

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Praise and Worship: Syllabus

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CLASS #1:

- I. Introduction.
- II. The Life of Worship.
- III. God Centered Worship:
 - A. Idolatry.

CLASS #2:

- III. God Centered Worship (cont.):
 - B. Man Centered Worship.
 - C. God Centered Worship.
- IV. Biblical Survey of Worship Themes.

CLASS #3:

- V. Worship and Celebration in the Church.

CLASS #4:

- VI. Worship and Redemptive Witness.
- VII. Practical Reflections about Worship.

CLASS #5:

- VII. Practical Reflections about Worship (cont.).
 - Exam.

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Praise and Worship: Exam

Possible 20 Point Questions

- 1) Why does the worship of God often tend toward being man-centered (pp. 116, 117)?
- 2) Describe and explain the transition in worship from the Old Testament to the New Testament by referring to Old and New Testament images of worship. Use various scriptures (pp. 120-123).
- 3) Choose six forms of worship, describe them, and defend their validity through the use of various scriptures (pp. 127-133).

Possible 10 Point Questions

- 1) Use one scripture to describe how on a universal/creational level existence is associated with a worshipful response to God (p. 108).
- 2) In one sentence, write a summary definition of 'worship' (p. 110).
- 3) State and describe two kinds of idol worship (p. 113).
- 4) List five elements or ingredients of corporate worship. No references necessary (p. 124).
- 5) List four requirements for those who are in the music ministry. No references necessary (p. 137).
- 6) List three basic functions of a worship leader (pp. 144, 145).

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I. Course Introduction.¹

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Call to Worship

After this I looked and there before me was a multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God...

John, The Apostle
(Revelation 7:9-11)

A. Worship: All of Creation’s Reason for Being.

1. Have you ever asked yourself: “Why did God make the world? Why did He make man? Why did He create me? Where does life lead?”
2. Many men, including great philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle have asked the same questions. This curiosity about our origin, existence, and destiny is very normal.
3. Have you ever wondered why Jesus came to earth as a man, lived sinlessly, died amongst criminals, was buried, resurrected, and ascended back to heaven?
4. These are the critical questions with which the Bible concerns itself most. Incidentally, the answer to those questions are found in one single concept in the Scriptures — **worship**.

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B. Course Objectives.

1. To introduce a God-centered view of worship, its elements, and forms. This is contrasted with the tendency toward man-centered and idolatrous approaches to God.
2. To make distinctions between a lifestyle of worship and the corporate expression of celebration. In other words, there is a difference between the praise and celebration which occurs when gathered together, and the practical living of a life of worthiness toward God.
3. To understand the important and sobering distinctions between worship within Biblical boundaries, and what may be considered outside of these Biblical boundaries.
4. To see the relationship between the worship and the work of witness in the world.
5. To provide practical guidelines to consider when organizing corporate celebrations of worship and praise.

II. The Life of Worship: The Normal State of Created Things.

A. Worship is Normal for all Created Things.

1. Creation's reason for existence is tied to a worshipful response to God, our Creator, and Redeemer.
2. Examine the following Scriptures to see this fact:
 - a. Universal/Creational Level (Ps 19:1-4). If there were no man ever to lift a voice of adoration to God, it would be enough that the heavens forever declare His worthiness and glory.
 - b. Global level (Rev 5:8, 9). The culmination of all world history is a multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi-national celebration of the worthiness of the Creator.
 - c. National/State Level (Ps 2:10-12). Leaders of nations and peoples are warned because they are going against the purpose for which they were authorized to serve.

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- d. The Vital Church Level (Acts 2:4-12). The first distinctive of the newly Spirit-baptized church was its remarkable multi-linguistic worship of God unto witness and redemption.
- e. The Individual Worshiper (Jn 4:23, 24). Jesus removed all doubt about what God was seeking in the earth—true worshipers. His very mission was linked with finding true worshipers.

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Discussion Point

Use the previous concepts to discuss how the worship of God is called for at all levels of life (Individual, Church, Nation, Global, Universal).

B. Describing the Life of Worship.

1. A description of worship is not immediately obvious.
2. Are all of the following considered as worship? Hymns, choruses, shouts of celebration, kneeling in reverence, dancing, hands raised, and silence?
3. Is worship more fundamental than its many forms?
4. As we consider worship in global perspective, it is critical that the Scriptures be our guide. This is the only way to understand the many cultural expressions of the forms of worship.

C. Biblical Descriptions of Worship.

1. There are at least six Greek words for worship (there are few differences between the Hebrew and Greek renderings of the word):
 - a. Proskuneo, which means to ‘kiss toward,’ is used most. It can be translated, ‘to adore.’
 - b. Sebezomai, which means an act of reverential awe or respectful reverence.
 - c. Eusebeo, which means a life practice of godliness, or piety.

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- d. Therapeuo, which literally means to heal by manipulation with the hands. In Acts 17:25 such worship—often practiced by idolaters—was denied as being a legitimate form of worship to the Living God.
 - e. Latreuo, which means an act of priestly service rendered to a deity.
 - f. Leitourgeo, which means the fulfillment of a representative office of worship.
2. From this linguistic foundation we see that worship affects outward forms and postures, but by looking more closely, we understand that ‘bowing’ and ‘kissing’ are outward responses to inner attitudes of value.
- a. A servant bows to a king because he recognizes the king’s worthy position.
 - b. A man gives a kiss out of a deep inner desire to communicate preciousness to the beloved one.
3. In Summary: Worship is the adoration of God accompanied by reverence - inspired thoughts, words and deeds.

Insert Your Illustration:

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Discussion Point

Discuss and answer any questions related to “The Life of Worship.”

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III. God-Centered Worship: No Other Biblical Option.

Warning Against False Worship:

I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; and will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream...

Amos, the Prophet
(Amos 5:21-24)

A. What is God-Centered Worship?

1. It goes without saying that worship is to be a God-centered activity.
 - a. However, the evidence of this understanding is not always present in many churches.
 - b. There is a carnal tendency in mankind to relax and move toward self-centeredness.
2. God-centered worship is a matter of diligent response to Biblical revelation on church-wide, family, and individual levels.
 - a. As the passage above indicates, worship transcends meeting times, or singing songs, or even orthodox formulations of the truth about God.
 - b. Worship is a life so captivated by God’s valuableness, that the believer responds by “bowing” with their whole life in response to the truth of Scripture by the Spirit’s empowering.

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3. Because of the element of human response in worship, let us examine the requirements for worship that honors God. We will present a contrast of idolatry, man-centered worship and God-centered worship, on a scale of worshipful response.

Use the Following Diagram to Present
a Scale of Worshipful Response



B. Idolatry: When Worship Loses its Way.

1. Worship is the most God intended response in creation. We are most human when we practice the spirit and forms of Godward worship and adoration.
 - a. However, because of this reality, Satan is set directly against true worship. He is committed to corrupting, disrupting, and perverting Biblical worship.
 - b. Due to this assault against worship in the world, it is no wonder that worshipers, and humans in general, sometimes lose their way from God-centered worship.

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2. The Scriptures are absolutely clear regarding one kind of worship, that of idols. In the overall scheme of the world and its religions, this kind of worship is practiced most. Although it may not be called by this name, much of mankind's worshipful response is idolatrous.

a. The definition of idolatry is to worship idols, images, or anything made by the hands, or which is not the Living God revealed in the Scriptures. It involves excessive attachment, veneration, or adoration of anything.

b. There are two kinds of idolatry.

1) Worship of anything made by the hands or imagination of mankind.

a) Images, statues, pictures.

b) Possessions, belongings, wealth, etc.

2) Worship of things not made by man

a) Heavenly bodies (sun, moon, stars).

b) Creation or nature (fire, wind, earth, stone, water).

c) Created living things on earth (man, land, sea animals, or vegetation).

d) Unseen and spiritual beings, elect and evil (angels, demons, ancestors, even saints).

3. Idolatry: Strictly Forbidden Worship.

a. The Scriptures assume that man will worship something, and without guidance will seek to express a worshipful response toward either:

1) Whatever is greater than man (by its appearance, strength, or beauty).

2) Whatever is able to help man meet his needs in this world.

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b. Let us look at several idols in the Bible. What was their appeal?

1) Two forms of Departure from Biblical Worship:

- a) Worship of false Gods (Ex 20:3).
- b) Worship of the True God, with images (Ex 20:4).

2) Examples of idolatry in the Bible:

a) Idols of the Egyptians.

- (1) Venerated the Sun and the River Nile. These were sources of life on which they were dependent.
- (2) Many of their images were drawn from images in the sky, and from within or around the water, (fire, snakes, frogs, crocodiles, bulls, etc.).
- (3) Study the ten plagues of Exodus to see God defeat the Egyptian gods, one by one (Ex 7-11; 23:24).
- (4) Notice the repeated phrase: “That they may know that there is no other God...” (Ex 7:5; 8:10, 19; 9:13; 10:2; 11:7).

b) Idols of the Canaanites.

- (1) This sort of worship involved dehumanizing practices and sacrifices, requiring the sacrifice of life, personal dignity, including child sacrifice, religious prostitution, and snake worship.
- (2) These gods had no moral character to them at all. Human and animal combinations were part of the images. **These represented fertility and ecstatic mystery.**
- (3) Molech, Dagon, Baal, and Ashotrahs, are examples of these (Lev 18:21; Jud 16:23; Jud 2:11-23). ²

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c) Idols of Mesopotamia.

- (1) The people that inhabited the land before, worshipped mountains, springs, trees, and blocks of stone.
- (2) **These represented visible things perceived to be greater than man.**
- (3) An example of this were the “sacred poles,” which Gideon was called to tear down (Jud 6:25-32).

3) Strictly Forbidden: An Abomination to God.

- a) The first two commandments deal with regulated worship—no images, and no substitutes (Ex 20:3, 4). The first four commandments are Godward and worship related.
- b) Believers are commanded to tear down and be aggressive against idols (Jud 6:7-10; 25-32).
- c) Idolatry has a defiling, even dehumanizing effect (Ps 115:8; Rom 1:21-32).
- d) Idolatry, is actually humorous by comparison (Ps 115).

Insert Your Illustration:

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Discussion Point

What forms of idolatry are present in our culture and in some of our churches? What are some of the ways we can resist idolatry and prevent it from entering our churches and households?

C. Man-Centered Worship.

1. It is no surprise to readers of the Bible, or readers of church history, that worship often tends to drift away from being God-centered, and becomes man-centered.
2. There are several reasons for this:
 - a. Man's Make-up: The Carnal Tendency.
 - 1) Man has been so created as to be able to transcend time and eternity through the act of worship, or prayer, or through illumination from the Bible.
 - 2) We would think that this tremendous ability would make us more noble, but in fact we tend to prefer the flesh, that which can be seen and that which makes us feel better about ourselves (1 Jn 2:15). We tend towards carnality.
 - 3) In matters of worship, this tendency is evident in man's ability to make the worship experience something which is beneficial to man, and not an offering which is enjoyed by God. (See Cain and Abel Gen 4:1-5).

Insert Your Illustration:

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b. The Carnal Tendency: Adding to God.

- 1) One tendency seen in the scriptures is adding to what God has allowed. This tendency is based on the notion, “Jesus is not enough.”
- 2) The Colossian and Galation churches were corrected by the Apostle Paul because they departed from true religion by adding features that would make worship more interesting, or “more spiritual” than God had intended (Gal 4:10).

Insert Your Illustration:

c. The Carnal Tendency: Subtracting from God.

- 1) Another tendency is subtracting from what has been intended.
 - a) Undue limitations are placed upon the believer’s worshipful expression in the name of the law.
 - b) Certain worship elements and forms are censured from use, not from a Biblical rule, but from traditions of men, denominational regulations, or cultural preferences.
 - c) The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ time were chastised for this tendency to limit the approach to God (Mt 23:13).

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- 2) In church history, the church at one time prevented common people from reading or hearing the scriptures in their own language at worship gatherings. Some denominations still allow no musical instruments, others disallow certain instruments and forms of expression.

Insert Your Illustration:

Discussion Point

Use the previous concepts to discuss the ways in which the problems of man-centered worship (exalting man, adding to God, subtracting from God) are present in our churches. How do we resist or correct the presence of man-centered worship?

D. God-Centered Worship.

1. Having looked closely at idolatry and man-centered expressions of worship, it is very easy to see why it is important to focus all affection, reverence, and adoration toward God. Because we become like what we worship (Ps 115:8).
2. In this respect, it is important to understand that worship is not the prerogative of musicians, or poets, but is the first work of every believer and is under the domain of theology, not hymnology.

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Class Activity:

Consider these attributes of God³ in light of Jesus words:

“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.” (Jn 4:23, 24).

For each of the following, discuss these questions: How should we respond to these attributes in worship? What forms are worthy?

1. God is in His being - an Invisible, Personal, Living, and Active Spirit (Jn 4:24; 1 Tim 6:16).
2. God is Metaphysically - Self-Existent, Eternal, and Unchanging (Ex 3:14; Jms 1:17).
3. God is Intellectually - Faithful, Omniscient, and Wise (1 Jn 1:9; 3:20).
4. God is Ethically - Holy, Righteous, and Loving (Hab 1:13a; Ps 5:4; 1 Jn 4:8).
5. God is Emotionally - Hating Evil, Long-Suffering, and Compassionate (Nah 1:3; Ex 34:6; Lam 3:22).
6. God is in Existence - Free and Omnipotent (Ps 115:3; Mk 14:36a).
7. God is Relationally - High in Sovereign Majesty, Near in Saving Care (Ps 89:11-15; 113:4-8; 145:18).

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IV. Biblical Survey of Worship Themes.

A. Introduction.

1. This section covers various themes in the Scriptures regarding man's worshipful response to God.
2. It also describes the transition from the temple-centered worship life of Old Testament believers, to the life of the individual believer, the new temple of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

B. Worship in the Old Testament Perspective.

1. In many ways, the features of worship in Israel represent Old Testament types of New Testament fulfilled realities.
2. The following features provide a description of worship in the Old Testament.
 - a. The Altar: Localized Meeting Place with the 'Presence of God.'
 - 1) In Israel, the altar represented the place of meeting between heaven and earth.
 - 2) In the earliest chapters of Genesis, there is a sense that Able and Cain understood the centrality of worthy and unworthy approaches to the presence of God.
 - 3) Abraham, the father of the faithful, demonstrates his personal priorities every time he moves—he builds an altar.
 - 4) Note how his sons, and grandsons imitate his good example (Gen 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 22:9; 26:25; 33:20; 35:1, 3, 7).

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b. The Sacrifice: The Lesson of the Exchanged Life.

- 1) For centuries, Israel presented its daily offerings of blood, flesh, and grains. These represented life and God's blessing of fruitfulness.
- 2) Annually, solemn assemblies atoned for daily sin corporately, which instilled the lesson that life is in the blood, and only by substitutionary death can sin be atoned for (Read all of Lev 16 for the Annual Ceremony of Atonement; Heb 10:1-3).

c. The Ceremonial Regulations: The Lesson of Holiness and Order.

- 1) Leviticus 10 teaches a perpetual lesson about God's view of man's approach to Him. He is to be regarded as holy by those who approach Him. He is to be revered.
- 2) The ceremonial regulations in the Old Testament, are revelations of mercy. Man tends to relax the standards of holiness, or make them more restricting than God intends—both are errors—much to his own peril. (Compare Lev 10:1-11 with Acts 5:1-11).

d. The Tent of Meeting: The Lesson of Access and Witness.

- 1) The presence of a traveling tent of worship is the picture of access to God. It is a compassionate offer to man. It says, "Come and know the True God." The message was to Israel, and it was to the surrounding nations.
- 2) It is interesting to follow the path of Israel's wandering. They visited most every nation between Egypt and Canaan. Was God offering Himself to the nations? (Discuss the implications of Ps 105: especially 1, 2 and 13).

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- e. The Music of Israel: The Lesson of Heartfelt Celebration.
 - 1) The Psalms represent the pure hearts of worshipers. They seem to sing with love, adoration, appreciation, and joy.
 - 2) They also express fear, failures, forgiveness, and pain.
 - 3) In them, and other music of Israel, we learn to give ourselves to God in worship. Many forms of worship are sanctioned throughout the Psalms.
- f. The Priestly Order: A Shadow of Christ the Substance.
 - 1) The presence of a priestly class in the Old Testament is a shadow of a Greater Priest in the New Testament, even Christ.
 - 2) It also foreshadows a class of servants at God's altar, the church (Heb 9:11; Rev 5:10).

Discussion Point

Promote further discussion of how these Old Testament features of worship relate to an understanding of our New Testament provisions in Christ.

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C. Worship in the New Testament Perspective.

1. The New Testament completes in substance what was only a shadowy promise in the Old Testament.
2. The Old Testament images offer understanding of New Testament realities.
 - a. The New Altar of God: The Redeemed Heart of Man (1 Col 1:27; 1 Cor 3:16).
 - b. The New Exchanged Life: Our Reasonable Service of Worship (Rom 12:1, 2).
 - c. The New Ceremonial Law: Regulated by Spirit and Truth (Jn 4:20-24).
 - d. The New Meeting Place: Man, the Temple in the Nations (Acts 16:25-30; 1 Pt 2:5).
 - e. The Music of New Israel: Expression of the Spirit's Presence (Eph 5:18, 19).
 - f. The New Priesthood: Christ, the High Priest; All believers, the Priesthood (Heb 3:1-6, 9:11; 1 Pt 2:5, 8, 9).

Discussion Point

Discuss how our worship would stay more God-centered if we allowed these New Testament perspectives to be the focal point of our worship life. How can you incorporate these perspectives into your church's worship?

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V. Worship and Celebration in the Church: Elements, Form and Substance.

A. Elements of Worship and Celebration.

1. The elements of the corporate worship experience are derived from the Bible. These elements are derived from examples in the New Testament.
2. They appear as expected occurrences in a normal fellowship of believers.
3. The spirit of each of these elements is in the context of a celebration of Christ's recent triumph at Calvary, over sin, death, and the grave.
 - a. The Word of God expounded and illumined (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 14:26).
 - b. The Lord's Supper or Breaking of Bread (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 11:23-34).
 - c. Baptism of Believers (Mt 28:19; Acts 2:41).
 - d. Gathering For Fellowship (Acts 2:42; Heb 10:24).
 - e. Praise and Musical Celebration (Lk 24:53; 1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19).
 - f. Making Offerings (Acts 4:34, 35; 1 Cor 16:1, 2).

Discussion Point

Are the previous concepts the normal occurrences of your church's gatherings?
Discuss the need for us to follow the scriptural model provided for us.
Discuss the potential dangers of drifting away from these scriptural descriptions.

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B. Other Quality Considerations: The Actual Gathering.

1. In the Bible there are descriptions that are not necessarily mandated to be a part of a worship gathering, but they seem to characterize New Testament worship.
2. Consider these descriptions of the gatherings.
 - a. Unified spiritually/materially (Acts 2:44, 4:32).
 - b. In the Temple; house to house (the church was localized).
 - c. Feelings of joy; awe, fear, conviction (Acts 2:43, 46, 47; 1 Cor 14:24, 25).
 - d. Supernatural events occurred (Acts 2:43; Jms 5:13-16).
 - e. All things were in common; meals together, property sold (Acts 2:44-46).
 - f. Supporting structures of service (Acts 6:1-7).
 - g. Met daily, or at least weekly (Acts 2:26; 1 Cor 16:1, 2; Heb 3:13).

Discussion Point

Do our gatherings reflect the New Testament descriptions?
If not, should we be concerned? Discuss this issue.

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C. Form and Substance of Worship and Celebration.

1. Let us now turn our attention toward the most external aspects worship, its form. It is important to relate these features to their more important internal factors.
2. Here are several factors to keep in mind as the attention in this study turns toward the working-out of a theology of worship and celebration.
 - a. Forms are shadows of the reality: Christ is the substance (Col 2; Heb 10:1-3). This is true in our worship practices too. Our expressions of worship must have an eternal nature about them (Rev 5:8-10).
 - b. Forms may change between cultures, but the substance remains; which is Christ.
 - 1) Jesus corrected the Samaritan woman who sought to argue about the “correct” forms and locations for worship.
 - 2) He challenged her thinking by de-emphasizing cultural preferences, and emphasizing eternal realities.
 - 3) He told her that the Father in Heaven was seeking worshipers who knew the Spirit’s presence (the One who points to Christ) and truth (the nature, word and revelation of Christ). (See Jn 4:20-24).
 - c. Forms (both individual and corporate responses) are regulated by Biblical truth, not human invention or misguided zeal (Lev 10:1-3; read about Uzzah’s zealous, but fatal error in this respect).

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d. Form follows purpose and function.

- 1) It is important to consider this simple rule. Asking the question “why” can be one of the most important reflexes of Biblical thinkers.
- 2) Since worship style is often a matter of certain traditions, denominations, or cultural expressions, the honest Christian is at liberty to consider the reason why a certain form is preferred or practiced.
- 3) This is the practical implication of Jesus’ words to the Samaritan woman (Jn 4:24).

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D. Forms of Worship and Praise.

1. **Standing** (see 1 Kings 8:22; 1 Chron 23:30; 2 Chron 7:6; Ps 134:1; 135:2; Rom 5:2). It is out of respect that we stand, and to show that we are attentive to the Lord.
2. **Kneeling** (see Ps 95:6; Acts 20:36; 21:5; Phil 2:10). We kneel as an act of reverence and submission.
3. **Bowing Down** (see Is 45:23; Ps 95:6; 2 Chron 20:18; Rom 14:11).

These three Hebrew words for worship mean to bow:

- a. Shachah - used 171 times.
- b. Qadad - used 15 times.
- c. Kara - used 30 times.

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4. **Dancing** (see Ex 15:20; Ps 30:11; 149:3; 150:4; Judg 11:34; 1 Sam 18:6-7; 21:11; 29:5; 2 Sam 6:14-16; 1 Chron 15:29; Jer 31:4,12, 13; Luke 15:25; Mt 11:17; Luke 7:32).
 - a. The Greek and Hebrew words that are translated as “rejoice” mean to spin, spring, leap, and jump for joy.
 - b. Dance is usually associated with worship and joy, but also has significance for spiritual warfare when the enemy is “under foot” (a sign of victory: see Ps 47:1-3).
 - c. There is much more to the dance than “hopping up and down”, which has become popular in North American Charismatic churches. This is valid, but there is a lot more.
 - d. The following is a brief word study of the Hebrew words for dance and rejoice.
 - 1) Gul; Gil: means to spin around; rejoice; fear; be glad; joyful; to go in a circle. (See, Ps 2:11; 9:14; 53:6; 89:16; 118:24; Is 9:3; 61:10.)
 - 2) Chul; Chil: means to twist or whirl (in a circular or spiral manner); to dance; to turn around; to writhe in pain; to travail (childbirth) (See Deut 2:25; Ps 29:9; 55:4; Is 13:8; Jer 4:19; Ezek 30:16.)
 - 3) Karar: means to dance; move in a circle (see 2 Sam 6:14).
 - 4) Rekad: means to stamp, to spring about (wildly or for joy, dance, jump, leap, skip). (See 1 Chron 15:29; Ps 29:6; 114:4,6; Is 13:21.)
 - 5) Dalag: means to spring or leap (see 2 Sam 22:30; Ps 18:29; Is 35:6).
 - 6) Pazaz means to leap; to bound; to be light or agile (see Gen 49:24; 2 Sam 6:16).
 - 7) Chagag: means to move in a circle; specifically to march in a sacred procession; to observe a festival, keep a solemn feast. (See 1 Sam 30:16; Ex 5:1; Lev 23:41; Ps 42:4.)

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e. The following is a brief word study of the Greek words for dance and rejoice.

- 1) Agalliao: means to jump for joy, be exceedingly glad, rejoice greatly (see Lk 10:21; Mt 5:12; John 5:35; Acts 2:26; 1 Pet 4:13; Heb 1:9).
- 2) Hallomai; Exallomai: means to jump, leap, spring up (see Acts 3:8).
- 3) Skirtao: means to jump, leap for joy (see Lk 6:23; 1:41,44).
- 4) Choros: means a ring or round dance chorus (see Luke 15:25).
- 5) Orcheomai: means to dance. (See Mt 11:17; 14:6; Mark 6:22; Luke 7:32 - it is the Greek word used in the “Septuagint” translation of the Old Testament to describe David in 1 Chron 15:29; 2 Sam 6:21.)

f. Dancing in worship.

- 1) Festival dancing.
 - a) A time of fellowship or celebration.
 - b) “Able-Meholah” (1 Kgs 19:16) is called the meadow of the dance. It was a place set aside for festivals and feast days.
 - (1) Elisha was born there.
 - (2) We might say that “double portion” ministries were born out of worship.
- 2) Prophetic interpretation.
 - a) In Ex 15:21, Miriam danced after the song of Moses.
 - b) In 1 Sam 18:6, 7, David was met by songs and dances that were prophetic to his later ministry.

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5. **Laughing** (see Ps 126:2). It is used as a way of showing and releasing joy.
6. **Shouting** (see 1 Sam 4:5; Ezra 3:11; Ps 5:11; 32:11; 35:11; 47:1; Zeph 3:14; Zech 9:9). It is used as a sign of triumph, a release of joy and exultant praise and worship, and as a weapon of war.
7. **Loud Noise** (see 2 Chron 20:19; Neh 9:4; Ps 98:4; Luke 17:15; Acts 14:10,11; Rev 5:12). It is used to proclaim an extreme and dynamic feeling.
8. **Solemn Sound & Procession** (see Ezek 46:9; Ps 92:3). It is used in a ceremony and is sacred, sober, and slow in movement or action.
9. **Banners** (see Ex 17:15; Ps 20:5; 60:4; Is 13:2).
 - a. God is revealed as “Jehovah-nissi” (The Lord my banner).
 - b. There are many truths associated with “lifting up” the banner of the Lord.
 - 1) When Jesus is “lifted up” He will draw all men unto Himself (Jn 12:32).
 - 2) It represents a weapon of war (see Is 31:9; Jer 4:6; 50:2; 51:12, 27).
 - 3) It is an instrument of worship and healing.
10. **Singing.**
 - a. There are over 120 references to the use of singing in worship.
 - 1) It is but one form of worship.
 - 2) Any mood of the heart can be expressed in song.
 - b. New Song (see Ps 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; Is 42:10; Rev 5:9; 14:3). This is the song of the Lord.

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c. Responsive Singing.

Notes —

- 1) This was a fundamental form of singing in Israel.
- 2) The songs were probably used to “teach.”
- 3) There are seven types in scripture.
 - a) Two companies/choirs (Neh 12:31,40,42; Ezra 3:11). This is a “planned” use of this form.
 - b) One to another (1 Sam 18:7; 21:11; 29:5; Is 6:3-4).
 - (1) One solo being responded to by another solo.
 - (2) The Song of Solomon could have been sung this way.
 - c) One to a group (Ex 15:21). Also the titles of Ps 44, 47, 99, indicate the possibility that they were sung by the sons of Korah in response to the chief musician.
 - d) Leader to the congregation (Ps 107; 136; and 106; 118). The congregation singing the written response.
 - e) Singers to dancers (Ex 15:21). To interpret the song with the dance.
 - f) Singers to instruments (Is 38:20). The instruments could play with the singers or in response to them.
 - g) One generation to another (Ps 145:4). A way to teach children about the praise and the ways of the Lord.
- 4) There are three ways to form the responsive song.
 - a) To develop a theme (Song of Solomon).
 - b) With an echo of all or part of each statement.
 - c) With the question and answer. These need to be practiced.

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11. **Instruments** (Ex 15:20; Ps 71:22; 150:3-6; 144:9; Rev 5:8).

- a. Instruments need to use all the elements of music in order to better express the word of the Lord.
 - 1) Rhythm: This can add to the “feel” of the word.
 - 2) Timbre: This is the effective use of the unique sounds of each instrument. It can emphasize the mood.
 - 3) Dynamics: It can also emphasize the mood. It is more than just the volume.
- b. All types of instruments were used in praise and worship.
 - 1) Tambourines (Jer 31:4).
 - 2) Stringed instruments, pipes, and cymbals (Ps 150:4,5).
 - 3) Horns and trumpets (Ps 98:6).
 - 4) Harps (Ps 33:2).
 - 5) A complete symphony (2 Sam 6:5)!

12. **Lifting of Hands** (there are 12 variations in the Scriptures).

- a. Supplication - a prayer of asking humbly for something (see Ps 28:2; 88:9, Lam 2:19).
- b. Repentance - a prayer of penitence (see Lam 3:40,41; Ezra 9:5,6; Job 11:13).
- c. Praise and Blessing - (see Ps 63:4; Neh 8:6; Ps 134:2).
- d. Worship - (see Ps 44:20).
- e. Thirsting and Seeking after God - (see Ps 143:6).
- f. Form of Prayer (see 1 Tim 2:8, “lifting up holy hands”; 1 Kings 8:22,54; 2 Chron 6:12,19; Ps 141:2).

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- g. Warfare (see Ex 17:11,12).
 - h. Divine Power (see Ex 9:15; 10:21,22; Num 20:11).
 - i. Meditation (see Ps 119:48).
 - j. To Bless Others (see Luke 24:50; Lev 9:22).
 - k. Making a Solemn Declaration or Oath (see Duet 32:40; 14:22; Is 62:8; Dan 12:7).
 - l. A Sign of the Heart. (see Heb 12:12; Neh 8:6; Job 11:13; Lam 3:41).
13. **Clapping of the Hands** (there are seven variations mentioned in scripture).
- a. Rejoicing (see Is 55:12; Ps 98:8).
 - b. Coronation (see 2 Kings 11:12).
 - c. Triumph (see Ps 47:1; Ezek 25:6).
 - d. Anger (see Num 24:10; Ezek 21:14; 21:17).
 - e. Contempt (see Lam 2:15; Job 27:23; 34:37; Nah 3:19; Exec 25:6, 7. This can also be used in spiritual warfare.
 - f. Sorrow (see Exec 6:11; 21:14).
 - g. Making a Pledge (see Prov 11:21).

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VI. Worship and Redemptive Witness.

Author's Comment:

There is a small church which has two signs over its door. As you enter you see the words, **enter to worship**. When you leave the church there is another sign which says, **exit to serve**. The signs might be simple, but there is a great deal of good theology written over those church doors—Biblical worship actually produces acts worthy of God's honor.

A. The Message and Aim of Witness.

1. Perhaps few have thought of evangelism in terms of worship—worshippers living lives that reproduce other worshippers.
2. In the scene around the throne, there are worshippers from every tribe, tongue, and nation, from all of history. The underlying reality is that these people, led by the Holy Spirit at particular times, each influenced some others to be turned towards their God. (Consider Daniel 6:10-28; Acts 2:47 and the role that worshipful and celebrative living plays in the events.)
 - a. Celebrating our Relationship with a Mighty God (Ex 15).
 - b. Celebrating our Rightful Place; King and Bowing Servants (Rev 5:8-10).
 - c. Celebrating to Dethrone Dehumanizing gods/idols (Ps 149).

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B. The Culminating Event: The Throne-ward Gaze.

1. Worship is perhaps one of the few human acts that requires the total person—spirit, body, and might.
2. It is also one of the few acts of mankind that transcends the bounds of time. In every glimpse into Heaven, we see spiritual beings fixed upon a central object of worship—the Reigning Lord Upon the Throne.
3. The vision of God causes spontaneous response of the highest of praise and the most reverential and celebrative postures of honor, love and joy. The Scriptures from beginning to end, portray the focus of history—to aim toward the recognition of His supreme worthiness.

Discussion Point

Study and discuss the following passages. Look for similarities and differences. Notice that Him who sits on the throne is at the center of all attention, praise, and effort. (Ezek 1:4-28; Is 6:1-6; Rev 4:8-11).

VII. Practical Reflections about Worship.

Author's Comment:

It has been said: “We cannot achieve the anointing and blessing of God through our planning and preparation, but by failure to plan and prepare we can prevent such anointing and blessing” (anonymous).

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A. Organizing for Excellence. In this final section, the practical matters regarding the coordination required for worship are presented.

1. The Worshipers: Spiritual Preparations.

- a. In one true sense, worship cannot be led. Music and people can be orchestrated, and moods can be created through the influence of a few technicians, but worship is the individual response of a believer to the revelation of God.
- b. If the believer has not prepared through personal reflection, then worship will at best be sentimental, or purely external demonstrations.

2. The Worship Service: Liturgies and Celebrations.

- a. Worship transcends liturgical preferences, styles, musical expertise, and the cultures which determine these. However, every corporate expression of worship must be coordinated in some way, even if minimally. This coordinated approach to God is called liturgy.
- b. In some churches, liturgy may be very formal with an emphasis on reverential approach. Others may be more informal, with the emphasis on celebration. Perhaps balance is the best aim as individual worshipers reflect different moods, needs, and understandings.

3. Decency and Order: Celebration, within Bounds.

- a. Regardless of whether the worshipful response of believers is characterized by formality or informality, the Bible teaches that some practices are outside its bounds and others are within its boundaries. The scriptures must dictate, not our tradition, preference, culture, or style.
- b. In all cases, the gathering should be conducted by authorized persons in decency and order so that visitors might discern God in the midst, and thereby be converted (1 Cor 14:26). This is celebration, within boundaries.

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4. Worship, According to the Glory Due Him.

- a. Our worship, regardless of our styles and forms, will be in direct proportion to how we value God. We never rise above our view of Him.
- b. This is to call to deep reflection upon God in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. There is no other source for valid worship, but the rich reservoir of the Word.

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B. A two-part Appendix for Worship Leaders.

APPENDIX PART I

Use the following outline as time allows and as it is applicable to your situation.

A. Biblical Guidelines for Worship Leaders and Teams.

1. The Musicians displayed a life of righteousness (see 1 Chron 15:7; 2 Chron 5:12; 29:15; Neh 12:30).
 - a. They wore a garment of white linen. This fine white linen signified a life of holiness.
 - b. They were sanctified and purified. This is also a need for the musician today.
 - 1) To keep themselves set aside for the purposes of the Lord.
 - 2) To keep themselves pure and undefiled from the things of the world. In the restoration of Nehemiah's time, the musicians were consecrated by an oath to the ministry (see Neh 10:28-39).
 - c. They separated themselves and their families from the world and unto the law of God.
 - 1) They were committed to their "brethren."
 - 2) They were committed to their leaders.
 - 3) They were committed unto the Lord and His Sabbath rests.

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- 4) They were committed to help in the practical needs of the church.
- 5) They were committed to the tithes and other offerings.
- 6) They were committed to be committed!
 - a) This might mean playing or going to a practice or prayer meeting when we do not feel like it.
 - b) It might be good for the members of the team to be “ordained” into the ministry in view of the congregation and with the laying on of hands by the pastors/elders.
2. The Musicians Must Keep a Teachable Spirit (see 1 Chron 15:22; 25:6-8; Eph 4:11-16; 1 John 2:27).
 - a. They must have a humble spirit that can rejoice in correction and instruction. God gives certain people musical abilities. However, these abilities must be developed. Thus, the musician must be teachable.
 - b. Musicians should take lessons and other classes that can improve and complement their talent.
3. Faithfulness is Essential in the Life of the Musician (see 1 Chron 6:32; 16:37; 2 Chron 7:6; 8:14; Neh 12:45).
 - a. There was continual ministry before the ark until it came into its final resting place (Solomon’s temple). This was a span of about thirty years.
 - b. The worship was continual. We can not just play our instruments when we want to. We need to be ready to play our instruments every day if it is necessary.

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4. A Musician Must Be a Person Who Desires Unity (see 2 Chron 5:13; 1 Thes 3:12; Eph 4:3).

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- a. As the team prays and practices together they should be able to produce “one sound.” Harmony is essential in music. Harmony in the music depends on the harmony between the musicians.

- 1) There is no place for “competition” in the music team.
- 2) Musicians can cover each other’s mistakes in an attitude of love if there is unity between them.

- b. Unity and peace are found in the Spirit.

- 1) Practice and prayer as a team helps to develop a sensitivity to this spiritual unity.
- 2) It will also develop the spiritual discernment needed to meet the needs of the congregation and to maintain a smooth flow in the service.

5. The Directors or the “Chief Musicians” Were Appointed (see 1 Chron 15:16-27; 16:5; 25:1-8; 2 Chron 5:12; Neh 12:42).

- a. In fact, all the musicians were appointed. They were not “elected.”

- b. There was an order (hierarchy of authority) and organization of musicians.

- 1) It allowed someone to be on “worship duty” every hour.
- 2) There was an order of responsibility and authority and covering.
- 3) Twenty four (24) sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun were over 288 singers and musicians. Eventually there were 4000 that were included in this governmental order of the music ministry (see 1 Chron 23:5).
- 4) They cast lots to see when they were to be responsible for ministry.
- 5) There were times when they all played and ministered together.

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c. Much can be learned about the music ministry from the four chief musicians.

1) Asaph: means “a person that gathers” (see 1 Chron 6:39; 15:17; 25:1,2; 2 Chron 20:14; 29:30; 35:15).

a) From his name we can see that it is important for a worship leader to be able to bring unity to the team.

(1) They need to truly love people.

(2) They will need pastoral skills.

b) By his example, he will disciple the team to “gather” the congregation into the presence of the Lord.

2) Heman: means “right-handed; faithful” (see 1 Chron 6:33; 25:5; 2 Chron 35:15; Ps 88). Thus, worship leaders must be faithful.

a) He should be able to disciple the others on the team.

b) Faithfulness is essential for such a “publicly visible” ministry.

3) Ethan-Jeduthon: means “strength; perpetuity; let them give praise” (see 1 Chron 6:44; 25:1-3,6; 2 Chron 5:12; Neh 11:17; Ps 39; 62; 77). The worship leader must be energetic and steadfast in order to be able to consistently lead the team and the congregation in praise.

4) Chenaniah: means “Jehovah has established” (see 1 Chron 15:22, 27). Indeed, the music ministry must be built and powered by the hand of the Lord.

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6. Musicians Were Involved in Other Practical Ministries (see 1 Chron 9:26-33; 25:8-31; 26:29; Neh 11:22).
 - a. They were in charge of the “maintenance department.”
 - b. They handled the finances.
 - c. They opened the gates.
 - d. They were responsible for the vessels and furniture of the sanctuary.
 - e. Some of them helped with legal and governmental needs of the people.
7. There Were Both Male and Female Musicians (see Ezra 2:65; Neh 12:43).

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APPENDIX PART II

The following section is primarily for churches and cultures in which a team is preferred. It will be helpful to those who organize worship services in these churches.

B. Practical Suggestions for Forming a Worship Team:

1. The team must understand the purpose of instruments.
 - a. To minister before the ark (the Lord). (see 1 Chron 16:4, 6, 37.)
 - b. To “praise” the Lord (see 1 Chron 23:5; Ps 33:2; 71:22; 92:1-3; 98:5, 6; 149:3; 150:3-5).
 - c. To accompany the singers (see 1 Chron 15:16).
 - d. To call together the assembly and to lead them (see Num 10:1-10; Ps 81:3; 92:1-3).
 - e. For deliverance and guidance (see 2 Kings 3:15; 1 Sam 10:5, 6).
 - f. For prophesy (see 1 Chron 25:1-3; Ps 49:4).

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- g. A weapon of warfare (see Num 10:2-10; Ps 144:1).
- h. A missionary tool (see Ps 57:7-9).
- 2. You Will Need a “Chief Musician.”
 - a. It is important (although not essential) that they are musicians themselves.
 - b. They need to understand their responsibilities and be given authority over those areas.
 - c. The chief musician must have the following qualities:
 - 1) Spiritual (gifts and callings). (see 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1 :5-9).
 - a) He must be able to handle the word of God correctly.
 - b) He must be a person who has established the disciplines of prayer and faithfulness in his life.
 - c) It should be obvious that his authority is from God.
 - d) He should be a man of proven integrity.
 - e) He needs to have a genuine love for the people (God’s love).
 - f) He should have the ability to bring together the people in unity and harmony.
 - 2) Skill (talents and abilities that can be developed).
 - a) Organizational and leadership skills. He must have the ability to communicate well so that he can define what is expected of each member of the worship team.
 - b) He should have the ability to learn and grow in music skills and its theory.

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3. Pray, Choose, and Appoint or Ordain Musicians.

- a. Pray and ask God for the musicians that you need. Involve the congregation in praying.
- b. Encourage (and when possible provide for) the instruction of young and unskilled musicians. Do not just use unskilled musicians (if at all possible) to fill in the empty spots.
- c. Promote discipleship of the musicians.
- d. Promote development of the musical skills of each one.
- e. Consecrate instruments.
 - 1) Ask the congregation for donations of funds or for old instruments.
 - 2) Set aside church finances for the purchase and repair of instruments.
- f. Develop a regular and organized practice time.
 - 1) Include individual and group prayer.
 - 2) Practice as a team.
 - 3) Learn new songs.
 - 4) Study music theory and try to broaden the style and abilities of each musician.
 - 5) Each member should have his own folder of the notes of the music.
 - 6) Set goals as a group.
- g. Worship team members should come early to services to tune their instruments, pray, and be “prepared” for worship.

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4. Ideas and Suggestions For Worship Leaders.

- a. This is a very difficult job! The worship leader will need to lead (not push) an entire congregation into the presence of God for communication with Him on an individual and corporate level.
 - 1) The congregation will often be tired, sick, discouraged, rebellious, hurting, or not in harmony with each other.
 - 2) The worship leader can not lead the service according to his emotional state. The Lord wants to minister to the congregation, and the worship leader must set aside his personal feelings and become sensitive to the spiritual condition of the congregation as well as the direction of the Holy Spirit. The worship leader, in harmony with the other musicians, can then become a channel of grace.
- b. There are three basic functions of the worship leader, which all have certain requirements.
 - 1) To lead the congregation into the presence of the Lord.
 - a) The worship of God must be a “lifestyle” for the worship leader.
 - b) He must have a deep “knowledge” of God.
 - c) He must have a sensitivity to the direction of the Spirit in order to minister to the needs of the congregation.
 - d) He must be a servant.
 - e) He must have a genuine Godly love for God’s sheep.
 - f) He must avoid having a critical spirit. It is very difficult to lead people in worship whom you consistently criticize.
 - g) He must be punctual and organized in his own life.

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2) To lead and cover the musicians.

- a) His love for the musicians must be genuine and from God.
- b) He should have skill in the various forms of worship (banners, dance, prophecy, new song, etc.).
- c) He should have skill in the basics of music.
 - (1) Pitch.
 - (2) Range.
 - (3) Other music theory.

3) To lead and prepare the congregation for the rest of the service into what the Lord is going to do.

- a) He must be in submissive harmony with the leadership of the church.
- b) He must be sensitive to the flow of the Spirit and the direction that the Lord wants to take the church.

c. Preparation for worship.

- 1) Personal sanctification (see 1 Chron 15:14; 2 Chron 29:14, 15; Neh 12:30; Gal 5:25; 1 Cor 6:11).
 - a) This takes personal effort.
 - b) It should be done on a daily basis.
 - c) A worship leader will lose all anointing without a clean heart.

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- 2) Waiting on the Lord (see 1 Chron 6:32; 2 Chron 7:6; 35:15, 16; Rom 12:7).
 - a) The Lord has a plan for each service.
 - b) He wants to share His plan with us.
 - c) He reserves the right to change it! This is analogous to a preacher who prepares a sermon. While he is preparing He seeks God's guidance. Yet, he is prepared to make changes as the Holy Spirit guides him during the service.
- 3) The worship leader should have a list of the songs that he "plans" to use.
 - a) This list of songs should have a flow with respect to key, theme, rhythm etc.
 - b) There needs to be sufficient practice with the team. The team will develop a style and will begin to flow together. This should be happening during practice sessions.
- d. Various practical points for leading worship.
 - 1) As much as possible, the worship leader needs to be at peace with all the musicians!
 - a) If correction is needed, do it in private.
 - b) Practice with them as much as possible.
 - c) Develop a simple set of hand signals to communicate with the musicians.
 - d) Do not use songs that the team can not play or sing well.

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- 2) Talking should be kept at a minimum during worship.
 - a) Talking can break the “flow of the Spirit.”
 - b) Never correct or rebuke the congregation. This is the work of the pastor. If necessary, share your concerns with him after the service.
 - c) Introductions of people should focus on lifting up Jesus and not the person being introduced.
- 3) Choose songs carefully and skillfully.
 - a) Develop a theme.
 - b) Become skillful in the use of keys, rhythms, and themes to make transitions and to create a flow.
 - c) Have “more” songs prepared than you plan to use.
 - d) Be open and available to the Lord to change things. Be flexible enough to sing a song that you did not plan to sing.
 - e) Never use the service as a time to practice.
 - f) Teach new songs that are consistent with what the Lord is saying to the congregation at that particular time.

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- 4) You need to be strong in your leadership.
 - a) You are the leader (not the congregation or the worship team).
 - b) The first note is the most important. You need to initiate it in an obvious way.
 - c) Most of the time you should sing the melody.
 - d) Try to be comfortable. If it is obvious that you are not, then the congregation will be negatively effected.
 - e) Lead people to the Lord, not to yourself.
- 5) Be sensitive to the Spirit.
 - a) Establish an attitude of praise and thanksgiving before moving on to other areas of ministry.
 - b) Sing a song until you feel in your spirit that the people have received its message in their spirit and are singing it to the Lord.
 - c) Know “when” to enter into a time of prophecy. You should know the Biblical basis for this and other spiritual gifts.
 - d) Do not be afraid of silence.
 - e) Lead the congregation in responding to any prophetic utterance.
 - (1) Rely on the anointing of the pastor. Let him decide if the gifts are “in order.”
 - (2) Establish a means of “silent communication” with the pastor.
 - f) Know when to stop. Submit to time limits.
 - g) Do not try to create too many “peaks.”

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- h) Be sensitive of when to move on after a specific “climax” of ministry.
- 6) Other ideas and suggestions.
 - a) Be aware of “habits and ruts” with respect to the form of worship.
 - (1) Clapping can become meaningless if it is used all the time.
 - (2) Be careful not to fall into a pattern where the same songs always follow each other.
 - b) Encourage the congregation to stand up sometimes (especially in the beginning).
 - c) The responsibilities of the deacons with respect to seating, lighting, sound systems, etc. can have a great effect on the flow of the worship.
 - (1) Be open in communication with these people.
 - (2) Share your needs and your concerns with them.
 - d) Focus the worship on God Himself. Lead the people in singing to Him (not to each other or to themselves).
 - e) Promote a perspective of worship that seeks to please God and minister to Him. Avoid the perspective that focuses on the benefits of the one who is worshipping (people sometimes worship because they want to “feel good” or “spiritual”).
 - (1) Remember, we are worshipping God. It is for Him, from Him, through Him, and to Him. He is the focus.
 - (2) We, of course, will also receive from God during worship. We will be blessed. However, this is not the goal of worship. It is a result.

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Praise and Worship: Endnotes

¹West, Russell W. “Personal Reflections on Worship.” Virginia Beach, Virginia 1994. This course except for those sections credited to Terry Kyle, is derived from personal reflections on excellence in living, worship and witness. It is contributed for use in MOTMOT (2nd Edition) by permission.

¹Kyle, Terry, MOTMOT, 1st Edition. Adapted from a course developed for training institute in Guatemala, 1991. Section II.B, “Forms” and III. retitled “Appendix for Worship Leaders and Teams.” Used by permission.

²Tenny, Merrill C. Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan’s. Entries: Ashtorahs, Baal, Dagon, Idolatry, Molech.

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