, a passionately expressed need for God and a desire to dance before the Lord. Evans expected the typical audience for his recording to be 18-25 year-olds. Instead he has been surprised by its wider appeal. It is crossing denominations, musical preferences and generations.

On the Horizon

Worship leaders believe two simple principles will help church leaders navigate fresh waters of renewal in their congregations: loving God and loving people. "I think as churches continue to explore these two principles in light of their generation, the musical style that praise and worship songs reflect

will change; however, the values won't," Davis believes. "The next wave of church-planters coming on the scene are planting 20-something churches," he says, "and their response to the current praise and worship explosion is that it's outdated and boring. They want something in their own language. I expect to see a whole new expression of worship emerge in the next two years." Evans agrees: "God doesn't change His character, but His kingdom is always moving forward; He's always doing something fresh with every generation." Evans believes youth need a worship expression that is entirely their own, regardless of denomination or cultural background. "Kids will go out and buy a Petra or some other Christian artist's CD, but you don't find many youth going out to buy a Hosanna or Vineyard CD." In a broader sense, as more and more churches place a greater priority on worship, Evans says it will become crucial for worship leaders to learn to "wash people's feet and lead with a pastoral, servant's heart. I see some incredible musicians out there, but worship leaders need to give up the reins to the Holy Spirit." Although some won't be willing to receive the new songs of today and tomorrow, Davis expects that the next few years "will literally explode with worship. It will impact our universities and flood through our churches. It will touch believers and seekers alike," he says. Says Evans: "We must be ready to roll with the Holy Spirit. He is moving."

6. THEMES OF THE EMERGING CHURCH

The Reevaluation Forum brought together many of the best practitioners and ministry thinkers in the country today. With that degree of passion, ideas, wisdom and perspectives in one place it is difficult to accurately report everyone's experience, but there were themes that came through in the large sessions, affinity groups, journeys and coffee shop discussions. Among the many things discussed, the following six issues came up repeatedly and well represent a framework for discussing the church of the future, the church on the New Edge. The following issues will give a glimpse of what was shared and discussed at the Forum. Tapes of all the presentations and transcripts from some of the presentations are available through www.youngleader.org.

(1) Community - Community is central to the 21st-Century church. Today we are a culture of fractured families and changing social structures. We are time-starved and isolated by distance, work, individualistic pursuits and even our neighborhoods. Yet, we were created for community. Community in the church of the future is more than just making relationships or being in a small group. Community is an expression of the Gospel. It is both our hermeneutic and our apologetic. The best the Church has to show is how we live in community with Christ at the center. Father-Son-Holy Spirit is only tangible in community. Community is not an extra or bonus: it is the essence of what Christians have to offer. Understanding this reality, Rodney Clapp, senior editor at InterVarsity Press, suggested three characteristics of Christian communities in the emerging culture.

(a) We Need to Talk the Right Talk - "Our first language is the story that we were created by this particular God, a God with a name, Yahweh, a God with people, Israel, and then later the Church. Our second language is like a missionary who goes to a foreign country and learns the native language. We need to learn the second language [of this emerging culture]."

(b) We Must Live the Talk - "Modernity was a period that separated fact from value, money from morality. It privatized and depoliticized faith. We bought the idea in modernity that you can believe whatever you want, you can hold whatever religious convictions you want as long as it doesn't make any difference in the way you live. Postmodernity is a setting that reminds us that convictions and practices cannot be separated. We can no longer simply say, 'Don't look at us, look at Jesus.' We have to start living the talk." Authentic community is organic in origin. It begins with the basics of being the people of God in the location in which God has placed you. It will look different because each area's culture, people and needs are different. Community is a by-product, not a program. "Don't fall into the trap of looking for the 'right program.' It's not a program and can't be imported," cautioned Stanley Grenz, professor at Regent Seminary.

(c) Be Community Where We Live - "The Church must be concerned about witnessing the truth and reality of the Gospel in the place where we live. If we are going to embody community as the body of Christ, then I think we have to start where we are. We need to ask, 'Where are there neglected people in our community?' 'Where is there injustice in our community?' 'How have people misheard or had misrepresented to them the Gospel in our community?'" Rudy Carrasco, of Harambee Christian Family Center in Pasadena, California, physically lives in community with his church and his inner-city neighborhood. Many members live within walking distance of each other and become family to the

family-less. Neighborhood youth know Harambee homes offer a continuous open door. Rudy is modeling the "redeemer-kinsmen" relationship he experienced when, at the age of two, his father left, and five years later his mother died. That's when a neighborhood church community lived out their Christianity and "walked me through the next ten years of my life," said Rudy. "To experience God is often the highest form of knowing, and the entire worship experience must be more than presentation about God." -Reevaluation Forum participant

People long to experience an intimate relationship with God, and the relationship between knowledge and experience has shifted. In the emerging culture, experience now precedes and validates knowledge. People experience something first and their experience then creates the context for learning. This is changing the way churches do everything from evangelism to discipleship, from leadership development to teaching and preaching. The role of the leader in this setting is changing to that of a guide and interpreter of experience rather than simply the deliverer of information. The unique role of the Christian leader is to do this in the context of church history and Scripture.

There are at least four dimensions of the experiential nature of the emerging culture:

(i) *Personal* - People desire to experience personally nearly everything or to hear the stories of others' experiences. What is important is the personal nature of experience and the ability to share in the experience of others. The increase of interaction and personal communication, the increased interest in biographies and the rise in interview-style talk shows all point in this direction. Many effective churches are finding creative ways of providing environments that allow people to have experiences and to tell their stories.

(ii) *Participatory* - There has been a shift from representation to participation, according to church historian and cultural observer, Len Sweet. People desire to participate in all areas of life including church. Churches hear this call for participation in worship, leadership, the styles of sermons that are effective, the identification of vision and purpose, and all facets of ministry.

(iii) *Hands-on Involvement* - Many in the emerging culture attended schools that encouraged participatory learning, and they work in environments that are structured around teams and lifelong learning. People want to serve and are looking for places to use their talents and abilities in both their church and community. Hands-on involvement in projects such as Habitat for Humanity and local, national and international mission efforts are ways that churches are providing opportunities for direct involvement.

(iv) *Multisensory* - The emerging culture engages all the senses. "Taste, touch and smell become as important as hearing and seeing." Churches are rediscovering that worship is equipped to touch all the senses, addressing the whole person, not just the mind. "Everything in the service needs to preach - architecture, lighting, songs, prayers, fellowship, the smell - it all preaches. All five senses must be engaged to experience God," explained Mark Driscoll, pastor of Mars Hill Fellowship.

(2) Mysticism - What is Christian mysticism? Author Andrew Louth, in *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition*, defines it as "the search for and experience of immediacy with God." Early church mystics were those who refused to be content with just knowing "about" God. They would not rest without a relationship with him. Why is mysticism reemerging today? The emerging culture is less dependent upon a scientific and rationalistic way of thinking. The emerging culture has moved to a time when people crave experiencing God for themselves. The Church needs to be sure that the Christian faith is accessible to outsiders as it seeks to be a place of spirituality and mystery. The Church must also fight against an individualistic form of spirituality. In an attempt to guard against these failures, churches are returning to the "old" and using guided meditative prayer, prayer walks, incense, candles, chanting and other historical Christian rituals. The mystical nature of the emerging culture is leading many churches to focus on three areas:

(a) *An Acknowledgment of People's Spirituality* - "The issue facing many pastors today is how to lead already spiritual people to become followers of Christ." We are entering an era when society as a whole is more spiritual in nature and yet less Christian. To begin a spiritual dialogue today, one must ask someone about their spiritual journey. Respecting an unbeliever's "spirituality" is the necessary beginning point of the conversation. Some who come to church seeking a spiritual experience with God would be disappointed to only hear information about God.

(b) An Appreciation of Mystery and Wonder - Christians are recovering a sense of the mystery and awe of God. Karen, a college student and Forum participant, described her experience of being reared in a typical conservative evangelical church but finding herself increasingly discontent. "In the church I grew up in there was no imagination, no mystery, no beauty. It was all preaching and books and application." Then she and a group of friends visited a more liturgical church that valued the mystery of the faith. It added a whole rich new dimension to her spiritual life. "I truly worship there. It's the wonder, the beauty I love," said Karen.

(c) A Return to the Creative Arts - When Martin Luther nailed his theses to the door, they inadvertently inspired Reformers to correct the church's "ills" by destroying many statues and paintings. Throughout the Reformation, Christian knowledge increased while interest in the arts dwindled. By the 19th century, pious Christians abandoned the arts and deemed them "worldly." "The arts and faith were torn apart." Today, leaders of churches in the emerging culture welcome the arts as part of their worship, recognizing that creativity always points to, and glorifies, the Creator. "What's been missing in all our modern churches is beauty," observed a senior pastor at the forum. "Maybe, like the woman who stole into the Pharisee's house with a box of costly perfume, we need to return beauty to our worship. We are a sensate people and worship involves more than just song."

(3) Story - The beginning questions people ask today are not "what and why," but "where and when." Because there is a lack of universals in the emerging culture, there is little context or an overarching story for understanding and dealing with the issues of life and history. The Church has The Story that is uniquely qualified to create an understanding of the "where and when" of human history and personal predicament. "Telling The Story is best accomplished through the use of stories, but they are not the same thing. An effective pastor today must be a teller of The Story, the great biblical, Genesis-to-Revelation Story, not just a good storyteller." This means that all communication must be done in light of the whole story of what God has promised to do, has done and is doing. Brian McLaren, senior pastor of Cedar Ridge Community Church, Spencerville, MD, made several observations about storytelling. *(i) Stories Invite Participation* - "A story almost always involves exploring life from the perspective of a person in a predicament. And that becomes a mirror for all of us who spend the majority of our lives in one predicament or another - that we often call the human predicament." *(ii) Stories Are Sneaky* - "A story doesn't grab you by the lapels and bring you close so that you can smell the cigarettes and coffee and Altoids on his breath. What a story does is sneak up behind you and whisper something in your ear. And when you turn around to see what it is, it kicks you in the butt and runs and hides behind a bush. And in so doing, a story does something that no abstract proposition can ever do. It stops you in your tracks and makes you think. It catches your attention and won't let go. You can't help it. A story can't be argued with or dismissed like a proposition. A story is just sneaky. It doesn't teach by induction or deduction. It teaches by abduction. It abducts your attention and it won't let you go until you have done some thinking for yourself." *(iii) The Story Is the Point* - "Who is reincarnating the Word in stories today? I suppose that the best black preachers do it a lot more than white folk like me. When they preach narrative passages from the Bible, they are not doing it to illustrate a point. The story is the point. They believe in the story's magic. They don't want to drain it of its blood, skin it, stuff it, mount it and present it as an outline of abstractions and limp moralisms the way I so often have done. C. S. Lewis understood this, which is why so many of us love him. Narnia can teach you more about hope and heaven and Jesus than a boxed set of my best sermons, including the fill-in-the-blank outlines." "The challenge for those communicating in the emerging culture is to use the wonderful benefits of storytelling to tell The Story to a culture that is looking for a context of 'when and where' for the many questions of 'what and why.'"

(4) Leadership - "The emerging new culture demands a new way of leading and a new set of leadership skills. The new way of leading is based on being rather than doing." Leadership must always fit the cultural setting in which it exists. Many current leadership systems and structures will not produce an effective church in the emerging culture. Christian leadership must always be grounded in certain leadership principles. To that end, Carol Davis, a practitioner of leadership development for 25 years at The Church on Brady, addressed the question, "What are the essential characteristics of a leader in any setting?" "There are a few timeless things," said Davis, "such as living in community, missional in purpose, connected to culture and, most importantly, connected to Christ."

(a) The New Way of Leading Involves...being an extractor rather than the sole creator of the vision. The leader draws out and articulates the people's collective vision and then serves as its protector. The leader asks the question, "What are the needs, gifts, abilities and desires of the congregation?" - followed by "How then do I serve this community?" *(b) The New Way of Leading Involves...being an*

interpreter of experiences in addition to imparting knowledge. The leader serves as a guide and interpreter of experience rather than only being the deliverer of information. (c) *The New Way of Leading Involves...being an apostle who leads the community to engage, embrace and transform the culture.* The leader must help the community to understand, make contact with and transform the surrounding culture as opposed to serving simply as a supplier of religious goods and services.

Many pastors are not yet equipped with the skills to pastor effectively in the coming age. This new way of leading requires a different set of leadership skills including listening and translating, extracting and synthesizing, as well as being a teller of The Story. Listening and translating means helping the community to see how it is uniquely qualified and equipped to minister in the surrounding culture. Extracting and synthesizing means finding the inherent passions, desires and abilities of the community and helping them to be expressed in useable, tangible forms of ministry. Being a teller of The Story means helping the community see their existence in light of what God has promised to do, has done and is doing.

(5) Missional - The world is changing and the Church will need to be missional in order to be effective. In addition to the two questions that many churches ask, "What should we do (program)?" and "Why should we do it (purpose)?", the Church is needing to ask another question in order to be effective in the coming world. The question is one of identity - "Who are we?" The following is an adaptation of two chapters from the book, *The Church Between Gospel and Culture* edited by Forum presentor George Hunsberger, that highlights some of the characteristics of "missional" churches and the role of the pastor in these New Edge churches.

The Church in America is often portrayed by the following images: (a) *Traditional Model* - The church is a place where religious things happen - worship, preaching, sacraments. The pastor/leader's role is in the church and they represent the church. The congregation serves the church and helps with doing what the church does. The world comes to the church for what the church has to offer. (b) *Contemporary Model* - The church is a supplier of religious goods and services. The pastor/leader serves the people by providing for them what they need. The congregation and the culture use the resources of the church to survive in the world. (c) *Missional Model* - The church is a body of people who are fulfilling the Kingdom Mission of impacting and changing the world. The role of the pastor/leader changes from serving the congregation or providing services to being an apostle, poet and prophet.

Definitions for the New Role of the Pastor

The role of the pastor in missional communities will include these three responsibilities: (a) *Apostle* - Leads the congregation as witnesses in lands where old maps no longer work. Demonstrates how to encounter the culture. Rather than recruiting new members, holds up the Gospel to challenge the congregation to be apostolic. Helps the congregation recognize that it is on the margin of culture and is called to penetrate and change the culture, not simply be a resource for the culture. (b) *Poet* - Articulates the congregation's experience in culture, identifying and expressing the soul of the people. Serves as listener and observer, sensing the experience of the Body and giving that experience a voice. Knows that the congregation and culture cry for something more than self-development or techniques of success; they are crying to be connected to a world that calls them beyond themselves. Begins the process of calling out an alternative vision for God's people, so that the congregation hears their story as God's pilgrim people. (c) *Prophet* - Addresses the Word of God directly to the specific, concrete historical experience of the people of God. Provides hope for the community through biblical witness that it exists for the life of the world. Calls forth a different story for God's people, a people who are out on a mission journey that calls them far beyond themselves.

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Chapter 8

DIVERSITY IN WORSHIP

Worship in a local church must deal with the issue of diversity. There will be at least the following areas in which diversity will be evidenced: (1) Diversity of Ages; (2) Diversity of Generations; (3) Diversity of Commitment Levels; (4) Diversity of Worship Styles; and (5) Diversity of Cultures.

1. DIVERSITY OF AGES

In order for worship to be meaningful to all involved the worship leader must be aware of the impact of the developmental stages of people and understand the distinctives of each stage as they relate to the worship experience.

A. Children and Worship

During the sensorimotor period, birth to two years, children act and think through their five senses. Cognitive learning at this stage of learning is impossible, so worship must be an emotional and enjoyable experience. During the preoperational stage, two to seven years, a child is unable to perform operations in thought. They can remember what they are taught, but not think about its meaning. They are also unable to distinguish fantasy from reality. For these children believing in God is as easy as believing in Dad, Mom and an Easter Bunny. They need a sense of belonging in worship, provided through active involvement, which will produce a sense of emotional fulfilment.

With the onset of the concrete operations stage, seven to twelve years, the child begins to differentiate fantasy from reality and can perform operations of thought on what they can see. The child now thinks in concrete terms but does not deal well with abstract concepts. When a child in this stage is told that Jesus is knocking at the door of their heart, they see Jesus as a literal man who is knocking on a physical door inside their chest. The worship leader should find ways to present abstract ideas in concrete forms.

Then comes the formal operations stage, beyond twelve years, when children perform operations in abstract thought. Only now will they be able to understand that the picture of Christ knocking on the door of our heart is a picture that speaks of God's Spirit calling to Man's spirit.

The inability of a child to relate to abstract ideas is of particular interest and importance when trying to lead children into an abstract experience, such as the worship of an invisible yet omnipresent God. Once we are aware of these limitations we can develop strategies for communicating abstract spiritual truths in concrete terminology. Jesus used the approach, "The kingdom of heaven is like..." to make the transition from the abstract to the concrete. By comparing abstract ideas to tangible things the child has experienced, they are able to grasp many spiritual truths.

Child Development and Singing:

* From age 4-6, learning is accomplished by rote (imitating the teacher), and is best taught in small groups. Attention span is short and music potential limited. They need to have their pitch sense, rhythm and co-ordination developed. They learn quickly by memory but also forget very quickly what they have learnt. Frequent repetition is necessary for both learning and retaining. The songs should emphasise simple truths about Jesus' love, and God's nature. Music should be simple children's songs with short phrases and steady rhythms.

* From age 6-8, learning is still accomplished by rote, but reading is to be encouraged. Their attention span has increased. Their music potential is increasing, but pitch difficulties are normal. They find it easier to memorise songs and retain more than before. They are learning discipline at school and will therefore respond to instructions. The songs should include words that are easily understood by the children, and can include solo or team parts. Songs sung as rounds can be introduced as well as "fun" songs that use action to teach truth.

* From age 9-11, learning is accomplished faster by reading than by rote. While their musical potential is at an all-time high, they still experience pitch problems. Their memory powers are diminishing and need to be activated. Repetition is important to stimulate memory and help retention. Discipline

problems will be noted, especially if the singing is not challenging or full of activity. Activity needs to be fast moving and include much variety. Boys' and girls' interests are beginning to differ but they still work well together. Teach them songs which stress the doctrines of salvation, man's responsibility to God and being dedicated to serve God.

B. Junior Teens and Worship

Worship for junior teenagers (12-14) must be informal, life-related, fast paced, and full of variety. They will not tolerate boredom or irrelevancy. They need to feel God's presence with them as they worship him and recognise him in their lives daily. Worship should focus on what junior teens can receive now rather than in the future. They need to experience God as the Solid Rock, who is a steady, faithful, unchanging friend and king. They also need to express their loyalty to God and to perceive again that God has standards for them in their daily lives.

So upbeat, "now"-orientated songs that emphasise loyalty to God, God's wonder, and His majesty make sense to them. Reflective songs like "Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord" do not make sense as they are too slow, gushy and sentimental for most young teens, who aren't even sure what "humble thyself" means, nor are many of them so proud as to need more humbling than they are already experiencing. Although they can appreciate contemporary songs and, with proper education, even age-appropriate traditional hymns, don't expect them to willingly sing solos. When you consider that junior teens are self-conscious, it is understandable that even group singing is risky business for them.

Early teens don't tolerate bloopers or slip-ups. Their laughter at these usually destroys any sense of worship, changing the focus from God to the mistake. When they help to lead worship they need enough practise in order to avoid embarrassment in front of their peers.

Aesthetics are not important to them. Their worship should be practical and concrete. Bells and smells, candles and banners, do not enhance junior high worship as most of them still think literally, unable to see beyond the concrete symbol to the abstract reality behind it.

Meaningful prayer for junior teens are personal, relevant, and life-related. The world around them is too close and God is too remote for them to focus on him for even a minute in general silent prayer. Directed silent prayers, on the other hand, help them focus on God. "The worship leader can say, "Think of God's great power. Now thank him for that power. Think of God's love for each of us; thank him for His love." Asking for short sentence prayers on specific topics helps teens pray aloud.

Junior teen's emotions are on the roller coaster, so it is easy to give them an emotional high or to completely ignore their emotions and only appeal to their minds. Teens need to feel God emotionally, yet without emotionalism. They must be able to respond to God's revelation of Himself with both their minds and their emotions. They need to feel love for God, need to praise and adore him, need to thank him for all that he does in their lives. These are all healthy emotions that they need to express in their worship.

Early Teen Development and Singing:

* From age 12-14 their musical potential is dependent on previous training or choir experience. Their memory powers are very low and they are resistant to memory. Boys' and girls' interest are directly opposite and the boys prefer to be with boys of their own age and not girls. They are physically clumsy and the girls tend to be more mature than the boys. Singing brings little satisfaction to the boys, they are more interested in instruments while the girls, whose voices are beginning to develop strength and maturity, are interested in singing. They need to learn songs that teach the great doctrines of the church, ie. standard songs used in the church.

C. Senior Teens and Worship

Like junior teens, senior teens (15-17) also look for a fast paced variety in their worship services. Contemporary, light, bright, and dynamic surroundings appeal to them. They enjoy worship that focuses on their personal needs and allows them to be actively involved in its planning and leading. They are, by nature, participators, and must be allowed to take an active part in the worship. Many have musical talents which can be used in worship.

Because they tend to be idealistic and loyal, they want contact with God that appeals to their idealism. They need to see God as the person who expects the best from us, His children. While they are more

capable of abstractions and symbols, they still need concrete and practical instructions in their faith. Because their expanding worldview encompasses more of the adult world, most look for experiences that fill out a broader view of the world. They also feel the need to serve and want to do so.

Senior teens appreciate the value of musical idioms - an appreciation that invites them into the newer, contemporary hymns and choruses as well as into learning the meaning of the church's traditional hymns. If a youth group uses contemporary music, then, it would be suitable to introduce some of the more traditional or classical church music that still speaks to their particular life situation. They are ready to understand both the words and the music, and how the two form a whole message.

Whereas junior teens worship tends to be more self-centred, older teens are ready for more God-centredness worship. Songs that emphasise the solidarity of Christians in their worship of God are appropriate at this point. They are attracted to songs that reflect their own experience of God.

By the time they reach middle adolescence, teens begin responding to beauty and symbolism. Symbols, colours, pictures and such art can be used with senior teens - providing they know their meanings. They are thinking abstractly and appreciate the meaning behind symbols.

Senior teens, like junior teens, respond to prayer that focuses on their needs and that connects with their lives. They do not appreciate prayers that are full of theological insight. Older teens are usually willing to pray focused, conversational, down-to-earth sentence prayers aloud and are responsive to directed silent prayer.

Like junior teens they are also easily swayed by emotions. It's not right to use worship experiences to play on teen's emotions, but neither is it proper to totally ignore emotion. God's presence needs to be felt emotionally as well as mentally. The music, scripture readings, and the delivery of a message need to reflect a proper balance between mental and emotional needs.

A contemporary translation or version of the Bible best communicates with senior teens. Keep the reading to a single, short, focused idea. Teens who read the passage for group worship should practise the reading aloud as well as discuss ahead of time with the youth worker the meaning and feeling of the portion and how the scripture relates to the planned worship experience.

Later Teen Development and Singing:

* From age 15-17 learning is accomplished in adult ways as youth possess adult capabilities. Their powers to memorise are increasing, due to the demands made on them in high school, but they do not enjoy repetition unless there is a purpose to it. Boys' voices, though not fully mature, have usually settled, while girls' voices will be gaining strength, but ill frequently become colourless and piercing, partly due to the fact that they are trying to increase volume. They should already be targeted to develop as worship leaders. A training programme is necessary to equip them with basic skills to be able to lead worship.

D. Young Adults and Worship

College age young adults want a personal, intellectually satisfying, God-centred worship experience. For the first time in their lives they seek worship experiences that deeply honour - both intellectually and emotionally - him who is invisible. They can respond as whole persons in worship to the whole being of God. They are still pragmatic, but in a more cerebral sense: their minds look for answers to the issues and questions and answers of life. They are concerned for their own future: vocation, marriage, security, social roles. They seek a mature faith that matches their ability to deal with abstractions and critical thinking.

Young adults tend to know what is happening in the world. They are looking for a worship experience that speaks to their world-wide view. Here is where they differ from junior and senior teens. For worship to be meaningful for the young adult, God must be seen as the God of the universe and not just a warm, personal friend.

This age group respond best in an unpressured atmosphere that stimulates them intellectually as well as touches their feelings and will. They value time for reflection and meditation - practises which should seldom be given to junior teens, and only rarely to senior teens. They respond well in an environment that touches their senses and that arouses in them thoughts of God's worthiness. The

total atmosphere should speak of God's greatness, of our continual response and commitment to him. Young adults can plan and execute the entire worship experience with little help from adult workers, whose roles should be limited to stimulating the planners and helping them focus on designing encounters with God in worship that meet their more mature needs. The college-age group is the ideal setting for the more doctrinal and theological hymns of the church, whether historical or contemporary. Symbols and art that veil abstract truths speak to them, and aesthetic atmospheres help them to focus on their worship of God, although it may not be necessary to explain the meaning of these worship aids.

Prayers can be longer with a more encompassing scope. While it is still appropriate to use directed prayers, periods of silent prayer don't need so limiting a structure as with younger groups. A mere suggestion to think about God's love is enough for young adults to begin fruitful prayer and reflection. They value personal participation and will pray aloud.

Summary: Whichever group we lead - children, junior or senior teen, or young adult - we must take into account each of their distinctive needs for worship that reflects their different developmental stages. The worship leader's challenge is to aid these youths in their expression of God's worthiness, to facilitate a worship experience that provides for an opportunity for a deep, personal encounter with God, and to allow worship experiences that are applicable to the worshipper's daily lives. The worst thing the worship leader can do is to make little adults out of their young people. We who lead young people in worship lead best when we consider them as God does: he accepts them as they are, revealing himself to them in worship according to their growing understanding of him.

(Some material on teens and young adults was adapted from an article by John Dettoni, "Worship that fits the worshipper" in the *Youth Worker Journal*, Spring 1990.)

A church will have to decide how they will handle the different generations in worship. One option is to consider an intergenerational worship service that seeks to integrate different ages in worship at the same time. Here are some guidelines on this approach:

This article is a proposal for family worship, also called intergenerational or all-age worship.

(1) A Vision for Family Worship - There are four key dimensions: (a) An intergenerational lifestyle in the church that facilitates interaction between all members. (b) Meaningful fellowship experiences into which all ages are meaningfully integrated. (c) Contemporary, relevant and lively worship that includes and attracts all. (d) Worship experiences that teach, nurture and stimulate the faith of those who attend. The worship service is a gathering of the whole church to worship together. It is not just a children's service, nor an adult service in which children are onlookers. Worship is for the whole congregation, old, young, single, married, adult and child. It is necessary to see all members as one group, while being conscious of a diversity of people. We must give children a place in worship - so they can feel they belong.

(2) The Aims of Family Worship - There are four aims: (a) To lead the whole congregation into a meaningful corporate worship experience - an environment for all generations to be together in worship, fellowship and learning. (b) To encourage each person, young and old, to participate meaningfully and reverently in worship. The leader's role is to lead people into an encounter with God. (c) To enable the congregation to experience a corporate expression of worship, so that each member, particularly the child, will enjoy a sense of belonging to the gathered people of God. (d) To maintain the basic integrity of worship - there is no need to descend into triviality - where there is genuineness, wholeness, order and dignity.

(3) Introducing Family Worship - The following guidelines are suggested: (a) Acceptance of intergenerational worship as a vision for the church - all must own this concept! (b) Development of a facilitating team (multi-aged) of creative people to work on designing worship. (c) The team evaluates various aspects of the present worship service - Are they appropriate for all? i.e. welcoming people; singing and special music; announcements; offering; baptism; communion; scripture reading; prayer and the sermon. (d) Guidelines for the service: keep it simple and short; develop a clear structure and order; ensure meaningful involvement of all age groups; make every aspect of the service communicate; keep the service lively and the action and involvement going; carefully select appropriate songs; and carefully explain what is happening.

(4) Models for Family Worship - There is not just one way to do intergenerational worship. In fact, as a family-based, intergenerational approach is pursued, it may well be discovered that there are many options to consider. Two models are presented here for consideration:

Model 1: Fully-Integrated Service: (a) Worshipping All Together - *All ages participate in worship with a special emphasis on singing including both old and new songs.* (b) Teaching Time - *A serious attempt is made to address all groups with dignity. This is achieved through the use of overhead, drama and other creative methods of message projection. The Scriptures are also communicated in creative ways. The telling of the story plainly takes up two thirds of the teaching time and then the message is taught in a deeper way, although possible losing the children here for a while, they are picked up in the next stage again.* (c) Discussion Groups - *These groups can be fully intergenerational or divided into sub-sections, ie. teenagers and adults, children and parents, etc. Discussion questions and material based on the teaching are provided for the groups.* (d) Take-Home Material - *This is to provide deeper teaching for adults, teaching input for the family during the week or memory aids for children.* (e) Weekly Peer Group Activity - *Each group actually needs some peer group activity during the week - the Friday night event provides for this.*

Model 2: Parallel Learning: This model involves an all-age involvement in all aspects of worship except for the period of formal instruction. This model acknowledges that the various groups of people are on different levels of cognitive learning. This model insists that each group, though separate for the instruction process, must focus on the same learning topic at an appropriate level. Here effective learning takes place separately, but still ensures common links are maintained in the congregation. The Structure includes: All ages meet for a carefully structure worship service for about 30 minutes; For the instruction period people divide up into broad age-groups; The 40 minute session is devoted to the learning process: presentation, discussion, feedback; The message is presented to the whole group who are seated in their own; The common themes are entrusted to the leader of each group who meet together regularly and design discussion sessions aimed at the level they are responsible for; Discussion groups ensure that the message is applied to each individual on their own level; Report back to the large group is facilitated with all groups joining together again; and The leader concludes the session with a brief summary of the message that has been presented.

(5) Including Children in Family Worship - Tell children why it is important for them to attend worship services; Get children to visit the bathroom before they go into the sanctuary; Get the ushers to make a point of welcoming children; Encourage the older folk to welcome children and "adopt" them if necessary; Get children to sit up front so they feel more a part of what is happening; Give children something to do to prepare for the service; Encourage children to listen for something in the service to ask you a question about afterwards; Share a song sheet or hymnal with the child; Include at least one hymn or song that children can easily sing or learn; Help the child locate the Scripture reading in their Bible; Encourage their participation as much as possible: offering; hand out bulletins, assist in welcoming people, hold up a poster for announcements, read short passages, etc.; Design worksheets that relate to the theme of the service for children to complete; Include children's concerns during prayer times or the sermon; Use responsive readings; props; catalysts to provoke reflection or group discussion, etc.; Guiding times of silent prayer, writing a prayer letter to God, a graffiti wall for people to write thank items or prayer requests, one word prayers, etc.; Scripture Reading: a play reading, mime, video, etc.

(6) An Environment for Family Worship - While children can worship in the same ways as adults, they need a less formal environment and a more varied format. The following are suggestions for the emotional and physical environment: (a) *Emotional* - Educate people on what worship is and how they can participate; Provide sensitive pastoral care and deal with people's complaints and suggestions directly; and Introduce practical programmes to build up fellowship among church members. (b) *Physical* - Freedom of expression on the part of children who are encouraged to participate; Physical mobility and flexibility for congregational activities - circular seating, small circles for group discussions, carpets on the floor for children to sit on, a toy corner with soft/quiet toys; Maximum participation of all members of the congregation - with a variety of worship postures.

2. DIVERSITY OF GENERATIONS

The way in which Boomers, Gen Xers and Millennials worship God differs significantly! Gary McIntosh, as quotes by Leith Anderson in *A Church for the 21st Century*, shows how worship among Pre-Boomers; Baby Boomers and Baby Busters has changed over the years:

Pre-Boomers	Baby Boomers	Baby Busters
Quietness	Talking	Talking
Hymns	Praise songs	Praise songs
Expository sermons	"How to" sermons	Issue-orientated sermons
Pastoral prayer	Various people pray	Various people pray
Guests recognised	Guests anonymous	Guests anonymous
Organ/piano	Guitars/drums	Jazz ensemble
Low participation	Higher participation	Lower audience participation

I recently read a book by Tex Sample entitled: *The Spectacle of Worship in a Wired World*. His basic thesis is that the electronic culture has changed the way in which Boomers, Xers and Millennials engage with their world and that our worship will need to adapt. Specifically we need to ensure that worship for this electronic era is based on (1) images; (2) sound as beat; and (3) visualisation. He helps us to understand why different generations approach worship so differently. Here is a summary:

Earlier generations grew up in an oral world where they engaged the world through proverbs, story and relationships thinking. Issues were dealt with in terms of their effect on their kin, neighbours and the relationships they had. After this there came a literate world where people thought in terms of propositional claims, in theory and conceptualisation, and where they developed ideas in linear discourse. But the Boomers, Xers and Millennials grew up in a post-literate, electronic world. They think in terms of images, sound and visualisation. It is significant to note that those who have been most influenced by electronic culture participate in church at far lower levels than those of previous generations.

Our senses are historically and socially organised. They are conditioned and influenced by the period of time in which we live and the cultures we are a part of. For example, the Greeks specialised in sight; Hebrews in hearing; the modern west is visual; Korea in taste; and today's electronic culture focuses on sound. People today are wired differently. Media is shaping us via TV; Internet; Computers; etc.

There are three key components of electronic culture: (1) They engage the world through images; (2) They engage the world through sound; and (3) They engage the world through visualisation.

A. Engaging the World Through Images

In one sense, thinking in images is not new – ie. newspapers have been around a while, as has art, etc. But people don't "read" images like they once did. People no longer listen to discursive messages. The shift from the printed word to image has had an impact on how people think about salvation – they want/need a visual mode of communication in presenting the Gospel. Here the subjective is more important than the objective – a constant flow of images that are ever changing, replace the coherent, orderly arrangement of ideas.

B. Engaging the World Through Sound

The West used to engage the world visually, as reflected in phrases like: "I see what you mean!" or "listen to my point of view!" But new metaphors are being used that suggest the emphasis is now on sound: "I hear you saying!" or "I hear you!" Popular culture, with rock music, has brought a growing emphasis on sound. Rhythm has become a vital part of the new generation. Music used to have an emphasis on the 1st and 3rd beats of a four/four rock and roll song: ie. BOOM dah; BOOM dah; etc. In the mid-1960's this changed to a focus on the upbeat: un CHAW; un CHAW; etc. The way people clap differently either on the upbeat or downbeat shows their different generations. (Tex says that the church tends to be a downbeat organisation in an upbeat world!). We are wired differently. What speaks to my grandpa does not speak to me. What moves me, entertains me, touches me, does not do so to them. We won't engage the younger generation until we concede that along with images, sound as beat is critical to them.

C. Engaging the World Through Visualisation

Technological developments, consumer trends and the increasing role of films and video are aspects of

a significant move toward visualisation in everyday life. The electronic culture and screen introduced an entire range of practises not previously present to the world. MTV, film, and TV is more visual than audio. Teenagers are even called *screenagers* today. While print viewing habits have changes (ie. less youth read books or newspapers), other more visual activities have increased among them (ie. visits to museums or galleries). This affects the way people make judgments about truth and reality. They look for visual arguments than rational arguments or mathematical proofs.

These three ways of engaging the world are combined to create a new powerful way of communicating – the creating of Spectacles - not just presentation by a performer, but an event that provides an occasion for the enactment of experience by participants and large crowds that gather. In this spectacle there is the development of *anticipation* or expectation about what is coming; there is *pacing* (a movement from fast to slow to fast, etc); and there is total *participation* by the audience. Music plays a key part of the spectacle – as sound enters us in a way in which the visual alone cannot. Dance also plays a key role.

While previous generations found meaning in words, today's generations find meaning in experiences.

In concerts there is a convergence – the total experience takes place in the response of an audience to the multidimensional character of electronic events. There is the music, words, charisma of the artists, the percussive use of light, images and beat; the behaviours of the crowd; the kinesthetic involvement of the audience in moving, dancing and typically staying on their feet the entire time; the smells and tastes of the event, etc. The power of the event for the participative audience occurs in the convergence of the sensory experience. They are drawn into a vortex of personal and social yearnings and satisfactions.

When you get people in close proximity to one another, focus their attention on a common object, and engage them in exercises that arouse emotions, bonding occurs. This is the power of spectacle. Spectacle is the ultimate experience where convergence generates participation and meaning. The following features of Spectacle are noted: **(1) Spectacle creates convergence which is cognitive dynamic** – knowing is generated through light and visualisation. This knowing is a source of identity. **(2) Spectacle develops emotional bonds and a sense of being part of something much bigger than yourself.** **(3) Spectacle reflects AND enacts the lives of those gathered** – it is a dramatisation. **(4) Spectacle generates commitment and convictions** – these can be good or bad. **(5) Spectacles create bonding** – “whom you gather with determines who you will be bonded with”. But spectacle tend to create publics not communities – as they don't provide a common story – people bring their own stories with them to the event.

The next section is all about the church's need to minister incarnationally. He says that the church has to "pitch tent" (ie. incarnate) with electronic culture. Yet it must be transformative and not merely conformative. It will bring it's own story, tradition and practises into the equation. The church both lives in a culture and is a culture. It must incarnate with a culture while remaining true to it's story. God became flesh and joined the indigenous practises of the culture of Jesus' time. The word became flesh and pitched a tent. Flesh is encoded culturally and historically - we are socially constructed. Depending on the time and place in which we live our senses are organised differently - we have different feelings and different forms of reason, depending on the time in which we live.

In pitching the tent, the Word experienced an indigenous engagement. This does not means that the church must pitch tent with every practise in a culture, but it must not be captive to a range of cultural practises from one culture that it imposes in colonial fashion on another culture. Often the church identifies practises as essential to the faith, when they are basically an expression of pitching tent in another, quite different culture.

The implications of this: **(1) The incarnation is not God joining human story and becoming part of it** - but a disclosure that the world is part of God's Story. We must understand our picture in terms of God's greater picture. **(2) God's story is fleshy and engaged with human practises** - so the church must take seriously the fleshy use of images, sound as beat and visualisation, It will pitch tent with practises of convergence, bonding and commitment. The Word will take on embodiment in spectacle, performance, soul music (as in music of the soul - it could be of any genre) and dance.

Worship is the construction of an experience. It must make use of pacing, rhythm and participation. It

will work with the soul music of the people gathered. It will engage people in movement and dance. It will take convergence and the practise of meaning in experience seriously. It will use electronic 'critique' to offer worship that is alternative, oppositional and subversive to the dominant order. This kind of worship will be put together by a team; using art, popular music, banners, and lighting.

3. DIVERSITY OF COMMITMENT LEVELS

Worship leaders, in fact, churches must work through how they intend dealing with different commitment levels in worship. There are at least three possible approaches we can take in our worship:

A. Believer-Orientated Worship

Here the primary audience are believers who know and worship God. Worship is seen as the response of God's people to His love and grace. Believers and their needs are the focus, they set the agenda. The Sunday morning service here is seen as a key time for growth and maturity – and worship is a chance for believers to connect with God and participate fully.

B. Believer-Orientated Worship Made Visitor Friendly

Here the style of the service and the content of the sermon cater for believers, but the congregation goes out of their way to ensure that visitors feel welcome. The church will do some of the following: develop effective greeters and ushers; make the venue visitor-friendly; use contemporary music; use informal, relational prayers; simplify the service and provide a quality nursery.

C. Outreach-Orientated Worship

The guest is seen as the irreligious, unchurched person. All aspects of the service cater for people who have never been to church before. This is also called *Worship Evangelism*, where worship experiences are provided for guests so they can understand the Saviour without first having to understand the service. Outreach worship is more presentational than participative as non-Christians come to watch more than to participate. The aim is to put the guest at ease; eliminate religious barriers; introduce guests to Jesus; encourage both believers and guests; and provide a place where believers can bring their unchurched friends. Worship here must be contemporary; offered weekly; scheduled at a good time; use high quality music; and messages must meet needs.

Some time back on an email forum the following question was raised by a participant: *What is the difference between contemporary worship, indigenous worship and seeker (-sensitive or -oriented) services?* The reply came from another participant: *Contemporary worship* is worship that is up to date for the people that it is geared for. This term is often used to refer to an upbeat worship style that is geared to people who have been going to church for quite some time. It is often used in an attempt to keep younger people from leaving the church. In this context it can, and often is, out of date by the standards of the world just outside the door of the church. *Indigenous worship* refers to worship with a style that is geared to the people who are just outside of the door of the church. This will vary from place to place, but perhaps better defines the fact that the worship style is designed to reach the people who live within driving distance of the church, than the term contemporary does. *Seeker (-sensitive or -oriented) services* can run a rather wide range: *Seeker sensitive* probably means that the worship style is geared for those who are already Christians, but will use terminology that can be understood by non-Christians. It will likely be contemporary (at least as far as those inside the church are concerned) but will not likely be geared to those outside the door (indigenous). *Seeker oriented* (or targeted) is very similar to indigenous. It is a worship style that is geared to those outside the door of the church. Let me put it this way: If your target is older Christians (older people who are already attending church), then use a traditional worship style. If your target is younger Christians (younger people who you would like to keep in church), use a contemporary worship style. If your target is non-Christians (people of any age who are not currently attending church), use a seeker or indigenous worship style.

4. DIVERSITY OF WORSHIP STYLES

There are different worship styles that need to be considered in a local church:

A. Traditional/Contemporary

The traditional/contemporary styles of worship need to be considered. A while back I set out to identify what it is that makes worship contemporary. I recently developed the following characteristics of contemporary worship:

- * Worship that connects with everyday life.
- * Worship that is sensory - people are encouraged to bring their senses into worship.
- * Worship that is experiential - the worship is an experience more than a discourse.
- * Worship that is filled with movement - people are allowed and encouraged to move about.
- * Opportunity to express intimate love and worship to God - participatory not spectator.
- * A structure that is dramatic - it moves one from unawareness of God to awareness of God.
- * Music that is similar to the genre of music worshippers would naturally chose to listen to at home.
- * Using a large percentage of music written in the current or last decade.
- * Music that has lots of instrumentation - drums, lead guitars, bass guitar, synthesizer.
- * Songs that express intimacy (immanence) more that 'distance' (transcendence).
- * Songs that use metaphor - especially metaphors that are sensory-orientated.
- * A smooth flow - ie. songs that flow into one another with minimal sermonising.
- * A large percentage of songs that address God directly and not indirectly.

Bill Easum in *Growing Spiritual Redwoods*, says that contemporary worship:

- * Aims at the heart rather than at the mind.
- * Builds harmony rather than mere ascent.
- * Communicates joy rather than mere contentment.
- * Celebrates lifetime covenants, rather than financial commitments.
- * Sends people into spiritual disciplines rather than committees.
- * Leads people towards freedom rather than bondage.

Leanard Sweet in *SoulTsunami* speaks of contemporary worship needing to be EPIC - an acronym that stands for worship that is Experiential, Participatory, Interactive and Communal. **(1) Experiential** - This is an experience-based culture. Nike sells an experience. People come, or don't come to church, because they expect to experience God. But people don't expect it to happen in church anymore. George Barna did a survey and discovered that less than a quarter of church attenders have experienced God in worship this year. As we facilitate an experience with God in worship we must be careful to move people beyond an experience of God to the God of their experience. Our worship needs to be multi-sensory to reach an experience-orientated generation. **(2) Participative** - Previously leaders represented people, but today we are all ministers and participants in the body of Christ. **(3) Interactive** - Electronic culture has not created passive people - as many people thought would happen when it arrived - but interactive people - people looking for high touch. This is a kerioke culture - everyone wants an opportunity to grab the microphone. People can change the character of worship by participating. **(4) Communal** - IBM did one thing right - they had a computer that was compatible. As a church we must make it easy for people to partner with us.

B. Worship Languages

Gordon McDonald (*Forging a Real World Faith*, Page 90f) writes about six different languages that worshippers speak. They are: **(1) The Aesthetic Instinct** – their agenda is *majesty* and David is a biblical example. Aesthetics enter into worship with great solemnity and they love to kneel in the presence of a God of majesty. **(2) The Experiential Instinct** – their agenda is *joy* and Simon Peter is a biblical example. Experientialists are big-hearted and generous – they seize any opportunity to meet with God. **(3) The Activist Instinct** – their agenda is *achievement* and Moses is a biblical example. Activists like to experience exhaustion as they mobilise people to do something constructive. **(4) The Contemplative Instinct** – their agenda is *listening* and a biblical example is John the Baptist. Contemplatives love to withdraw to meet with God. **(5) The Student Instinct** – their agenda is *truth* and a biblical example is St. Paul. Students see heaven as an eternal Bible study with God as the discussion leader. **(6) The Relational Instinct** – their agenda is *love* and Barnabas is a biblical example. Relationists believe God is most heard when people are engaged in good relationships with each other. Gordon MacDonald says that Jesus balanced these six worship languages because he was a contemplative and an activist; a relationist and a student; an experimentalist and an aesthetic. Most of us will possess a natural inclination for two or three of the six styles; a curiosity in one or two

more but will struggle to believe that what's left has any value at all. Maturity in faith comes as we become conversant in all six languages as Christ was. A worship leader must ensure that worship caters in some way for all the worship languages.

C. Modern/Postmodern

The transition within society from modernism to postmodernism has major implications for worship. John Holand (John.Hoyland@galint.com) posted a list of characteristics of postmodern worship to a worship leaders email forum on the 5th of June 1995: **(1) Culturally relevant** - rejects cultural barriers that are not part of the gospel, aims to be accessible. **(2) Participative** - encourages (not forces) people to participate in worship, rather than being passive receivers - also encourages people to participate in creating and running the worship events. **(3) Recognition of importance of community** - the worship is based in a community, and builds up that community. **(4) No 'figurehead'** - worship proceeds without a leader, or many people are involved in leading. **(5) Wholeness** - rejects notion of body/mind/soul split, expects that worship should involve the whole person. **(6) Recognises that both experience and understanding are essential** - creates opportunities in worship for both. **(7) Eclectic** - willing to use all kinds of ideas, music, texts, etc. from a wide range of traditions. **(8) Sense of past and present** - aware of being part of a long tradition, aware of its history, but combined with an awareness of future, of its destiny. **(9) Rejects the notion of a split between 'sacred' and 'secular'** - willing to use ideas, forms, materials, etc. from the 'secular' world in worship. **(10) Willing to use non-linearity and/or concurrency.** **(11) Multi-media** - willing to use all available media in worship, for communication, and to create atmosphere. **(12) Provisional** - recognises that it is not perfect, and will need to change - always experimenting with new ideas. **(13) Tolerant** - recognises that other forms of worship are valid. **(14) Local** - recognises that worship is tightly related to the worshipping community - each community must find it's own style of worship, rather than following some "cookbook" approach. **(15) Anti-independent** - determined to remain part of existing churches rather than form new denominations.

5. DIVERSITY OF CULTURE GROUPS

A major challenge to worship is how to develop culturally-integrated worship. We face a challenge in South Africa to integrate different cultural styles in worship. Our past is one of racial division, but the majority of churches are experiencing the challenges of racial integration. It seems like we are finding it difficult to create services that include different cultures. There are many cultural difference which can leave one wondering whether it is possible for diverse culture groups to worship together. The challenge for worship leaders is to find ways to reflect the whole audience in the worship. If the whole audience is from one culture group, then the worship is already culturally-inclusive, but if you are leading in a church where the audience is made up of different cultures, then you must take seriously the challenge to move towards culturally-integrated worship. How? Well, I would not presume to know all the answers, but here are some pointers:

- * Seek to understand how different culture group express their worship to God.
- * If possible attend church services in places where a different culture from your own is in the majority.
- * Begin to integrate people from the different cultures into your worship team.
- * Use people from different cultures when you involve people in worship services.
- * Sing songs and do readings from different languages.
- * Consider translating the service into a different language.

Chapter 9

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP

Moses stood before Pharaoh and said, "Let my people go." After eight devastating plagues the Egyptian ruler offered to allow the adults to go and worship the Lord, but the children were to remain behind. Moses rejected this offer categorically (Exodus 10:9). Moses knew that the worship experience is short-lived if the children are not taken along! Too often children are ignored or ushered out to a games room while the adults enjoy their worship experience - Moses would be horrified if he was around today! The heart of God is crying out, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me, and forbid them not" (Luke 18:16). Children too can worship the Lord. Their hearts are hungry and longing for the presence of God.

1. A PLACE FOR CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

Leading children in praise and worship involves more than singing amusing and entertaining songs, although such songs have their place. They need to have an opportunity to express their love and appreciation to Jesus for all that he has done for them. They also need to be equipped with power to stand against the attack of the evil one. We are told in Psalm 8:2 that praise, even in the mouths of children, silences the enemy. There is supernatural power that is released through a child's worship. While children's praise often looks like an imitation of adults they respect, Jesus said that their praise is perfect (Matthew 21:15,16). When children praise God they are building a protective shield around their minds and lives.

2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND WORSHIP

Scripture shows that a child thinks, talks and reasons differently from an adult. They are not mini-adults! Understanding the developmental stages children pass through is helpful in relating to, and leading, them in worship. In general a child's intellectual development progresses from the self-centred, magical thinking of a preschooler, to concrete reasoning during elementary school years and finally to the abstract reasoning of adolescence.

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, identified four developmental stages that correspond to a child's chronological age:

A. The Sensori-Motor Period (birth - two years)

At this early stage children act and think through their five senses. Cognitive learning is very limited. Worship must be an emotional and enjoyable experience for children at this stage.

B. Pre-Operational Thought (two - seven years)

During this stage a child is unable to perform operations in thought. They can remember what they are taught, but not think about its meaning. They are also unable to distinguish fantasy from reality. For these children believing in God is as easy as believing in Dad, Mom and an Easter Bunny. They need a sense of belonging in worship, provided through active involvement, which will produce a sense of emotional fulfilment.

C. Concrete Operations (seven - twelve years)

At about age seven the child begins to differentiate fantasy from reality and can perform operations of thought on what they see. The child now thinks in concrete terms but does not deal well with abstract concepts. When a child in this stage is told that Jesus is knocking at the door of their heart, they view Jesus as a literal man who is knocking on a physical door inside their chest. The worship leader should find ways to present abstract ideas in concrete forms.

D. Formal Operations (beyond twelve years)

Only at this stage can children perform operations in abstract thought. Only now can they understand that the picture of Christ knocking on the door of their heart is a picture that speaks of God's Spirit calling to their spirit. The inability of a child to relate to abstract ideas is of particular importance when

trying to lead children into an abstract experience, such as the worship of an invisible yet omnipresent God. Once we are aware of these limitations we can develop strategies for communicating abstract spiritual truths in concrete terminology. Jesus used the approach, "The kingdom of heaven is like..." to make the transition from the abstract to the concrete. By comparing abstract ideas to tangible things the child has experienced, they are able to grasp spiritual truths.

3. SONGS FOR CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

We must answer the question of why we sing. To let off steam? Because children enjoy doing the actions? To fill in time? To "warm children up" for the teaching? These are not good enough reasons in themselves. The only really good reason for singing is to let children tell God, and tell each other, what they think of him. Some of the other advantages can fall into place behind this, but it must dominate the selection of songs and determine the position they occupy in the programme.

The songs that can be used for leading children in worship include:

A. Action Songs

These teach the meaning of the song and provide an outlet for their energy to be released. Songs with few words and much repetition are the best for children. But they do not need to be meaningless to be included in the category of action song. Songs such as "Silver And Gold," and "He That Believeth" teach while they involve children in actions.

B. Adoration Songs

Avoid thinking that children just want to sing fun songs. They also want to express their love to Jesus in songs that will allow them to sing their love to Jesus. Even children can be "lost in wonder, love and praise."

C. Adult Songs

Children need to, and want to, sing songs that are being sung by older people in church or the senior youth groups. This will ensure that children do not feel out of place when they participate in church services or home cells.

D. Assorted Songs

Paul in his letters listed three types of songs to be use in worship: psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16):

(1) Psalms - This involves the singing of scripture choruses. Because they are simple in lyrics and melody, they are quickly learned by even young children. The use of modern language helps children relate to the words and the message.

(2) Hymns - There is a need to teach children traditional hymns. Exposure to the past helps children to face the future. A sense of their heritage stimulates a sense of their future destiny. But the use of a hymn book is counter productive as most children will stare blankly at the pages; be unable to follow the format or thumb idly through the pages. Rather repeat the more well known hymns until children learn the words or make use of an overhead screen.

(3) Spiritual Songs - These are songs which emanate from our spirit and not from our mind. Paul makes the contrast in 1 Corinthians 14:15. They are sung to God (v2), by our spirit (v14) and are not understood by others (v16). Judson Cornwall says these songs are "extemporaneously composed musical numbers expressing ecstasy". In either case this is an area where children can express themselves in original song. It is common for children to create tunes to accompany their play. There is a place to encourage children to sing their, "new song unto the Lord" (Psalm 33:3; 96:1; 98:1; 149:1).

The following songs should be avoided:

- * Metaphorical or Poetic: "Running Over, My Cup Is Full And Running Over"
- * Untrue or Misleading: "Since The Lord Saved Me, I'm As Happy As Can Be"
- * Obscure or Vague: "Give Me Oil In My Lamp, Keep Me Burning"

Choruses, as well as some of the traditional hymns, must be screened for their accuracy in doctrine. In leading children's worship, this is even more vital, as children are still forming their theological concepts. The worship leader has the responsibility of taking steps to ensure that the music accurately conveys the true message.

4. LEADING CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

The role of the worship leader includes:

A. Provide An Example For Children To Follow

When Jesus said, "Follow me", he used the Greek word "akolouthos" which means "to go in the same way." The worship leader help the worshippers to go in the same direction. The response of children in worship is found in another Greek word for follow, "mimeomai" which means "to mimic." (See Ephesians 5:1 and 1 Corinthians 11:1). As they follow (mimic) the leader they will be encouraged to respond to God's presence with love and devotion. To be successful the leader must live a life of worship, and have a growing relationship with God!

B. Provide An Explanation For Children To Understand

Leading children in worship involves the element of teaching as the leader explains appropriate means of expressions in praise and worship and why they are used. The leader should teach that there is freedom to clap, dance and express joy but not to the degree of foolishness. Worship should also be seen as an opportunity to teach some facet of the nature of God, our relationship to him, etc. The theme that is chosen for the time of worship should be carefully thought out and all elements of the worship related to the theme. This will enhance the message.

C. Provide Encouragement For Children To Participate

Leading children in worship includes the responsibility to encourage children to move from being passive spectator's to active participants. This will be accomplished with lively singing, actions, opportunities for children to pray and share, and above all a desire to continually find creative ways to involve children. The leader should develop a style that is conversational and which encourages children to open up to the worship leadership.

D. Provide An Environment For Children To Participate

The worship leader who is viewed as the great disciplinarian will not be the most successful leader in the eyes of the children. Yet children need to be kept in check and on track. The worship leader should be free to enter into worship without having to correct and discipline children at the same time. Adult or teen-age helpers are the secret to keeping control of the children, separating the unruly ones if necessary, while they worship among the children.

Practical Guidelines for Leading Children in Worship:

(1) Be Relatively Predictable in Your Style - When children know more or less what you will do next they will be more free to focus on God and not be distracted. Children feel secure with schedules and routines, and they relax easier.

(2) Be Creative and Use Games - Predictability does not imply dull, routine worship but includes creative and fun times of praise. Group singing competition is a healthy form of variety in singing.

(3) Use Instruments That are Unusual and Fun - Allow children to play banjo's, shakers, tambourines, triangles, spoons, etc.

(4) Flow from Song to Song - When the singing progresses beyond fun songs into praise songs the leader should flow from song to song without "commercial" interruption. Some interjected statements and encouragements are necessary during fun songs, and during the initial stage of praise but as you advance there should be a minimal number of interruptions.

(5) Give Directions Loudly and Clearly - Bold and clear leadership is essential to unite the worshippers. Children need to be reminded that someone's in control.

(6) Become Invisible as God Becomes Visible - Do this by limiting chatter and give clear directions. Encourage children to close their eyes when they worship and see "the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted" (Isaiah 6:1). This helps to avoid distractions and opens their spiritual eyes. They can also be encouraged to fold their hands. This will help to limit their wandering and mischief. The leader needs to "watch and pray" to ensure that hands are not wandering. If a disturbance is noted, a simple reminder or a stern look should be sufficient. Deal with problems later - don't break the atmosphere!

(7) Remain Aware of the Time - Worship can't be squeezed into tight time schedules but at the same time we must realise that a child's worship cannot be sustained as long as an adults worship. Children have a shorter attention-span and a more limited ability to express his emotions. Sensitivity to children and common sense will dictate when to move on with the service or programme.

(8) Encourage Times of Silence - When children are experiencing a sense of the presence of God do not be afraid to allow time for silence. Use these moments to encourage children to hear if Jesus has something to say to them. Encourage soft speaking of praise, or expressing love to the Father in their own words. If the leader is sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings they may be led to allow children the opportunity to ask Jesus to come into their lives, or have children confess their sin.

(9) Use Fun and Colourful Overheads - When using overheads for songs, make use of coloured drawings on the same sheet. They will capture their imagination and, if well chosen, will reinforce the message of the songs.

(10) Narrow the Focus of the Children - The leader must continually narrow the children's focus until their full attention is focused on God the Father.

5. PRAYER AND CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

When a leader stands in front of a group of children and shuts his eyes to pray, three things can happen to the children: They can listen, agree and say amen as a sign that they accept the prayer as their own; or they can retreat into their own private thoughts and imagination; or they can communicate with each other in that informal sign language they know so well. There are ways to ensure that the first of the three options happen.

A. Pray In Their Language

Beware of obstacles to understanding, such as: out of date language; big words and religious cliches. A prayer like, "Thou O Lord art highly to be praised because of thine exceeding holiness," uses foreign language and complex religious words. An alternative would be, "Lord God, you are so great and so good that, when we think of you, we want to tell you how wonderful you are."

B. Pray Specifically

Pray in such a way that children will be able to see that God has answered them. If a mother is expecting, ask God for the safe delivery of the baby, etc. This involves a risk, as God may answer Yes, No or Wait. But it is good for children to understand from a young age that we are dependent upon God for His will and the way he chooses to answer prayer.

C. Be Brief

Children don't have an ability to spend half an hour in prayer. You can always have another time for prayer later in the worship. Be aware of their attention span.

D. Encourage Response

Teach children to say "Amen" if they agree with what is being prayed. This will ensure that the Amens are genuine. A lot of children think that "Amen" means "please", whereas it means "let it happen as we have said" - so tell children that by saying "amen" they mean, "I agree".

E. Encourage Children To Pray

Help children overcome their shyness and fear of a long prayer by saying a word or phrase. This will build their confidence. Introduce the time of prayer by asking each child to give one reason why they are thankful to God or one thing that they like about God. Then have them speak out what they have contributed in a short time of prayer.

F. Equip Children To Pray By Themselves

Encourage children to pray and give them a structure they can use to pray on their own at home or at school. Give children a teaspoon to keep by their bedside. Tell them that the letters, TSP in teaspoon stand for Thank you, Sorry and Please - things which they can say to God every night.

6. CREATIVITY AND CHILDREN IN WORSHIP**A. Antiphonal Praise**

Divide children into two groups, select a Psalm and ask one group to read the odd numbered verses and the other to read the even verses. Then ask the children in pairs to discuss what the verses tell them about God.

B. Listen To Music

Select music to help children think through the teaching they've heard. Choose music that is age-appropriate and suitable to the culture of the children.

C. Change The Words/Pitch Of Songs

Change words of songs, such as, "God Is So Good," to "God, You're So Good" Change the key of songs - simple songs can be raised a semitone at a time.

D. Read Scripture As Praise To God

Many passages such as, 1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Revelation 4 and 2 Timothy 2:11-13 are ideal, where the leader can read the first half of the statement and the children can read out the second. Devise chants which the children can respond to, ie. Victory Chant and Psalm 136. Teach children to respond to the statement: "What do we believe?" with the following: "Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again, Yeah!" On "Yeah" the whole group leaps into the air with their right hands raised.

E. Make Use Of Silence

Children can be moved by silence in valuable ways. But the leader must be very specific about what the children should think about. Explain that sometimes God uses pauses to get a message through to His people who are listening out for him, but tell the children that they must not listen for an audible voice, for it is more likely that God will communicate by putting good ideas inside their heads. We can refer to the voice of God as an uninterrupted flow of thoughts that are birthed in, and pass through, our minds.

7. OUTLINES FOR CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

With children the opening songs need to be fun songs where they can march, stomp, shout, clap and get actively involved. This helps to draw children into participate. Meeting children where they are means jumping in with both feet and having some fun with them. Follow fun songs with praise songs which help children tell one another about God and who he is to them. Once established in praise children are ready to move into worship songs which minister to God. From fun, to praise, to worship - the leader's role is to continually narrow the children's focus until their full attention is focused on God the Father. Sometimes the praise to worship transition can be made by changing a word or two of the song being sung (ie. "God Is So Good" to "God, You're So Good").

Develop these simple outlines, mostly centred around Bible stories, using fun songs, praise songs and then worship songs.

A. Jesus Heals Today (Acts 3:1-10)

(1) Share the story of the lame man's healing; (2) Praise God like the lame man did (8); (3) Pray for someone you know who is ill.

B. Praise Brings Victory (Acts 16:25-34)

(1) Sing songs to God and Pray (25); (2) Praise brings release and victory (26).

C. Jesus Is Here (Matthew 18:20)

(1) The Promise of the Presence (Isaiah 43:1,2); (2) The Fulfilment of the Presence (Matthew 1:23; 18:20); (3) Our Response to Jesus' Presence (Sing songs to Jesus).

D. Jesus Gives Light (John 8:12)

(1) Worship Jesus as the light of the World; (2) Read John 9:1-7 Jesus gives sight to the blind man; (3) Prayer for sight, for guidance and comfort; (4) Read John 12:35,36.

E. Thank You Jesus (Luke 17:11-19)

(1) Read the passage about the one grateful leper; (2) Allow children to express thanks in prayer; (3) Sings song that express gratitude.

F. With Jesus In The Storms Of Life (Mark 4:35-41)

(1) Read the story of Jesus and the disciples in the storm; (2) Have the children think of a storm in their lives; (3) Apply the story to their personal storm; (4) Sing songs that express confidence in Jesus.

G. Take It To Jesus (Isaiah 37:14-20)

(1) Read Isaiah 37:14-20; (2) Tell children to take a piece of paper and write their request to God (14a); (3) Have children spread the letter out in God's presence (14b); (4) Lead in Prayer for the requests while God "reads" them (15f); (5) Speak about the God who answers prayers (21f).

H. The Father And The Drifter (Luke 15:11-32)

(1) Tell the story of the prodigal son from Luke 15:11-32; (2) Encourage children who have drifted to come back to father; (3) Sings songs that speak of restoration.

I. Parables: Modern Messages Of God's Love

(1) God's love for us: the prodigal son; (2) Love for ourselves: the lost sheep; (3) Love for others: the good Samaritan; (4) Love for God's world: the sower and the seed.

J. Follow The Leader (Matthew 4:18-22)

(1) Sings songs about following Jesus; (2) Have the children play "follow the leader" as they sing; (3) Teach children that a Christian follows Jesus; (4) Prayer: asking God to help us to be good followers.

K. Jesus Loves Children (Matthew 19:13-15)

(1) Read passage about Jesus' love of children; (2) Sings songs about how Jesus loves us; (3) Have children respond to: "I know Jesus loves me, because..."; (4) Sing songs to express love for Jesus.

L. The Child Who Killed A Giant (1 Samuel 17)

(1) Tell the story of David and Goliath; (2) Thank the Lord for the Power we have through him; (3) Sing songs that speak of us as victorious; (4) Teach a memory verse, ie. Philippians 4:13.

M. Everyone A Hero (Hebrews 11)

(1) Mention the heroes of the faith in the passage; (2) Sings songs about faith, ie "He That Believeth"; (3) Challenge the children to become heroes for God.

N. Jesus, I'm Sorry (Psalm 32)

(1) Sing songs about God's holy nature; (2) Briefly explain David's sin with Bathsheba; (3) Explain how He tried to cover it up; (4) Teach the children how to say, "Jesus, I'm sorry that I..."; (5) Sing songs about forgiveness and cleansing; (6) Memory verse: "you may be sure that your sin will find you out" Numbers 32:23.

Article 1: An Interview With Sally Morgenthaler

By Spencer Burke and David Trotter; April 30, 1999

Without ever connecting face to face, we were excited at the chance to meet soul to soul with Sally. We were huddled in the 6'x8' home office of the Ooze nestled under the shaky timbers of a 1909 beach shack just a block from the Pacific Ocean. Sitting indoors under the shade of a 'paper-mache' tree (Spencer's own creation), we precariously placed our \$9.99 micro-cassette recorder on top of a camera bag perfectly positioned above the speakerphone. Spencer got the comfortable desk chair in front of the flickering 17" view of the world. David stretched out his 6 foot 5 inch frame on a wobbly folding chair half in the kitchen half in the hallway. As we played an 11-digit tune, we wondered what insights Sally might share about the secrets of sacred music, worship, and the arts. Expecting the awkwardness of a first date, we were pleasantly surprised at how much we had in common moving beyond gender, age, tradition, and geography. We invite you to listen in on our soulful conversation...

How did you come to a different view of worship?

In the late '80's when I was very young (laughter), I was very young starting out in ministry in a leadership role at a mission congregation in Colorado in an area that was 75% unchurched and 75% Baby boomers. My role was quite simply to transition 30 people from a traditional, liturgical ministry into an experience of worship that would be welcoming and accessible to the unchurched folks where this mission was planted. It was a pretty tall order given the fact that we hadn't transitioned much out of an order of service that had been used for 30 to 40 years in that denomination. We had a keyboard - that was it. I was the keyboard player. So, it was a big job, but God was up to it - not that I was. Gradually, God added and we formed a band. Very much from the beginning, because of the liturgical roots of this mission, we held pretty much to the value that there would be confession involved in worship, that we would celebrate Communion every other week. That there would be invocations, calls to worship, benediction - things that in the '80's and '90's were being thrown out. I was highly influenced by several models in the '80's and '90's, and I wanted to take about the quickest route away from my childhood worship expression that I could. I would change anything - whatever worked. I was very, very pragmatic - following a spirit of that decade. My qualifications, my criteria for what worked, I think were pretty questionable. 'What can bring the most people in the door and look cool?'

Fortunately, I did have some older members of the congregation who finally took me aside and said, 'You know, I think we really do need Communion in our services' (because I wanted to take it out). 'We really like having, even in the gymnasium with folding chairs, we really having a table with a tablecloth on it and a cross on it. We really like having banners with Christian symbols. Don't you think we ought to retain something that says distinctively that we are the Church?' I thought I knew better, but I was under their supervision as a worship leader...fortunately. Instead of taking the quickest route - the Autobahn - out of that condition. I had to work within parameters that I didn't like. Yet as I worked within those parameters and we kept the Lord's Supper in every other week. We not only kept that, but we expanded our experience in that gymnasium to include anointing for healing, individualized prayer, and meditation. What we found was that on those weeks where it was quite unapologetically sacramental and where there were a lot of trappings of a liturgical church - those were the weeks where most of the unchurched people were coming. If they had been there before, they wanted to come back. We would have more intentional confession times obviously preparing for Communion. It was amazing how meaningful that was.

We were attracting quite a few Catholics and Episcopalians, but not all. People who had been going to Baptist or Community churches, and they felt very much like, 'Hey, this is an experience we haven't had, and we don't know what is going on here, but we really like this.' We don't have to center our whole experience of worship in 20 minutes of singing praise choruses - which we did have. But, there were other ways to respond to revelation. That is one of the most important things that we can get under our belt in terms of worship. Worship is God - a self revealing God - calling for our response. "Music, in particular, is one of the fastest ways to a person's soul..."

What were some of the surprises during this transition?

We are talking late '80's where Communion is being - God is using it evangelistically. That is not supposed to happen. Because if you think about it, back in the late '80's, many of us who were trying to do something different, progressive, contemporary - usually we're still 20 years behind even at that - that was not supposed to happen. 'Seekers,' ten years ago, we were told by many, many people - that

a lot of us were following - that they didn't really belong in worship. They don't understand it, and they don't want it because it is scary. It is religious stuff that will turn them off, and a lot of it involves ritual that they don't know anything about. So, let's just bring them into a program - very much the modern approach - whether we gave them information in a drama or a song. It was still dissemination of information yet perhaps in an aesthetic experience - but not an aesthetic experience that would draw into intentional response. Ten years it was a much different atmosphere in the quote on quote progressive, outreach-oriented church. Worship was not one of the colors on the evangelistic palette.

Some people are saying that the arts are a new evangelistic language. Have you seen that?

I do believe that our evangelism is going to be most effective when it coincides with the language people speak. We typically think of language syntactically - our oral, verbal language we grow up with - yes, that's important that we talk in such a way that people can understand. But communication is so much more than words, because much or most of our information we are getting is outside of words. We are getting it visually, we are getting it through music, and then we are getting where the visual and music are put together. That's been the case with MTV for 15 or more years. So, we have a choice to make. We can say that it's idolatry to use images. We can go back to the Reformation and keep repeating these cautionary practices that turned into what I believe are barriers to faith - an excuse to remain at arm's length with God. Music in particular is one of the fastest ways to a person's soul, and it can be used manipulatively. But, it can also be used sacramentally. The difference being - the sacramental use of music is where there is an element of faith where we are not directing so much as allowing God to meet people through that medium.

It's interesting. In the past, we have used rationale to convince the modern mind. People seem to be more receptive now in the postmodern world to the experience. Is this part of what you are finding?

Yes, yes. If you take a look at television commercials, usually what you don't get is a lot of information about product. In fact in some commercials, you don't even know what the product is until the very end. Then, you wonder what that has to do with the product. They are selling experience, first and foremost. I'm not recommending that we have experience without substance. But, Madison Avenue, Hollywood, and people who are influencing us the most in contemporary culture - they understand that our experiences drive what we do and who we are. At this time, in the 1990's, we want to feel first. In order for us to get the substance, our feelings have to be accessed. I don't mean just manipulated. We have to be able to express and have a whole of range of feelings. Then, we are able to take in substance information much more quickly. We will be open to it. We will take in not just in a left brain way, but we will take into our whole person and spread it out. If you believe in right brain, left brain - the Greeks, I think, did not do us a favor by dividing us or dissecting us like one of the frogs in 8th grade science. We have a soul here, mind here, emotions whatever. In the modern world, we kept those divisions. I think that the postmodern person is not that we don't want to think. We want to feel as we think.

Integration?

Yes, we do want to be integrated. We want to experience God through our emotions as well as our brain. We want to integrate that. The arts really give us the opportunity, not bypassing the brain - I think of integrating the brain with our emotions. That we have not done since the Reformation, since the Enlightenment impact on the church. Much more than crater-sized, Deep Impact, if you think about that movie - the Enlightenment hit us. We have been under this cloud of particulates for year and years and years. The postmodern is tired of being held at arm's length. There are many in the church who still want to be at arm's length with God and want God to be a concept - want God to be a proposition. It is very easy to keep God as that if there is not a personal relationship that involves the whole person. Postmoderns do not have to know theology - they don't have to have read the Bible to know God as a person. "Celebrate your uniqueness. You have never before been created in the history of the world - your community I mean, not just as an individual."

Some sources that we have recently read indicate that more traditional evangelicals are leaving churches to go to more experiential-oriented churches - some are even moving toward the Greek Orthodox Church. Is that something that you are seeing?

If you take the Notre Dame church attendance study early last year or late '97, there was an exit poll done of maybe 8-10 counties. They came up with 26% of adults are attending church across the board across the United States. It is much lower than Gallup or Barna, but I think it's a more valid approach. I would like to see another one just to compare. If you take that 26% figure, I think there are reasons

why we are about a quarter of the adult population attending church. There are so many sectors of the evangelical church. You do have the Pentecostal / charismatic side, and you've got the more fundamental side. Then you've got the more traditional, Baptist-type of experience.

I think we are all in trouble. I would say even those who have been majoring on praise and worship for the last 10 to 15 years. The seeker church is in trouble. The praise and worship church is in trouble. The charismatic church is in trouble. One of the big reasons we are is because people are bored. Just in the last year, I have heard more people in the praise and worship tradition saying, 'Is this all there is to worship?' To me, we've done just what we did with the sermon - in the Reformation and Enlightenment all the way up through the seeker model - with praise and worship. 20-30-40 minutes of praise choruses back to back incorporating one of the arts, but in a very narrow expression. We normally use a band sound that is freeze-dried in 1985 - a vocal sound that was freeze-dried in 1985. My kids, 14 and 18, when we are driving and we pass a Christian station, they know it. They say, 'Mom, get off of that!' They can't stand it. It's not only kids. I'm only talking about one sector here, but it is something that most people don't talk about. So, I'm going to go there. I usually go places where others won't go. (laughter) The worship music industry has been serving the baby boomer, 1985, music taste for 15 years. Some of the companies are starting to wake up and figure out that we have had a musical revolution out in the culture. It is called 'world music.' For the most part, it has not touched the church until now with alternative ministries and those trying to reach postmoderns. They know that if they tried to pass off the 1985 praise and worship sound to postmoderns, they would be out the door.

Do you think there is a danger in the pendulum swinging too far? Is there a middle ground where we can have a depth of tradition plus the newer approaches as well?

Yeah, I believe the art can embody the Word. People would probably really take issue with me on that. But, I don't want to just say communicate the Gospel. I'm so tired of hearing that, because in the evangelical world we believe that the Word is the printed word. It is not. Jesus never said that this printed word is the Way, Truth, and Life. John 1 does not say that what we read about in this book is the Word. The Gutenberg press was not even invented yet. Jesus is the Word, but we have such a hard time with that. I guess what I'm saying is that the arts are going to be so key in helping people experience the person of Jesus Christ, experience God as the Trinity and even beyond that. This is the new way, and we can't forget to integrate substance. We are not just emotion. We are not just senses as people. We do have this analytical capability that needs to be fed and addressed and used to God's glory. We need to know who it is we worship so that we can respond with everything that we are. Yeah, I believe that our challenge is going to be that balance. It will require all the intentionality that we have. It is going to be all to easy to line the stage of platform with candles - this is the 'in' thing. Everything is dark. Put up the digital art of the Masters - Rembrandt is going to get so old, a lot older than he is now. That is who we're going to be showing on Sunday morning. That is our tendency is take the package of the arts and do a multi-sensory experience but forget that our minds can and need to be fed information.

Any word of encouragement to churches wrestling with these issues?

The day of the model is gone - the formula. Most people know that. It is so scary knowing that they can't just go to a conference and get it and bring it home in a test tube. That is our advantage. Celebrate your uniqueness. You have never before been created in the history of the world - your community I mean, not just as an individual. There has never been a collection of individuals just like you, gifted like you, personalities in your community. It is constantly changing so God is remaking it every single day. We can participate in God's creativity with each community. We can thrive in the chaos. We can muck about in this mud not knowing what we are doing. Understand that in God's grace and God's mercy he has provided this particular group of people as the reflection of his Body in that community. That sounds so simple. Yet, we have forgotten it. There has been such an emphasis on that it is 'out there.' If you can just get it and contain it and franchise it - that is the answer. God is working and a lot of times we have our blinders on. We say, 'No, God has to work in this way.' If we just take our blinders off, look where God is working and go there.

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From: <http://www.theooze.com/Pages/OL/OLCMArticles/OLCMMorgenthaler.html>

Article 2: Bridging The Generation Gap

Music is a sublime creation of God which is especially suited as a vehicle for believers to express praise to their Creator. How it must then grieve him (and delight the Enemy) when this special gift all too often becomes a force for division (if not strife) rather than unity in our churches. The Church of Jesus Christ is to be a place where barriers come down - barriers separating Jew and Gentile, man and woman, laborer and executive, young and old. When this occurs it is a powerful testimony to the supernatural nature of the Body of Christ - because people just don't act that way towards one another, and get along so well together, under normal circumstances.

Like the tongue (James 3:9-10), music can be a force for great good and great evil. The latter can occur when battle lines are drawn between the generations in the local church. Typically, the older adults prefer more "traditional" church music (the standard hymns and gospel songs plus church anthems of a bygone era), while the younger set leans toward choruses, praise and worship songs, and a generally more upbeat style.

Churches take different approaches in dealing with this dichotomy:

1. The church goes almost exclusively in one direction (traditional or contemporary) based on factors such as the congregation's history, its constituency, or the personal preferences of the leadership. As a result the church keeps and attracts those whose personal tastes tend in that same direction, while those whose preferences lie in the other direction gravitate toward other churches where the music is more to their liking. At least this is what happens in larger towns where there are a multiplicity of evangelical church choices - the towns end up with a variety of "specialty" churches from among which one may select according to his or her liking; one goes to such a church if he or she is looking for a particular kind of music. In smaller communities where a single evangelical church may be the only real option, the results of musical specialization can be more problematic yet, even tragic: a group within the church can feel alienated and disenfranchised with no alternative solution. (This can also be the case when a well-established church makes a deliberate shift to a new musical style, and long-standing members find themselves suddenly feeling like outsiders.)
2. In an attempt to address the very real differences in musical style preferences, more and more churches are providing separate worship services, each with a very different flavor and musical style. Very often this means starting a "contemporary service" to supplement an existing "traditional service." Rather than forcing people to choose between different churches to find the approach to worship which is meaningful to them, this approach has the laudable goal of providing, within a single church body, worship experiences at both ends of the spectrum. But it must be asked whether the unity in the body which this approach seeks to preserve is truly served in this way. One may provide a way for these two constituent groups to meet inside the same set of walls; but when they gather at different times for the regular corporate meeting of the church, and under such diverse circumstances, are they not in reality more like two congregations than one? This approach seems to accentuate the differences between the groups, to concede that "ne'er the twain shall meet," and to miss out on the unifying potential of corporate worship.
3. It is possible to bring the generations into worship that is meaningful to all and truly expressive of the oneness of all persons in the Body of Christ. God has led our church to gradually develop a style of worship which manages to involve all ages and tastes in a way which is truly unifying.

While each church must find a form of worship which fits its particular mixture of people, gifts, and resources, the following characteristics would seem to be important (if not essential) to the task:

Theocentric Worship

Acceptable worship is by definition theocentric worship. Only the Creator is worthy to be revered and praised by His creatures. It is corporate worship which calls men to women to throw off the engulfing self-absorption which is not only the father of sin, but also the fleshly tendency even of the redeemed; and it is corporate worship which calls believers to refocus on him who is the Giver and Sustainer of life and of life eternal. Our worship must be relentlessly theocentric. God deserves and demands our reverent attention and our often frantic existence needs to be regularly and formally drawn back to its reason for being: to honor and bring glory to God. Hymns and choruses which emphasize our human pilgrimage and reactions can be perfectly appropriate responses, but only after God has been lifted up

and magnified in our midst. Worship thus infused with the wonder of God is also uniquely appropriate to prepare people's heart to hear and receive the preaching of the Word of God.

Blended Worship

Tastes differ even in relatively homogenous congregations; therefore worship must incorporate a mixture of musical styles and types, increasingly being referred to as blended worship. In our fairly traditional (though not liturgical) church, our musical offerings span somewhat widely over the middle range of the musical spectrum; this range would go from standard hymn - anthems to contemporary songs (from mellow to dramatic, though not "rocky"). Occasional brief forays are made into the "classical" or "upbeat contemporary" extremes of the spectrum, but then we quickly return to more familiar and less controversial turf. And yes, hymns and choruses share a peaceful coexistence in most of our worship services. In fact, the most personally satisfying reactions to what we're doing have been the comments from young people about how they have gained a new appreciation for the great hymns of the faith, which they had previously written off as irrelevant or inaccessible. And positive comments from the other end of the spectrum have often included affirmations of services which contained any number of choruses, which I know would not have been tolerated in isolation by these same elderly saints!

Thematic Worship

One may well ask, how does one join together both hymns and choruses in a coherent musical fabric? One way is through an emphasis on thematic worship. A single theme for the time of worship and singing (which may or may not be related to the theme of the sermon) directs the devotional thoughts of the participants. This theme may consist of an attribute of God (love, holiness, faithfulness, etc), a particular aspect of worship (prayer, praise, thanksgiving, etc.) a theological concept (access to a holy God through Christ, the Second Coming), or a special biblical component of redemptive truth (the Lamb of God, the Cross). It is the theme which governs the selection of all music and readings employed in the service. Hymns, choruses, responsive and choral readings, anthems and even portions of anthems can be drawn upon (with the aid of the various thematic and Scripture indices currently available). It should be noted that often only a single verse of a hymn may pertain to the chosen theme (for example, in many gospel hymns the last verse alone brings to bear the believer's future hope of heaven); there is no reason to use more of the hymn than is relevant to pursuing the theme - in fact, taking portions of hymns out of their familiar surroundings encourages worshippers to concentrate on and make more careful not of the text being sung. A refrain or other portion of a familiar anthem (other than the anthem of the morning) which conveys the same theme may be likewise brought in and sung by the choir. All of these elements can be effectively woven together into a seamless fabric which proceeds without pause and without instructions being given to the congregation. Other than occasional opening remarks which introduce the theme, our services flow in uninterrupted fashion for 15-20 minutes; the bulletin includes all the texts and indicates who is to sing them. This type of worship obviously takes a great deal of planning - but I believe that is a responsibility incumbent in the free church tradition. Liturgical churches need not put as much planning into their services because the story of redemption is beautifully and powerfully related in a standardized form; but there is incredible potential for dynamic worship in the nonliturgical church if we are willing to give it the forethought and planning it deserves.

Participatory Worship

Another crucial aspect is that of participatory worship. Kierkegaard's perceptive portrayal of worship as having God as the "audience," the congregation as the "performers," and the worship leaders (music minister, choir) as "prompters" deserves careful consideration. The flow of the service in our church incorporates a sort of dialogue between choir and congregation. Our trained musical force offers a musical invitation to the people to approach God in reverent worship, but the congregation is never left for long to sit and listen: they are regularly brought in to respond and participate by singing or reading. The great biblical and reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers must be lived out in the full participation of all God's people in the act of corporate worship.

Reverent Worship

Another vital biblical and Reformation doctrine is that God is not aloof and distant, but rather has come close through His Son Jesus Christ. In our informal age this precious truth is sometimes translated into worship which seeks to be a little too "chummy" with Jesus. He is our Friend, to be sure, but not in a backslapping kind of way. He is our Lord as well, who has gone to incredible lengths to provide for our wellbeing. If we were in fact to visually behold him, we would not see him in blue jeans-- we would be

overwhelmed by His unspeakable majesty and resplendent glory, and we would fall to our knees. Worship befitting its divine Object will be reverent worship. This does not - I repeat, does not - mean dead or dull worship. But the primary goal will not be to produce giddy or even warm feelings in the participants. The goal will be to glorify God in all of His transcendence and majesty, so that His people are transfixed by the contemplation of the matchless beauty of His person and the unsurpassed wonder of His redeeming love. Some of our people regularly find themselves weeping as they join in worshipping their Lord in all His splendor. There is plenty of room in dignified worship for joyful and exuberant expression - not as an end in itself, but rather as an appropriate response to the Giver of all good gifts.

To have the whole people of God (young and old) join together in meaningful corporate worship is an overwhelming testimony to the barrier-breaking truth of the gospel - and unbelievers cannot help but notice! And to invite the body of Christ to exalt the Person of Christ and of God the Father in a way in which no segment of the congregation feels alienated - that is a goal so unspeakably worthy that we should joyfully marshall all the creative forces at our disposal for this greatest of all human pursuits.

By Ron Man, Pastor of Worship and Music
http://www.firstevan.com/worship_for_all_of_god.htm

Article 3: Finding The Grace Gates

How pastor and "lead worshiper" Joseph Garlington helps people recognize holy moments and encounter God. A Leadership Interview.

The sanctuary is packed. Ushers wedge latecomers into the few empty seats scattered across the long, low room. When those seats are full, they open clattering doors to overflow rooms on the sides. There's no holy hush in this place. Even the quiet moments are accompanied by electronic instruments and punctuated by whispers. At times the service is more like the Promise Keepers rallies that have brought Joseph Garlington to prominence (he led worship at the mammoth 1998 Stand in the Gap event in Washington, D.C.). The congregation cheers as people approach the altar area to signify their commitment to Christ, and (amazingly) they cheered just as enthusiastically when it was time to pass the offering baskets ("It's a privilege to give!"). But throughout was a sense that something holy--sometimes exuberant, sometimes tender, always spontaneous--something holy is happening here.

Welcome to Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, where Garlington is pastor and, as he puts it, "lead worshiper." He guides worshipers through a seamless mix of praying and singing, old songs and new sounds. It's a style that draws on his eclectic background. His congregation is multi-racial--60 percent African-American--and so is the staff. Over the heads of this gathering are colorful flags from many nations, banners festooned with the names of Jesus, and signs bearing the word and definition of Garlington's present emphasis in worship--"repristinate."

The day after this service, Leadership editors Marshall Shelley and Eric Reed sat with Pastor Garlington to talk about leading people into an awareness of God's presence.

Why do you have the word "repristinate" posted around your sanctuary?

I found this concept in a book on leadership, *Certain Trumpets* by Garry Wills. In order for a tradition to be worth passing to another generation, Wills says, you must repristinate it, "restore it to its original state or condition." He quotes G.K. Chesterton: "Conservatism is based upon the idea that if you leave things alone, you leave them as they are. But you do not. If you leave a thing alone, you leave it to a torrent of changes. If you leave a white (fence) post alone, it will soon be a black post. If you particularly want it to be white, you must be always painting it again. Briefly, if you want the old white post, you must have a new white post." What people celebrate as tradition is usually a thing that's been blackened by time. "All things that resist change are changed by that resistance in ways undesired and undesirable," says Wills. "The tradition must be repristinated if it is to be worth following." This really had an impact on me--the church must not move through life without repristinating what we hand down.

How is worship repristinated?

We were selecting songs for an upcoming PK album. The musicians were telling me that one of the songs college groups are singing all around the country is "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing." The composer describes his backsliding--"prone to wander, Lord, I feel it." My friend said, "Man, the kids are really singing this song." And so it catches on again, 250 years after it was written, because it says something about the reality of who we are today. Some things don't change. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" is a powerful song right now. I've watched guys sing that song at PK events. You start it with a pipe organ sound. And then all of a sudden the drums come in and that song takes off and the guys are singing it, some yelling almost. I think this is what Luther had in mind. We should not say that a song can only be sung a certain way. Luther put incredibly sound theological words to a tavern song. He gave new meaning to something everybody was familiar with.

So that's painting the post?

Yes. I believe a hymn can maintain its freshness if you keep that hymn exposed to fresh expressions. But it's more than just the music. The people have to be repristinated. I taught recently from Luke 5. Jesus uses the analogy of old wine skins and new wine. He used two different Greek words for "new." Some translations say "new" twice--new wine must be put in new wine skins. But I like the NAS translation, new wine must be put in fresh wine skins. Some people wonder, "Because we're old wine skins, does that mean we can't handle new stuff?" That isn't what Jesus is saying at all. I say if you've got an old wine skin, get it repristinated, restored to its original condition. I see some people who stay fresh from season to season. They were involved 20 years ago. Something fresh is still going on now,

and 20 years from now they'll still be here. Somehow they're able to refresh their wine skins, so that when something godly and wonderful and fresh comes along they say, "Hey, that's great!"

When you lead worship, what are you trying to accomplish?

My first task is to be a worshiper. When I stand on the platform, I want to be authentic. And my authenticity isn't determined by how effectively I sing, because I honestly don't believe singing is worship. Singing is an expression of that which is internal. Worship takes place in my spirit. Second, I try not to get in the way. And the best way to stay out of the way is not telling people to do something but simply doing it myself. I don't think worship leading is so much of what I do with my hands, but worship leading is what I do in my spirit. The lead worshiper (and that to me is a better term) is the pastor. Pastors often shrink back from that because a pastor thinks he or she has to know music or be a great singer. That's not true. Ultimately a pastor has to be the one who models something. If pastors want people to worship, especially men, they're going to have to give them a model to follow. I want people to see me doing what I expect them to do. As lead worshiper, I give people permission to do what I do. We lead by example. French priest Teilhard de Chardin said, "We're not just human beings having a temporary spiritual experience. But we're spiritual beings having a temporary human experience." When I speak to people in worship, I'm not appealing to the human being; I'm appealing to the innate person inside, that new creature who does want to worship. And I'm showing him how.

How do you prepare to model worship?

I remain a student of worship. I don't want to become an expert on it. I want to be learning, so I'm listening. I listen to worship songs. I have an ongoing dialogue with God. Worship is a conversation in progress. Worship is not just a gathering of people at a certain time around a certain idea. Worship is the joining of our spirits with anyone in the universe who is worshipping. It's like plugging into a current that's always on. Worship enables me to gaze at the unseen, at the eternal. And in that, something happens in my heart that doesn't happen when I'm not worshipping. So when I come to the platform to lead worship, the experience is a continuation of what's happening every other day of the week. If I worship only on Sunday, I won't recognize the moment of God's presence when it comes.

There was a moment yesterday when you said, "Let's not rush past this; this is the moment for which we've prayed, the moment we long for." You seemed to be especially aware of God's presence. How do you know that moment?

Sensing moments like that has a whole lot to do with experience. An old sea captain who has no barometers or scientific equipment looks out and says, "I think a storm is brewing." You don't argue with him. Some of this sounds so subjective. But there's a way of sensing something and knowing whether it's right or not. Some of this you learn only by experience. The guys at Promise Keepers tell me, "If you sense a moment like that, no matter what's going on in the program, don't worry about our timeline." And we have a pretty tight schedule. But that element is more precious to us than anything, because the one thing we can't program is true awareness of God's presence. You can only pray and wait until it happens, your "eureka" moment, in which anybody can say, "This is a God moment." We have lingered over moments in which the worship was so crisp and so real that I never got to preach. I think churches have visitation moments in which God comes, but we don't plan well for the unexpected. In school, at least, we plan for fire drills. We rehearse for them. But is there anything in the plan of our worship for a moment in which God breaks through?

A God drill?

Yes, a God drill. When he does show up, we are either so unaccustomed to that or so unprepared for it that we don't know how to steward the moment. We should become "guardians of the moment." This moment is to be treasured. It is not to be wasted. This is what we're waiting for.

What does a God moment look like?

C. S. Lewis in his Space Trilogy tells of the first time Ransom goes to a certain planet. Ransom is trying to figure out where he is, and he's evaluating the terrain based upon things that he's seen elsewhere. He doesn't realize that there is no comparison for this place. He says at first it looks like an umbrella, and then it looks like an umbrella blown inside out. Then it looks like organ pipes. He names several things. Then Lewis makes this incredible observation. "It's hard to see things if you don't roughly know what they look like." It's hard to see a God moment if you don't roughly know what it looks like. But once you do, you will see it everywhere. A comparable experience would be some years ago when my wife and I bought a car. The salesman said, "It's a Toyota Camry." I'd never noticed a Camry before. We weren't off the lot five minutes before we saw another Camry. Before I got

home, I'd seen at least three of them. One was the same color as ours. They'd been on the street all the time, but I'd not seen one. Some people can't see worship because they've not really had a worship experience.

Does everybody in the room always recognize the moment?

No. That's the job of the lead worshiper. Worship leading, to me, involves an ability to recognize something so that you can lead people to it.

How do you do that?

I try to help people identify what I call "grace gates." The term comes from a series of messages that I preached from 2 Corinthians 12. Paul recounts his experience of being caught up into heaven. He's frustrated that he can't get rid of this issue that's bugged him ever since he's been in the presence of God, his thorn in the flesh. The thorn makes Paul conscious of his humanity, his limitation. And so God responds, "My grace is sufficient for you, and my strength is made perfect in your weakness." When I am most conscious of my inadequacy, my dependence upon God, and upon his sufficiency, that's when I have "a grace gate"--the inrush of the grace of God for me for a particular reason, a particular season in my life.

But not many have Paul's dramatic experience.

No, but ordinary events also can point you to God's grace. For instance, if I have an argument with my wife before church and no time to get it resolved. I go to the platform and I pray, "God, this is a real mess. I've got to speak to your people, and I really need you to help me." I can't say to the congregation "Excuse me. I've got to get something settled with my wife." In my experience, it's the moments I have cried out to God for help, when I felt I least deserved it, that the moment of dependency became for me a grace gate.

How do your feelings affect your ability to lead worship?

Well for me, I don't have to limit my worship to high moments in God. Worship is just as valid when I'm feeling my absolute worst, even when I have conflict in my life. In fact, the writer of Hebrews says there's no point in staying away. You need to come, he says. And when you come you need to know that all things are bare and laid open before God. So come with confidence to the throne of grace that you might find help in the time of need. So part of my time of preparation may be lying on my face here in my office, just saying to God, "I really can't do this without you." And sometimes coming to a place of weeping in dependence and vulnerability. Even coming in a consciousness that I've sinned and I've failed God can be in itself an act of worship. My responsibility as lead worshiper is to help my congregation find the gate. You get a thousand people in a room, and there's somebody out there who's broken the law. And there's somebody else who's had the best week ever, and there's everything in between. I have to get these people to understand that they all have access to the presence of God. The entrance is by the blood of Jesus Christ.

How do you shape worship so people can experience grace gates?

The grace of God can be seen more readily when people are focused on God through worship, through vertical songs that speak to him and address his majesty. A friend, Helena Barrington, calls them "earth to heaven" songs--"Come Thou Fount," for instance. There are also "earth to earth" songs, where we sing to one another--"Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine." The psalms will often move from horizontal to vertical. But there are also "heaven to earth" songs--I'm talking to you, then I am addressing God, and all of a sudden, God seems to be addressing us. When heaven sings to earth, suddenly we're aware that God is addressing us, and the song is grace.

How much of guiding people in worship is technique, turning the right knobs?

There are moments in which people need to be told what to do. But it's not cheerleading, the rah-rah-rah stuff: Clap a little faster. Stomp a little harder. Shout a little louder. Technique involves introducing people to biblically valid expressions of worship. And it seems to me that there are a lot more noisy Scriptures than quiet ones. Some people need help with that. They can't see certain things as worship because they've never experienced it that way before. Some guys come to a PK rally and see an expression of worship that they've never seen in their own settings. They find that expression in Scripture--kneeling, or raising hands--and suddenly it becomes worship to them. Essentially we get real clear with people--this isn't optional stuff that we're talking about here. Worship is a command.

Some would say this borders on manipulation.

Manipulation begins when I want to see certain outward things happen. There is a difference between manipulating a person, I think, and releasing people to express their worship. I can say, "Look, some of us might be a little uncomfortable with this expression, but it's biblical." In a PK setting, I simply say, "Some guys really need to let sorrow break their hearts." Until they're really sorry about something that's gone wrong, they're not going to change. "Godly sorrow works repentance," Paul says. If my goal is to get you to feel sorrow, I can, but I don't believe I can manipulate true repentance. Some leaders may contrive acts associated with worship, but worship itself can't be manipulated.

You're very comfortable expressing emotion in worship, more so than most people.

This is one of the greatest fears today. Somehow the American church fears emotion or what people will say is emotionalism. But there's a big difference between the valid expressions of emotion and emotionalism. The Scriptures are filled with people who are called to a place of worship and come with weeping. And yet, when that happens here, we express our embarrassment by shoving hankies into people's hands and saying, "Here, dry up." We need to get beyond our discomfort so that people can be freed to express valid, godly emotion.

How do you get people to try something new in worship?

People need to be shown how and encouraged to do it. Jesus said let the children lead. For instance, on Palm Sunday, have the small children sing a song and wave palm branches. As the adults come into the service, give them palm branches, too. When the kids begin to sing, the worship leader can say to the congregation, "Come on, let's join them and wave the branches in celebration." And everybody wants to join in. There's something about children that releases adults from self-consciousness. I've done more stupid things with my grandkids than I would ever do on my own. "Pop-pops, make funny faces." And so there I am, making funny faces. Kids can get us to do things. Kids can take us somewhere. And you don't have to coerce kids to do acts of worship--"Come on, kids, love Jesus." They just do it. What we don't realize is that growing up in the kingdom of God isn't becoming more reserved. Maturity isn't being more stiff. It's becoming less aware of myself and more aware who God is. My goal isn't to get you to do things you haven't done before. My goal is to get you to worship. And I have found that for me the best way to move people to a place of worship is to worship God myself.

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Article 4: Leading Worship Leaders

By Carl Tuttle (from Let Your Glory Fall Syllabus)

The selection, nurture, and discipline of a worship leader have serious implications for any church, especially a Vineyard church that emphasizes the priority, and experience of worship.

The process of recruiting, multiplying, and deploying worship leaders is so challenging-and frankly, messy-because it involves...people! People pick other people. True, it may be God who is calling an individual to a certain ministry. But a divine calling has to be identified, acknowledged, and approved by other humans. That's the scriptural model. The apostle Paul gave his disciples, Timothy and Titus, explicit instructions about appointing people for positions of oversight and authority.

Go Slow

The number one rule is to go slowly. The apostle Paul said, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hand..." (1Tim. 5:22). It's much harder to lay hands off, than to lay hands on people. If you aren't careful, your selection will come back and haunt you. Sometimes we're desperate to fill a slot. In walks a guy with a Martin, who can play, sing, and stay sober for at least thirty or forty minutes. We say, "What the heck!" That viewpoint can be hazardous, and you could find yourself in trouble in the long run. John Wimber told me years ago, when I went to Santa Maria, California to plant a church: "This is the number one rule for you: Take your time. Write that down. TAKE YOUR TIME. Number two rule: Take your time. And rule number three: Take your time." However, for some of us committed to ministry, we want action, growth, and explosive growth! It is better to grow slowly, and build a firm foundation.

How to go slowly

1. Get to know the person and develop a relationship. This involves finding out how they are in different situations (with their wife, kids, work, friends, and under stress). Spend time with them. It is important to know what you're dealing with. Some people are mystical and some are not. Some see angels and some figure if angels show up it'll be fine, but it isn't that they need to see anything. But you need to know what they're like, because you're going to have to find ways of communicating with them.

2. Ask yourself these questions about the person you're releasing:

What is their temperament: are they melancholic, choleric? Are they go-getters, or are they down all the time? Moodiness doesn't disqualify them. It just means your job is going to be a little tougher, because the worship may be somber at times. Melancholic types need coaching, encouragement and stimulation to speed up a little. The hyper-types may need reigning in a little (unless you enjoy marching outside the building every week). Neither type is inferior to the other. You just need to be aware of what they're like.

Are they mystical or pragmatic? How do they see the world? Can they take direction or correction? Are they a crisis waiting to happen? All you have to do is bump people like that a little bit, and they spin out. And it will take you the rest of the month to calm them down. This is the qualifier for me. If they can't take direction or correction, then I may have to compromise and utilize them for a time. But, as soon as I find somebody who is teachable, they're in and the other person's out. You don't want to spend 30-40 percent of your time putting these people back together. You just don't have that much time and energy. There are so many thieves of your energy and time in the life of the church. Identify those things and determine not to give too much of yourself to them-they'll wipe you out. There is different time and energy that you'll give to year number one that you won't give in year number three. It's progressive.

Can they color between the lines? When you set boundaries, can they work within them? There have been times when I had a thirty-minute worship list, and the speaker asked me to do only 20 minutes. You just do it. The last thing a pastor needs is for his worship leader to argue over the amount of time for the worship. The worship leader can ask afterwards what was going on, but not before a service or a meeting. Some people can't handle that. They honestly think they are violating some spiritual principal or putting God in a box if they don't worship a set amount of time. But, there's no way you

can contain God in a box. God can do it any way He wants to. He can do it in 2 minutes or 40 minutes. God is able to get the job done despite time restraints.

Can you tell this person no? That's when you find out whether you're the pastor or not. You can tell a great deal of where people are at when you have to tell them no. For some people, you're their pastor, until you tell them no.

What is the basis for his or her service? Are they serving because they need approval? Are they serving out of insecurities? Are they serving because they need God's favor? This neither qualifies nor disqualifies. It's just something you need to know.

Do they know the difference between performance and worship leading? There are some great musicians who have a difficult time making the transition between the two. You might find someone, who is really talented, and can really play, and really sing. But he or she has trained his whole life toward performance and so has a hard time differentiating the two. Notice I said "some" great musicians. The Vineyard movement has many expert musicians who care about excellence, and playing skillfully - who also have incredible hearts for worship. Andy Park, Eddie Espinosa, and Danny Daniels are good examples.

What is their understanding of worship?

Do they have a narrow or broad understanding of worship? Is worship just singing choruses and simple love songs, or do they understand that worship ranges from "being still and knowing that he is God" to dancing, and shouting, and rejoicing. Worship is all of those things, and more.

Release people progressively

I never give anybody complete autonomy, right off the bat. If you're not a worship leader, you can get intimidated by people who are, and so you feel as if you have to give it all to them. Don't. Release progressively. You have plans, but nothing ever ends up looking the way you think it's going to look. You get people involved in the process, and it all gets screwed-up. Chuck Smith is fond of saying; "Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not break." You must have some flexibility in your system, or you're going to be one miserable person. I tell people: "Do it my way first, and then, one day, you'll be able to do it your way." Some people don't like that, but nobody leads unless they follow first. The best leaders are good followers.

Make clear and short term commitments.

As a leader, your whispers are shouts. You tell them a tiny, little thing, and you've just made a life time commitment to them, as far as their concerned. Jerry Ballard, president of World Relief, says that, "All miscommunications are the result of differing assumptions." Make sure things are clearly articulated. Make short term commitments. Say, "I want you to lead worship this Sunday." Then let them lead worship, and see how they do. If they do well, then ask them to do it the next week for you. You can limit them to a three month span. Then watch them to see how they do, and interact with them. But don't commit long term to them right out of the gate, because you're inviting all kinds of difficulties and problems.

True Believers

You want people, who believe in you, believe in your vision. You want people who are totally committed to what God is doing in your situation, city, and town. You want people in the boat who are all rowing in the same direction. It's crazy to think of twelve people in a boat and six of them rowing one direction, and six of them rowing another direction. It makes no sense. You'll have a hundred people who are just as happy as clams, and one person will say, "You know, the Spirit of the Lord just isn't here anymore." That's the only one you'll feel. That's the one you'll obsess on. Team up with people who are going the same direction. You want to be able to commit to them, because you believe in them, and what God is doing in and through them. Value them. These are the people you need to entrust your life with. People don't get there over night. They get there progressively. Take your time, and earn the right to have authority in people's lives. Don't just march in with your badge on, and your club, and your gun, saying, "I'm the authority here." It's so tempting to do because it's shorter and quicker. Take the time to let them know you, and learn to respect the call of God in you.

Even with volunteers, expect the same effort as with people who have full-time salary. If they said they were going to do it, I'm assuming they're going to do it, because, one, they said it and two, they're

doing it for the Lord Jesus. We all have to do it by the same standard. Everyone in the whole church should work at that one standard. Actions, not words.

A heart to serve, not rule

Be willing to look beyond their talent and see if they are people who are willing to come early, and help set up, willing to stay around late to take things down. See if they consider it to be below them to do that sort of work. They ought to be willing to participate in the broader life of the church.

Select People Who Have Support From Their Family

Is the spouse and children willing and able to pay the price? If the husband or the wife is unwilling to pay the price of the person practicing, or leaving early, or staying late, it can cause all kinds of difficulties. Look for people who are in unity over that issue. Although your worship leader may not function as an elder in the life of the church, applying elder principles, such as; having one's house in order, and having a good reputation in the community is applicable. Remember that people who flake in everyday life are more likely to flake in ministry responsibilities. Something magical doesn't happen when they come to church. They really are the same people.

Look for people who like being with you

And look for people you like being with. Look for people that others like being around. You don't want people who bring everybody down.

Look for people who demonstrate wisdom, not just intelligence.

Look for people who value time, and understand time. If you look at creation, it is in perfect order. If the earth moves a few degrees on way or the other, we'll either freeze or burn. God really does have everything structured and in perfect place. I admonish people about being on time and doing things within the set limit. I try to get people who value that, because I value that. And even if they don't value that, I make them value that when they're working with me. If they're going to come to MY meeting, they're going to come to MY meeting on time...or don't come to my meeting. Because I'm not going to have a meeting if I don't think it's important. The people who work with me are going to work within that context, because I don't want to have to fight with them over this issue. It is a reasonable expectation. If you have a reasonable expectation, make them clearly known to people. It's unfair to hold people to expectations that haven't been clearly defined.

People who are able to keep short accounts with themselves

You want people who are able to keep short accounts with themselves, so if they blow it, they don't spend a month in a funk. You want to make sure they don't have a lot of conflict with all these people in the body, because they are unwilling to forgive. And they need to keep those short accounts with you. You will make mistakes. You will blow it. You will not do things right. And you don't want people around reminding you of everything that you've done wrong over the last year. If you keep short accounts with them, they'll keep short accounts with you.

Article 5: Ten Things I've Learned About Raising Up Worship Leaders

By Andy Park

1. Don't be intimidated by the idea of training others

I like the "Five Step Discipleship model" I learned from John Wimber:

- A. Lead worship with a worship leader in training in attendance.
- B. Have that person play alongside you while you lead.
- C. Have that person lead while you play alongside him or her.
- D. Talk about the worship time afterward.
- E. Finish the process by letting them lead alone.

As long as you're a page ahead of the people you're leading, you have something to say!

2. Be unselfish

Be committed to building god's kingdom, not your own. If there's only one weekly meeting in your church, you might have to share your space! Co-lead with an apprentice. Gradually increase his or her levels of responsibility.

3. Choose people who have a well-rounded worship life and Christ-like Character

Worship leaders have more authority when their lives match their songs. Outstanding worshippers in the Bible are also noted for their acts of service to God. Furthermore, when the church sees someone who is "going for it" in God's kingdom they are more willing to follow that person in worship.

4. Choose people who risk and have a good track record

At the Anaheim Vineyard, we have a gifted worship leader named Mike Kinnen. Mike spearheaded worship in a local church plant. He had lots of responsibilities that were new to him, like raising up a worship band and worship with a P.A. system. Then, he raised up other worship leaders and left them doing it in his place. I like to work with risk-takers who don't quit even when the going gets tough.

5. Choose people who have "bought in" to your ministry

You can't lead people that don't want to follow you. The most fruitful mentoring relationships I've have are those in which there is mutual admiration between the two parties. If a person has the skills, experience, knowledge, perspective and character that I admire, I'll have a reason to pursue them.

6. Choose people that have well-rounded skills

The best worship band leaders are good pastors and leaders. Worship team members need to be cared for as people, not just deployed as musicians. If a young leader has a compassionate heart and is a good people person, he or she can be trained to pastor.

7. Release people into positions of responsibility gradually

Give someone a little responsibility and see how it goes. It is important to determine if the worship trainee is "faithful with the little things." Even if God speaks to you powerfully about a person's calling, a proven track record will confirm what God has shown you before you give someone a permanent position.

8. Use the three arenas for training: the classroom, worship time, and personal meetings

A. The classroom

The basics of worship and worship leading can be taught once or twice a year through a six or eight session course. Worship leaders take more advance course once they are leading. When they find out what they don't know, they're more teachable.!

B. The worship time

Observe the person leading. Give specific feedback about skills. Sometimes I only address one issue because I don't want to weigh down a new leader with negative input.

C. Personal meetings

You'll see more output from your worship leaders if you care for them personally. I take people with me whenever I go on ministry trips.

9. Expose people to other training resources

Nobody I've trained has learned everything they know from me. For those who have a hard time attending training events, there are books, videos and tapes.

10. To keep giving, you have to keep growing

I take courses and seek out new material that will inform and inspire me. Unless I have fresh input, I get stale. Most importantly, make time to pray and worship by yourself. Go directly to the well of living water, and let him speak to you. This puts gas in your tank and gives you the right perspective on all your responsibilities.

Excerpted from *Worship Update*, 3rd Quarter 1997

WORSHIP EVALUATION FORM

Worship Leader

Critic

General Impression <i>(fill in your comments)</i>
1. Visual Presentation:
2. Body Language:
3. Vocal Communication:
4. Creativity:
5. Unity of Worship Elements:
6. Transition Between Elements:
7. Audience Participation:
8. Involvement of the Worship Team:
9. Theological Balance: * Relational/reverential * God as near/God as far * Man-centered/God-centered * God as love/God as holy * Edification of man/Exaltation of God
10. Relevance to Life:
11. Evidence of Participation:

Specific Elements

1. Call to Worship

Appropriate A B C
 Creativity A B C

2. Welcome and Notices

Enthusiasm A B C
 Creativity A B C

3. Prayer

Prepared A B C
 Relevant A B C

4. Songs

Selection A B C
 Flow A B C
 Creativity A B C

The Ministry Team

1. The Worship Band

Musical Excellence A B C
 Starting of Songs A B C
 Ending of Songs A B C

2. Leader Sensitivity to:

Church Leadership A B C
 Audience A B C

Key

A - Very Good
 B - Room to Improve
 C - Poor