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**A STRATEGY FOR IDENTIFYING THE NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF
A WORSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM**

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**A Thesis Project Submitted to
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree**

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

Don Wesley Tuttle

Lynchburg, Virginia

May 1999

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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY FOR IDENTIFYING THE NECESSARY ELEMENTS OF A WORSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999

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A review of current literature indicates that little has been written with respect to the development of a systematic program of study for those desiring to lead worship in the contemporary church. The purpose of this project is to identify the necessary elements of a worship studies program geared toward ministry in the contemporary church. Incorporating Biblical research, field studies, and surveys, the project reviews Biblical principles as well as personal perspectives on worship from individuals in the United States and other parts of the world. Based on this information, recommendations are made regarding principles of worship for the contemporary church. In addition, learning outcome goals for a worship studies program are suggested.

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Wes Tuttle
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Chapter 1

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Jesus said that when believers come to worship Him, they must worship Him in spirit and truth: “the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4: 23-25, RSV). Over the centuries since He made that statement there have been numerous expressions of worship, and there still are today. The question arises, however, as to whether or not all that is called worship is actually carried out in spirit and truth. Too often it appears that when people come together to participate in what is called worship, God the Father is the “unacknowledged host” of the meeting.

In recent years there has come to be a movement called worship renewal in many evangelical churches. This movement has been born out of a desire for people to experience what true worship is. According to Sally Morgenthaler, “We are in the midst of a worship reformation, a movement that continues to address the issue of worship form (relevance) but stretches way beyond for the core of worship itself—biblical substance.”¹ Apparently there are a great number of people who feel that there is more to know and experience in worship than they have known and experienced.

¹ Sally Morgenthaler, Worship Evangelism (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), p. 282.

Worship has been called “the missing jewel” in evangelical churches.² However, week after week there are gatherings which are called “worship services.” Could it be that in a significant number of churches what is called “worship” is really nothing more than “going through the motions?” There is a great need for understanding with respect to what it means to worship God, however, there is very little opportunity in an academic setting for specialized training in leading worship as is expressed in the worship renewal model.³ Therefore, very few candidates are available for the great number of positions open for worship leaders in local churches.

For example, the manager of the church placement office at the Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia reports that among the active requests for placements there are currently 83 requests for worship leaders/ministers of music qualified to lead worship. Yet the placement office has only 4 potential candidates to offer to these churches (April 1999).

There are a number of ministers of music who have gone through traditional fine arts music programs and are presently in local church positions. Many of these have a level of comfort in conducting traditional choir programs and producing huge pageants (e.g. Living Christmas Tree), but do not feel comfortable leading the congregation in worship. The skills necessary to do this were not included in their music program curricula. In other words, while they feel confident in their abilities to direct a choir from a technical

²A.W. Tozer, Worship: The Missing Jewel (Camp Hill, Pa.: Christian Publications, Inc., 1992), p. 1.

³ The *worship renewal model* is defined and discussed on pages 8 and 9.

standpoint, they feel unqualified to lead the congregation into an intimate experience in the presence of God. This topic is likely never addressed even in Christian college/seminary fine arts music programs, much less a secular fine arts music programs.

Others are serving in churches with a more traditional worship style whose leadership would like to move toward a more contemporary or blended worship style, but no one knows how to get the church from where they are to where they want to be. This is not a point of focus in most seminaries. Robert Webber states, "Seminary education does not equip a pastor for leading worship."⁴

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a strategy for the development of a five-course concentration in worship studies with an emphasis on the worship renewal model. To this point there have been three primary ways that people have received training in how to lead worship. The most well known source of training has been that which has been offered by conferences, workshops, and seminars by such organizations as Integrity Incorporated, Maranatha! Music, and Vineyard Ministries. These opportunities have provided for many people an introduction to worship renewal and have served churches well by offering affordable and convenient remedial worship training experiences.

A typical conference will last for one or two days and will address a number of practical topics such as music rehearsal techniques, leading the worship team, the use of midi instruments in worship, sound reinforcement, drama, etc. A few sessions may also

⁴ Robert Webber, Signs of Wonder: The Phenomenon of Convergence in Modern Liturgical and Charismatic Churches (Nashville: Abbott Martyn, 1992), p. 25.

be devoted to more inspirational topics related to what it means to praise and worship God. Topics in this area may include worshipping in spirit and in truth, the heart of a worshipper, and praise in spiritual warfare.

A number of the seminar instructors also make their lessons available through audiocassette, videocassette, books, and magazine articles in such publications as *Worship Leader* and *Psalmist*. Thus, there are some who have never even been to a seminar and have simply learned all they could on their own utilizing these resources.

Some of the benefits of the seminar/workshop approach include the opportunity to fellowship and network with other worship leaders and ministers of music. There is also the inspirational benefit of being encouraged by the experience. Further, attendees can gain information on available resources. Companies that produce worship resources sponsor many of the seminars. However, the greatest weakness of the seminar/workshop approach is that it is typically too short and too shallow to significantly impact the attendees. Due to the number of topics offered in a short span, it is unlikely that any topic is fully developed. Further, in many cases the seminars offer several sessions happening simultaneously on different topics making it impossible for the attendees to get the full benefit of all that is offered. It is difficult at best to internalize all that is covered in what is often such a brief and unsystematic approach to worship leadership training.

Another way that some have received training in leading worship is in the situation where an individual is an apprentice of sorts with someone who is an established worship

leader. In this scenario the worship leader serves as a mentor for the one who is learning and honing his/her skills.

There are some great positives to the mentoring relationship, not the least of which is the personalized instruction and individual attention one receives which is not possible in the seminar approach. However, this approach is lacking due to the fact that there is such a limited number of worship leaders who would be qualified to offer such a relationship. Further, even those who could would not be able to sufficiently train enough worship leaders to meet the need of the numbers of churches seeking trained worship leaders. Finally, as in the seminar approach, this type of training is generally unsystematic and sporadic. The would-be worship leader receives the training in so many bits and pieces. The mentoring relationship can be invaluable, but is better appropriated when pursued in addition to a more systematic approach to the forming and building of worship leaders.

Some have sought to receive training in leading worship in a Bible school or seminary. This is a more systematic approach in terms of class offerings, etc. However, churches are finding that students are generally not receiving the kind of training necessary to meet the needs and/or desires of local churches. In fact, many of those who graduate from Bible school or seminary programs and take worship leader positions in local churches find themselves having to attend the worship conferences/seminars in order to have access to necessary training in areas never addressed in their academic programs. There are at present only a few schools offering graduate work in worship

studies.⁵ However, these programs are geared more toward a theological approach, with little practical training in the worship renewal model.

At other seminaries, there is graduate work available in church music, but most of these programs are more classically oriented. In the author's research, there was little found incorporating contemporary music or the worship renewal model at the seminary level. This is something that must change if the seminary is going to produce graduates truly equipped to serve the contemporary local church. Barry Liesch offers the following:

Ten Reasons Seminaries Should Teach Worship and Music

1. Worship is central to every pastor's ministry.
2. Music is central to evangelical worship, and the new worship has intensified this centrality: music forms 50 percent of the service.
3. A peer relationship between pastors and musicians is demanded in contemporary worship.
4. Worship requires interdisciplinary study. Seminaries, as an institution, are most able to offer the variety of resources needed to provide a platform for teaching worship.
5. Worship aids spiritual formation.
6. Pastors need a theology of worship and music and a better understanding of the arts.
7. Musicians need theological grounding and a better understanding of ministry and the nature of the church.
8. Pastors and musicians should share classes, practicums, and become comfortable with each other prior to their partnership in ministry.
9. Pastors should experience numerous, varied, quality worship experiences in seminaries and have opportunities to design and execute them.
10. Some pastors and musicians have gifts in both preaching and music. Why should only one be developed?⁶

⁵ There is a masters program at Ontario Theological Seminary (Toronto, Canada). There are doctoral programs at Northern Seminary (Lombard, Illinois); The Institute for Worship Studies (Orange Park, Florida); and Golden Gate Theological Seminary (San Francisco, California). Several other schools are considering worship studies programs.

⁶ Barry Liesch, The New Worship: Straight Talk on Music and the Church (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), pp. 238-239.

The fact that adequate training in the area of leading worship has been lacking is evident in that the typical worship experience in local churches is not meeting the needs of those who are attending.

A recent report by Zondervan News Service stated that on a typical Sunday more than 75 million adults attend worship services at Christian churches. Interestingly enough, that is more than triple the number of adults who will watch the Sunday afternoon football games during the regular season.⁷

What is even more amazing is that, according to research by George Barna, people continue to go to church week after week even though they fail to accomplish that which should be the most important reason for attending church: connecting with God. According to Barna, the majority of people attending worship services at Christian churches leave the church without feeling that they have experienced God's presence. In a nationwide survey of people who attend American Christian churches, Barna found that less than one third of those who attend church services feel as though they have truly interacted with God. Tragically, Barna's research revealed that one third of the adults who regularly attend Christian church services say that they have never experienced God's presence at any time during their entire lives!⁸ Other research has shown that only 28% of Americans are very happy with what goes on in church sanctuaries every week,

⁷ "Church Attenders Tend Not To Worship." *Zondervan News Service* [online] (September 98): Available: <http://www.zondervan.com/academic>.

⁸ Ibid.

and there seems to be widespread ignorance among those who attend church regarding what Christian worship actually is.⁹ Barna further states:

A substantial proportion of the worship population—perhaps even a majority of it—appears to be unclear about what it is they venture to the church to accomplish each weekend. This ambiguity, in turn, calls into question the value or validity of having satisfied people’s expectations regarding a worship experience.¹⁰

The goal of the church should be to bring people into a relationship with God whereby they can worship Him in a meaningful way. This is not happening due to the fact that the way most churches are approaching their services is not geared toward bringing people into a participatory worship experience. Sally Morgenthaler states, “We are not producing worshipers in the country. Rather, we are producing a generation of spectators, religious onlookers lacking, in many cases, any memory of a true encounter with God, deprived of both the tangible sense of God’s presence and the supernatural relationship their inmost spirits crave.”¹¹

Therefore, it is highly important that believers be educated as to what true worship is, and be lead into worship by those whom the Lord has called to be worship leaders. There is a need for trained worship leaders who are equipped to bring believers into the presence of God for a meaningful worship experience. However, there is little training available for those who would desire to be worship leaders.

⁹ Morgenthaler, p. 25.

¹⁰ George Barna, *Barna Report 1994-1995*, p. 102.

¹¹ Morgenthaler, p. 17.

The Bible speaks of teaching faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2). It should be a priority in Christian education to provide training and equipping for those who would seek to be worship leaders for their congregations. Those having received Biblical training in the area of leading worship would then be equipped to more effectively lead their congregations in meaningful worship experiences, and to pass along their knowledge and experience to others with a view toward producing true worshipers.

Definition of Terms

When this project addresses a *worship renewal model*, it is referring to a particular approach to worship which has been shown to provide a meaningful worship experience for the participants. Elmer Towns describes six different worship models: (1) the evangelistic church; (2) the Bible expositional church; (3) the renewal church; (4) the body life church; (5) the liturgical church; and (6) the congregational church.¹²

According to Towns:

The strength of the Renewal Church is its emphasis on worship in song and the use of new music for a new generation of worshipers. Much of what has been written on worship in the past has been written from a liturgical perspective. Real worship was generally considered 'high church,' and what evangelicals did was generally considered a poor substitute. The Renewal Church movement has highlighted an alternative to liturgical worship that is apparently effective in bringing people into a deep reverence for God. In doing so, this movement has encouraged other nonliturgical worship-style churches to renew their focus on worshipping God in their Sunday worship services.¹³

¹² Elmer Towns, Putting An End To Worship Wars (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1997), pp. 13-17.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

This is critical due to the fact that as churches experience worship renewal, people are drawn deeper into the presence of God. Because this is the hunger of the heart, to be with God, people are drawn to those churches that have worship programs with which they can connect and where they can experience the manifest presence of God. William Easum states, "If your congregation still worships through long liturgies and stately hymns of earlier generations, the odds are your congregation is declining. If it is growing, it is probably due to a growth in the population."¹⁴ Similarly, John Bisgno makes the following straightforward statement:

Long-haired music, funeral-dirge anthems, and stiff-collared song leaders will kill the church faster than anything the world. Let's set the record straight for a minute. There are no great vibrant, soul-winning churches reaching great numbers of people, baptizing hundreds of converts, reaching masses that have stiff music, seven-fold amens, and a steady diet of classical anthems. None. That's not a few. That's none, none, none.¹⁵

The church must be willing to address these issues without compromising the message of the gospel. There continue to be plenty of opportunities for training and education in traditional and liturgical styles. The vast majority of Christian colleges and seminaries continue to offer those programs. What is greatly needed is a systematic program designed to train and equip worship leaders in the worship renewal model who will have the ability to lead people into the presence of God and a meaningful worship experience.

¹⁴ William Easum, Dancing With Dinosaurs: Ministry in a Hostile and Hurting World (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), p. 81.

¹⁵ Joe Bisagno, as quoted by Easum, p. 85.

Statement of Limitations

The research component of this project focuses on staff members and students from those churches within the evangelical Christian community which would likely consider a conservative evangelical learning institution as a possible site for training in leading worship. The research survey sample included only those who had graduated from or were currently attending an evangelical school. Representatives from a more liturgical or “high church” perspective were not purposefully included in the survey. Had they been included, their responses may have been markedly different.

Also, with respect to the use of the survey instrument as a means of determining what should be included in a worship studies program, the following should be noted. Though some parts of the survey seek to gain information regarding what churches are currently doing as well as what the respondents view as important in the area of worship in a contemporary setting, it is not meant to imply that worship begins and ends with music. Indeed, the preaching of the Word of God, the giving of tithes and offerings, and other acts of corporate worship are to be viewed as integral to the worship experience as well.

Further, worship is not confined to only what occurs in a corporate worship setting, but is in essence to be at the very heart of the believer’s lifestyle. This study is not meant to discount these important aspects of worship. However, it is designed, at least in part, to gain information regarding the specific practice of contemporary “praise and worship” as it has come to be understood as an extended time of congregational participatory singing and other related expressions unto the Lord.

Finally, it should be recognized that whether one is worshipping alone in a time of devotion, or with other believers in a corporate worship setting, the practice of worship should be based on Biblical principles as expressed in the Scriptures. Worship style preferences notwithstanding, the Word of God should be our guide.

Chapter 2

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF WORSHIP

There are many expressions of worship in the world today. People engage in worship as they involve themselves in a variety of religions and observe a myriad of worship practices. For example, it is said that the country of India is a land where 330 million different gods are worshipped. In that land of nearly one billion people there is a vast array of different expressions of worship.

The same might be said even of Christian worship. Though there is only one God in the Christian faith, the various denominations and divisions in the Christian church represent many differences in the way Christians participate in worship. It is important to realize, however, that there are foundational principles which should guide the worship of Christian believers. Though the characteristics and practices of worship in Christian churches may have had any number of influences in their development, the Bible, the Word of God, should be the ultimate guide for Christian worship.

Sadly, there are many Christian churches that are offering a form of worship, which is not properly incorporating the biblical foundational principles of worship. A. W. Tozer says, "We are missing the genuine and sacred offering of ourselves and our worship to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁶ God desires that offering of ourselves as we come to Him in worship. It is incredible to consider that the God of the universe, the

¹⁶ A. W. Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, compiled and edited by Gerald B. Smith (Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1985), p. 9.

Creator of all, seeks to have a relationship with us, His creatures. This relationship is to be grounded in our worship of Him. According to Don McMinn, “God is not seeking worship, He is seeking worshippers.”¹⁷ When we are worshipping Him we are involved in the enterprise for which we were created. Tozer observes, “God is trying to call us back to that for which He created us—to worship Him and to enjoy Him forever!”¹⁸

In order for believers to hear and answer that call, there must be a commitment to worship that is congruent with the principles found in God’s Word. Jack Hayford states:

A Bible-centered approach to worship clearly reveals that worship is definitely not a God-built device to somehow get man to stroke a Heavenly Ego. Neither is it a summons to a weekly reaffirmation of one’s expertise in precision-cut declarations of doctrinaire posturing. Instead, the Scriptures consistently show God calling His creatures to worship in His presence that He might release, redeem, renew and restore them.¹⁹

In this Bible-centered approach we recognize that we were created to worship; God is calling us to worship; and yet worship ultimately benefits us as we find our greatest fulfillment in participating in that for which we were created.

Worshipping the biblical way will not only serve God and bless us, it is also the greatest way to reach out and introduce the lost world to the Savior. We will never be as effective in our outreach as long as we fail to worship God in the proper manner.

According to Sally Morgenthaler, “If we hope to have any impact on our culture. . . we have to change. Our worship is going to need to feature direct, supernatural interaction

¹⁷ Don McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!* (Irving, TX: NCM Press, 1993), p. 5.

¹⁸ Tozer, *Whatever Happened to Worship?*, p. 12.

¹⁹ Jack Hayford, *Worship His Majesty* (Waco: Word Books, 1987), p. 48.

with God. This is not only timely. It's thoroughly biblical. And ironically, it is what the unchurched expect the church to do."²⁰

As one considers the fact that the characteristics of worship in the church today do not necessarily constitute true worship it is important to recognize that this is due, in great part, to the fall of our first parents. According to Tozer, God made us to worship Him, and had we not fallen with Adam and Eve, worship would be the most natural thing for us. God still desires our worship, but it must be done on His terms, not our own. Unfortunately, there are many people who are participating in a form of worship that is not pleasing to God. It is entirely possible for there to be recognized forms of worship apart from Christ and apart from the salvation He offers.²¹

Upon consideration as to what true worship is, "defining worship proves difficult because it is both an attitude and an act. Any definition of worship must be both simple and complex because worship is a concept as well as a relationship."²² Our English word *worship* is defined literally as meaning "to attribute worth" to someone or something. However, that is only a very small part of what biblical worship actually encompasses.²³ Bob Sorge offers the following list of various definitions of worship:

- Worship means, "to feel in the heart." Worship also means to express in some appropriate manner what we feel.
- True worship and praise are "awesome wonder and overpowering love" in the presence of our God.

²⁰ Morgenthaler, p. 66.

²¹ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 38.

²² Andrew Hill, Enter His Courts With Praise! (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), p. xviii.

²³ Morgenthaler, p. 46.

- Worship is the ability to magnify God with our whole being - body, soul, and spirit.
- The heart of true worship is the unashamed pouring out of our inner self upon the Lord Jesus Christ in affectionate devotion.
- Worship is fundamentally God's Spirit within us contacting the Spirit in the Godhead.
- Worship is the ideally normal attitude of a rational creature properly related to the Creator.
- Worship is extravagant love and extreme obedience.
- Worship is conversation between God and man, a dialogue that should go on constantly in the life of a Christian.
- Worship is giving to God and involves a lifetime of giving to him the sacrifice he asks for: our total selves.
- Worship is our affirmative response to the self-revelation of the triune God. For the Christian, each act of life is an act of worship when it is done with love that responds to the Father's love. Living should be constant worshipping, since worship may be said to provide the metabolism for spiritual life.
- Worship was the outcome of the fellowship of love between the Creator and man and is the highest point man can reach in response to the love of God. It is the first and principal purpose of man's eternal calling.
- Worship is one's heart expression of love, adoration, and praise to God with an attitude and acknowledgment of his supremacy and lordship.
- Worship is an act by a redeemed man, the creature, toward God, his Creator, whereby his will, intellect and emotions gratefully respond in reverence, honor, and devotion to the revelation of God's person expressed in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit illuminates God's written word to his heart.²⁴

There are many other definitions of worship that have been offered by a variety of authors. However, it seems they all fall short of expressing all that it means to worship God. Rather than attempting to factor worship down to a simple definition, perhaps it is best to approach it from a number of biblical perspectives. This chapter seeks to offer a collage of what it means to worship in a manner that is true to biblical principles. In order to do this, consideration will be given to words related to worship throughout the English text of the Scriptures (Revised Standard Version). Original languages will be

²⁴ Bob Sorge, Exploring Worship (Canandaigua, NY: Oasis House, 1987), p. 65.

considered with respect to Old Testament concepts and vocabulary as well as New Testament concepts and vocabulary of worship. Consideration will also be given to the Old Testament tabernacle as a model of worship as well as worship in the lives of certain biblical characters.

WORDS RELATED TO WORSHIP IN THE ENGLISH TEXT

Upon consideration of what would be the foundational principles of worship as indicated in the Bible, it is important to observe how words related to worship are used in the Scriptures. The word, “worship,” or some form of it (i.e. “worships,” “worshipping,” “worshiped”), occurs in some 165 verses in the Revised Standard Version.

It is interesting to note that of those references, 62 verses are related to either the prohibition or indictment of worship which is offered to anyone or anything other than God. One of the early verses which speaks to this is Exodus 34:14, “...for you shall **worship no other god**, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

Throughout the Scriptures “other gods” which are not to be worshiped are identified as gods of pagan nations (I Kings 11:33); the host of heaven (II Kings 17:16); idols (Isaiah 2:20; I Corinthians 10:14); the sun (Ezekiel 8:16); Satan (Matthew 4:9, 10); demons (Revelation 9:20); angels (Revelation 22: 8,9); and the beast (Revelation 13:12). The great fallacy of engaging in the worship of anything or anyone other than God is that it is essentially exchanging what is true about God for a lie and worshiping the creature rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25). Indeed we are exhorted rather to “worship him who

made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water” (Revelation 14:7). Further, such worship should be refused by anyone other than the Creator as Peter does in Acts 10:25, 26 and the angel does in Revelation 22: 8, 9.

The Scriptures indicate that there are consequences of worshipping other gods. One of the most pointed warnings is found in Deuteronomy 8:19, “And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you this day that **you shall surely perish.**”

It is interesting to recognize that the first use of the word “worship” in Scripture is a reference related to Abraham’s proper worship of the true God (Genesis 22:5).

Abraham’s is an example of faithful and obedient worship, even to the point of great sacrifice. We learn from Abraham that worship, at its very core, involves a sacrificial offering which is evidence of the fact that the worshiper places no other person, place, or thing in higher esteem than the Lord Himself.

The last use of the word “worship” in Scripture is one in which the angel defers worship from himself and exhorts John simply to “worship God” (Revelation 22:9). From beginning to end, the Scriptures related to worship clearly indicate that worship is to be reserved for the One and Only True God and not to be extended to anyone or anything else.

Another indication of what biblical worship should be may be found by considering words or concepts which are commonly associated with worship. For example, in support of the principle that worship is only for God is the fact that there are 57 verses in which the word “worship” occurs that the word “LORD” also occurs.

“And the people believed; and when they heard that the **LORD** had visited the people of Israel and that he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and **worshiped**.”
(Exodus 4:31)

“All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the **LORD**; and all the families of the nations shall **worship** before him.”
(Psalm 22:27)

“While they were **worshipping** the **Lord** and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”
(Acts 13:2)

Another of the words closely associated with “worship” in the Scriptures is the word “serve.” Of the 165 verses in the Bible which contain “worship,” 26 also make reference to “serving” the one who is worshiped. Interestingly enough, each of these verses makes reference to worshipping and serving gods other than the LORD. The first such verse is Deuteronomy 8:19:

“And beware lest you lift up your eyes to the heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and **worship** them and **serve** them, things which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.”

According to the Scriptures, there is a very strong tie between worship and service. Thus, while there are those times when intimate worship is experienced, they are to flow out of a lifestyle of worship which is evidenced by faithful service. Jesus affirms the appropriateness of the exclusivity of worship and service unto God in His confrontation with Satan: “...It is written, ‘You shall **worship** the Lord your God, and him only shall you **serve**’” (Luke 4:8).

Another concept commonly expressed in the “worship” verses in the Bible is that of “bowing down,” “falling down,” “falling on one’s face,” or “worshiping at one’s feet.”

These acts are found in 20 verses related to worship.

“Then I **bowed my head** and **worshiped** the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the way to take the daughter of my master’s kinsman for his son.”
(Genesis 24:48)

“...and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and **they fell down** and **worshiped** him...”
(Matthew 2:11)

“And all the angels stood round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and **they fell on their faces** before the throne and **worshiped** God...” (Revelation 7:11)

The act of bowing down or falling to the ground on one’s face indicates a spirit of humility before the one who is being worshiped. There is the expressed recognition that the one being worshiped is greater than the worshiper. A key verse in this regard is, “O come, let us **worship** and **bow down**, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! (Psalm 95:6).

There are 12 verses of the 165 “worship” verses which refer to “sacrifice” (I Samuel 1:3), “altar” (II Kings 18:22), or “offering” (I Chronicles 16:29). Some may be inclined to associate the idea of sacrifice in worship only with the Old Testament sacrificial system. However, it bears pointing out that New Testament believers are exhorted to “present your bodies as a living **sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual **worship**” (Romans 12:1). As with the concept of service discussed above, the presentation of a living sacrifice in worship implies a worship lifestyle which has impact beyond temporal episodes of worship expression.

Another word used in conjunction with worship is “heart.” “Heart” and “worship” occur together in four verses. Particularly in the Book of Deuteronomy there are verses which indicate concern that the heart can be deceived and may turn away from worship of the true God.

“Take heed lest your **heart** be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and **worship** them...” (Deuteronomy 11:16)

“But if your **heart** turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to **worship** other gods and serve them...”
(Deuteronomy 30:17)

Worship is an activity of the heart. It is not merely an intellectual pursuit; nor is it merely appropriate behavior. It is the expression of that which is at the core of the worshiper; the heart.

A related word which is associated with “worship” is the word “spirit.” There are 5 verses which have both “worship” and “spirit.” The key passage is the exchange between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will **worship** the Father in **spirit** and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.’” (John 4:21-24)

These verses indicate that we must have a personal experience with the Spirit of God in order to be in a relationship with him whereby we can worship him because true worship must be in keeping with God’s nature. This can only be attained through Christ. We can only worship God in spirit when we are truly rightly related to him through

Christ. The Apostle Paul says that "...we are the true circumcision (those who truly have a covenant relationship with God), who worship God in spirit" (Philippians 3:3).

There is also the necessary element of truth. This requires the knowledge of the truth which is found in Christ, the eternal Word of God (John 1:1) and the personification of truth (John 14:6). John uses the word "truth" 25 times and links it closely to Christ. The greater our awareness of God's truth in Christ, the greater will be our ability to worship in a manner that is pleasing to him. Those who will worship God in spirit and in truth are the ones for whom the Father is seeking.

Worshipping in spirit and in the truth of Christ is related to the "glory" of God. An aforementioned verse in its entirety reads, "For we are the true circumcision, who **worship** God in spirit, and **glory** in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3). "Glory" and "worship" occur together in 6 verses. Two examples:

"Ascribe to the LORD the **glory** of his name; **worship** the LORD in holy array." (Psalm 29:2)

"...and he said with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give him **glory**, for the hour of his judgment has come; and **worship** him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water.'" (Revelation 14:7)

Thus, one of the aspects of worship is bringing glory and honor to the Lord; recognizing his splendor and his magnificence. God is to be worshiped for who he is (Psalm 96:7-9); for what he has done in creation (Psalm 136:4-9); for his work in redemption and the deliverance of his people (Psalm 22:26-31); and for all his abundant blessings (Psalm 5:7).

Another expression that is closely associated with “worship” in the Scriptures is “praise.”

“And Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing **praises** to the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. And they sang **praises** with gladness, and they bowed down and **worshiped**.”
(II Chronicles 29:30)

“All the earth **worships** thee; they sing **praises** to thee, sing **praises** to thy name.” (Psalm 66:4)

Synonyms for “praise” (e.g. “extol;” “bless”) are also used at times.

“**Extol** the LORD our God; **worship** at his footstool! Holy is he! **Extol** the LORD our God, and **worship** at his holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy!”
(Psalm 99:5, 9)

“Then David said to all the assembly, ‘**Bless** the LORD your God.’ And all the assembly **blessed** the LORD, the God of their fathers, and bowed their heads, and **worshiped** the LORD...” (I Chronicles 29:20)

The word “praise,” or some form of it (i.e. “praised,” “praising,” “praises”), occurs some 247 times in the Revised Standard Version. As with “worship,” “praise” in Scripture is an expression offered to the Lord. Of the 247 verses using “praise,” 100 also have “Lord.” The first record of praise is an expression of joy directed to the Lord by a mother at the birth of a child.

“And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, ‘This time I will **praise the LORD**,’ therefore she called his name Judah...” (Genesis 29:35)

“Judah” is a name which means “praise.” It is interesting to note that one of the names of the Lord Jesus is “Lion of Judah;” from the tribe of Judah, the tribe of “praise.”

The last verse incorporating “praise” is from the John’s description of the heavenly throne room and is a call and exhortation for universal praise unto God.

“And from the throne came a voice crying, ‘**Praise** our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.’”
(Revelation 19:5)

The “praise” verses express a number of reasons for praising the Lord. They essentially fall into one of two categories: praise to God for an attribute related to his nature or praise to God for something he has done. There are some verses which incorporate praise for both:

“Let the heavens **praise thy wonders**, O LORD, **thy faithfulness** in the assembly of the holy ones!” (Psalm 89:5)

“**Praise** him for his **mighty deeds**; **praise** him according to his **exceeding greatness!**” (Psalm 150:2)

There are a number of deeds for which the Lord is offered praise in Scripture. They include praise for **wonderful works** (I Chronicles 16:9; Psalm 105:2; Isaiah 25:1; Daniel 4:37; Luke 19:33); **salvation** (Exodus 15:2; Jeremiah 31:7); **God’s vengeance** (Deuteronomy 32:43); **deliverance** (I Chronicles 16:35; Psalm 71:23; Jeremiah 20:13; Acts 4:21); **help** (Psalm 42:5,11); **victory** (Psalm 48:10); **creation** (Psalm 89:12); **children** (Psalm 113:9); **healing** (Jeremiah 17:14; Luke 13:13; John 9:24; Acts 3:8, 9); and **providing wisdom and strength** (Daniel 2:23).

Praise is also offered to the Lord for various attributes of his nature including **worthiness of praise** (II Samuel 14:25; Psalm 18:3); **goodness** (Psalm 135:3); **enduring/steadfast love** (II Chronicles 5:13; Psalm 63:3); **righteousness** (Psalm 71:16);

graciousness (Psalm 147:1); **glory** (Psalm 148:13); **mercy** (Romans 15:9); **grace** (Ephesians 1:6); **greatness** (Psalm 96:4); and **eternality** (Daniel 4:34).

It should be noted that “praise” is often associated with the “name” of the Lord. There are 30 verses in which “praise” and “name” appear together. Some examples are:

“I will be glad and exult in thee, I will sing **praise** to Thy **name**, O Most High.” (Psalm 9:2)

“I will **praise** the **name** of God with a song...” (Psalm 69:30)

“**Praise** the LORD! **Praise**, O servants of the LORD, **praise** the **name** of the LORD! (Psalm 113:1)

In the view of the people of God, the name of the Lord is representative of his nature and character. The different names of God used in Scripture are very important as they show various characteristics of who he is and what he is able to do. When we praise the name of the Lord, we are praising him for all that his name represents. Indeed, his is a “name above every other name.”

Another word often found in the “praise” verses is “glory.” “Glory,” or one of its forms, occurs in 22 verses with “praise.” This is related to the fact that praise is often offered unto the Lord for his magnificence and splendor.

“Sing the **glory** of his name; give to him **glorious praise!**”
(Psalm 66:2)

“Let them **praise** the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his **glory** is above earth and heaven.”
(Psalm 148:13)

One of the characteristics of praise in the Scriptures is the ultimate universality of its expression to the Lord. Not only human beings, nor only living creatures, but everything is to bring praise to the Lord.

“Let heaven and earth praise him, the seas and everything that moves therein.” (Psalm 69:34)

“Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!”
(Psalm 117:1)

“Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!” (Psalm 150:6)

“For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.” (Isaiah 61:11)

Another characteristic of Biblical praise is associated with the idea of the sound of praise being heard.

“Bless our God, O peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard.” (Psalm 66:8)

The sound of praise is one that is described as a **“joyful noise”** (Psalm 95:2; 98:4). There are references to people **shouting praise** to the Lord (Jeremiah 31:7; Ezra 3:11) and **praising with a very loud voice** (II Chronicles 20:19). Yet the sounds of praise most often found in “praise” verses are those sounds related to music. There are 64 “praise” verses which have some reference to music. 13 of those verses specifically mention instrumental music. For example, Psalm 150 gives the exhortation to praise the Lord on a variety of types of instruments including winds, strings, and percussion.

“Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding Cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!”
(Psalm 150:3-5)

One of the greatest expressions of praise to the Lord in the Scriptures is through singing his praise. There are 54 “praise” verses which have reference to either “song” or “singing.” As a song can be an expression of the heart, there are many exhortations to sing heart-felt praise to the Lord.

“Sing praise to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm!” (Psalm 47:6, 7)

“Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth! Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.” (Isaiah 42:10)

Another expression that is often associated with worship and praise is that of “thanksgiving.” There are 27 “praise” verses which also have a reference to giving thanks. Perhaps the most familiar is the exhortation of the psalmist:

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him, bless his name! (Psalm 100:4)

In all of scripture, there are 146 verses which refer to the expression of thanksgiving. In all but one of these verses (Luke 17:9), the offering of thanks is given to the Lord. This in itself is an indication of the importance of offering thanks to the Lord.

There are many things for which thanks is specifically offered including God’s **deliverance** (I Chronicles 16:35; Psalm 106:47; Romans 6:17); **victory** (I Corinthians 15:57); God’s **deeds** (Psalm 9:1); **wisdom/strength** (Daniel 2:23); **salvation** (Psalm 118:21; II Corinthians 9:65; Colossians 1:12); God’s **righteousness** (Psalm 17:17); **grace** (I Corinthians 1:4); **believers** (Romans 1:8; Ephesians 1:16); **food** (Matthew 15:36; Mark 8:6) and **answered prayer** (II Corinthians 1:11).

God's goodness and his steadfast love are the reasons for expressions of thanks in 20 verses. Of all the reasons to be thankful, the Scriptures strongly encourage and exhort us to be thankful for the goodness and the steadfast love of the Lord.

"O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever!" (I Chronicles 16:8)

"Praise the LORD! O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever!" (Psalm 106:1)

Even though there are a number of references to giving thanks for specific things, there is also exhortation that thanksgiving should be all-encompassing. Believers are to express thanksgiving not only for the blessings of the Lord, but for all things and in all situations.

"...always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father." (Ephesians 5:20)

"...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (I Thessalonians 5:18)

Biblical worship involves humble expressions of worship; the joyful noise of praise; and the unceasing attitude of thanksgiving. These expressions are appropriately offered as a testimony to others. For example, praise and thanksgiving are given to the Lord "among the peoples," "among the nations" (Psalm 57:9); "in the company of the upright, in the congregation" (Psalm 111:1); "before the gods" (Psalm 138: 1); "in the great congregation, in the mighty throng" (Psalm 35:18); and "in the presence of the godly" (Psalm 52: 9).

OLD TESTAMENT VOCABULARY AND RELATED CONCEPTS

In order to develop a picture of what it means to worship from a biblical perspective it is important to have an understanding of the biblical vocabulary of worship. In the Old Testament it is evident that God desires to be thanked and praised and worshipped. It is said that worship “begins with God’s initiative, that it remembers the story of God’s saving deeds, that it rehearses our relation to God through the covenant, and that it demands the sacrifice of praise and obedience.”²⁵ In the Old Testament we learn that worship may incorporate a variety of activities:

- to bow down;
- to give thanks;
- to know that the Lord is God;
- to trust in God’s covenant;
- to fear the Lord;
- to seek the presence of the Lord;
- to wait upon the Lord;
- to intercede.²⁶

We also learn from the Old Testament that we are to boast in God’s deeds; make high and extol the Lord; ascribe greatness to God; raise a shout; and be joyful!²⁷

It is of great importance that consideration be given to the meanings of particular words in the Old Testament vocabulary of worship. Words for the ancients were considered to be more than just expression of thought. According to Andrew Hill, “The spoken or written word was regarded as a living force, a concrete entity that possessed an

²⁵ Robert Webber, Learning to Worship God With All Your Heart (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1996), p. 40.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 41.

intrinsic and powerful dynamic. This was especially true of the divine word, the word responsible for creating and sustaining all things.²⁸ Hill offers great encouragement to the study of Old Testament words of worship.

First, the investigation and analysis of the Hebrew words for worship improves our understanding of the nature and character of Israelite religious belief and practice. Second, our examination of the terminology describing Old Testament worship provides the opportunity for the joy of discovery. This is true both for identifying the key concepts foundational to Hebrew worship and for thoughtfully considering the ramifications of the Old Testament worship for the contemporary Christian church.²⁹

Elmer Towns says that words used for worship in the Old Testament have as their root idea the “reverential attitude of the worshiper, often expressed physically by the act of bowing or prostrating one’s self before a superior.”³⁰ “*Shachad*” means “to bow politely or respectfully, to prostrate oneself, to make obeisance, to bend low.” A related term, *tsaghadh*, is based on the idea of “falling down and prostrating one’s self.”

Another Old Testament word translated “worship” implies the idea of service as an act of worship. *Abodah* means “to serve” or “to work.” The implication is that what a person does for the Lord is considered to be worship just as the physical or verbal expressions of the worshiper.

B. E. Underwood discusses a number of other Old Testament words related to worship. One of the key Old Testament words of worship is the root *halal* from which

²⁸ Hill, p. 1.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

³⁰ Towns, p. 161.

comes a word that has been transliterated into almost every language, *hallelujah*. *Halal* means “to shine, to boast, to rave, to celebrate, to be clamorously foolish.” This is the word that is used in every verse of Psalm 150. When the psalmist is exhorting everything that has breath to praise the Lord, he is calling upon all that is living to rave, to celebrate, to be clamorously foolish as they are offering praise to the Lord.³¹

Another Old Testament worship word is *yadah*. The meaning of this word is to extend the hand or to throw out the hand. It is used, for example, in Psalm 139: 14 where the psalmist says, “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” The implication is that we should throw up our hands to praise the Creator Who has made such a wonderful creation.³²

The word *towdah* is related to *yadah*, but involves the idea of extending the hand in adoration. In Psalm 50: 3 where the Word of God says, “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me,” it is implied that God is glorified when we reach up to Him with extended hands.

Vocal worship is a very important in the Old Testament. The word *shabach* means “to shout, to address in a loud voice, or to commend.” The word *tehillah* is related to *halal* and means “to sing praises.” It involves the idea of praising as in *halal* incorporating music. Another musical worship term is *zamar* which means “to touch or pluck the strings of a musical instrument.”³³

³¹ B.E. Underwood, *You Shall Worship* (Franklin Springs, GA: Advocate Press, 1986), p. 18.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³³ *Ibid.*

Robert Webber associates three words with Old Testament worship. The first is “memory.” According to Webber, “Jewish worship is rooted in memory. The primary memory is that God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt (the Exodus event), formed them into a community, entered into covenant with them, gave them the Torah, and promised to bring them into the promised land.”³⁴

The second word Webber associates with Old Testament worship is “covenant.” The covenant was the agreement between God and Israel in which God pledged to be their God; give them His Name; bless them; and give them the promised land. Israel’s side of the covenant was to display undivided loyalty; complete obedience; love and worship.³⁵

Webber’s third word is “sacrifice.” It was the sacrifice ritual which served to ratify and secure the covenant. God made covenants with Noah (Genesis 8:20-9:17); Abram (Genesis 15:1-21); Isaac (Genesis 26:24-25); Jacob (Genesis 31:43-55; 35:6-12); and Moses on behalf of Israel (Exodus 24:1-8). According to Webber, “God gave Israel a sacrificial system that was full of sign-acts, signifying their approach to God in worship. A fundamental sign of relationship with God was expressed in the sacrifices at the tabernacle and in the very setting of time, space, and ritual on which these sacrifices were accomplished. It was in this sign-act space that Israel conducted the sacrifices that were part of the covenant and expressed the relationship between God and Israel.”³⁶

³⁴ Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, p. 19.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 25.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

Not only is it important to consider specific words related to worship in the Old Testament, consideration should be given to how the Hebrews viewed themselves and their understanding of worship. Andrew Hill states...

The ancient Hebrews understood a human being as an indivisible totality. Thus, almost by definition, Hebrew worship in the Old Testament was participatory. Their synthetic understanding of the nature and constitution of the human being demanded that the whole person respond to Yahweh in worship, not just the spirit and soul.³⁷

Because of the Hebrew view of personhood, bodily movement was incorporated into their expressions of worship. Hill gives a number of reasons why the Hebrews would express their worship through bodily movement.

- Movement fulfills the divine imperative to worship God with the whole person (Deut. 6:4-5).
- Worship actions permit a holistic response to God consistent with the Hebrew understanding.
- Movement affirms and demonstrates faith.
- Acts of worship serve to express the desire of human beings to communicate with God, to maintain and restore relationship with God, and to model worship practices for the next generation in the community of the faithful.
- Worship action may have the practical effect of inducing penitence (Isaiah 32:11; Jonah 3:5-8), confirming or sealing a vow (Genesis 31:13; Numbers 15:3), or serving as a reminder of God's gracious deeds in the past (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).
- Movement can give educational value through symbolism.
- Bodily movements in worship serve to mirror God's approach to humanity by means of both word and deed.³⁸

John Frame summarizes worship in the Old Testament as follows:

There were many different kinds of worship in the Old Testament. There were meetings between God and man,

³⁷ Hill, p. 110.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 112.

spontaneous prayers, prescribed sacrifices, a calendar of regular worship events at different intervals, beautiful buildings for worship, divinely instituted leadership for sacrificial worship, and the teaching of God's word.³⁹

There is much to be learned about worship in the Old Testament. Present-day worshipers would do well to take notice of the humility with which Old Testament worshipers approached the Lord. The participatory nature of worship in the Old Testament is also instructive. Further, the Hebrew understanding of personhood gives insight in terms of how the totality of an individual can and should be involved in worship.

NEW TESTAMENT VOCABULARY AND RELATED CONCEPTS

Not only is there much to learn from the Old Testament vocabulary of worship, we can also gain insight from the New Testament vocabulary of worship. There are some similarities in expression between the two, yet because of the coming of Christ, New Testament worship has the capability of greater intimacy. Webber says that, in general, New Testament worship is a continual attitude of thanksgiving and a willingness to rejoice in all things—even unpleasant situations. It involves acclamation and praise in celebrating the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.⁴⁰

There are several Greek words which are used in worship contexts in the New Testament. *Proskuneo* is a compound word combining *pros*, meaning “toward,” and

³⁹ John Frame, Worship in Spirit and Truth (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1996), p. 24.

⁴⁰ Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, pp. 45-46.

kuneo, meaning “to kiss.” It carries the idea of bowing to kiss the hand of one who is revered. McMinn points out that to get close enough to Jesus to kiss His hand, for example, exhibits the idea of the closeness and intimacy in New Testament worship.⁴¹

According to Towns, “The words *sembomai* and *sembazomai* are related terms and convey the idea of revering with an emphasis on a feeling of awe or devotion often associated with worship.”⁴²

The Greek counterpart to the Hebrew *abodah* is *latreuo* which means “to serve.” The use of this worship word indicates the relationship between service and worship (Matthew 4:10; Luke 2:47).

According to Underwood, the New Testament word which corresponds with the Hebrew *halal* is the Greek word *aineo* which is translated “praise” (Luke 2:13, 20; Acts 2:47; 3:8,9). In Hebrews 13:15 the scripture exhorts to “offer the sacrifice of praise continually.” *Doxazo* is translated “glorify.” *Eulogia* means to bless or to praise (Ephesians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 5:12, 13; 7:12).⁴³

There are a number of aspects about New Testament worship which may be seen by considering the record of worship in the early church. Webber offers the following observations about the worship of the early church:

- They met in private homes (Acts 2:46).
- They met on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:20).
- They sang hymns (Ephesians 5:19).

⁴¹ McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!*, p. 7.

⁴² Towns, p. 162.

⁴³ Underwood, p. 19.

- They prayed together (1 Corinthians 11:4,5).
- They heard instruction (1 Corinthians 14:26; Colossians 3:16).
- They focused on the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10: 16, 17; 11:20; Acts 2:42).
- They sang in tongues with interpretation and prophecy (1 Cor. 11:4,5; 14:1-33).
- Prophets seemed to have a role in corporate worship (1 Corinthians 14:23-33).
- Worship happened in the context of good fellowship (Acts 2:44,45).
- Worship inspired compassion toward the poor (Acts 2:44,45).
- Worshipers were filled with awe and joy (Acts 2:43).⁴⁴

Consideration of the various places in which New Testament worship occurred can provide insight. As the early Christians sought to worship God in their new-found faith, they continued to meet in the temple courts for daily prayer (Acts 2:46). According to Webber, it is likely that they also met in the synagogues, although their primary place of meeting was in a home.⁴⁵ Acts 2:42-47 reveals the clearest picture of what house church worship was like for the early believers. Those New Testament worshipers were devoted to the teaching of the apostles, to fellowship, and to the breaking of bread and prayer. They also experienced many wonders and signs. They sought to meet one another's needs and their hearts were generous and glad as they praised God.

In addition to the house church aspect of early worship, Webber writes of a worship style in the Corinthian church which he describes as "body life." The Apostle Paul strongly describes the church as a body. It may be observed from 1 Corinthians 12 that New Testament worship involved each person bring a particular gift to worship and

⁴⁴ Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, p. 99.

⁴⁵ Robert Webber, Rediscovering the Missing Jewel (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), p. 9.

exercising that gift within the body.⁴⁶ Paul exhorted the early believers to live and worship in unity even though there was diversity within the church (I Corinthians 12:12-26; Ephesians 4:1-6).

As was stated earlier, early Christians made a practice of worshipping in the Jewish synagogues. The synagogue was a powerful influence on early Christian worship. This may be true because many people first heard the claims of Christ and the gospel in their local synagogue. It was the practice of Jesus to attend the synagogue. Also, the apostle Paul often began his preaching of the gospel in a particular place at the synagogue. This strategy proved to be effective, though divisive at times. The synagogue was a common meeting place for the Jews and was quite accessible.

Webber relates that the synagogue was a place of praise, prayer, and instruction. Hebrew worship began with praise as instructed in the Talmud. In addition to praise and prayer, a portion of scripture would be read.⁴⁷ In the early days of Christianity, the Jewish Christians frequented the synagogue for worship until the issue of Gentile Christian worship caused a split with the Jews.

Not only was the synagogue influential in early Christian worship, the Jewish temple was also important to the development of the early church. According to Acts 2 and 3 it is evident that the new believers were meeting daily at the temple to pray and to worship. Further the apostles evangelized in the vicinity of the temple, performing miracles and preaching Jesus as the Christ (Acts 3:11-4:2). Hill points out that it would appear that the

⁴⁶ Robert Webber, Renew Your Worship (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), p. 32.

⁴⁷ Webber, Learning to Worship God With All Your Heart, p. 91.

early church continued to worship, pray, preach, and teach in the temple until the persecution of Christians in Jerusalem became so severe that Stephen was stoned after having been accused of blaspheming Moses, God, and the temple by the Jewish council (Acts 6:11-14).⁴⁸ From this point on it would have likely have been impossible for believers to worship Jesus at the temple without suffering severe harassment and persecution, perhaps even death.

Although the early Christians continued to worship in some ways related to worship in the Old Testament, as Frame states, “The most significant fact about worship in the New Testament is that its focus is on Jesus.”⁴⁹ The writer to the Hebrews goes to great lengths to establish the superiority of Christ over the sacrificial worship system of the Old Testament. In Hebrews, Christ is shown to be superior to the prophets, the angels, Moses, Joshua, and the Aaronic priesthood. As a result of his superior sacrifice, we are able to participate in a superior covenant. Because of all of these things, Jesus Christ is worthy to be worshipped and glorified.

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21)

Hill points out that:

⁴⁸Hill, p. 185.

⁴⁹ Frame, p. 25.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the role of priest, even high priest, since he acted as go-between for his Holy Father and sinful humanity. Not only is Jesus Christ the great high priest, but he was also the perfect and innocent victim since he was tempted in every way yet remained sinless and perfect. Further, he offered himself as a once-for-all sacrifice for sin, and thus he became the mediator of a new and better covenant.⁵⁰

Covenant and sacrifice are two important Old Testament words which Jesus fulfills in the New Testament, opening the door for the New Testament believer to have an intimate worship relationship with God. Indeed, New Testament worship has Christ as its focus. It is through Christ that the believer has access to the holy of holies, the presence of God.

THE TABERNACLE AS A MODEL FOR WORSHIP

A study of the biblical foundations of worship is enhanced by consideration of the Old Testament tabernacle as a model for worship. It should be remembered that God initiates worship just as He has initiated a relationship with His people. This relationship involves communication between God and His people. The communication occurs in the heart, but also involves words, actions, and symbols which are visible, tangible, concrete expressions of what is happening in the heart. One of the ways God chose to communicate with His people in the Old Testament was through the institution of the tabernacle.

The significance of the Old Testament tabernacle as a model of worship may be seen in the symbolism surrounding the tabernacle worship and what this symbolism

⁵⁰ Hill, p. 152.

represents. God gave very specific instructions regarding the construction of the tabernacle (Exodus 25-28). Frame offers this description of the tabernacle:

The tabernacle itself was a kind of tent, enclosed in a rectangular courtyard. In the courtyard, 150 by 75 feet, was the altar of burnt offering and a basin (or laver) for the priests' ceremonial washings. The tabernacle itself was divided into two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, which were separated by a curtain. In the Holy Place was the table for the bread of the Presence, a lampstand, and the altar of incense. In the Most Holy Place was the ark of the covenant—the throne or seat of the divine presence.⁵¹

According to Hill, the tabernacle was not primarily a meeting place for the Israelites, although there were times when the entire Hebrew community met together before God at the tabernacle (Numbers 14:10). However, the basic purpose of the tabernacle was to provide a dwelling place for God so that He might be in the midst of His people.⁵² “And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst” (Exodus 25:8). In essence, Frame asserts, the earthly tabernacle was intended to be, as much as possible, a copy of the tabernacle in heaven, the ultimate dwelling place of the presence of God.⁵³

The presence of God was the distinguishing characteristic of the tabernacle. The fact that God established the tabernacle worship is evidence of his desire to be present among his people. God does not desire to merely watch us “from a distance” as some have mistakenly characterized him. He wants to be with his people. “The Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us.” (John 1:14).

⁵¹ Frame, pp. 20-21.

⁵² Hill, p. 173.

⁵³ Frame, p. 26.

Portable in nature, the tabernacle also served as the worship center for the Israelites as they were led toward the land of promise. It was at the tabernacle that the Hebrew priesthood led the people in worship and gave instruction in covenant obedience to God. In addition to being God's dwelling place and Israel's worship center, Hill states that the tabernacle "stood as a life-sized object lesson in the middle of the Israelite camp, vividly portraying the nature and character of God to the Hebrew people. The tabernacle served to instruct the Hebrews in God's holiness, transcendence, immanence, wrath and mercy, justice and grace, and covenant love and faithfulness."⁵⁴ Thus, the tabernacle served as a unique testimony to the Hebrew worshipers of who God is and how they might come to know him and experience his presence.

The symbolism of the Old Testament tabernacle serves to represent a number of theological truths about God, people, and their worship relationship. As stated earlier, the primary purpose of the tabernacle was to provide a dwelling place for God among the people. This magnificent theological truth displayed is that the God of the universe desires and initiates a way through which to be with the people He loves.

The altar where the priest was to offer sacrifices is representative of the fact that as we come to the Lord in worship we are to offer all of ourselves to him (Romans 12:1). The worship relationship begins when we lay ourselves on the altar and pursue communion with God on the basis of the ultimate sacrifice of Christ.

The holiness of God and the need for cleansing and purity of the worshippers is also evidenced in the limits placed on the Israelites approaching God. The bronze laver

⁵⁴ Hill, p. 173.

symbolized the necessity of cleansing and purification before God could be approached in worship (Psalm 15).

The tabernacle served to bring God and man closer together in relationship and communication even though there were certain parameters put in place by God. God was the Initiator and it was his desire to have his presence among his people, but his holiness required that worship take place on His terms.

The Old Testament tabernacle model of worship does have implications related to contemporary worship. It serves to remind contemporary worshippers that God desires to be with, to “tabernacle,” with His people. God initiates the relationship in which He can meet with His people and participate in their daily lives. Whereas the structure was put in place to facilitate and appropriately order the relationship between God and His people, it is important to recognize that the holy temple of the Lord is made up of redeemed people in the Body of Christ. The worshipping community, the Church, is comprised of people in divinely initiated relationship with God, made possible by the superior covenant and sacrifice of Christ.

The tabernacle worship model emphasizes the importance of preparation on the part of the worshipper before meeting with a holy God.⁵⁵ Just as it was necessary for the priests to go through the ritual washing symbolizing the internal and spiritual cleansing of penitence, confession, and purification so the contemporary worshipper must prepare

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 189.

his/her heart for worship by approaching the throne of God with confession of sin, repentance, and recognition of the atonement through the blood of Christ.

Contemporary worshippers have the privilege of coming boldly before the throne of God through Jesus Christ, yet there should be a recognition of the price that was paid for that privilege and an understanding that entering the holy of holies in worship should be pursued with the appropriate heart attitude of humility and thankfulness for what Christ has done.

The priest who served in the tabernacle observed a number of religious duties in the Outer Court and the Holy Place, but in was in the Holy of Holies that he met with God. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, the veil of the temple was rent, and now we have access to the Holy of Holies ourselves. McMinn makes the observation that contemporary believers, like the priest, “can become engaged in many religious activities which are good and proper and even necessary, but if we stop short of the Holy of Holies, we will miss communion with God.”⁵⁶ It should be the desire of every believer to experience the presence of God in worship and not too simply follow a form of religion which is void of God’s manifest presence.

The tabernacle model of worship also reveals the participatory nature of the Hebrew worship experience as it engaged the worshipper’s whole person, mind, emotions, and body. For contemporary worshippers, the implication is that the congregation should be actively involved in worship, not simply observing as spectators. It is the responsibility

⁵⁶ Don McMinn, Entering His Presence (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, Inc., 1986), p. 189.

of pastors and worship leaders to so design the worship experience that everyone is involved and participating.

Finally, the Old Testament tabernacle was at the center of Hebrew life. It is said that, for the Hebrews, worship was life and life was worship.⁵⁷ The same should be true for contemporary worshippers. Genuine worship should ultimately alter the way the worshipper conducts his/her life. Worship should be at the center of who a believer is, not simply an isolated aspect of life.

WORSHIP IN THE LIVES OF KEY BIBLICAL CHARACTERS

One of the ways to study biblical foundations of worship is to consider what worship was like in the lives of key biblical characters. Throughout the Scriptures there is evidence of how men and women approached the worship of Almighty God. There are principles and concepts which can be learned from the lives of worshippers in the Bible which will serve to give insight into true worship for contemporary worshippers. Indeed, the biblical personalities are good resources for the study of research. Tozer says, "All of the examples that we have in the Bible illustrate that glad and devoted and reverent worship is the normal employment of moral beings. Every glimpse that is given of heaven and of God's created beings is always a glimpse of worship and rejoicing and praise because God is who He is."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Hill, p. 190.

⁵⁸ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 13.

Abraham is one of the biblical characters whose worship offers insight to the contemporary worshipper. One of the greatest worship lessons learned from the life of Abraham is that it is God Who initiates the relationship between Himself and the worshipper. Robert Webber describes this in the following manner:

Abraham was living a comfortable existence in Ur of the Chaldees when God said, "I want you to pack you bags and go on an unknown journey" (Hebrews 11:8). "I'll go before you," God said, "but right now I choose not to tell you all the details. But I will tell you this: If you obey Me I will bless you greatly. I will make a great nation of you and I will bless the whole world through you." Abraham did just what God asked him to do. Here is what lies at the heart of salvation and of worship: God initiates a relationship, and we respond.⁵⁹

Abraham is a good example to consider because the Bible records not only the victories of his faith, but also the tragedy of his failures. He was not a super saint, but a regular person with good characteristics and flaws like everyone else. Yet another great lesson from his life is that "whether stumbling, succeeding, fumbling or failing, the one outstanding, discernible feature of his character is that he lived his life before the altar of God."⁶⁰ God knows that we are not perfect, but he does expect us to come to him with all our failures and shortcomings in an attitude of humble worship.

Perhaps the greatest worship lesson of Abraham's life is the Genesis 22 account of his willingness to offer his own son as a sacrifice in obedience to God's directive. Herein is the lesson of surrender. True worship involves complete abandonment to God, withholding nothing. Because of the fact that God, in Christ, has given all to the worshipper, the same should be the response of the worshipper. Though one is flawed

⁵⁹ Webber, Learning to Worship God With All Your Heart, p. 13.

⁶⁰ Hayford, p. 63.

and fumbling, God is pleased to accept his/her worship when it is offered without restraint.

The worship life of Moses also illustrates that God initiates the relationship. Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush (Exodus 3,4) affirms this principle. Moses, like Abraham, was not a perfect individual, but one of excuses and questions. He did, however, recognize the sovereignty and holiness of God. Tozer describes the encounter:

Consider the experience of Moses in the desert as he beheld the fire that burned in the bush without consuming it. Moses had no hesitation in kneeling before the bush and worshipping God. Moses was not worshipping a bush; it was God and His glory dwelling in the bush that Moses worshipped.⁶¹

The instructions Moses received in the encounter and the ensuing story of the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Pharaoh establish another principle of worship. According to Webber, worship is rooted in an event. One of the greatest saving deeds of God in history "occurred when God delivered the people of Israel from captivity to Pharaoh and led them across the Red Sea, to enter into covenant with them at Mount Sinai. God does not leave us in captivity or in bondage to the enemy. God liberates us, freeing us from those powers of evil that would enslave and destroy our lives. The Exodus event is a resounding testimony to the fundamental truth of biblical faith."⁶²

The principle applied to true worship today is that worship should be rooted in the redemptive Christ event, His atoning for sin and making it possible for worshippers to have a relationship with a holy God. We recognize that it is only through Christ, and on

⁶¹ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 119.

⁶² Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, p. 13.

the basis of his redemptive act, that believers can approach God in worship. This truth is clearly stated in the words of Christ, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

Other lessons to be learned from Moses and the story of the Exodus include the principle that worship was at the heart of Moses’ commission. The purpose of their release was to allow them to worship. God was not only calling them to liberty, but to intimacy. Worship was also the core of the message the Lord told Moses to give to Pharaoh and the issue of the power struggle between Pharaoh and God. It was also the key to Israel’s protection from the final plague. Finally, worship was the destiny of the people in covenant relationship with God and was at the center of their lives as evidenced by the tabernacle.⁶³

One of the most recognized worship experiences of biblical characters is that of Isaiah (Isaiah 6). This experience for Isaiah provides some key insights into the realities as well as the results of true worship in the presence of God.

The incredible privilege of seeing the Lord in His glory and holiness struck Isaiah with awe and caused him to see himself for who he really was. Worshipers must understand the absolute holiness of the God to be worshipped as well as their own unworthiness to be in His presence. Tozer says:

Complete moral purity can only describe God. Every-thing that appears to be good among men and women must be discounted, for we are human. Not one of us is morally pure. Abraham, David and Elijah, Moses, Peter and Paul—all were good men. They were included in God’s fellowship. But each had his

⁶³ Hayford, p. 77.

human flaws and weaknesses as members of Adam's race. Each had to find the place of humble repentance.⁶⁴

Because of this it is important for the worshipper to realize that "we don't waltz carelessly into the presence of the Holy One. After all, God is God. No matter how good we feel about ourselves or our accomplishments, we are fallen creatures in need of God."⁶⁵ It is in the intimate worship experience in the presence of God that we see ourselves for who we really are. Yet we can rejoice that God accepts us as we are, and is willing to cleanse us to make us fit for his presence.

The glorious truth, as seen in the Isaiah encounter, is that God's mercy and grace are available to the believer in worship. As Isaiah allows himself to be cleansed he is able to experience the acceptance and love of the Holy One. This leads to Isaiah's abandonment to the Lord and his willingness to answer God's call. The worshipper who has experienced the awe and wonder of the presence of God, and the cleansing of impurity, will be able to hear and respond to the call of God in a manner that is pleasing to Him.

Thus, true worship will lead to a response on the part of the worshipper which will motivate him/her to bring others to a point of relationship with God in which they can worship Him as well. Morgenthaler says, "Although evangelism is one of the central tasks of the church, it is worship that 'drives' evangelism, not vice-versa. The prophet Isaiah's consecration as an evangelist came within the context of a profound encounter

⁶⁴ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 72.

⁶⁵ Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, p. 59.

with God.”⁶⁶ The natural and normal response to an encounter with the presence of God should be the desire to see others come to know God.

John Piper states it this way:

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.⁶⁷

No discussion of worship in the lives of biblical characters would be complete without consideration of David. Of all the Biblical characters, David is probably the one who is most associated with worship. According to Jack Hayford, “There is no more insightful study in worship than the life and music of David.”⁶⁸

One of the first qualities of David's worship is that it is expressed as a way of life. His was a life that brought honor to God and was fully given to God and God's purposes.⁶⁹ Just as is true of the other biblical characters, and worshippers today, David was an imperfect human who made many mistakes. Yet he had a heart for God. Hayford says, “There is a fundamental prerequisite for everyone who would worship God or lead others to do so. David abundantly manifests that quintessential trait of a heart filled with a passion for God”⁷⁰ (Psalm 63:1-2).

⁶⁶ Morgenthaler, p. 41.

⁶⁷ John Piper, Let the Nations Be Glad! (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993), p. 11.

⁶⁸ Hayford, p. 115.

⁶⁹ Morgenthaler, p. 37.

⁷⁰ Hayford, p.118.

Another characteristic of David's worship is that it was uncompromising. Morganthaler points out that David did not offer worship halfheartedly or stingily. His worship involved total focus, total commitment, and uncompromised devotion (Psalm 27:4). Further, because of David's uncompromising approach to worship, his worship was a witness to the nations (Psalm 57:9). David felt that God would draw unbelievers to Himself through a true worship experience. (Psalm 40:3).⁷¹ Worship offered to God is not to be hindered by external circumstances or pressures. As one focuses on the Lord and maintains a steadfast witness through worship, others will be drawn to the Lord.

David made worship a priority in his life. Because of that he reflected the heart of God. Throughout both Old and New Testaments, it is very evident that worship is the most important thing that God's people can do.⁷² It is so important that it should only be approached by offering one's whole life in worship. To do any less is an insult to God. Worship does cost something; there is sacrifice involved. Webber comments:

Davidic worship, like Christian worship, calls for the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. What God wants from us is not the offering of bulls and goats, but the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving on our lips and in our lives. God wants the sacrifice of service—lips of humble faith and obedience, a life lived for others.⁷³

The New Testament accounts offer insights into worship as well. Andrew Hill states that the groundwork for what will become New Testament worship in the Christian church is found in Jesus' teaching (Matthew 5:1-7:29). In the Sermon on the Mount

⁷¹ Morganthaler, p. 37.

⁷² Ibid., p. 38.

⁷³ Webber, Learning to Worship With All Your Heart, p. 77.

Jesus affirms the importance of personal piety as a catalyst for a worship life-style. He also affirms the complementary relationship between worship and service to others. He gives instruction regarding true piety as opposed to hypocrisy, indicating that worship is to be genuine, not phony. Finally, He instructs His followers that worship and service to God are to be characterized by an attitude of humility toward God and others.⁷⁴

Morganthaler expounds on Jesus' teaching on worship:

In the New Testament, Jesus prioritized Mary's worship over Martha's busy preparation schedule (Luke 10:41-42). At another point, Jesus defended a woman who, out of the intensity of her adoration, poured precious oil on his head (Matthew 26). On another occasion, a Sadducee asked Jesus which commandment was the most important. Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). Jesus knew and taught that God desires our worship above anything else. It should be number one on our agendas.⁷⁵

Of course, one of the most profound teachings of Christ regarding worship is that God is seeking worshippers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23).

The Apostle Paul is another key biblical character from which there are lessons to be learned regarding worship. From his first encounter with the Living Christ in Acts 9, Paul considered the Lord to be supreme and worthy of worship and praise. Out of his experience in the presence of God came immediate obedience and bold proclamation that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

It was in an atmosphere of worship in Acts 13 that Paul and Barnabas were commissioned as missionaries from the Antioch church. The leadership of the church

⁷⁴ Hill, p. 227-228.

⁷⁵ Morganthaler, p. 38.

was worshipping and fasting when they heard the voice of the Holy Spirit instructing them to set apart Paul and Barnabas for the work to which they were being called. Thus, worship brought Paul and the church leadership around him to the place where the Holy Spirit could communicate the will of God to them.

In Acts 16, Paul and Silas had been beaten and thrown into jail for preaching the gospel and delivering one young girl in particular from the influence of demons. Having been put into stocks in to inner prison, Paul and Silas began to pray and sing hymns to God at about the midnight hour. In this atmosphere of praise and worship God sent an earthquake which loosed their bonds. Ultimately, through the display of the power of God and the witness of Paul and Silas, the jailer and his family became believers.

Worship in difficult circumstances leads to God's deliverance and provides a witness of His power.

Another of the most recognized worship experiences in all of scripture is that of the Apostle John in Revelation 1-4. In these chapters, John provides a picture of heavenly worship. This New Testament expression of heavenly worship provides principles of worship which are important for the present-day worshipper.

It is evident from John's experience of heavenly worship that God was the object of his worship (Revelation 4:2). Worship is to be given to God alone through Jesus Christ. There is only One God Who sits upon the throne. His oneness is also to be demonstrated in the unity of worship. According to McMinn, though there are many believers from various backgrounds, denominations, traditions, etc. there should be unity when gathered

around the throne of God in worship.⁷⁶ The beauty of the heavenly worship that John describes is that there are to be those “from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne,” (Revelation 7:9), worshiping the Lord in unity.

John’s vision of heavenly worship also demonstrates the physical nature of worship. Heavenly worshippers sing, cast crowns, fall down, cry out, and play musical instruments. From this picture it can be seen that worship is to incorporate some activity and response to the presence of God on the part of the believer. It should not be the norm for believers to approach a worship experience without being prepared to actively participate wholeheartedly.

In fact, John’s experience reveals that when one is in the presence of God, the natural response is to worship. The reason He is to be worshipped is simply because He is God. According to McMinn, the praise of heaven is prompted by distinct revelations of who God is and what He has done. Worship is to be offered to God because He is: holy (4:8); God Almighty (4:8); eternal (4:8); creator (4:11); and preserver (4:11).⁷⁷

⁷⁶ McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!*, p. 50.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

SUMMARY OF THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF WORSHIP

There are a number of principles for worship which can be identified in the Scriptures. The purpose of this chapter has been to attempt to discover what biblical worship entails. The following summary is divided into three sections: (1) Biblical principles of worship related to God; (2) Biblical principles related to the worshiper; (3) Biblical principles related to the expression of worship.

Biblical Principles Related to God

1. Worship is for God and God alone. He alone is worthy of worship.
2. God is the Initiator of the worship relationship.
3. God seeks worshippers. It is God's desire to tabernacle among His people.
4. God is enthroned on the praises of His people.
5. The worship relationship is made possible through the redemptive covenant of Christ.
6. God is to be worshiped for Who He is and What He Does.
7. God speaks to believers in the context of worship.

Biblical Principles Related to the Worshiper

1. A person is fulfilling his/her purpose for creation when they are worshipping God in spirit and in truth.
2. A true, intimate worship relationship with God should be the normal Christian experience.
3. Worship should be made a priority for the believer.
4. Worship should involve the whole person and be reflected in a lifestyle of worship.
5. Worship involves the sacrifice of praise as well as the sacrifice of service.
6. Preparation for worship involves cleansing through the blood of Christ.
7. Worshippers are participating in an eternal activity which serves as a witness to the nations.

Biblical Principles Related to Expressions of Worship

1. Worship is to come from the heart in humility and awe before the Lord.
2. Expressions of worship are to bring honor and glory to God.
3. Worship often is expressed in joyful and celebratory praise, involving shouts of praise, singing, musical instruments, and bodily expressions of worship.
4. The expression of thanksgiving is an important element of worship.
5. Expressions of worship may be lifted to the Lord individually and corporately.
6. Worship in fellowship with other believers is to be characterized by unity and active participation by all.
7. Expressions of thanksgiving, praise, and worship are to be given at all times and in all circumstances.

Regardless of what personal preferences may be, there should be no dispute that worship should be based on Biblical principles. The purpose of this chapter has been to attempt to lift from the Scriptures what those guiding principles should be. A beneficial exercise may be to compare one's worship experience individually as well as corporately to the Biblical principles that are to guide our worship of the Lord.

Chapter 3

CULTURAL ISSUES IN TRAINING WORSHIP LEADERS

Upon consideration of the principles of worship from a Biblical perspective, it should be recognized that the Bible is very supportive of the idea that God's plan is that He receive worship from all kinds of people in all parts of the world.

“All the nations thou hast made shall come and bow down before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.” (Psalm 86:9)

John's description of worship in heaven is indicative of the fact that heavenly worship throughout eternity will involve a representation of the variety of people groups in the world.

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!’ And all the angels stood round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.’” (Revelation 7:9-12)

In light of the fact that a Biblical view of worship will recognize that people of all nations are to worship God, it is appropriate to consider the variety of ways in which believers from various “nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues” practice their worship of the Lord within their cultural contexts. Further, it is appropriate to take this knowledge into consideration when proposing to establish training for worship leaders.

The world is growing smaller every day. There is a constant clashing of cultures which may represent different languages, customs, styles of dress, eating habits, world

views, as well as modes of worship. In this context, as the evangelical church seeks to impact the world with the gospel of Christ, there has been a long held missiological principle that culture should be a consideration in the presentation of the gospel. However, cultural consideration should go beyond the initial presentation of the gospel and be recognized as a factor which will influence the practice of the Christian faith once it has been received by a particular culture.

It has been said that if the world were a small town of 1,000 people, it would include 564 Asians, 210 Europeans, 86 Africans, 80 South Americans, and 60 North Americans. Living in a town this small with such diversity would not allow for us to be monocultural and ethnocentric. We would have to learn how to minister to and gain from those of different cultural backgrounds.⁷⁸

This is extremely critical for those who are to be involved in Christian ministry cross-culturally. It is greatly important to learn as much as possible about the culture in which one will be ministering. But just as important is the recognition of any cultural bias which may be harbored in the heart of the cross-cultural minister. According to Brislin, Pedersen, and Weeks:

Practical information is obviously necessary to acquire in order to effectively function in another culture. However, unless persons recognize their own culture-based values, feelings and attitudes, are able to communicate them to others, and experientially learn the logic of other cultural systems practical information about another culture will be of little use.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Paul Gordon Chandler, Divine Mosaic. (London: Triangle, 1997), p. 1.

⁷⁹ Richard W. Brislin, Paul B Pedersen, and William H. Weeks, eds., A Manual of Structured Experiences for Cross-Cultural Learning. (Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1979), p. 3.

It is very important to recognize that the Church worldwide, as well as in the United States, is an extremely diverse collection of people. Considering all the different countries, ethnic groups, and cultures represented, it is like the canvas of a beautiful painting with contrasting and complementary colors. In fact, the foundation for our unity as Christians throughout the world is not our likeness but our diversity.⁸⁰ Yet, as the Apostle Paul exhorts, we are to strive to maintain unity in our diversity.

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, on God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4: 1-6, RSV)

From an evangelical perspective there should be the allowance of other cultures to respond to the Christian message in their own culturally distinctive manners. Therefore, a Christian view of multiculturalism would be related to “the influence of the living Christ, as perceived through the text of Holy Scripture, upon the language, art, music, and social mandates of the culture which receives Him.”⁸¹

This calls for not only a tolerance of, but also a celebration of diversity within the Christian family across cultural lines. We must allow each other freedom of expression from within our own cultural contexts as long as the freedom of expression does not lead to a violation of Scriptural principles.

⁸⁰ Chandler, p. 1.

⁸¹ James Breckenridge and Lillian Breckenridge, What Color is Your God? (Wheaton: Bridgepoint, 1995), p. 26.

It should be remembered that with all our differences, we have all been made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). Since God has created each human face differently, it may be assumed that He enjoys variety. There is one Christian faith, yet there are many cultures. The gospel is one, but it finds expression in a variety of ways as each individual's culture shapes his or her response to Christ as well as his or her understanding of the gospel. Consequently, Christians in different parts of the world worship the Lord in various ways.⁸²

However, the fact that something is different does not make it wrong or inferior. In fact, there is much to be learned by observing and embracing positive aspects from other cultures. Indeed, there should be no part of the global church that is exclusively independent of the others. Our own Christian life is made more complete by learning from other cultural expressions of the Christian faith. These various expressions of the Christian faith must be in fellowship with one another. No one expression is closer to Jesus Christ than any other.⁸³

This is why Christians having the opportunity to minister among people from other cultures must be careful not to favor the characteristics of their own cultural expressions of Christianity to the discouragement of or the exclusion of the cultural expressions of others. Dr. D.T. Niles of Sri Lanka has said:

The Gospel is like a seed, and you have to sow it. When you sow the seed of the Gospel in Palestine, a plant that can be called Palestinian Christianity grows. When you sow it in Rome, a plant of Roman Christianity grows. You sow the

⁸² Chandler, p. 2.

⁸³ Ibid.

Gospel in Great Britain and you get British Christianity. The seed of the Gospel is later brought to America, and a plant grows of American Christianity. Now, when missionaries came to our lands they brought not only the seed of the Gospel, but their own plant of Christianity, flower pot included! So, what we have to do is to break the flower pot, take out the seed of the Gospel, sow it in our own cultural soil, and let our own version of Christianity grow.⁸⁴

In terms of the prospect of appropriate cross-cultural ministry, it is imperative that the minister seeks to approach another culture with a tolerance and openness.

There is, however, a balance to be sought. Cultural relevance is not to be pursued at the expense of Biblical principles. Neither is it to be held as important above all else.

There are certain aspects of some cultures that need to be discarded because they either violate Biblical principles or because they are in some way detrimental to the people.

There is a danger in so identifying with a culture that the ministry is rendered ineffective.

Sally Morgenthaler states:

We can become so culturally relevant that we no longer have anything to say to the culture. Instead of having a transforming influence on it, we run the risk of fusing with it. We need to make it our job to study the unbeliever's lifestyle and be informed about his or her reading, viewing, and listening habits. But knowing where people are does not mean that we leave them there.⁸⁵

The critical issue is that of recognizing and affirming the value of culture in all aspects that are not in violation of Scripture or are neutral. It is in the embracing of the good and the neutral that one earns the right to address the evil and inappropriate. According to Donald Hustad, "If healthy change is to come to a culture, it must be guided by those who are identified with it, who love it and understand it. Actually, only they are really

⁸⁴ D.T. Niles as quoted in Chandler, p. 2.

⁸⁵ Morgenthaler, pp. 137-138.

qualified to evaluate it.”⁸⁶ Morgenthaler says, “Study the culture, yes. Acknowledge the culture, yes. Use the best the culture has to offer, yes. But transcend the culture, we must. Transcend it with the whole Truth of Scripture and the Gospel.”⁸⁷

It is in the transcending of the culture with the Truth that will bring about any necessary change. As wonderful and beautiful as the great diversity and variety of cultures in the world may be, all are tainted with sin and evil. Yet, as Donovan says, “The nations and cultures of the world, with all the riches they imply and possess, are not destined merely for salvation—to be saved and conserved. They are called to be lifted up and fulfilled and transformed in Jesus Christ.”⁸⁸ The challenge for the cross-cultural minister is that of not allowing his/her own cultural biases against a particular culture to be interpreted as sufficient to determine what characteristics associated with the culture are to be transformed.

Unfortunately, Americans tend to assume that our culture is superior to other cultures and from that deduce that our way of doing things is the best or only way. The reality is that cultures should not be measured against each other as to quality. Each cultural grouping of people naturally believes that its culture is the best. The cross-cultural minister needs to realize that the strangeness of cultural behavior makes it neither good nor bad (as long as no scriptural principles are violated). What appears to us as strange

⁸⁶ Donald P. Hustad, Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal. (Carol Stream, Ill.: Hope Publishing Co., 1993), p. 148, as quoted in Leisch, p. 188.

⁸⁷ Morgenthaler, p. 138.

⁸⁸ Vincent Donovan, Christianity Rediscovered. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), p. 193.

behavior is, within the context of that culture, both appropriate and logical. Perhaps the most that should be said is that each culture has its strengths and weaknesses in terms of informing the people how to behave.⁸⁹

According to Breckenridge and Breckenridge, “Communicating with other cultures represents perhaps the greatest contemporary evangelical challenge. The question is how to relate to other cultures without altering or subtly changing the essential nature of the Christian message.”⁹⁰ This can be particularly challenging to American Christians who can sometimes be victims of the most incredible cultural blindness.⁹¹

These issues should not, however, be intimidating to one seeking to minister across cultural lines. The differences one encounters should ultimately be overshadowed by a unity among believers. For many, it is just a matter of the need for exposure. Once the initial step toward understanding is taken, the learning begins. It is not a difficult step to take. “Cross-cultural experience begins with simply being able to sit down and talk with people.”⁹²

As one engages in the process of gaining understanding of another culture, it is important to avoid comparison conversations that exalt his/her country, state, or culture over another. One should guard against a superior attitude in regard to his/her education,

⁸⁹ Levi Keidel, Conflict or Connection: Interpersonal Relationships in Cross-Cultural Settings. (Wheaton: Evangelical Missions Information Service, 1996), p. 18.

⁹⁰ Breckenridge and Breckenridge, p. 34.

⁹¹ Donovan, p. 64.

⁹² Bob Sjogren, Bill Stearns, and Amy Stearns, Run With a Vision: A Remarkable Global Plan for the 21st Century. (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1995), p. 151.

possessions, and spiritual life. Also, one should avoid acting toward others as if they are ignorant or inferior. It is crucial to identify similarities between the two cultures which are able to forge cross-cultural bonds.⁹³ These bonds will make it possible for more effective ministry opportunities to occur.

Worship and Culture

As one comes to understand and appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of the various cultures in the world, there can be a further openness to the many and diverse expressions of worship which are possible and appropriate. Donovan says, “While the general outline of the church is certainly present in scripture, the specific details of the church, the response to the good news, will just as certainly have to be as free and diverse as all the separate cultures of the human race.”⁹⁴ Beals suggests that these variations need not be counted as standing in opposition to scripture.

As gospel hearers become gospel believers, the resulting churches differ from culture to culture. Preaching styles, teaching methods, church discipline, styles of leadership, and worship patterns vary markedly. Cultural variables must be recognized and accepted as long as they do not violate the absolute truths of Scripture.⁹⁵

An example of this in a true cross-cultural ministry experience is found in the story of a Ghanaian student named Michael Ntow. Michael recounts how joyful his people were when they first received the Gospel. Having accepted Christianity they proceeded to

⁹³ Martha Van Cise, Successful Mission Teams. (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1996), p. 163.

⁹⁴ Donovan, p. 82.

⁹⁵ Paul A. Beals, A People for His Name. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 159.

worship God in the ways which are common to their culture. Because they loved drums, they continued to play them as lively as ever, only now they were playing the drums for Christ. Then came the day when a large boat anchored in the West African harbor and the missionaries unloaded a pipe organ. The Ghanaians hated the organ—but they were told that this is the instrument they must play in worship. From that point forward, Christianity became integrated with a type of worship which was alien to their way of life. They still accepted Christianity, but had to adapt to a new cultural artifact.⁹⁶

This account serves to illustrate the danger of superimposing cultural preferences in worship on those from another culture. Similarly, Donovan says of his work in Africa, “Approaching an African people like the Maasai with a European version of the gospel makes the acceptance of Christianity on their part a very difficult proposition.”⁹⁷ The point is that different cultures should be allowed to have their own cultural expressions of Christianity and worship without the undue influence of others seeking to impose their own cultural version of Christianity upon them. According to Breckenridge and Breckenridge:

Developing multicultural sensitivity does not mean that the worship customs of any ethnic group should be altered. Each of us brings something unique to the Lord’s table, and that uniqueness is enhanced as we learn from each other. What does have to be safeguarded, however, is the content of the worship experience. The crucified Christ can be preached equally effectively in black, Hispanic, and Anglo churches. The

⁹⁶ Breckenridge and Breckenridge, p. 42.

⁹⁷ Donovan, p. 150.

forms may vary, but there is no reason the content cannot remain the same.⁹⁸

Byron Spradlin, President and Director of Artists in Christian Testimony, describes worship in various cultural contexts.

People want to celebrate their faith, confess their sins, meditate the awesome majesty of the true and living God of Scripture, take communion in ways and manners that are truly *their* ways and manners. These are not theological issues, at their core. These issues are cultural issues.⁹⁹

Therefore, the approach to ministry in another culture should include the recognition that “indigenous worship does not need English, or singing in parts, or pipe organ, or a guitar in order to be valid worship. Observing European and American worship services often suggests to those who have been evangelized that this is the correct way to do things. This is the message we must guard against. Each culture should produce its own songs, pray its own prayers, and thus worship with true understanding.”¹⁰⁰ That freedom will likely result in some extreme diversity in the worship practices throughout the Body of Christ at large.

T.W. Hunt offers the following principles which should be employed when considering this issue of various cultural expressions in worship: (1) Everything good in a culture should be retained. (2) Everything obviously and inherently evil should be

⁹⁸ Breckenridge and Breckenridge, p. 49.

⁹⁹ Byron Spradlin, “Trends in Worship and Church Growth Into the 21st Century,” (Franklin, TN: Artists in Christian Testimony, 1996), p. 3.

¹⁰⁰ Vida Chenoweth, “Spare Them Western Music,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 20 (January 1984), p. 31.

discarded. (3) One may trust the Holy Spirit in the gray areas, especially as He guides a new believer if the believer is being carefully disciplined. (4) Cross-cultural ministers should carefully and prayerfully evaluate how much of their message and how many of their standards are biblical and universal and which are conditioned by their own cultural background. (5) The tools of culture should be regarded as important means of communication.¹⁰¹

Music is one of the greatest tools of culture. If cross-cultural ministers are willing to share in the musical life of those to whom they are ministering, they will have access to the deepest levels of human emotion. God has commanded that his people, regardless of their culture, sing a new song to Him. He has given each culture the musical tools with which to do it. We can do no less than to honor His desire by encouraging that many and diverse expressions of worship music to be lifted to Him.¹⁰²

This may be accomplished by encouraging believers from other cultures that their music is acceptable, their spiritual gifts are valid, and their talents are valuable to God and to the church. There should also be the encouragement of Biblical principles, regardless of the cultural context, so that the various expressions of worship have the commonality of being God-centered. Also, encouragement through participation is important. Identification with the music of another culture enables the cross-cultural

¹⁰¹T.W. Hunt, Music in Missions: Discipling Through Music. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), pp. 121-122.

¹⁰²Brian E. Schrag, "Becoming Bi-Musical: The Importance and Possibility of Missionary Involvement in Music," *Missiology: An International Review* 17 (July 1989), p. 318.

minister to develop a rapport with the people whereby he/she may seek out, encourage, and develop the talents of individuals.¹⁰³

Ultimately the music used in worship needs to be accessible to the people, using the styles and techniques from the surrounding culture. At the same time the gospel should constantly challenge culture and contrast its values with those of the good news of Christ.¹⁰⁴ As evangelicals seek to get the message of the gospel out to the nations, it must be remembered that diversity is a key. Unity in uniformity is not the Biblical ideal. In fact the Bible indicates that diversity is God-honoring and that unity rooted in diversity is healthy and normative.¹⁰⁵

According to Philip Lawson-Johnston:

If the Church wishes to communicate clearly with the world, then it has to speak in a language that can be understood by the ordinary person in the street. Martin Luther himself insisted that church music should be simple, direct and accessible. Likewise, Isaac Watts wrote hymns which spoke of Christian experience rather than the straight doctrine of earlier hymns, making it possible for people to identify themselves closely with them. When the Church becomes too removed from the world, in the desire not to be polluted by its values, it can appear self-righteous and irrelevant to the outsider. It needs to be up-to-date in its means of expression, without compromising the absolute truths of the Bible or doing anything which is scripturally doubtful or forbidden by God.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Hunt, pp. 125-126.

¹⁰⁴ Stephen Dean, "Roman Catholic Music: The Recent Past and the Future," in In Spirit and in Truth, ed. Robin Sheldon (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), p. 47.

¹⁰⁵ Tony Funk, "Discipling Believers to Embrace Diversity in Worship," *Direction* 22 (Fall 1993), p. 33.

¹⁰⁶ Philip Lawson-Johnston, "Power in Praise - Worship, Cloud and the Bible," in Sheldon, p. 163.

The cross-cultural minister must be reminded that “the Church in any culture will not reclaim that culture for Christ, no matter how Biblically sound its ministry, or make significant inroads into that culture without seriously embracing the relevant artistic cultural expressions with the Gospel and for the Gospel.”¹⁰⁷

With this in mind it should be enlightening to observe the current worship practices of various cultures with a view toward coming to a greater understanding of the diversity with which worship of Christ occurs in the world. Donald Smith writes of the new believer:

Not everything is changed. An Indian remains an Indian, a Japanese is still Japanese, an American is American. There are three kinds of values and beliefs in the core: those that are unbiblical, those that are approved by the Bible, and those that are neither approved or disapproved in Scripture. Every culture includes elements that are already in agreement with the teaching of God’s Word, such as hospitality in Africa or the greatness of God recognized in Islamic cultures. Those things are not to be changed. Many other values and beliefs are not a biblical issue, and they also need not be changed. But in every culture there are things in the core that are ungodly and that are condemned in the Bible.¹⁰⁸

There can be great benefit in identifying those elements in Christian worship within a specific cultural context which do not constitute biblical issues, but are simply culturally relevant expressions of worship. For example, Smith quotes a Sudanese Christian worker saying:

¹⁰⁷ Spradlin, p. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Donald Smith, Creating Understanding: A Handbook for Christian Communication Across Cultural Landscapes (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), p. 264.

In my country you see many Christians in traditional churches leaving their church because change is forbidden. They go to churches where they don't only listen to sermons but also have time to express all their feelings in singing, clapping, and even dancing. After services there is fellowship where people pray together, confess their sins, sometimes crying, sing, and drumming as much as they wish. This gives them opportunity to share how the Word of God works in their lives—with much emotional expression.¹⁰⁹

The following study of diverse cultural expressions of worship involves qualitative inquiry which specifically considers cultural influences. Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh describe this type of study as one in which there is concern for the context and the natural setting. In qualitative studies, the investigator is the data-gathering instrument and he/she relies on fieldwork methods—interviewing, nonstructural observation, and document analysis—as the principal means of collecting data. Reports of qualitative inquiry are generally heavily narrative in form and involve thorough descriptions of the setting and context. Rather than presenting tables of statistics and graphic displays of numerical data, reports of qualitative studies present the natural language of the participants in a study as drawn from interview data and documents.¹¹⁰

Over the course of several months, interviews were conducted on site in India, Honduras, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United Kingdom. The interviews involved questions related to how characteristics of the indigenous culture are incorporated into worship. The following reports of the interviews and observations are not intended to

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 291.

¹¹⁰ Donald Ary, Lucy Cheser Jacobs, and Asghar Razavieh, Introduction to Research in Education (Philadelphia: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1990), pp. 447-450.

imply that the characteristics expressed should be generalized to those countries or cultures at large. These are snapshots, as it were, designed to shed light on the diversity of Christian worship around the world.

INDIA

The first set of interviews was conducted in January 1998 in India. India is a land of great racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. Nearly 16% of the world's population is Indian, living on 2.4% of the world's land surface. It is predicted that by early in the 21st century India will become the most populous country in the world with nearly 1.3 billion people.¹¹¹

Tradition holds that the Apostle Thomas brought Christianity to South India in the first century. Since then there have been a number of mission endeavors. 200 years ago, William Carey, the Father of Modern Missions, went to India and made a great impact despite great opposition. There have been countless Christian workers, Indian and expatriate. Yet today India remains over 80% Hindu. Hinduism readily absorbs elements of any religion with which it comes into contact, a great challenge to true Christianity. Fundamental to Hinduism is the caste system that perpetuates the racial superiority of Brahmins and other higher castes over the majority. The caste system pervasively influences all religious and social structures in India. The population is approximately 12% Muslim and only 2.6% Christian. With 16 major languages and over 1600 different

¹¹¹ Patrick Johnstone, Operation World (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), p. 273.

dialects, there is indeed great diversity in India, making Christian ministry a tremendous challenge.¹¹²

On January 4, 1998 a Sunday morning worship service was held at the Christian Believers Assembly Fellowship in Kota, Rajasthan (north India). This church is pastored by Dr. Samuel Thomas. There were approximately 200 people in attendance. Worship music included “Blessed Assurance,” “Are You Washed in the Blood,” “Amazing Grace,” and several songs in the Hindi language. Worship was lead by an ensemble of ten singers. Instruments used included a keyboard, an electric guitar, and conga drums. On faster songs the worshipers clapped on beats one and three. There were two sermons preached and the Lord’s Supper was observed with a common cup. The preacher removed his shoes for the sermon, indicating he was standing on holy ground. The service also included a responsive reading of Psalm 91 in Hindi. The congregation was divided as the women sat in a group on the floor and the men sat in a group in chairs. There were a number of Bible verses painted on the walls in English and in Hindi. The following is an excerpt of an interview with Dr. Samuel Thomas.

WT: Dr. Samuel Thomas, how does the Indian culture in general express itself in music and the arts?

ST: See, you have to understand that India has 330 million gods. As far as India being religious, there’s no question that we are religious. You cannot get any more religious than Indians. Worship singing is even a part of the Hindu religion and what we do in our church services, and I think it is cultural, too . . . we start with the slow tempo music like “Amazing Grace” and “What A Friend We Have In Jesus.” Then they go into a faster tempo; and then they break the service into groups where people give testimonies. But even in the testimony session they will have to have a song after each testimony. And the songs always connect to the testimony. . .

. . . Then we go into the slow songs again that build us up for a worship attitude before we take part in the Lord’s Table. In India, most all of the churches have the communion table every Sunday. At that time, most of them get on their knees . . . almost like a meditation . . . The songs we will sing during the worship, before we take part from the Lord’s Table, are songs people know by heart. They don’t have to look in a

¹¹² Ibid., pp. 274-275.

book or something like that. The pastor keeps leading, and the longer they sing the song, the more concentrated and devoted they are to the purpose they have come together for.

WT: When they're singing in English, and sometimes in your situation in Kota, in Hindi and other languages . . . would you say a word about some of the songs that are indigenous to the culture?

ST: . . . Scripture is the main basis for all our songs. In India you will never hear in worship any songs because of someone's personal experience. Every song we sing in our worship is nothing but scripture verses. Then, after the communion, we start building with fast tempo songs and upbeat music. . .

WT: In terms of the instruments that you use in worship, would you just say a word about how Indian culture is represented in the musical instruments and the style of music?

ST: The style of music is most like Jamaican. We use congas and bongos because those are the instruments that most churches can afford. Then we have drum sets, rhythm pads, guitars, keyboard, harmonicas, accordions . . . we have all of that in our worship service. But if it's a small church, you know he's going to have a conga. He has to have that; it's part of the church; that's the beat.

WT: But often, would you say that in a lot of Indian services they just have the drums playing and the people all singing in unison and no other instruments?

ST: That's right - Indians don't sing in harmony. What Indians love to do is see who can sing the loudest. I tell you what, though, I think that's scriptural in some ways. "Sing with a loud voice."

WT: Okay, which of the following types of body movements would be involved in worship there: kneeling, raising of hands, clapping, maybe even dancing?

ST: Raising of hands, yes. There's nothing wrong with that. We do that in our service. Dancing, to me personally, is taking it a bit too far . . . maybe because I'm more conservative. But if you feel like dancing, that's fine because you could say David danced before the Lord. Well, that's how you interpret the Bible there in that context.

We do kneel and pray. Again, even if you have fasting prayer, half of the fasting prayer is nothing but scriptural songs. The reason we emphasize songs more than preaching and testimony is every person in our church comes from a Hindu, Muslim, or Catholic background. They don't know much scripture. But if they learn how to sing the song, they don't realize they're singing scriptures. That's one of the easiest ways to teach our people scriptures.

WT: A lot of churches in the States are using liturgy, banners, symbols, etc. I noticed coming into your church, you have the Scriptures painted on the walls; some in English, some in Hindi. Say a word about why you've chosen to do this.

ST: Our church . . . we not only have Christians come in, we have non-Christians come in. Like when LIGHT came and performed a music program, we have the Hindus come. When they come in they see, "The Lord is My Shepherd" and "All that are heavy laden and burdened, come unto me, I'll give you rest." Those kinds of scriptures penetrate their heart. Even though they don't pay attention to the preaching, they can't help but read the scripture that's on the wall in green and white paint.

WT: That's good. Just briefly go down what would be the normal order of service for your worship, and about how long would an average service go?

ST: In our culture it starts at 8:45 a.m., all the Christian Believers Assembly's meetings, and goes up to 12:00 p.m. 50-60% is singing. One shares a testimony. He'll find a scripture, and songs that go with that, and we'll build that up.

WT: Well, I know that you spend a lot of time in the States and you've been in many American churches. What are the distinctions between the Indian church and American church when it comes to worship?

ST: Oh my. I have to be very careful how I answer that question if I want to come back to the States. I think in some ways in the American culture, if I put it in a nutshell, is organized culture. But I think sometimes we are too organized in our (American) worship meetings. If someone is lead by the Lord to preach a little longer or sing a song that God has laid upon his heart, he can't do it. So many of our (American) churches are controlled by the bulletin instead of by the Spirit of God.

So I think, to make it easier to understand, what I'm trying to say is: If it's a youth minister or musician, music leader, or whoever is selecting the songs in your country (America) . . . if they would spend a Monday and Tuesday, or Friday and Saturday before the Sunday and get on their knees and ask God what would He have, instead of just picking "Amazing Grace" all the time . . . It's amazing that, I think, sometimes being in the States, that God cannot save anybody unless we sing "Just As I Am" or "All to Jesus." Well, there are some other songs that God can still speak through. But for some reason we're following tradition in some ways. But we must be open and let God have His way.

WT: Okay . . . Is there anything else that you can think of that you think would be appropriate for this interview?

ST: I think I'll go back to what I said. Our songs must be scripture-based . . . To build up a church, it must be scripture-based; not emotional; not personal experience . . . If you want to see the church grow, it better be grounded on God's Word.¹¹³

Emmanuel Ministries International, of which Dr. Samuel Thomas is president, recently posted the following statistics regarding their ministry in India:¹¹⁴

Churches	2,217
Believers	75,000
Schools	120
Students	49,000
Orphanages	40
Orphans	2,000
Bible Institutes	17
Bible Students	800
Hospitals	1
Clinics	25
Nurses School	1

¹¹³ Samuel Thomas, Pastor of Christian Believers Assembly in Kota, Rajasthan - India, author interview, January 1998.

¹¹⁴ Emmanuel Ministries International, Forest, VA

Weekly Radio Programs	7
Leper Colonies	110

Another interview was conducted in the southern state of Kerala, in the city of Calicut after a service in the Assembly of God. The worship at this church was very energetic with extended times of singing. Most of the approximately 100 believers were seated on the floor with the men on one side and the ladies on the other. The ladies had their heads covered. The only musical instrument was a set of drums. There were shouts of praise and lifting of hands. During the songs the believers clapped their hands on every beat.

Assistant Pastor Austin Y. Danam gave the following description of their worship:

All the Pentecostal churches in India (S. India) worship on Sundays for two and a half hours and so start at 9:30 or 10:00 AM in the morning for the convenience of the believers. Some come from very far off places and all finish their work at home and are ready to worship the Lord for two and a half hours. Our churches give prime importance to Sunday classes which we conduct before worship at 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM.

The worship service starts with an opening prayer of the pastor praising and thanking God for his love and guidance through the week etc. and the prayer continues to bring all the believers into a spiritual state. It goes on for 10 minutes. Next the congregation openly worships by singing two songs of praise through their worship in their tongues. Two members from the ladies side and another from the gents side will pray. Followed with reading of the psalms by the pastor. The chapter taken will be chosen earlier through personal devotion through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. One or two verses will be particularly taken on which a brief message will be passed. The next 45 minutes will be a time for free and open worship for the congregation, all standing. During this worship members become free from sickness, mental tensions, family problems and evil spirits.

As we continue the worship, all sit down and the pastor introduces the special guests to the congregation. The Sunday School students then stand, sing a song and give testimonials quoting short Bible verses. Then 20 minutes is given for the elders to give their testimony very briefly. After this session all stand up, sing a song, and the offering is taken. One member prays and blesses the offering. Everyone is seated and the announcements are carried out which include the next week programmes like fasting prayer, family meetings Bible study programme, etc. After this the pastor preaches 45 minutes, gives the blessing, and closes with prayer.

According to I Corinthians 11:10-15 the ladies put a scarf around their heads. We have a traditional concept that by kneeling, closing our eyes, and clapping the hands brings about concentration and personal satisfaction for worship which we follow. The social system (from which this concept comes) actually is believed to come from a Hindu tradition which in the temple school the students kneel and clap their hands in praise of their idols (that is known as Bhajana). They are sitting in that

way and clap their hands and worship Hindu gods, so the same way the people worship Jesus Christ. In our culture, if we are sitting in chairs we cannot worship in a proper way, in proper harmony, in proper joy. If we want to worship enthusiastically, we want to sit like that. Always we remove the shoes when we come to the service. It is a holy place.¹¹⁵

The significance of religion for the average Indian cannot be overstated. The people are very religious. Their religious beliefs greatly impact their daily lives. The Indian Christians approach worship with passion. Their scripture songs are sung with energy and fervency unto the Lord.

Their respect of God's holiness is evidenced in the removal of their shoes and the women covering their heads for worship. These expressions of reverence are symbols of an attitude which all should bring to worship. Also, their regular observance of the Lord's Table is a good example to other believing fellowships of the positive aspect of placing that observance in high regard in the life of the church.

A potential weakness in the worship life of Indian believers is that of not striking a good balance between freedom and structure. There may be a point at which freedom degenerates into disorganization to the degree that the worship experience loses meaningfulness. Also, as in many churches regardless of culture, there is the danger of failing to pursue excellence in worship through appropriate planning and preparation.

THE CARIBBEAN

Another culture observed is that of the Caribbean Islands during a visit in February 1998 to the island of Providenciales. Provo, as it is called, is one of the Turks and

¹¹⁵ Pastor Austin Y. Danam, Assembly of God, Kerala, South India, author interview, January 1998.

Caicos Islands of the British West Indies. The Turks and Caicos Islands make up an archipelago of 30 coral islands at the southeastern end of the Bahamas. Ninety-five percent of the people are Afro-Caribbean, including a growing number of Haitian refugees. It is estimated that 99% of the people are Christian, though a great number are only nominal Christians. Corruption and drug scandals have rocked the church going islanders.¹¹⁶

Though the population has been considered predominantly Christian for centuries, a general stagnation, compromise with the world, and a loss of vision is widespread. Cults, spiritism and error have become major problems for the Christian community. Also, there is very little ministry to young people.¹¹⁷

The Sunday morning services at the Provo Bible Church were attended by approximately 20 young people and 20 adults; 5 men and 15 ladies. All appeared to be dressed in their very best. They sat on wooden pews that had been painted red. The doors and windows were open and ceiling fans were on to try to make the sanctuary cooler.

The church has an acoustic piano, but it is in ill repair due to weather and humidity. The electric organ plays, but also needs work. The afro-Caribbean congregation sang heartily and clapped on beats two and four of faster songs. There were occasional “Amens” throughout the time of singing.

¹¹⁶ Johnstone, p. 546.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 49.

The worship service appeared to be much like that of an American evangelical church. The church had a hymnal, "Great Hymns of the Faith," as well as a song book called the "Country and Western Gospel Hymnal." The music consisted of traditional hymns as well as some contemporary choruses. There was little that would distinguish the service from a worship service in the United States.

Pastor Tom Rigby had become a Christian under the ministry of an American missionary and had planted the church following what he had learned from the missionary years ago. This is likely why there was little of what might be considered truly indigenous island culture in the worship service, particularly in the area of music.

According to T.W. Hunt, "The most stubborn musical associations often result from the mission history itself, especially where a given work is older. Earlier missionaries sometimes taught, either deliberately or unconsciously, that indigenous music was heathen, and contemporary believers are heirs to prejudices so strong that it seems unwise to force changes too rapidly."¹¹⁸

The following is an excerpt of an interview with Pastor Tom Rigby of Provo Bible Church.

WT: Pastor Rigby, how would you say the local culture is represented in the music of our worship?

TR: The music here, you have to make sure that all of the churches, whether they're Baptists or Methodists, have gospel music. The music must not be only appealing to emotions, but be music from the heart. Even if there is not a good, solid, Christian foundation in that assembly, but they prefer gospel music that wouldn't just appeal to the emotion of the people, but to the soul. What we consider with the music is that we prepare the people.

The style of the music, we're very particular about. We wouldn't want anything that the culture wouldn't approve. The majority of the people here, even non-Christians, love singing gospel music. . .

WT: What would be a typical order of service?

¹¹⁸ Hunt, p. 133.

TR: The song leader will lead one song and then he will ask one of the deacons or me to pray. After that, another song, then I would get up and give the announcements. After that we take the offering. We might have another song or the choir sings and then I preach. The service, excluding the preaching, is about 25 minutes long.

WT: How do you conduct your baptismal services?

TR: We don't have a baptistry, so we go to the beach and have a special service for that. Sometimes, we prepare the people for baptism, teaching them and asking them if they know what baptism means. After the church service, I have a special talk with them.

WT: How often do you have a communion service?

TR: We don't set specific times to do communion. Sometimes we'll do the supper once a month; sometimes before Easter; sometimes on Holy Night, and so on. We do the communion when we feel we need encouragement and especially for new believers, and encouraging other people.

WT: Does your worship incorporate body movements such as kneeling, raising hands, etc?

TR: . . . People could clap their hands, and they could raise their hands and say, "Praise the Lord." There is nothing wrong with that. But we don't make that as a practice that they must do that.

WT: Is there anything else you would like to say about the worship in your church?

TR: One of the most important things of the church is the music. It must be good gospel music. And with the music we prepare them for the message. You must prepare them for the message with a song because they could easily get offended, especially non-Christians. That's why the music has to be prepared carefully, so that it is different from that of the world. The music is important, but it must prepare the heart for the Word of God.¹¹⁹

It would be interesting to see how people in the church would respond to worship music which is more representative of the Caribbean culture. It appears that there is not very much freedom in that particular area. The danger is that there would develop a legalistic attitude toward indigenous expressions of worship which are more representative of the culture. Even so the people enjoy singing the songs and clapping along and appear to be sincere in their worship.

¹¹⁹ Pastor Tom Rigby, Provo Bible Church, Turks and Caicos Islands, author interview, February 1998.

HONDURAS

Latin America is one part of the world where there is great interest in the church. Latin America has a population of over 350 million people, many of whom are turning to the Christian faith. In fact, the Church is one of the most important factors shaping human life and institutions throughout Latin America. Hispanics in both Central and South America vary in skin color, history, and racial origins. Yet the two central cultural characteristics they share are (1) a marvelous sense of celebrating life through fiesta, which results in a loving appreciation of God's gift of life; and (2) a unique understanding of time which allows them to savor that gift.¹²⁰

Today much of the worship in the churches is vigorous and lively. This is occurring in contrast to years of routine worship, ritual and excessive traditionalism. One of the most unfortunate things that could happen to these festive people would be that they become "caged in rigid and overly structured worship in which they do not naturally feel comfortable. They flourish when allowed to act with great freedom."¹²¹

Latin Americans have described themselves as having certain personality characteristics related to their culture. They are easily carried away by emotions of compassion and tenderness. They are known for their personal warmth, responsiveness

¹²⁰ Chandler, p. 49.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 50.

and emotion. They can be hot-blooded, with passions running close to the surface. Yet they are optimistic and have a good sense of humor.¹²²

They are also known for their joyous music which incorporates the marimba, harps, flutes, pan-pipes, and drums. Popular rhythms are calypso, salsa, and samba. Further, dance is inherent to the musical culture. Their approach to life is naturally one of celebration. Consequently, when they find deeper and more meaningful life in Christ, they are able to celebrate life at its fullest; not just life, but life more abundantly.¹²³

A series of interviews was conducted in the Latin American country of Honduras. In Honduras, the Roman Catholic Church is officially recognized, but there is separation of Church and State and religious freedom. The population is approximately six million, 85% of which are Roman Catholic. The evangelical population has grown steadily, but faces problems of poverty, illiteracy, and paternalistic attitudes among mission organizations.¹²⁴

The first interview was conducted with Mario Rodas, pastor of the Sanctified Evangelical Church of the city of La Ceiba after a Sunday evening service. The worship incorporated a praise band made up of an electric keyboard, also programmed for drums, and an electric guitar played by the pastor/worship leader. Joining the worship leader was a male and a female vocalist, one of whom also played tambourine.

¹²² Ibid., p. 51.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 52

¹²⁴ Johnstone, pp. 263-264.

Praise choruses had been hand written in Spanish on large sheets of paper and were hung from the rafters of the church. In order to change the song, one of the church members let the paper down by a pulley, turned the page, then raised it back up. The music was loud and lively with a lot of clapping. Between choruses, the worshipers would clap and shout praises.

There were approximately 50 worshipers, from young children to older adults, gathered in a cement block building with bare rafters and a tin roof. As they worshipped for 25-30 minutes some lifted hands, some swayed back and forth with the music.

The following is an excerpt of an interview with Pastor Rodas.

WT: How is the Honduran culture expressed in the worship services?

MR: There are particular aspects in our country that express that “sense of depth” - the things that we believe through expressions of rhythm, dances, and folklore. The Honduran culture isn’t represented in all the churches due to the fact that we have been educated as churches by other cultures. In the past, we have had a strong influence of the North American culture. In a general way, at any level and place, the music has suffered many changes and transformations. Without a doubt, North America is still a strong influence for us.

WT: I noticed a Latin style in the praise songs. How is Honduran culture represented in the music of the church?

MR: The Latin rhythm and music is not very common in our churches. Not all churches in Honduras, and particularly in La Ceiba, manage the level of music that we, as the Sanctified Church, manage. The majority of the praise songs that we sing are written by foreign composers. Some of them are Central American, but naturally, the majority of songs are translations from North American composers. The last song we played was written by a Honduran composer.

WT: Do you ever incorporate drama or dance in your worship?

MR: What we use as a concept of worship are the songs. We don’t use drama in that sense, but we do use them to address a message. We also lift hands, some dance, clapping, and shouting. A small percentage of the churches keep the traditional forms of worship, but more than 50% use the forms that were taught to us by the early churches.

WT: How would you like to see the worship of you church progress?

MR: We have been playing the music that we play for about three years. Later, we would like to incorporate the bass, a drum set, and personally, I would love to include the saxophone. This is something

new for us as a church. As both a music ministry and a church, we want to help the congregation grow in this attitude of worship and praise.¹²⁵

Another church that was visited was the Sanctified Evangelical Church of San Pedro Sula, Cortes, Honduras. This church has an average attendance of 100. They meet in a typical Honduran building; plaster walls, tiled floor, and plastic chairs. The service included responsive reading, energetic singing of hymns and choruses, and a sermon. During the worship singing there were shouts of “hallelujah” and lifting of hands as expressions of praise to the Lord. The church is pastored by Carlos Castro. The interview with Pastor Castro went as follows.

WT: How does the Honduran culture express itself in the church?

CC: I believe that the Honduran culture has an impact in everything that has to do with the teachings and preaching. When I think about culture, I think about the irradiation of the gospel in different regions of the country.

WT: How is the culture represented in the music of the church?

CC: We’ve had a lot of influence from the U.S. in music. So now we’re trying to develop our own style of music and Marcos Witt is helping us do that. One of the key characteristics of church music in Honduras, and especially in the Sanctified churches, is that of putting music to Bible verses. But if we could revive our music and implement it in our churches, it would be ideal though it would be very hard for the church to accept this type of music because of the external influences that we’ve had.

WT: What musical instruments do you use in worship?

CC: Here in the city we use the electric guitar and the drums, but personally, it’s not my favorite. I am much more blessed when we use traditional instruments like what they use in the country churches: accordion, concertina, and maracas. We’ve lived in a generation in which we like to worship God with sacred music, but these are the people in their 40’s and 50’s. But in the church, a new generation has emerged; a generation which is permeated by a new musical culture: upbeat music with guitars and joyful rhythms.

WT: Do you ever incorporate drama, dance, banners, etc. in worship?

CC: In our church, we use drama, lift hands, kneeling. We don’t dance - it’s not that I don’t believe, but that’s not the culture of our church, even though our origins have dance. But we were born and influence

¹²⁵ Pastor Mario Rodas, Sanctified Evangelical Church, La Ceiba, Honduras, author interview, March 1998.

by another culture where dance is not appropriate. We use the national flag and the evangelical flag, but only as symbols of our nation and the gospel.

WT: Please describe a typical Sunday morning service.

CC: In a typical Sunday morning service, we have five minutes of praise songs, five minutes of worship songs, Bible reading, brief announcements, and the preaching. Then we have Sunday School. We have the Lord's Supper every three months.¹²⁶

The Latin Americans are wonderful loving people who live life with passion. That passion is expressed in their worship. Their fervent singing is very moving and it is great to be a part of a worship experience in which everyone is participating with their whole heart.

There may be a danger in becoming so festive in worship that intimacy with God suffers. Though the festive times are wonderful, there is also the need at times to "be still and know that I am God."

UNITED KINGDOM

The last interviews were conducted in the United Kingdom. This is a land with a long tradition of Christianity, yet numerous "Christians" are secular and have no meaningful link with a church. In England only 10% of adults and 14% of children are in a church service on an average Sunday, although 65% would claim to be Christian. Evangelical Christians are steadily growing in number in contrast to overall Christian decline.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Pastor Carlos H. Castro, Sanctified Evangelical Church, San Pedro Sula, Cortes, Honduras, author interview, March 22, 1998.

¹²⁷ Johnstone, pp. 556-561.

While there is religious freedom, the Church of England (Anglican) is recognized as the established church in England. The Sovereign is recognized as the titular head of the Church of England.¹²⁸ The services of the Anglican Church are quite formal and liturgical. As a matter of law, services must be conducted from either the Book of Common Prayer or the 1980 Alternate Service Book. The following are excerpts from an interview which was conducted with an Anglican priest, Rev. David Wakefield.

WT: How does the British culture express itself in the arts?

DW: In a variety of ways. One of the things is British people tend to hold on to the fact that they have a very strong historic culture, so therefore, they like to feel that strength and history is incorporated into the arts in general. I think it has been altered in the last 20-30 years by many of the new cultures that have come to live in this land.

WT: What cultural expressions would be found in the worship of the British people?

DW: I think that it is very varied. If you take the very, very traditional English church: the cathedral, the parish church type of situation, the culture of the service, the worship, the liturgy, the people that go would be very, very British. It would have a choral tradition, a singing tradition. . . not so much a "taking part" tradition, but a "being there" tradition.

WT: One of the most controversial areas of church worship would be the area of music. How would you surmise that British culture is represented in the music of worship?

DW: I think it's very represented, particularly in the cathedral type worship and parish church type worship. Many churches have a choir and an English tradition of worship. . . The problem, I feel, is that you may have an extremely nice psalm which nobody can take part in because nobody knows the chant. It is too complicated. So the congregation tends to stand there with their mouths open, reveling in these beautiful voices coming from the choir, but at the same time with no concentration on words which they couldn't take part in. And very often couldn't hear; probably because of the tradition and the style that is sung. So I think that there's a great tradition. But unfortunately, it's a tradition which in many instances. . . becomes more like a concert tradition rather than a "join in worship" tradition. I think that's a great shame.

WT: Is the music mostly classical?

DW: There are lots of new churches in the Anglican Church and lots of churches which are Evangelical, not classical in any way at all. But, of course, many churches are classical. And they're classical not only with choirs, but they're classical because the old type of service is the one that the congregation actually sticks rigidly to and wants, either because they feel safe with it, or because they like the wording or whatever. Again, the problem is that very often people don't actually understand what's being said.

WT: How does the culture influence the way believers actually participate in worship themselves?

¹²⁸ Ibid.

DW: The culture in many ways enables or allows a person not to take part in worship. They can take part in familiar hymns, but it's quite interesting. . .the main hymn book used in Anglican churches would be, Hymns, Ancient and Modern, revised, which has the usual classic hymns in it. More and more churches, of course, are using things like, Mission Praise, for a common worship book with more modern things in it. And that would go together with the old modern time hymn. But for cathedrals, they use a totally different book called, The English Hymnal. There are hymns in there which are very, very old and are certainly not in any other prayer book. . .And so again, even a person going along at that point in time, when one of those hymns is being used, couldn't actually take part very easily because they actually wouldn't know the tune that was being played.

WT: Which of the following might be incorporated in a worship service: drama, use of body motion like kneeling/raising of hands, banners, symbols, art, liturgy, ritual, etc?

DW: Over the years I think we've use, at some time or another, all of those. . .Many churches are actually using drama. . .but again, you've got this divider like you've got with music.

WT: Would you describe an Anglican church service?

DW: The main services in an Anglican church by law have to be taken from either The Book of Common Prayer or The Alternative Service Book which came out in 1981. . .Some churches will actually use what I would call illegal services. . .An Anglican church being a state church, the state actually defines through parliament the actual services that you can actually adopt. . .My own personal belief is that services should be done with the congregation in mind. One congregation may want a very full service with the 1662 prayer book. I think it's absolutely wonderful; I get a lot out of it and take a lot home. I leave feeling completely uplifted by that service. Another service may be conducted very freely with drama, banners, choruses, etc. in it. It is up to the priest to find ways to bring the two together.

WT: Is there a regular observance of the Lord's Supper?

DW: The Lord's Supper, or Eucharist, or Communion, should be read or celebrated every Sunday.

WT: Is the church calendar generally observed throughout the Anglican Church?

DW: Yes. It's a special set lectionary which is actually set out for the Anglican Church.

WT: Is contemporary music becoming more common in the church?

DW: It is becoming more common in some of the churches; but, certainly, if you introduced it into many of the old traditional parish churches, they would freak. . .In other churches, of course, it's becoming very, very popular. . .Songs like "Shine, Jesus, Shine" and "Surely the Presence of the Lord is in this Place" are very popular because they have become traditional. . .even though they've only been written in the last 20 or so years. Modern traditional things you might introduce would take a long time to be accepted. It's a peculiarity really. . .Most unchurched people's experience with church comes from baptisms, weddings, and funerals which, in the main, are very traditional services.

WT: Whether a service is more traditional or more contemporary, what is it that you as a minister want to see accomplished when the people come together for worship?

DW: I would like them to feel that they can be part of what's happening; that they could actually take away with them as much as they possibly could take away. Now that might be a person who turns up totally depressed, who might take away some joy (because of the worship). Or it may be someone taking

away something from the sermon; or whatever it may be. But I'd like to feel that every person, in some way or another, actually takes something away from that worship.¹²⁹

In the more traditional liturgical approach to worship of the Church of England the danger is that the form becomes cold and void of meaning. Effort must be made to not allow the service to be a dry presentation. Yet if care is taken, there are beautiful moments in the liturgy which can be incorporated into a very meaningful worship experience.

The final interview took place in Edinburgh, Scotland at the Carrubbers Christian Center. This church is located on what is known as "The Royal Mile," a highly frequented tourist area in the heart of Edinburgh. The church had begun many years ago as a mission to street children. It became well known for fervent evangelism and drew the attention of Dwight L. Moody who became involved in the ministry and raised funds for the construction of the present church building, which has recently been beautifully remodeled.

The current congregation of approximately 250 people is made up of mostly white college aged students with some older adults. The 18-piece orchestra includes strings, woodwinds, horns, piano, acoustic guitar, electric bass, and drums. The musicians are all college students in Edinburgh.

The Sunday morning service on May 24, 1998 began with a congregational hymn with the orchestra. The lyrics were displayed by an overhead projector. This was followed by scripture reading and prayer, then intimations (announcements). Special music, a

¹²⁹ Rev. David Wakefield, Anglican Priest, Retford, Nottinghamshire, England, author interview, May 1998.

children's message, and a testimony were followed by the offering. Here the congregation sang a more contemporary chorus from the *Mission Praise* book. After the sermon and prayer, the service closed with an Isaac Watts hymn, "Come, Let Us Join Our Cheerful Songs," and the benediction.

Colin Peckham, the music director and worship leader, is a music teacher from South Africa who has been living in Edinburgh for 13 years. The following is an excerpt from an interview with him.

WT: How do you feel that the local culture is expressed in the arts in the community?

CP: Traditionally, Scotland is probably very suspicious of the arts when it comes to culture because Scotland was one of the most reformed European countries. And so you tend to find in most traditional churches of Scotland that there is a sort of suspicion of the arts, generally. Churches tend to be rather plainly decorated and so is the music as well. In certain parts of Scotland, you only would ever sing the psalms. And even in some churches here in Edinburgh you only would ever sing the psalms. Here in Carrubbers we have a rather different approach; we have a much more liberal, if you like, approach to music and we do a lot of various things. . .

WT: Would The Church of Scotland be significantly different from what we experienced this morning?

CP: Yes...as in all places there may be some individual churches of The Church of Scotland that would have a more modern approach...but it would be a more traditional, more organ-based congregational hymnology.

WT: I recognized this morning you did a hymn by Isaac Watts as well as a song by Keith Green. What would you say about this blending of the traditional and the contemporary?

CP: Well, I am a firm believer in the blending them actually. I think that when you try to introduce new songs to a church, you have two battles to overcome. You've got to get the older people in the church to accept the modern. But then you have another battle, and that's where most churches that do go modern fall down. You've got to get the younger people to accept the old. That's the second half that is not very often attacked. Often there is so much of a revolution toward the new that they forget the old. I firmly believe that if you couch an old hymn surrounded by modern hymns, it lends more meaning to it. The new becomes more acceptable to the older people, and the old becomes more acceptable to the younger people. So I am a big believer in mixing the old and the new.

WT: How does the culture reflect upon the way in which people participate in worship?

CP: People in British culture are very reticent to involve themselves in any great deal. To be honest, we struggle a bit in Carrubbers with the singing being not quite what it should be. Sometimes it has to be pushed to get involvement. But I have to say, here in Carrubbers, we are very fortunate above perhaps

most other churches. We do things in the music ministry here which, on paper, we should never really be able to do with a congregation of 250. For example, once a year we'll put on a big outreach event based upon black gospel music around about Easter time. And we'll have a choir of between 60 and 70. For a congregation of 250 that's pretty unthinkable.

WT: Do you ever incorporate drama?

CP: We have done in the past when we have the people here who are able to do it. We certainly have no prohibition on it. It is something we would use.

WT: Would people incorporate body motions in their worship such as kneeling, lifting of hands, dance, etc?

CP: Lifting of the hands...yes, absolutely. It's not common, of course, because we come back to the reformation effect on Scotland which made it very, very conservative. So you tend to need to go to the more charismatic churches where there would be dance and use of ribbons (banners), and that sort of stuff. Generally, here in Carrubbers, that doesn't usually happen.

WT: Please comment on the Church of Scotland.

CP: The Church of Scotland is Presbyterian, so it doesn't have a liturgy as such. They are also much more conservative. . .

WT: Are there any other observations about worship that you would like to add to this discussion?

CP: I think Britain will eventually move toward a more lively style in even the ordinary churches. . . I firmly believe that while worship is a life, not just an act of singing, we shouldn't put an obstacle in the way of either the young or the old, or people from different cultures as regards music. And let people worship and feel free in the culture that suits them best. And at the same time introduce them to other cultures so that they do feel comfortable in them eventually, and start to take a more active role within them.¹³⁰

Because of the fact that those from British culture are generally less inclined to participate in worship in a very personal way, there is the danger that the worship experience becomes merely an observing and impersonal experience. Care must be taken to encourage people to engage in worship themselves and not simply watch.

These "snapshots" of worship in other cultures are but simple examples of the wonderful reality that the Lord, Jesus Christ is being worshipped around the world in a

¹³⁰ Colin Peckham, Carrubbers Christian Center, Edinburgh, Scotland, author interview, May 1998.

variety of ways. Upon consideration of offering training for worship leaders, it must be remembered that this diversity is to be embraced and celebrated.

Some might argue that most of those seeking training in seminaries in the United States will be ministering in the United States, so cultural sensitivity should not be such an issue. To the contrary, because of the diversity of culture represented in the States, even those of us who desire to participate in ministry here must be aware of cross-cultural issues. America must be viewed through missionary glasses. Donovan notes:

Missionaries looking at the church in America would be worried by what they see. Because what they see is a bad missionary situation. Not just the sharp decline in active participation in church community and the draining away of the young, but a church life that is not much more relevant to the human life lived in the neighborhoods surrounding it than the mission compound was to the tribal life of the Africans.¹³¹

It is indeed tragic to think that in many cases the church has become so irrelevant to the American culture as to be as foreign as the colonial approaches to missions in Africa or India. Our approach to training worship leaders must recognize this. Secular universities have made, in many cases, appropriate adjustments. Multiculturalism and the cultural diversity in America have become such a powerful influences on all levels of our society that colleges and university campuses have been affected by serious challenges from minorities concerning “Eurocentric” or “Anglocentric” curricula.¹³² Any program which seeks to train and equip people to minister the gospel of Christ should also be aware of those challenges.

¹³¹ Donovan, p. vi.

¹³² Breckenridge and Breckenridge, p. 67.

Whether a person is going to be ministering in India or Africa, or in the United States, it is important to recognize that our oneness in Christ is not found in sameness. We need to not only accept the need for different cultural expressions of worship in different countries, but also to recognize the diversity within the congregations at home.

For example, greater awareness should be pursued with respect to the upcoming generations. Upon returning from Africa after being away a number of years, Donovan observes:

I realized, when I came back to America, that here on the home front I had left behind me one of the most exotic tribes of all—the young people of America. They have their own form of dress symbolized by the omnipresent blue jeans; their own food, not always the most nutritious; their own music, which, I confess, I do not understand; their own rituals enacted as they listen to their music in concert; their own language, their own values remarkably similar from New York to California. Dress, food, music, ritual, language, values—these are the things that make up a tribe, or a sub-culture as they have been called. It is to that tribe, as they are, that the gospel must be brought.¹³³

Once the gospel has been received by any tribe or subculture, the goal should be to affirm and celebrate the appropriate cultural expressions of worship of that body of believers. The following principles should be emphasized in the training of worship leaders who desire to minister across cultural lines.

- Each person should guard against the ethnocentrism which causes one to feel his/her culture is superior to others.
- Each person should be aware of his or her own cultural bias.
- Each person should strive to maintain a neutral attitude towards cultural issues.

¹³³ Donovan, p. vii.

- Each person should approach other cultures with meekness, patience, and an openness which will allow him/her to learn about other cultures and the ways in which they worship.
- Each person should develop a theology of cultural awareness which recognizes that true and Biblical worship may be expressed in a variety of culturally relevant ways.
- Each person should make the effort to affirm and celebrate culturally relevant expressions of worship, even when different from his/her own.
- Each person should guard against favoring some cultural expressions of worship to the exclusion of others that may be appropriate in the local context.
- Each person should encourage others to maintain a consistent and scriptural message throughout varied cultural expressions of worship.
- Each person should purposefully seek out opportunities to interact with believers from other cultures, as well as welcome those from other cultures into the local fellowship with a view toward educating believers and developing unity.
- Each person should redouble his/her efforts to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace as a testimony to unbelievers of all cultures of the shared love of Jesus Christ across cultural lines.

This is our greatest challenge. David Garrett says, “As worship in spirit and truth is given back to the Creator from every tribe and in every language this will, I believe, be one of the greatest evangelistic tools ever seen. People will be confronted with the fact that Christianity is not just a Western religion; that Jesus is not just a white man. He is their own.”¹³⁴

This expression of unity in the body of Christ would surely be one of the most beautiful sights upon which the Father would ever have occasion to look. Paul Chandler writes, “Christianity worldwide is a *divine mosaic*, with each piece being a different cultural expression of the Christian faith, and the whole portraying the beauty of God’s

¹³⁴ David Garrett, as quoted in Frank Fortunato, “An Army of Artists: A Call To Musicians and Artists to Join the Battle to Bring the Gospel to Every People,” *Mission Frontiers Bulletin* 20 (May-August 1996), p. 23.

character as perhaps nothing else. And it is in our continual learning from these many cultural expressions of Christianity that our own faith can be made most complete.”¹³⁵

We have the opportunity today to participate in the fulfillment of one of the most precious prophecies in all of scripture. “I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Revelation 7:9). As we seek to train worship leaders, let us envision a host of those who will go out to every nation, tribe, people, and language and participate in the bringing together of those believers from all over the world who will come before the throne of God to worship Him with their own cultural expression in spirit and in truth.

One Church in many, many places,
One Faith with many, many faces,
One World with many, many ways
of singing praises to the Lord of Life.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Chandler, p. 3

¹³⁶ From the Iona Community, as quoted in Chandler, p. 5.

Chapter 4

RESEARCH METHOD, PROCEDURES, TREATMENT OF DATA, AND RESULTS

Having given consideration to the Biblical foundations of worship and cross-cultural issues in training worship leaders, it is appropriate to move toward establishing what would be the essential elements in a program designed to enable ministers to become effective worship leaders. The following strategy seeks to identify those elements of a worship studies program which would serve to prepare worship leaders to minister within their respective cultural contexts according to universal Biblical principles.

Research Design and Procedures

In order to identify the essential elements of a worship studies program it is necessary to have the input of those who are presently leaders in ministry and/or involved in key roles in the area of worship. It is also important to have the selection of the subject matter of the worship studies program be driven by input from those involved in ministry in order to insure that the studied topics will be relevant and meaningful to those in ministry contexts. It would be unwise to establish a program based on assumptions of needs rather than needs expressed by those currently involved in this particular area of ministry.

Further, those who are currently operating in positions of leadership in the area of worship are likely be consulted by a variety of churches, pastors, ministers of music, and worship leaders, and are able to speak not only from their own observations, but are also

able to report on the needs represented by those who consult with them. Using this strategy, it is possible to have input from a representative group of people in the evangelical community at large rather than hear the voices of only a few from a single segment of the evangelical community.

Based upon the above factors, the research design involved a two-pronged approach. The first involved the development of the survey instrument. Eight highly respected individuals, representing a broad spectrum of the evangelical community and currently involved in worship ministries, participated in a discussion of what are the essential elements of a worship studies curriculum.¹³⁷ The topics discussed were recorded and fashioned into a survey instrument.

The second prong of the design involved the actual distribution of the survey instrument and the collection of the data. The survey was given to two groups to gather information regarding their opinions related to what should be the essential elements of a worship studies program. The first group was made up of alumni of Liberty University or Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary. 118 alumni responded to the survey. The second group was made up of students who were actually enrolled in a worship course. 35 students returned surveys.

¹³⁷ These individuals are Michael Coleman, President - Integrity Incorporated; Don Moen, Creative Director - Integrity Incorporated; Rev. Jim Whitmire, Minister of Music - Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN; Todd Bell, Minister of Music and Worship - Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, TX; Steve Williamson, Minister of Worship - First Church of the Nazarene, Nashville, TN; J. Daniel Smith, Minister of Music - Bethesda Community Church, Fort Worth, TX; Dr. Dow Robinson, Academic Dean - American Center for Theological Studies, Mobile, AL; and Rev. Ron Kenoly, Worship Leader and Music Minister - Jubilee Christian Center, San Jose, CA.

Survey Instrument

The survey was made up of five parts. The first part requested demographic information such as: present position; number of years in profession; number of years in present position; age; race; gender; denominational affiliation; and educational background. The second part requested a response to the statement, "It is my opinion that specialized training in worship studies at the seminary level would be greatly beneficial in the preparation of worship leaders/ministers of music." Respondents could express agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale. The third part of the survey requested a response to the statement, "It is my opinion that a Master of Arts in Religion with a concentration in worship should include study of/experience in . . ." and then a list of 34 topics were listed with the five-point agree/disagree scale. The fourth part gave the opportunity for the respondents to indicate any additional topics they thought should be addressed. The fifth part gave respondents the opportunity to express any additional comments they wished to make.

Treatment of Data

Initially, the raw data was tabulated according to the five point rating scale. If those surveyed failed to make a rating on a particular topic, that topic received the neutral rating of 3. The five categories were combined into three: agree, neutral, and disagree. The positive responses, 1 and 2, were combined to indicate "agree." The negative responses, 4 and 5, were combined to indicate "disagree." Results were tabulated to indicate the frequency of individual responses as well as the percentages of the total

number of responses. Cross-tabulations were also conducted to indicate specific responses of pastors, worship leaders/ministers of music, and youth ministers regarding some topics.

Demographics of Alumni Survey

Of the 118 Liberty alumni who responded to the survey, 54 were pastors, 27 were worship leaders/ministers of music, and 27 were youth ministers. Other respondents did not hold official ministry positions. Of those presently in ministry, thirty-five have been in ministry 1-5 years; twenty-nine have been in ministry 6-10 years; twenty-four have been in ministry 11-15 years; fifteen have been in ministry 16-20 years; and four have been in ministry 21-25 years. Thus the survey had a good representation of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers with a broad spectrum of ministry experience.

Sixty-eight respondents have been in their present positions of ministry for 1-5 years. Twenty-one have been in their present positions for 6-10 years. Fifteen have been in their present positions for 11-15 years. Two have been in their present positions for more than 15 years. The majority of those surveyed have been in their present positions of ministry for 15 years or less.

Of the 118 alumni respondents, 42 had completed bachelor's degrees; 60 had completed master's degrees; and 14 had completed doctorate degrees. Of the pastors, eight had completed bachelor's degrees; 35 had completed master's degrees; and 13 had completed doctorates. Of the worship leaders/ministers of music, 16 had completed bachelor's degrees; and 7 had completed master's degrees. Of the youth ministers, 15

had completed bachelor's degrees; and 12 had completed master's degrees. The respondents as a group were well educated. The pastors had pursued the highest levels of education, but the worship leaders and youth ministers had also achieved respectable degrees. The difference may be related to age differences. Pastors may have been working on their education for longer periods of time.

Of the pastors, twelve were 25-34 years old; twenty-nine were 35-44 years old; thirteen were 45-54 years old; and one was 55 or older. Of the worship leaders/ministers of music, one was 18-24 years old; seventeen were 25-34 years old; eight were 35-44 years old; and one was 45-54 years old. Of the youth ministers, four were 18-24 years old; twenty were 25-34 years old; and three were 35-44 years old. The majority of the alumni survey respondents were 25-44 years old.

Of those who responded to the Liberty alumni survey, 111 were Caucasian; 4 were African/American; and 1 was Hispanic. Others did not indicate a specific racial category. Over 98% of the respondents were male. Denominational affiliation results indicated 82 Baptists; 2 Methodists; 2 Assemblies of God/Pentecostal; and 32 Non-denominational respondents. Other denominations represented are Evangelical Free, Grace Brethren, Worldwide Church of God, Wesleyan, Episcopal, and Church of God. The survey respondents were predominantly male Caucasians from mainline evangelical churches.

The churches represented have average attendances as follows:

<u>Average Attendance</u>	<u># of Churches</u>
1-99	14
100-199	16
200-299	18
300-399	10

400-499	8
500-999	17
1000-1499	15
1500-3000	7
3500 or above	5

105 responded that they currently have praise and worship times in their churches as defined by the use of contemporary choruses and instruments. 12 churches do not. Of those who currently have praise and worship times in their churches, 53% indicate there is 20-30 minutes of praise and worship in their Sunday morning worship services. 9% have 30-45 minutes. 38% have 15 minutes or less. 100 respondents indicated that they currently have someone in their church who is designated to lead worship; 14 do not. Most of those responding to the alumni survey currently do have someone designated to lead worship for 20-45 minutes during their Sunday morning worship services.

46 pastors indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship; 8 pastors indicated that their churches do not. 27 worship leaders indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship; 0 indicated that their churches do not. 23 youth ministers indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship. 3 youth ministers indicated that their churches do not. Whether pastors, worship leaders, or youth ministers, the majority of respondents are incorporating praise and worship in the Sunday morning service.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Results of Hypothesis One in Alumni Survey

Hypothesis One is, "A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that there is the belief that a program of specialized training in leading worship would be beneficial." This hypothesis was supported by the data.

Part II of the survey asked for a response to the statement, "It is my opinion that specialized training in worship studies at the seminary level would be greatly beneficial in the preparation of worship leaders/ministers of music." The survey results indicate that 85.59% of the respondents agree with this statement. Only 6.77% disagree with the statement; and 7.63% are neutral.

Of the pastors who responded, 90% agree with the statement. Of the worship leaders who responded, 95.65% agree with the statement. Of the youth ministers who responded, 96% agree with the statement. Whether pastors, worship leaders/ministers of music, or youth ministers, there is significant agreement that a program involving specialized training in leading worship would be beneficial.

Results of Hypothesis Two in Alumni Survey

Hypothesis Two is, "A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that it is believed that a program specializing in worship studies should have a strong biblical foundation." This hypothesis was supported by the data.

Part III of the survey asked for a response to the statement, "It is my opinion that a Master of Arts in Religion with a concentration in worship should include study

of/experience in . . .” and then 34 study areas were given as possible course offerings. Included in the list were 4 study areas related to worship in the Bible; “Worship in the Old Testament;” “Worship in the New Testament;” “The Tabernacle as a Model of Worship;” and “Worship in the Lives of Biblical Characters.”

Of the respondents, 76.32% agree that the program should include a study of worship in the Old Testament; 7.9% disagree; and 15.79% are neutral. 83.33% agree that the program should include a study of worship in the New Testament; 5.26% disagree; and 11.40% are neutral.

Support for the inclusion of the tabernacle as a model of worship is not as strong. 54.39% agree that this should be a part of the program; 14.04% disagree; and 31.58% are neutral. The numbers are stronger for study of worship in the lives of biblical characters: 75.44% agree that this should be part of the program; 7.02% disagree; and 17.54% are neutral. The responses indicate that a program specializing in worship studies should have a strong biblical foundation. The program should include study of worship in the Old and New Testaments as well as worship in the lives of biblical characters. Though not as critical, the program may also offer study of the tabernacle as a model of worship.

OPINIONS RELATED TO BIBLICAL ELEMENTS IN A WORSHIP STUDIES
PROGRAM - ALUMNI SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Worship in the O.T	76.32%	15.79%	7.90%
Worship in the N.T	83.53%	11.40%	5.26%
Tabernacle Model	54.39%	31.58%	14.04%
Biblical Characters	75.44%	17.54%	7.02%

Results of Hypothesis Three in Alumni Survey

Hypothesis Three is, "A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that there is the belief that a program in worship studies should be contemporary in nature while allowing for the inclusion of traditional elements." This hypothesis was supported by the data.

Six of the study areas listed had to do with contemporary issues: (1) Current trends in worship; (2) Various worship models; (3) Worship evangelism; (4) Current resources; (5) Contemporary worship music; (6) Drama.

According to the respondents, 82.30% agree that current trends in worship should be included in a worship studies program. 6.19% disagree and 11.50% are neutral. 80.53% agree that a program in worship studies should include study of various worship models. 6.19% disagree and 13.27% are neutral.

80.53% agree that a program in worship studies should include study of worship evangelism. 8.84% disagree and 10.62% are neutral. 76.99% of the respondents agree that study of current resources in worship should be included. 5.31% disagree and 17.70% are neutral.

82.30% of the respondents agree that contemporary worship music should be included in a worship studies program. 3.53% disagree and 14.16% are neutral. Not as strong, but still significant, is the fact that 72.32% of the respondents agree that drama should be included in the program. 4.46% disagree and 23.21% are neutral. There is significant support for the hypothesis that a worship studies program should be contemporary in nature.

Of interest is the fact that the support for the contemporary nature of the program is consistent regardless of age. For example of the respondents aged 18-34, 87.1% agree that current trends in worship should be included. Of those 35-55+, 78% agree. Similarly, of those 18-34, 88.9% agree that the program should include contemporary worship music. Of those 35-55+, 76.3% agree.

Of the respondents who are 18-35, 81.5% agree that the program should consider study of various worship models. Of those 35-55+, 79.7% agree. One topic that showed a greater difference between the two age groups is that of drama. Of those 18-34, 79.6% agree that drama should be included in the program compared to the 65.5% of those 35-55+ who agree. It is significant that there is support for a program which is contemporary in nature regardless of age.

OPINIONS RELATED TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN A WORSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM - ALUMNI SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Current trends in worship	82.30%	11.50%	6.19%
Various worship models	80.53%	13.27%	6.19%
Worship evangelism	80.53%	10.62%	8.84%
Current resources	76.99%	17.70%	5.31%
Contemporary worship music	82.30%	14.16%	3.53%
Drama	72.32%	23.21%	4.46%

While it is true that most respondents favor a contemporary approach, it should be recognized that there is also support for the idea that traditional elements in worship should not be completely ignored. For example, 61.06% of the respondents agree that hymnology should be included in a worship studies program. 11.5% disagree and 27.43% are neutral. 51.33% agree that study of age-graded choir programs should be

included. 13.27% disagree and 35.40% are neutral. However, it should be pointed out that although age-graded choir programs may have often been associated with more traditional churches, there are a number of churches with contemporary formats which also incorporate programs for age-graded choirs.

There is relatively strong support for the inclusion of study related to special production events.¹³⁸ 71.68% agree that this should be included; 5.3% disagree and 23.01% are neutral.

The least supported study topic in the survey is that of liturgical worship. Only 36.04% of the respondents agree that it should be included in a worship studies program. 27.03% disagree and 36.94% are neutral. This is likely due to the fact that most of the respondents are from mainstream evangelical churches where liturgy is not often practiced.

As with respect to the contemporary nature of the program, there is similar response to traditional elements across age differences. For example, of the respondents aged 18-34, 61.1% agree that hymnology should be included in the program. This is identical to the 61% agreement of those 35-55+. Similarly, of those 18-34 only 38.9% agree that the program should include liturgical worship. Of the older group, 35-55+, even fewer agree with only 33.3% supporting liturgical worship.

¹³⁸ Special production events are large-scale performances which require months of preparation, rehearsals, special sets, lighting, costumes, etc. These are usually presented at holidays or on special occasions. An example would be "The Living Christmas Tree" program for which a huge tree is constructed in the sanctuary. The choir members literally sit in the tree for the performance. There may also be dramatic presentations, a live nativity scene, etc. Other examples would include "The Living Cross" at Easter and a "Fourth of July Celebration."

On the other hand, there is more support for the study of age-graded choir programs from the older group than the younger. Of those 35-55+, 55.9% agree compared to 46.3% of those 18-34.

ELEMENTS IN TRADITIONAL WORSHIP
ALUMNI SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Hymnology	61.06%	27.43%	11.50%
Age-graded choirs	51.33%	35.40%	13.27%
Special production events	71.68%	23.01%	5.30%
Liturgical worship	36.04%	36.94%	27.03%

Of particular interest is the fact that there is significant support of the study of blending traditional and contemporary worship. 88.50% of the respondents agree that study of blended worship should be included in a worship studies program. 4.42% disagree and 7.08% are neutral. Almost as strong is the support for including study of transitioning from traditional to contemporary worship. 81.42% agree that this should be included; 7.07% disagree and 11.50% are neutral.

Interestingly, 85.2% of those 18-34 agree that the program should include blended worship while 91.5% of those 35-55+ agree. The older group offers more support for the blending of the traditional and contemporary. However, when considering transitioning for traditional to contemporary, the younger group yields the greater support. Of those 18-34, 85.5% agree that the program should include this transition element. While those 35-55+ give good support with 78% in agreement, it is interesting that it is somewhat less

that the younger group. Perhaps the younger group feels more motivated to move away from the traditional elements of worship at a greater pace than those from the older group.

BLENDED WORSHIP AND THE TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL TO CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP - ALUMNI SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Blended worship	88.50%	7.08%	4.42%
Transition traditional to contemporary	81.42%	11.50%	7.07%

Results of Hypothesis Four in Alumni Survey

Hypothesis Four is, "A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that there is strong support for the inclusion of the study of practical issues related to contemporary worship in a worship studies program." This hypothesis was supported by the data.

80.70% of the respondents agree that practical issues related to leading worship should be included in a worship studies program. 7.02% disagree and 12.28% are neutral. There were five practical study topics on the survey in addition to the general question. For example, 80.36% of the respondents agree that a program in worship studies should include study of working with sound systems. 7.15% disagree and 12.50% are neutral. Also, 74.11% of the respondents agree that MIDI/Computer use should be included in the program. 7.44% disagree and 18.75% are neutral.

Issues related to rehearsal techniques also have strong support. 76.99% of the respondents agree that rehearsal techniques should be a part of a worship studies

program. 4.42% disagree and 18.58% are neutral. 79.46% of the respondents agree that training with respect to working with a vocal ensemble should be included. 5.36% disagree and 15.18% are neutral. Not quite as strong is the support for training in working with a rhythm section. 65.18% agree that this should be included; 8.03% disagree and 26.79% are neutral.

The idea of a worship leader internship experience has significant support. This would give the student very practical “hands on” experience. 80.00% of the respondents agree that a worship leader internship should be included in a worship studies program. 7.28% disagree and 23.01% are neutral.

The inclusion of practical issues related to worship in a worship studies program would be unique in that most systematic programs training for worship ministry in the local church do not concentrate on many of those practical issues.

**PRACTICAL ISSUES RELATED TO CONTEMPORARY
WORSHIP - ALUMNI SURVEY**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Practical issues related to:			
leading worship	80.70%	12.28%	7.02%
working with sound system	80.36%	12.50%	7.15%
rehearsal techniques	76.99%	18.58%	4.42%
MIDI / Computer Use	74.11%	18.75%	7.44%
working with a rhythm section	65.18%	26.79%	8.03%
working with a vocal ensemble	79.46%	15.18%	5.36%
worship leader internship	80.00%	12.73%	7.27%

Other Findings in Alumni Survey

A number of other issues on the survey have significant support. One area is that of the various relationships a worship leader maintains. For example, 88.50% of the respondents agree that a worship studies program should address the issue of the relationship between the worship leader and the pastor. 5.3% disagree and 6.19% are neutral. 86.61% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and his/her family. 6.25% disagree and 7.14% are neutral. 84.07% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and instrumentalists. 7.96% disagree and 7.96% are neutral. 84.96% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and the choir/singers. 5.31% disagree and 9.73% are neutral. Finally, 87.61% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and the congregation. 5.3% disagree and 7.08% are neutral.

Some of the study topics in the survey are related to other personal issues. 87.50% of the respondents agree that a worship studies program should address worship as a lifestyle. 6.25% disagree and 6.25% are neutral. 87.82% of the respondents agree that principles of leadership should be addressed. 7.02% disagree and 6.09% are neutral.

There is strong support for study of the role of music and the arts in worship. 87.83% of the respondents agree that this should be included in a worship studies program. 6.09% disagree and 6.09% are neutral. One topic that received little support in the area of music is that of songwriting. 39.82% of the respondents agree that this should be included. 25.66% disagree and 34.51% are neutral.

63.72% of the respondents agree that a worship studies program should include study of cross-cultural issues in worship. 13.27% disagree and 23.01% are neutral.

OTHER FINDINGS - ALUMNI SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Relationship of worship leader with;			
pastor	88.50%	6.19%	5.30%
family	86.61%	7.14%	6.25%
instrumentalists	84.07%	7.96%	7.96%
choir/singers	84.96%	9.73%	5.31%
congregation	87.61%	7.08%	5.30%
Principles of leadership	87.82%	5.26%	7.02%
Worship as a lifestyle	87.50%	6.25%	6.25%
Role of Music/Arts in worship	87.83%	6.09%	6.09%
Song writing	39.82%	34.51%	25.66%
Cross-cultural issues in worship	63.72%	23.01%	13.27%

Additional Study Topics in Alumni Survey

Part IV of the survey requested that the respondent indicate any additional topics which he/she felt should be addressed in a worship studies program. The following list is representative of the responses.

1. How to candidate for worship leader positions
2. Copyright laws
3. Performance vs. ministry
4. The history of music in the church
5. Budgeting for the worship ministry
6. Dance
7. Lighting
8. Working with media
9. Preparing a calendar for the year
10. How to design a worship service
11. Dynamics of age on worship
12. Developing a philosophy and vision statement for worship ministries
13. Balance in music styles
14. Worship as spiritual warfare
15. Music theory, progressions, and transitions

Additional Comments in Alumni Survey

The final section of the survey gave the opportunity for the respondents to make additional comments. Most respondents commented very positively regarding a contemporary worship studies program. The following comments were made.

“I think this is a much needed program. As an M.Div. student, I surely could have benefited from a general class on leading worship.” - senior pastor

“Because of the present interest of a contemporary style of worship, it makes good sense and demonstrates godly wisdom to offer such a program.” - senior pastor

“Praise and worship is vital to the local church. It has transformed the worship at the church I pastor. The need for training is great.” - senior pastor

“I am cautious to allow changing cultural trends to dictate to the church its means and methods of worship. I still believe the church is her with a message to change people’s lives, not the reverse” - senior pastor

“The in-depth instruction of these topics would have been very valuable to me in college.” - worship leader

“We must not worship worship - we must worship the God of worship.” - associate pastor

“If we are going to reach this generation of young people, I think it is a must to have a dynamic worship and praise service with contemporary methods incorporated into the corporate worship setting.” - youth minister

“This type of training is greatly needed! There are a lot who lead worship, but few who are actually worship leaders. I must emphasize that one’s inner character and godliness in the most important ingredient.” - youth minister

“This concept is long overdue.” - associate worship leader

“I believe every masters should include at least one course on worship.” - youth minister

Demographics of Worship Class Survey

Of the 35 worship class students who responded to the survey, 14 were pastors, 18 were worship leaders, and 3 were youth ministers. Of those presently in ministry, 17 have been in ministry 1-5 years; 8 have been in ministry 6-10 years; 5 have been in ministry 11-15 years; and 3 have been in ministry over 15 years. The majority of the class respondents have been in ministry for 10 years or less.

Twenty-eight respondents have been in their present positions of ministry for 1-5 years. Three have been in their present positions for 6-10 years. Four have been in their present positions for over 10 years. The majority are relatively early in their present positions of ministry.

Of the worship class respondents who indicated they had college degrees, thirteen had earned bachelor's degrees and eleven had earned master's degrees. No student had completed a doctorate. Of the pastors, two had completed bachelor's degrees and five had completed master's degrees. Of the worship leaders, ten had completed bachelor's degrees and four had completed master's degrees. Of the youth ministers, one had completed a bachelor's degree and two had completed master's degrees. The worship class respondents had not as a group completed as much education as the alumni respondents, but were still fairly well educated, and are at work to further their education.

Of the pastors, three were 25-34 years old; three were 35-44 years old; and three were 45-54 years old. Of the worship leaders/ministers of music, three were 18-24 years old; eight were 25-34 years old; five were 35-44 years old; one was 45-54 years old; and

one was over 55 years old. Of the youth ministers, one was 18-24 years old; two were 25-34 years old. There was a good cross-section of ages represented.

Of those who responded to the worship class survey, 20 were Caucasian; 14 were Asian; and 1 was Hispanic. 82.86% of the respondents were male; 17.14% were female. Denominational affiliation results indicated 20 Baptists and 7 Presbyterians. Other denominations represented were Wesleyan, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Assembly of God/Pentecostal. In comparison to the alumni respondents, the worship class respondents were more diverse in gender, culture/race, and church background.

The churches represented have average attendances as follows:

<u>Average Attendance</u>	<u># of Churches</u>
1-100	16
100-175	4
250-400	5
450-600	3
1000-1800	4
2000 or above	3

35 responded that they currently have praise and worship times in their churches as defined by the use of contemporary choruses and instruments. 2 churches do not. Of those who currently have praise and worship times in their churches, 76% indicate there is 20-45 minutes of praise and worship in their Sunday morning worship services. 20% have 15 minutes or less. 33 respondents indicated that they currently have someone in their church who is designated to lead worship; 2 do not. Most of the worship class respondents have someone designated to lead praise and worship for 20-45 minutes in Sunday morning services.

7 pastors indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship; 1 pastor indicated that his church does not. 17 worship leaders/ministers of music indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship; 1 indicated that his church does not. All three youth ministers who responded to the survey indicated that their churches currently do praise and worship.

Results of Hypothesis One in Worship Class Survey

Hypothesis One is, “A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that there is the belief that a program of specialized training in leading worship would be beneficial.” This hypothesis was supported by the data from the worship class.

Part II of the survey asked for a response to the statement, “It is my opinion that specialized training in worship studies at the seminary level would be greatly beneficial in the preparation of worship leader/ministers of music.” The survey results indicate that 91.43% of the respondents agree with this statement. Only 2.86% disagree with the statement; and 5.71% are neutral.

Of the pastors who responded, 75% agree with the statement. Of the worship leaders who responded, 94.4% agree with the statement. Of the youth ministers who responded, 100% agree with the statement. As with the alumni survey, whether pastors, worship leader/ministers of music, or youth ministers, there is significant agreement that a program involving specialized training in leading worship would be beneficial.

Results of Hypothesis Two in Worship Class Survey

Hypothesis Two is, “A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that it is believed that a program specializing in worship studies should have a strong biblical foundation.” This hypothesis was also supported by the data of the worship class survey.

Part III of the survey asked for a response to the statement, “It is my opinion that a Master of Arts in Religion with a concentration in worship should include study of/experience in . . .” and then 34 study areas were given as possible course offerings. Regarding the study topics related to the Bible, 94.29% of the worship class respondents agree that the program should include a study of worship in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Support for the inclusion of the tabernacle as a model of worship is stronger than the 54.39% of the alumni survey. 80% of the worship class survey respondents agree that a study of the tabernacle as a model of worship should be included. 5.71% disagree and 14.29% are neutral. 88.57% of the respondents agree that a study of worship in the lives of biblical characters should be included in the program. 2.86% disagree and 8.57% are neutral. Just as in the alumni survey, the worship class survey results indicate that a worship studies program should have a strong biblical foundation.

OPINIONS RELATED TO BIBLICAL ELEMENTS IN A WORSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM- WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Worship in the OT	94.29%	2.86%	2.86%
Worship in the NT	94.29%	2.86%	2.86%

Tabernacle model	80.00%	14.29%	5.71%
Biblical characters	88.57%	8.57%	2.86%

Results of Hypothesis Three in Worship Class Survey

Hypothesis Three is, “A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth minister will show that there is the belief that a program in worship studies should be contemporary in nature while allowing for the inclusion of traditional elements.” While not as strong in some areas as the responses from the alumni survey, this hypothesis was supported by the data from the worship class survey.

According to the worship class respondents, 74.29% agree that current trends in worship should be included in a worship studies program. 8.57% disagree and 17.14% are neutral. 85.71% agree that a program in worship studies should include study of various worship models. 2.86% disagree and 11.43% are neutral.

85.71% agree that a program in worship studies should include study of worship evangelism. 5.72% disagree and 8.57% are neutral. 68.57% agree that study of current resources in worship should be included. 8.57% disagree and 20% are neutral.

Two areas that are significantly different between the alumni survey and the worship class survey are contemporary worship music and drama. 82.30% of the alumni agree that contemporary worship music should be included compared to 64.71% of those in the worship class. The difference is in the fact that 29.41% of the worship class respondents are neutral; 5.88% disagree.

72.32% of the alumni respondents agree that drama should be included in the program compared to 45.71% of the worship class respondents. 20% of the worship class

respondents disagree and 34.29% are neutral. The differences in support for contemporary music and drama may have been impacted by the high percentage of Korean students in the worship class. It may be that some cultural issues reflected on the smaller amount of support for the incorporating of contemporary music and drama in the worship class survey. Nevertheless, as in the alumni survey, there is significant support for the hypothesis that a worship studies program should be contemporary in nature.

Of the worship class respondents aged 18-34, 75% agree the program should include current trends in worship. Those 35-55+ also support this with 73.3% in agreement. Similarly, of those 18-34, 85% agree the program should include study of various worship models, while 86.7% of those 35-55+ agree.

OPINIONS RELATED TO CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN A WORSHIP STUDIES PROGRAM - WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Current trends in worship	74.29%	17.14%	8.57%
Various worship models	85.71%	11.43%	2.86%
Worship evangelism	85.71%	8.57%	5.72%
Current resources	68.57%	20.00%	8.57%
Contemporary worship music	64.71%	29.41%	5.88%
Drama	45.71%	34.29%	20.00%

As with the alumni survey, there is also some support among the worship class respondents for the idea that traditional elements in worship should not be completely ignored. 68.57% of the respondents agree that hymnology should be included in a worship studies program. None disagree and 31.43% are neutral. 54.29% agree that

study of age-graded choir programs should be included. 8.57% disagree and 37.14% are neutral.

62.86% agree that study of special production events should be included. 8.57% disagree and 28.57% are neutral. As in the alumni survey, liturgical worship has weak support. 48.57% agree that it should be included; 14.28% disagree; 37.14% are neutral.

The worship class survey yielded a very interesting distinction between the age groups regarding the inclusion of hymnology. Of those 18-34, only 50% agree that hymnology should be included, while 93.4% of those 35-55+ support its inclusion. On the other hand, concerning the inclusion of age-graded choir programs, of those 18-34 60% agree while only 46.6% of those 35-55+ agree. Again, it is suspected that these figures may have been impacted by cultural issues.

ELEMENTS IN TRADITIONAL WORSHIP WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Hymnology	68.57%	31.43%	0%
Age-graded choirs	54.29%	37.14%	8.57%
Special production events	62.86%	28.57%	8.57%
Liturgical worship	48.57%	37.14%	14.28%

While not as strong as that of the alumni survey, there is support of the study of blending traditional and contemporary worship. 68.57% of the worship class respondents agree that study of blended worship should be included in a worship studies program. 8.57% disagree and 22.86% are neutral. There is similar response to the study of

transitioning from traditional to contemporary worship. 68.57% agree that this should be included; 11.43% disagree; 20% are neutral.

BLENDED WORSHIP AND THE TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL TO
CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP - WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Blended worship	68.57%	22.86%	8.57%
Transition traditional to contemporary	68.57%	20.00%	11.43%

Results of Hypothesis Four in Worship Class Survey

Hypothesis Four is, “A survey of pastors, worship leaders, and youth ministers will show that there is strong support for the inclusion of the study of practical issues related to contemporary worship in a worship studies program.” As in the alumni survey, this hypothesis is supported by the data of the worship class survey.

82.86% of the worship class respondents agree that practical issues related to leading worship should be included in a worship studies program. 5.71% disagree and 11.43% are neutral. 68.57% agree that the program should include study of working with sound systems. 2.86% disagree and 28.57% are neutral. 68.57% agree that MIDI/Computer use should be included in the program. 5.72% disagree and 22.86% are neutral.

65.71% of the respondents agree that rehearsal techniques should be a part of the worship studies program. 11.43% disagree and 22.86% are neutral. 71.43% of the respondents agree that training with respect to working with a vocal ensemble should be included. 8.57% disagree and 20% are neutral. As with the alumni survey, not quite as

strong is the support for training in working with a rhythm section. 65.71% agree that this should be included; 2.86% disagree and 31.43% are neutral.

As in the alumni survey, the respondents to the worship class survey gave significant support to the idea of a worship leader internship being included in the program. 74.29% of the respondents agree that this should be included; 11.43% disagree; 11.43% are neutral.

**PRACTICAL ISSUES RELATED TO CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP
WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY**

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Practical issues related to:			
leading worship	82.86%	11.43%	5.71%
working with sound system	68.57%	28.57%	2.86%
rehearsal techniques	65.71%	22.86%	11.43%
MIDI / Computer Use	68.57%	22.86%	5.72%
working with a rhythm section	65.71%	31.43%	2.86%
working with a vocal ensemble	71.43%	20.00%	8.57%
worship leader internship	74.29%	11.43%	11.43%

**PRACTICAL ISSUES RELATED TO CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP
COMPARISON OF ALUMNI/CLASSROOM SURVEYS**

Practical issues related to:	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM
leading worship	80.70%	82.86%	12.28%	11.43%	7.02%	5.71%
working with sound system	80.36%	68.57%	12.50%	28.57%	7.15%	2.86%
rehearsal techniques	76.99%	65.71%	18.58%	22.86%	4.42%	11.43%
MIDI/Computer Use	74.11%	68.57%	18.75%	22.86%	7.44%	5.72%
working with a rhythm section	65.18%	65.71%	26.79%	31.43%	8.03%	2.86%
working with a vocal ensemble	79.46%	71.43%	15.18%	20.00%	5.36%	8.57%
worship leader internship	80.00%	74.29%	12.73%	11.43%	7.27%	11.43%

Other Findings in Worship Class Survey

As in the alumni survey, the worship class survey offers significant support to a number of additional study topics. 91.43% of the worship class respondents agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and the pastor.

5.72% disagree and 2.86% are neutral. 88.57% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and his/her family. 5.71% disagree and 5.71% are neutral. 91.43% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and instrumentalists. 5.71% disagree and 2.86% are neutral. 88.57% agree that the program should address the relationship between the worship leader and the congregation. 5.71% disagree and 5.71% are neutral.

88.57% agree that the program should address worship as a lifestyle. 2.86% disagree and 8.57% are neutral. There is strong support for the inclusion of principles of leadership. 94.29% agree; 2.86% disagree; 2.86% are neutral. Songwriting received significantly more support in the worship class than by the alumni where only 39.82% agree it should be included. 71.43% of the worship class respondents agree that songwriting should be included in the program. 8.57% disagree and 20% are neutral. The difference in interest in songwriting for the worship class may be related to the fact that such a large percentage of the class are worship leaders who are constantly in search of new songs to introduce to their congregations. Instruction in songwriting may give them more confidence that they could produce some of the needed new material themselves.

Cross-cultural issues also received more support by the worship class students than the alumni. 71.43% of the worship class respondents agree that the program should include cross-cultural issues. 5.71% disagree and 22.86% are neutral. This may have been influenced by the number of Koreans in the class whose presence may have made the Americans more sensitive to cross-cultural issues.

OTHER FINDINGS - WORSHIP CLASS SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Relationship of worship leader with;			
pastor	91.43%	2.86%	5.72%
family	88.57%	5.71%	5.71%
instrumentalists	91.43%	2.86%	5.71%
choir/singers	91.43%	2.86%	5.71%
congregation	88.57%	5.71%	5.71%
Principles of leadership	94.29%	2.86%	2.86%
Worship as a lifestyle	88.57%	8.57%	2.86%
Role of Music/Arts in worship	88.57%	5.71%	5.71%
Song writing	71.43%	20%	8.57%
Cross-cultural issues in worship	71.43%	22.86%	5.71%

Because of the fact that of the worship class respondents 57% were Americans and 40% were Korean, it is interesting to note the comparison of their responses on several issues. There are some issues which the Americans and Koreans equally support. For example, 70% of the Americans feel that hymnology should be included in the program and 71.4% of the Koreans also support hymnology. There is a very strong hymn tradition in the Christianity of both cultures.

The Koreans are more supportive of the inclusion of liturgical worship than the Americans. 57.2% of the Koreans feel liturgical worship should be included while only 45% of the Americans support it.

One of the issues, which received significantly different responses, is that of blending traditional and contemporary worship. 75% of the Americans agree that the program should include study of blended worship. Only 53.9% of the Koreans support the study of blended worship. 30.8% of the Koreans are neutral on this point. It may be that the

question was not worded in such a manner as could be easily understood by those for whom English is not their first language.

Another issue that showed some disparity between the Americans and the Koreans is whether or not to include drama in the program. Only 50% of the Americans feel it should be included; but even less of the Koreans support the inclusion of drama with only 35.7% agreeing. With the growing popularity of drama in the U.S., particularly among churches of the Willow Creek model, it should be recognized that while the use of drama may have a positive impact here in the States, it may or may not be readily embraced for the worship services of other cultures.

Interestingly enough, one other issue on which the Americans responded more favorably is that of the inclusion of cross-cultural issues in a worship studies program. 75% of the Americans agree that this should be included. While still relatively strong, the 64.3% of the Koreans is less support than that from the Americans.

During the course of the class, and before the survey was administered, the Koreans were invited to come forward and sing for the rest of the class. They very humbly came and one of them explained that they were going to sing a song of blessing to the class in the Korean language. As they sang they looked at individuals in the class and made gestures toward them with their hands. Even though the Americans could not understand the words they were singing, they could feel the sincerity of their expression and were moved by this special blessing. It was a beautiful exchange. It may well be that this experience caused the Americans to be more sensitive to the cross-cultural issues question on the survey.

Additional Study Topics - Worship Class Survey

The following list is representative of the responses that the worship class respondents offered as additional study topics to consider.

1. The value and absolute need to listen and learn from the Holy Spirit
2. Budget planning
3. "Signals" to the worship team
4. Sensing where God's going while you're leading worship
5. Women as praise and worship leaders
6. Vocal pedagogy/health
7. Use of PowerPoint
8. Making changes to format while leading worship
9. Working with youth pastors and leading youth in worship
10. Copyright laws
11. Presentation of worship leader - body language, appearance, verbal interaction

As can be seen from this study, there is strong support for a systematic worship studies program designed to equip contemporary worship leaders for effective ministry in a variety of areas. The research bears out that the worship studies program should have a solid Biblical foundation. In addition, the program should deal with a variety of very practical elements which relate to worship in a contemporary setting.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

According to A.W. Tozer, the “local church exists to do corporately what each Christian believer should be doing individually—and that is to worship God. It is to show forth the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. It is to reflect the glories of Christ ever shining upon us through the ministries of the Holy Spirit.”¹³⁹ The sad fact, however, is that many churches are not really accomplishing the goal of bringing people into the presence of God. In fact, in far too many churches this hardly seems to be a goal at all. Too often there is simply a “going through the motions” and God is essentially the “unacknowledged host” of the meeting.

The people in the congregation are more likely to be spectators than true participants; observing what may be the trappings of worship, but never connecting, never engaging, never experiencing a true encounter with God. There is a great need for worship renewal in which people experience the manifest presence of God in a manner that is life transforming.

In the majority of churches, this will require an educating of the people regarding worship. Of great importance is that the leadership of the church have hearts of worshipers themselves and that they be trained and equipped to lead worship in a more meaningful way. Pastors, ministers of music, worship leaders, youth ministers and all

¹³⁹ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 93.

those involved in ministry from the local church platform must model worship. Indeed as worship leaders they should be “the lead worshipers.”

This project has attempted to present support for a systematic course of study in the area of worship which would serve to prepare “the lead worshipers.” Through the study of the Biblical principles of worship, interviews, surveys, and observations it is clear that recommendations for such a program need to be based upon a number of principles.

PRINCIPLES OF WORSHIP FOR THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH

There are several principles which may be gleaned from a study of worship in the Bible which may and should be applied to worship in the contemporary church. Many of these have already been mentioned throughout the course of this project. However, it is appropriate to summarize these points.

First, *it is important that the worshiper consciously prepare for corporate worship.*¹⁴⁰

This may be accomplished through private prayer, praise, singing, and worship. Private worship helps to prepare for worship in the corporate setting. The corporate worship atmosphere of many contemporary churches would be significantly altered if more people were worshipping outside the corporate setting privately and with their families.

Second, *worship involves the whole person in response to God.* It is not only an intellectual pursuit, but involves mind, body, and spirit. Worship is to be active and participatory.¹⁴¹ McMinn states, “A fundamental aspect of praise and worship is that it is

¹⁴⁰ Hill, p. 134.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

something you do - not something you watch others do. It is not a 'spectator sport' but involves participation from everyone."¹⁴²

Third, *worship in the contemporary church should be directly connected with the redemptive acts of God in human history.*¹⁴³ Worship should spring from a recognition of what God has done for the worshipper through Jesus Christ. Worship remembers and reflects on the great lengths God has gone to in order to provide the way to a relationship in which man may know and worship Him.

Fourth, *the worship service should have God as its main focus.* The purpose of attending church is to honor God, yet too often, church attenders neglect the very One Whom they are supposed to be honoring. The following account serves to illustrate the point:

A young couple was hosting a special party in honor of their newborn baby. As the guests arrived, drinks were served and the celebration began. Baby pictures were distributed accompanied by rave reviews. The parents delighted in telling of the anticipation of the birth, the facts surrounding the delivery, and the great plans they had already made for the child's future. Everything said and done centered on the baby. Then someone asked, "But where's the baby?" The festivities soon turned to horror as they realized that the baby had been placed on the bed in the master bedroom, covered by a light blanket, and as the guests arrived, they placed their coats, purses, and other belongings on top of the bed. The baby had smothered to death.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!*, p. 54.

¹⁴³ Hill, p. 134.

¹⁴⁴ McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!*, p. 52.

This tragic illustration is an example of how easy it is to go through the motions of honoring someone, yet essentially leaving them out of the celebration. Contemporary worship services need to be focused on God, not simply going through the motions without truly acknowledging Him.

A fifth principle of worship in the contemporary church is that *the leadership must have an awareness of how the Spirit of the Lord is leading in a service and be open to change in the order of service or format*. Instead of having an order of worship that is “chiseled in stone” there should be some flexibility for creativity and freshness. This is not change simply for the sake of change; but there needs to be flexibility and sensitivity in the planning and carrying out of worship services.¹⁴⁵

Part of the reason for the need of flexibility is that there should be room for long periods of uninterrupted worship. It may take time for worshippers to enter into a time of intimacy in which worship can be experienced. Therefore the service should have a definite direction as the worshippers are striving to enter into the presence of God. This being the goal of the worship service, everything that is a part of the worship service should be seen as a means to that end, and not ends in themselves.¹⁴⁶ For example, worship music should enhance the sense of the presence of God, not simply drawing attention to the performer or performance, but rather to the Lord. The entire structure of the service should serve to create an atmosphere conducive to worship. Consideration

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 54.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

should be given as to where to place things like the announcements, offering, etc. so as to give the worshippers the maximum time of uninterrupted worship before the Lord.

All of the above considerations should serve to enhance the corporate worship experience and merit inclusion in a systematic approach to the development of worship leaders. In summary, the principles which should guide the formulation of a worship studies program include:

1. Preparation of worshipers for corporate worship.
2. Participatory worship involving the whole person in response to God.
3. Worship that is connected with the redemptive acts of God.
4. Worship that has God as its main point of focus.
5. An awareness of the role of the Holy Spirit in worship and openness to flow.

These principles serve as the foundation for the establishment of a systematic worship studies program. From these principles it is possible to set several broad goals in terms of what skills, experiences, and knowledge a student should be able to take with him/her upon the completion of the worship studies program.

RECOMMENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

As consideration is given to the development of a worship studies program which would provide worship leaders with the tools with which to work in order to move their local church congregations toward more meaningful worship, a number of learning outcomes should be sought.

First, it should be a goal that one who completes the program should *have sufficient knowledge and understanding of biblical worship to effectively lead a congregation in a meaningful worship experience*. The respondents to the survey indicated that they felt

that a worship studies program should include significant study related to the Old and New Testaments, the tabernacle as a model of worship, and worship in the lives of Biblical characters. The chapter on the Biblical foundations of worship dealt with these and other issues related to Biblical worship. Many of the works cited in the literature review indicate the importance that worship have a strong and accurate Biblical foundation. The chapter on cultural issues also affirmed that regardless of the various ways different cultures might express themselves, it is imperative that they not conduct themselves in a manner which is in opposition to scriptural principles.

The worship leader must be the lead worshiper. One cannot lead where he/she has never been. Often those responsible for leading worship have not had sufficient Bible training to understand the Biblical foundations of worship and what it truly means to be in the presence of God. Many of those in worship leadership positions are excellent musicians, but have very little Biblical/theological training. What systematic study they may have done is likely to have been of a survey nature rather than specific study related to Biblical principles of worship.

A second desired learning outcome is that one who completes the program *be equipped with the skills necessary to plan, organize, and develop an effective worship program, as well as to conduct the training and rehearsal of the worship team.* Those responding to the survey felt that principles of leadership should be included in a worship studies program. It is important that the worship leader be viewed as a leader before he/she comes to the platform to lead worship. The leadership exhibited in pastoral ministry, rehearsals, etc. will make the individual a more effective worship leader when

the time comes to usher people into the presence of God. Thus the worship leader should continually desire personal development in leadership and be involved in mentoring others for the worship ministry (II Timothy 2:2).

A third desired learning outcome of the program is that one who completes the program should *have had practical experience in leading worship in a variety of settings*. As was seen in the survey, the respondents felt that practical issues related to leading worship should play an integral part in the worship studies program. However, as was pointed out in chapter 1, there are no systematic programs dealing with those practical issues available. The format of the worship studies program should give opportunities for “hands on” experience in leading worship in a variety of settings. The settings may include classroom opportunities as well as for other small groups and also larger church settings. These opportunities will give the students exposure to and experience with the current available resources and techniques employed by contemporary worship leaders. For example, experience regarding practical issues related to rehearsal techniques, contemporary service programming, MIDI technology, sound reinforcement, use of drama, and major worship events would be invaluable to students who because of the size of their church or their particular church tradition have not had opportunities to have been exposed to these things.

A fourth desired learning outcome is that one who completes the program should *have had exposure to the latest in worship resources, techniques, methods, and models for contemporary worship*. As churches are making the transition from a traditional approach to a more contemporary or blended worship, it is imperative that worship

leaders have an awareness of historical models of worship and also be exposed to the great variety of elements currently incorporated in contemporary worship. As stated in the chapter on cultural issues related to worship, the exposure to the different ways in which people worship can serve to enhance one's own worship. That is not to say that the person will fully embrace all to which he/she is exposed, but that there will be an openness to new and fresh ways of expressing worship to the Lord.

The respondents to the survey gave strong support to the idea of offering study of current issues in contemporary worship in the worship studies program. Also, some of the more sought after recent books and articles cited in the literature review have to do with the variety of what is currently happening in contemporary worship here in the United States and around the world. There is great interest in the study of the current trends and issues related to contemporary worship. In addition to the various current and historical worship models, there is also much interest in worship evangelism, cross-cultural issues, and church worship in transition.

A fifth desired learning outcome of the worship studies program is that one who completes the program *should be committed to lifelong development as a worshiper and worship leader*. Though the foundational truths of the Christian faith will never change, changes in culture and the ways in which people express themselves are sure to continue to occur. It can be observed in the literature review some of the changes in worship which have taken place in the last 30 years. With every new generation comes new music, new language, new ways of expression.

Beyond these issues, no one will be able to assert that he/she has ultimately “arrived” in the fulness of the worship experience until kneeling before the Lord and participating in the worship of heaven. There must be a commitment to a lifelong hunger and passion for more intimacy with God. Therefore, there should be the understanding that the simple completion of a worship studies program does not imply that one can abandon the pursuit of learning more about what it means to worship God in spirit and truth. To the contrary, an effective systematic worship studies program should ignite a flame in the individual causing him/her to desire intimacy with God more than ever and to lead others there as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Because of the importance of worship to the individual believer, the local church, and the Body of Christ at large, it is recommended that further research be conducted in this area. This study has attempted to ascertain which elements should be included in a contemporary worship studies program through numerous interviews, surveys, literature reviews, and personal observations. However, there remain a number of research components which could prove to be helpful in future study.

It is recommended that further research be done in broader elements of the Christian church. First, it may prove to be helpful to have more denominations represented in the survey. Second, it may prove to be helpful to have a greater number of females represented in the survey. Third, a broader cross-cultural sample may bring some interesting insights in terms of how the Body of Christ worships in different cultures.

It should also be remembered that as time goes by and cultures change, the way people express themselves will also change. Though the Scriptural principles of worship are timeless, the ways in which people express worship may be somewhat different in 20 or 30 years or more if the Lord tarries. This issue is of such great importance that further study is appropriate to insure that systematic training is available for those who desire to lead worship, and that this training is of a nature that is relevant to what is currently happening in the culture and in the local church. Most importantly, the training needs to produce “lead worshipers” who are able to lead others into the presence of God. It is that for which those who attend the local church hunger for most.

CONCLUSION

Those fellowships which make the effort to be churches in which God is worshipped in spirit and truth will find His presence abiding in new and fresh ways. As worshippers come to worship corporately out of lives which are lived daily unto the Lord in holiness, they will experience a more fulfilling time of worshipping together. Tozer says:

God assures us in many ways that His worshipping people will be a purified people, a people delighting in the spiritual disciplines of a life pleasing to God. No person who has found the blessings of purity and joy in the Holy Spirit can ever be defeated. No church that has discovered the delights and satisfaction of adoring worship that springs automatically from love and obedience to God can ever perish.¹⁴⁷

God continues to seek those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. That is the purpose for which He created man. God did not create Adam for the purpose of having

¹⁴⁷ Tozer, Whatever Happened to Worship?, p. 103.

someone to serve Him; He already had all of the angels serving Him and doing so perfectly. He created man in His own image so that we might have the capacity to know Him, and in knowing Him, to worship Him. The one thing in the universe that is more like God than any other thing He created is the spirit of man, and it was made that way so we might know and worship Him.¹⁴⁸

In a very real sense, to the degree we fail to worship God in a manner that is pleasing to Him, we miss out on the real purpose for our existence. Worship must be a priority and must not be approached lightly, haphazardly, or without passion. It is the responsibility of those who are in positions of worship leadership to model what it means to be a worshipper. Andrew Hill offers these thoughts:

The quality of the worship experience for the people of God often occurs in direct proportion to the vitality and biblical grounding of the worship leadership. This means local church leadership must elevate the issue of worship leadership to a place of priority on the church's administrative agenda. It also means the professional clergy must be involved in ongoing training of lay worship leaders for service in the church. In addition, some kind of worship training should be instituted for all the members of the local congregation so the biblical principles of worship permeate the private worship and devotion in the home. Only then can the church effectively carry out the mission of priestly ministry to which it is called in behalf of the world. And only then can the church be assured of a new generation of believers who understand, appreciate, and become involved in the worship proclamation and service.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ McMinn, *A Heart Aflame!*, p. 14.

¹⁴⁹ Hill, p. 160.

Even at this moment there are activities occurring around the world which are designed to express “worship” to someone or something, performed by people which God created to worship Him and Him alone. Sadly, even many of those who gather regularly for a religious meeting never really encounter the presence of God or participate in worship that is in spirit and truth. Without a doubt, there needs to be an awakening, a renewal which brings people to a place of true worship before Almighty God.

Biblical worship will impact people at profound levels. It will provide pathways of contact with a holy and loving God. It will also nurture and uplift relationships with those who are brothers and sisters in Christ. Biblical worship even witnesses to those outside the faith.¹⁵⁰

There are many things we do in life now that one day, when this life is over, we will never do again. There will come a day when there will be no more sermons preached; there will be no more lessons taught; there will be no more pursuit of career or education; there will be no more churches to build or nations to evangelize. But there is one activity in which we can participate today that we will never cease to do. . . worship God. It is imperative that we worship Him in a manner that is pleasing to Him; the biblical way; in spirit and in truth.

¹⁵⁰ Morgenthaler, p. 123.

APPENDIX A

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The following will summarize the key writings related to Christian worship, particularly with respect to those contributions to the worship renewal literature. The review will include that of related books, theses and dissertations, and periodicals.

BOOKS

While a search for books related to a curriculum for a concentration in worship did not discover writings specifically dealing with the curriculum topic, there are a number of books on the subject of worship. In fact, much has been written regarding worship in general, as well as from a variety of more specific perspectives. This review is not intended to identify and describe an exhaustive list of books related to worship, but to provide an overview of several of the works which might be considered influential in the literature, particularly those which have been written within the last 30 years.

While many books have been offered related to a history of Christian worship, a good representative is that of James White's, A Brief History of Christian Worship (1993), which is a historical survey of worship. White's Introduction to Christian Worship (1990) is also helpful as it deals with the meaning of Christian worship and aspects of the worship service. Perhaps White's greatest contribution is that of Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition (1989). This work provides an excellent scholarly analysis of a number of worship traditions from the Reformation to the present. White addresses nine

worship traditions including Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, Anglican, Separatist/Puritan, Quaker, Methodist, Frontier, and Pentecostal.

From the Reformation period much of the individual traditions stayed the same, particularly in the more liturgical churches. Church traditions of worship in many cases were simply built upon what had been passed down from the previous generations. Through the years the attendees to corporate Christian worship came to have more of an observing role than a participatory role in the service.

According to leading worship author, Robert Webber,¹⁵¹ worship in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a participatory event in which the attendees were involved in the prayers, readings, and witnessing. There was even what was known as “the talk-back sermon” in which the congregation responded to the sermon in an interactive way.

In the nineteenth century, worship space and order was changed by the era of revivalism. In this setting the congregation began to take on a more observatory role. The piano and organ music, the choir, the special music, and the sermon all became more performance-oriented, driving to the invitation of sinners to repentance. Thus worship in the nineteenth century was “clericalized” and those in the audience became spectators.

In the twentieth century, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, things began to change in some areas. Webber summarizes the change by observing that reason gave way to mystery; observation gave way to experience; and individualism gave way to community. There has been more change in worship in the last 30 years than in all of church history.

¹⁵¹ Much of the following is taken from Dr. Webber’s *Renew Your Worship!* Workshop conducted in Roanoke, VA September 1997.

In the 1950s and early 1960s the greatly influential A.W. Tozer was preaching and writing on the importance of worship. Prior to his death in 1963, Tozer expressed his opinion that worship acceptable to God is the missing crown jewel in evangelical Christianity. His messages and writings have become some of the most quoted in the current worship renewal literature, The Knowledge of the Holy (1961), being a good example.

Tozer's influence on worship renewal may be seen in two later books which are compilations of his sermons and essays on worship from the 1950s and 1960s. Whatever Happened to Worship?: A Call to True Worship (1985), was compiled and edited by Gerald B. Smith from Tozer's sermon tape series, "Worship: The Chief End of Man." This book makes some powerful observations about the nature of worship in the church during those times. Also, Tozer on Worship and Entertainment (1997), compiled by James L. Snyder, puts forth Tozer's views on what worship is, the kind of worship which is unacceptable, and the power of God in worship.

According to Webber, in the 1960s there began a renewal in the mainline churches which emphasized substance. At about the same time there were the beginnings of what became known as "the Jesus movement" which birthed praise churches seeking to emphasize relevance. Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California was one of these churches. As young people came to Christ in those early days of the Jesus movement, they brought their music and non-traditional ways of expression into the church. Maranatha! Music, originally a ministry of Calvary Chapel, was one of the first music

companies which began to record the contemporary praise music which was becoming more and more common in churches like Calvary Chapel.

The changing elements with respect to things like contemporary music and attitudes toward worship in the church in the 1970s and 1980s produced more books and resources concerning worship. In this period, Judson Cornwall wrote some key books which initially primarily influenced those from a Pentecostal/charismatic tradition. Let Us Praise (1973), Let Us Draw Near (1973), Let Us Worship (1983), and Elements of Worship (1985). One of the key discussions that Cornwall, a Pentecostal theologian, offers in this series of books is that of the journey into the holy of holies. He was one of the first to make a clear distinction between the acts of praise and worship, a distinction held by a number of writers in the Pentecostal/charismatic tradition.

From the beginning of the Jesus music infiltration of the church in the late sixties and early seventies, there has been tension regarding the use of contemporary music in worship. An important work related to this is, Jubilate! Church Music in the Evangelical Tradition (1981), by Donald P. Hustad. In this well-researched volume, Hustad discusses the history of evangelical worship in a variety of contexts. He places particular emphasis on the role of culture and its influence on various worship expressions. This is significant in that the changes in culture were having a great impact on the changes which were happening in the worship life of the church. Hustad's follow-up volume, Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal (1993), deals with a great number of the aspects of mainstream, evangelical church music and worship, and incorporates a strong historical emphasis.

In 1982, Ronald Allen and Gordon Borrow published, Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel. This book was written in order to aid those churches that desired to move into meaningful worship and to rediscover that which had been covered by tradition. It is a quite practical book, which provides definitions and descriptions of the various aspects of the worship service. It also offers practical guidelines for worship leaders as they plan and prepare worship services.

As the worship renewal movement began to grow, there came to be more and more churches which identified one or more persons on the staff or from the congregation as the worship leader for the church. As this happened, a number of these worship leaders from contemporary churches began to write and publish books and articles on worship. One such was Graham Kendrick, a British worship leader and songwriter. His book, Learning to Worship as a Way of Life (1985), is a study of the relationship between personal and corporate worship. This book is reflective of the worship renewal teaching that the corporate worship experience is intimately related to one's own personal worship experience. Kendrick also emphasizes the effect of worship on the personal lifestyle of the worshiper. Kendrick's, Ten Worshipping Churches (1987), tells the stories of ten British churches and the difficulties they came up against as they changed their corporate worship patterns. The struggles of transition from traditional to renew were great. Many of those same struggles are evident to this day in churches which seek to move from a more traditional approach to worship to the worship renewal model.

Another worship leader/songwriter whose books have been influential is Lamar Boschman. His books, The Rebirth of Music (1986) and The Prophetic Song (1990),

have made a great impact in the praise-and-worship tradition, particularly among charismatic churches. Boschman makes the point that music in the worship life of the church should be important because of the fact that God's Word places such a major emphasis on music. In fact, according to Boschman:

Music is mentioned in the Bible over 839 times. God must consider music important to mention it that many times in His Word. In fact, it is one of the major emphases in the Bible.¹⁵²

One of the most important works in the worship renewal movement was written by a great pastor and songwriter, Jack Hayford. Worship His Majesty (1987) is the expression of Pastor Hayford's view that worship is the key to people fulfilling God's intended purpose for their lives and that through worship the personal needs of people are met. Regarding the multitude of changes in the worship experience of the church Hayford writes, "I want to underscore the reformation in worship that is in progress. It's already begun, and its fruit has been tested and proven worthy in a sufficient number of situations to show we are not simply dealing with a fad."¹⁵³

Regarding the path to worship renewal, Hayford speaks in terms of the attitude of the heart rather than in terms of the specific, practical elements of planning and organizing a worship service. "True renewal comes where hearts wait for God. True renewal

¹⁵² Lamar Boschman, The Rebirth of Music (Shippensburg, Penn.: Destiny Image Publications, 1986), p. 25.

¹⁵³ Hayford, p. 21.

manifests where hearts thirst for God. True renewal stays where hearts walk with God.”¹⁵⁴

Other valuable books by Hayford include The Church on the Way (1983) which describes the life of the church he pastors in southern California. Also, Mastering Worship (1990), co-authored by Jack Hayford, John Killinger, and Howard Stevenson, is a book in which these three respected worship leaders from three different evangelical denominations describe both personal and public aspects of worship.

In 1985 a ministry was birthed in Mobile, Alabama by Michael Coleman and Ed Linquist. This ministry of providing live recordings of the new praise and worship music by mail order under the name, “Hosanna! Music,” has had a tremendous impact on the worship renewal movement. The mission statement of the parent company, Integrity Incorporated, is “helping people worldwide experience the manifest presence of God.”

In 1989 Coleman and Lindquist published, Come and Worship, a book written to show what happens when people come into the presence of God. Praise and worship music was becoming more popular in worship in local churches. Coleman and Lindquist write:

Long before we sent out our first tape, we sensed that God was doing something very special through this kind of music—only we weren’t sure of all that it involved. We began a search—a journey, if you will—to find out more. We prayed and we studied the Word of God. We talked with people all over the country and the world—ministers, teachers, worship leaders, and ordinary Christians who’d experienced revolutionary changes in their lives when they praised God in song... What we’re discovering is that praise

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 111.

and worship music is having a profound impact on the Body of Christ. People are gaining a deeper relationship with the Lord, and unity is being restored throughout the Church.¹⁵⁵

Another important work from the late 1980s regarding the subject of music in the worship life of the church is the book, In Spirit and in Truth: Exploring Directions in Music in Worship Today (1989), edited by Robin Sheldon. This is a collection of essays from several writers in Great Britain dealing with the tensions between traditional and contemporary music in the church. The fact that the writers come from a broad spectrum of Christian worship tradition makes this book very helpful in considering the issue of tension over music from a variety of standpoints.

The worship renewal movement which was characterized by more contemporary music in the church services and incorporating new songs and choruses was by and large a more influential movement in Pentecostal and charismatic churches in the early months and years. In fact, many non-charismatic churches and denominations were initially reticent to incorporate this type of worship due to the fact that there was concern that they might be perceived as becoming a charismatic church.

This began to change in the eighties as a few non-charismatic churches began to incorporate newer music and worship styles into their services. One of the most influential writers in the United States from a more mainstream evangelical perspective is Don McMinn. Entering His Presence (1986) deals with the restoration of praise and worship in the church and emphasized the point that the ultimate purpose of the

¹⁵⁵ Michael Coleman and Ed Lindquist, Come and Worship (Old Tappan, N.J.: Flemming H. Revell, 1989), p. 16.

crucifixion of Christ on the cross was to make it possible for mankind to once again be worshipers of God. According to McMinn, “Man was created in the image of God that he might have the capacity to know God, and, in so knowing, would adore Him. The most godlike thing in the universe is the spirit of man, and it was made that way so we might know and worship God.”¹⁵⁶

Another of McMinn’s influential works is, The Practice of Praise (1992). In this book McMinn deals with a number of biblical issues as well as some practical application appropriate to leading worship in a local church setting. Of note is McMinn’s description of what he calls, “The Pathway to Worship: The Divine Progression.” According to McMinn, “The primary praise book of the Bible has given us a three-step progression to worship. The order is: thanksgiving, praise, and then worship.”¹⁵⁷

McMinn also offers the following observable elements of a praise and worship service:

- The service is God-focused
- There is an emphasis on congregational involvement
- There is flexibility in the order of service
- There are long periods of uninterrupted worship
- New songs are constantly being integrated into the worship repertoire
- Music is seen as a means to an end
- The service has a definite direction—it is moving into the presence of God
- Sometimes there is the use of body language¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Don McMinn, Entering His Presence: Experiencing the Joy of True Worship, p. 2.

¹⁵⁷ Don McMinn, The Practice of Praise (Nashville: Word Music, 1992), p. 24.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-93.

Another worship renewal writer from the evangelical mainstream is Barry Liesch. In his 1988 book, People in the Presence of God: Models and Directions for Worship, Liesch views worship from a contemporary perspective and makes a number of practical suggestions for making positive transition in worship in the local church. Considering worship models from scripture, Liesch places emphasis on the acts of worship.

Liesch's more recent work, The New Worship (1996), is a very practical handbook on contemporary worship in the local church. The book is self-described as "a practical resource for everyone involved in music and worship planning: pastors, worship leaders, teacher and students in seminaries and colleges, and professional musicians."¹⁵⁹ Liesch deals not only with contemporary worship services, but also with issues related to performance, changes in style, and ministering with others.

From a more charismatic perspective, Bob Sorge's, Exploring Worship: A Practical Guide to Praise and Worship (1987), is divided into two sections. The first deals with the heart of praise and worship and deals with not only the meaning of praise and worship in general, but also what it means to become a worshiper personally. At a time when there is much discussion of the elements of true worship, Sorge indicates that worship is simple. "It is for those who are childlike enough to just open up their hearts and respond to God in sincerity and honesty. Worship should be renewing, invigorating, therapeutic. We must relax if we are to enjoy the simplicity of worship."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Liesch, p. 13.

¹⁶⁰ Sorge, p. 83.

The second part of Sorge's book deals with practical issues related to the leading of praise and worship. There is discussion of the art of leading worship, planning a worship service, and the relationships between those on the worship leading team.

Another book that has been widely read among those from a Pentecostal/charismatic perspective on worship is Ruth Heflin's, Glory: Experiencing the Atmosphere of Heaven (1990). Heflin also offers a progression in worship. She instructs the reader to "Praise until the spirit of worship comes. Worship until the glory comes. Then stand in the glory."¹⁶¹

A recent quite scholarly work on worship is Andrew Hill's, Enter His Courts With Praise!: Old Testament Worship for the New Testament Church (1993). As the title suggests, this book relates theological principles gleaned from study of the Old Testament scriptures to contemporary worship. For example, as he conducts a discussion of the participatory nature of Hebrew worship, Hill relates:

One of the trends identified in the current worship renewal movement is participatory or active worship. There is widespread agreement today that the whole congregation should participate in worship.¹⁶²

As there continues to be great discussion regarding worship from a variety of perspectives it seems that, though much is observed regarding the changes that have and are occurring in culture, music styles, etc., the majority of those who write are interested in worship that is true the scripture and biblically sound. Of course, observations

¹⁶¹ Ruth Heflin, Glory: Experiencing the Atmosphere of Heaven. (Hagerstown, Md.: The McDougal Publishing Company, 1990), p. 200.

¹⁶² Hill, p. 109.

regarding that which is scriptural are made based upon the observer's interpretation of the scripture in question.

John Frame is representative of those who take a very high view of scripture. His book, Worship in Spirit and Truth: A Refreshing Study of the Principles and Practice of Biblical Worship (1996), is written from a Reformed perspective stated quite clearly in the preface. Frame says, "The main assumptions of this book are distinctively Reformed: God is sovereign; he is related to us as the covenant Lord; he wants us to worship only as his word requires."¹⁶³ From this perspective Frame deals with principles of worship in the Old and New Testaments, practical elements of worship, and music in worship.

One of the most prolific recent writers on worship renewal is Robert Webber. His 1982 book, Worship Old and New, deals with the history and theology of worship primarily from a liturgical perspective.

In 1992 Webber published the book, Worship is a Verb, in which he outlines eight principles for transforming worship. They are as follows:

- Worship celebrates Christ
- Worship tells and acts out the Christ event
- In worship God speaks and acts
- In worship we respond to God and each other
- Return worship to the people
- All creation joins in worship
- Worship as a way of life¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Frame, p. xv.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Webber, Worship is a Verb (Nashville: Abbott-Martyn, 1992), pp. 16-17.

His series entitled, The Complete Library of Christian Worship (1993), is a mammoth undertaking including seven volumes with contributions from over 60 denominations and 600 writers. The seven volumes are as follows:

- The Biblical Foundations of Worship
- Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship
- The Renewal of Sunday Worship
- Music and the Arts in Christian Worship
- The Services of the Christian Year
- The Sacred Actions of Christian Worship
- The Ministries of Christian Worship

In his book, The Worship Phenomenon (1994), Webber discusses his observations about worship. According to Webber, “God seems to be doing a new work in our time, a work of breaking down prejudices, bringing his people together, and uniting us to the common history of the church. And the place where this is happening is in worship—in a worship that crosses traditions, joins them into one seamless robe, and allows the people of these various traditions to worship not as separate entities, but as one church.”¹⁶⁵

In recent years, contemporary worship has come to be viewed as not only beneficial for the worshipers themselves, but is also seen as a means by which unbelievers may come to an understanding of the gospel. Consequently the “seeker” movement has become a hot topic among church leadership in the last few years. There have been a number of success stories, and there have also been a number of failures as well. As church leadership has begun to make changes, unfortunately balance has not always been a top priority. Perhaps one of the most influential books published recently along these

¹⁶⁵ Robert Webber, The Worship Phenomenon (Nashville: Abbott Martyn, 1994), p. 11.

lines is Sally Morgenthaler's, Worship Evangelism (1995). In this book Morgenthaler offers a strong premise for evangelistic worship without compromise. One of her main points is that "seekers" have an interest in God and are also interested in observing believers who are worshipping God. The book includes material from extensive interviews with church leaders from a variety of backgrounds discussing the idea of worshipping God with the unbeliever in mind. According to Morgenthaler, our worship practices need to be analyzed because "worship has always been a controversial subject within the church. The way we worship is often as much a part of our Christian identity as whom we worship."¹⁶⁶ It is important that church leadership understands that "seekers" are interested in God and are interested in observing Christians in their worship of God. Observers should be able to see in Christian worship what God is like and how faith can express itself.

It is no secret that change does not always come easily; and with something so personal as the subject of worship, there are very strong feelings and opinions. Contemporary worship practices have not gone without criticism. A recent book from a more liturgical perspective is Marva Dawn's, Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down (1995). Dawn considers the background of our culture and society, as well as the present condition, with implications regarding how we approach worship. Her primary point is that recent innovations in worship practice underestimate the "seeker" and take a very low, unintelligent (dumbing down) approach to reaching him/her. Dawn indicates that the book was written . . .

¹⁶⁶Morgenthaler, p. 17.

. . .to reflect upon the culture for which we want to proclaim the gospel; to expose the subtle powers that beckon us into idolatries and that upset the necessary dialectical balances in the Church's life and worship; to stimulate better questions about if, why, and how we might be dumbing faith down in the ways we structure, plan, and participate in worship education and in worship itself; and to offer better means for reaching out to people outside the Church.¹⁶⁷

Elmer Towns, a well-known author and speaker related to the church growth movement, has been reporting on the characteristics of growing churches for since the early 1970s. Towns' writings are very much descriptive in nature and offer great insights into those factors which impact the life of the local church. As the controversy regarding contemporary worship continues, Towns' book, Putting an End to Worship Wars (1997), discusses the reasons why people disagree over worship and analyzes six basic worship styles. Towns offers ways to find balance and make peace in the midst of "worship wars." The book describes the styles of worship in the following types of churches:

- The Evangelistic Church
- The Bible Expositional Church
- The Renewal Church
- The Body Life Church
- The Liturgical Church
- The Congregational Church

Towns' also offers nineteen observations regarding worship in the church today and gives the following suggestions for preventing a worship war in the church:

- Learn tolerance
- Strive for balance in the Body of Christ.

¹⁶⁷ Marva Dawn, Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), p. 11.

- Recognize the strengths of the church where you found Christ.
- Discover your spiritual gifts and worship from your strength.
- Realize how the church contributes to you if its dominant spiritual gift is different from yours.¹⁶⁸

As the worship renewal movement continues, we should expect more and more books on the subject. Hopefully the controversial element of the writings will be at a minimum and authors will continue to find greater common ground on which to seek to persuade readers in the area of worship renewal.

Doctoral Projects

A search for other D.Min. projects on the subject of developing a concentration in worship studies did not locate any other such D.Min. projects. The majority of the doctoral work which might contribute to the discussion of worship renewal in the church has been in the area of music. A related project is the 1980 Ph.D. dissertation by Donald Bearden in which he studies the minister of music in a Southern Baptist church in terms of the specific competencies that he should possess. These competencies specify the particular understandings, skills, and behaviors needed to perform the task successfully. According to Bearden, “this study had as its primary objective the development of a

¹⁶⁸Towns, pp. 136-137.

group of statements (in behavioral terms) which describe the musical and music-related skills, behaviors, and knowledge needed by a minister of music.”¹⁶⁹

Davies states that “it is essential that choosing music be done intentionally, on the basis of a philosophy of music in worship, because of its importance and power. This suggests a need for education so as to have an informed and prepared approach.”¹⁷⁰

Elias Hardge, Jr. studied the role of music in the vitalization of the worship in black congregations. Hardge found that “there are any number of elements working together in worship which tend to make worship alive, vibrant, fulfilling, enjoyable, and spiritually uplifting. Increasing the understanding of worshipers about the many components of worship through biblically based education may result in congregations rising to new levels of exciting worship never before realized.”¹⁷¹

Thomas Seel’s 1990 study was conducted to develop a theology of music in worship by studying the Book of Revelation in order to provide the contemporary church musician with a greater spiritual understanding and appreciation of music in worship in the first century.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Donald Roland Bearden, “Competencies for a Minister of Music in a Southern Baptist Church: Implications for Curriculum Development,” Ph.D. Dissertation (The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1980), p. 188.

¹⁷⁰ Frank B. Davies, “Prolegomena to the Use of Music in Worship: An Introduction for Worship Leaders,” D.Min. Dissertation (Columbia Theological Seminary, 1987), p. 8.

¹⁷¹ Elias S. Hardge, Jr., “The Role of Music in the Vitalization of the Worship in Black Congregations: An Attempt to Discover the Kinds of Music Which are Most Meaningful in the Worship Experiences of Black Christians,” D.Min. dissertation (Columbia Theological Seminary, 1987), p. 89.

¹⁷² Thomas A. Seel, “Toward a Theology of Music for Worship Derived From the Book of Revelation,” D.M.A. dissertation (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), p. 11.

In recent years it has become more apparent that church attendees can have a more meaningful worship experience if they have a greater part in the planning of the worship service as well as a more participatory role in the worship. Kelvin Moseley conducted a project the goal of which was to equip the laity of a local church to serve on a worship team. During the project, Moseley led nine training sessions designed to teach the worship team the meaning of authentic worship. Participants also attended and analyzed worship practices in churches other than their own. Finally, participants were involved in planning and evaluating four worship services. These exercises served to enhance the participants' understanding of worship.¹⁷³

As the planning of worship services has become a point of greater emphasis, Marion Jones makes a number of recommendations for improving music in worship services. According to Jones, the service should be organized around a central theme with carefully selected music that is appropriate as well as familiar and appealing to the congregation. If possible, a variety of music should be employed, depending on the abilities of the church musicians.¹⁷⁴

Thomas McDonald offers a tool designed to reduce the shortage of ministers of music and to enhance the level of music making and the quality of instruction rendered by ministers of music. In his chapter entitled, "The Minister of Music as Worship Leader," he states that "worship is central to the mission of the church. A vibrant worship service

¹⁷³ Kelvin Moseley, "Equipping the Laity to Serve on a Worship Team," D.Min. report (Fort Worth: Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1992), p. 6-7.

¹⁷⁴ Marion B. Jones, "Music in Liturgy: Enhancing the Quality of Worship in the AME Zion Church," D.Min. project (Madison, New Jersey: Drew University, 1991), p. 51.

will undeniably bear fruit. The process of being conformed in the image of Christ is fostered by open, honest and sincere times of worship and praise.”¹⁷⁵

The literature indicates that there is a need to approach worship from primarily a biblical standpoint, with emphasis on the importance of preparedness of heart and the practical elements of a time of worship. Meyerhoff’s project addresses a need for more information from a biblical, practical and historical perspective on the subject of Christian corporate worship. It also seeks to encourage greater congregational participation in public worship and better preparation of an order of worship by those who bear that responsibility in a local church. He states that “Leaders of Christian corporate worship must avoid the practice of haphazard planning. Careful thought and attention to the true nature, purpose and meaning of worship as revealed in the Bible will enhance the structure and experience of worship.”¹⁷⁶

These doctoral projects are representative of some of the recent writing at least somewhat related to worship renewal in the local church. There are a number of other projects which would merit consideration as the worship renewal movement continues to grow.

Periodicals

In addition to the books and doctoral projects which have addressed the worship

¹⁷⁵ Thomas J. McDonald, “The Reason We Sing: A Choral Based Strategy for Music Ministry in the 90’s,” Ph.D. dissertation (The Union Institute, 1993), p. 89.

¹⁷⁶ D. Steven Meyerhoff, “God With Us: A Course on Christian Corporate Worship,” D.Min. project (St. Louis: Covenant Theological Seminary, 1990), p. 2.

renewal movement, there have been a number of periodicals which have spoken to the topic. An article by Donald Macleod appeared in the Princeton Seminary Bulletin in 1975 which addressed the need for more meaningful praise in the church. Interestingly enough, the article struck a chord in keeping with the attitude of those who were beginning to incorporate praise music in the churches. Macleod states, "The reason so much of our worship is dull, meaningless, and unfruitful to people inside and outside the church is simply because we have lost the indispensable note of praise."¹⁷⁷

Yet as the worship renewal movement continued to grow through the eighties, there were a number of people writing articles who came to question what was happening in the movement. For example, Harry Boonstra takes issue with three of the authors who have been influential in the praise and worship movement: Jack Hayford, Graham Kendrick, and Judson Cornwall. One of the issues that Boonstra does not like is the above-mentioned authors' distinction between praise and worship.¹⁷⁸

As the tension between the traditional and the contemporary continues, many are grappling with the issues related to transition. The March 1993 issue of *Reformed Worship* deals with a series of topics related to the changing attitudes and approaches. Regarding the importance of worship Craig Van Gelder states, "More than any other activity we engage in, worship defines the relationship of the church to the world. As a

¹⁷⁷ Donald Macleod, "The Re-Discovery of Praise," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 67 (Winter 1975), p. 70.

¹⁷⁸ Harry Boonstra, "With Reservations: A Review of Three Influential Books on the Praise and Worship Movement," *Reformed Worship* 20 (June 1991), p. 36.

church seeks to give honor and praise to God in worship, it is openly declaring to the world that it serves a different master.”¹⁷⁹

Regarding the transition from more traditional to more contemporary approaches to worship, Edith Bajema suggests that churches should be concerned about how they go about making the transition from old to new. Strategy should be related to the vision of the local church with a view toward developing unity in the Body of Christ and incorporating the gifts and talents of a broad spectrum of the church family.¹⁸⁰

As the worship renewal movement has progressed, the idea of the importance of the relationship between the pastor and the minister of music or worship leader has become more greatly stressed. G. Kenneth Cooper writes that pastors and worship leaders/ministers of music should seek to learn from each other in order to be able to minister more effectively together. The fellowship which occurs through such an approach will give strength to all in the stress of ministry. This relationship can be enhanced when the pastor and the worship leader or minister of music do things like attending a conference or workshop together. New avenues of learning are opened when there is worship and study together without the pressure to preach, teach, play, or direct.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Craig Van Gelder, “Culture Shock: Redefining the Relationship Between Church and Mission Now That We’ve Lost the Home-Field Advantage,” *Reformed Worship* 27 (March 1993), p. 3.

¹⁸⁰ Edith Bajema, “We’re Struggling With Worship,” *Reformed Worship* 27 (March 1993), p. 7.

¹⁸¹ G. Kenneth Cooper, “To Understand and To Be Understood: The Pastor and Musician Learning in Community,” *Reformed Liturgy and Music* 28 (Fall 1994), p. 188.

Concerning this relationship, Spragens and Ptomey suggest that as the pastor and worship leader plan services together, it should be remembered that worship is to involve the entire congregation and involves an act of praise and thanksgiving to God which is centered in God's Word. Though there is a pastoral aspect to worship planning, it is to be a shared responsibility.¹⁸²

With all that has been written about worship and its importance, it is interesting that there has not been more attention given to a more systematic approach to training those who desire to lead worship in the more contemporary worship renewal model. Worship is the greatest activity in which a believer may participate. Unfortunately, as has been stated, those who are regular attendees in churches too often seem to fail to have a truly meaningful experience in the participation of worship. As Linda Schwartz indicates, "Worship is not a spectator sport; the whole people of God must engage in the drama, which continues to unfold through time, and whose final act will be the restoration of all Creation to God in Christ."¹⁸³

The issue is with the individual believer. Yet there are many who would no doubt become more involved, more participating, and have more meaningful worship experiences if they were simply lead in worship in an effective manner, and given permission to express themselves to the Lord in ways that they have perhaps been reluctant to express.

¹⁸² Carol Tate Spragens and K.C. Ptomey, Jr., "Musician and Minister: Partners in Praise," *Reformed Liturgy and Music* 28 (Fall 1994), p. 195.

¹⁸³ Linda Schwartz, "Conformation Or Transformation," *Direction* 22 (Fall 1993), p. 22.

This is not an uncommon situation. Donnelly says that C. S. Lewis acknowledged that praising God was a stumbling block for him after his conversion to Christianity. He felt that either God is self-sufficient and does not need praise (especially from His creatures), or that God must suffer from an inadequacy which correspond to the deficiency of rock stars and body-builders who need to be told, over and over again, how great they are. Whatever the case, Lewis considered it depressing to consider it.

Lewis resolved his dilemma by recognizing that “when we do not praise God, the loss is ours, not God’s, for we deny ourselves as regards the supremely Valuable, what we delight to do, what indeed we can’t help doing, about everything else we value.”¹⁸⁴

Summary of Literature Review

A review of the literature related to worship reveals that while much has been written on worship from a variety of perspectives, little has been written specifically geared toward the training and equipping of worship leaders. This is true particularly in the case of literature directed toward a systematic approach toward training worship leaders in the worship renewal model.

There has been a great deal written regarding the history of worship, the meaning of worship, various worship styles, and characteristics of worship services. There are even some works which deal, at least in part, with some of the issues related to being a worship leader. But nothing has been offered to date which would constitute the establishment of

¹⁸⁴ C.S. Lewis, Reflections on the Psalms (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), p. 95. As quoted by Doris Donnelly, “Impediments to Praise in the Worshipping Community,” *Worship* 66 (January 1992), p. 95.

a systematic curriculum designed for the training of those who aspire to lead worship. It is appropriate, therefore, to pursue the establishment of such a program.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY CONCERNING A CONCENTRATION IN WORSHIP STUDIES IN THE SEMINARY

Name: _____ Address: _____

Present Position: Senior Pastor Associate Pastor Worship Leader/Minister of Music Youth Minister

Number of years in this profession: _____ Number of years at present position: _____

Age: 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55+

Race: Caucasian Afro-American Hispanic Asian other

Gender: Male Female

Denomination: Baptist Methodist Nazarene Assembly of God/Pentecostal
 Presbyterian Nondenominational Other _____

Church currently serving: _____ average attendance: _____

We currently do praise and worship in our church (using contemporary choruses, instruments). Yes No

We currently have someone designated to lead praise/worship. Yes No

We would be interested in having someone trained to lead praise and worship. Yes No

How much time do you spend in praise/worship on Sunday AM? _____ Sunday PM? _____

I would like more information on Liberty's worship training programs. Yes No

Educational Background: Final Degree _____ Date _____ Institution _____

I. I have received training/acquired skills in leading worship from the following:

seminary undergraduate program workshop/seminars others (please list) _____

II. It is my opinion that specialized training in worship studies at the seminary level should be greatly beneficial in the preparation of worship leaders/ministers of music.

Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Disagree

III. It is my opinion that a Masters of Arts in Religion with a concentration in worship should include study of/experience in . . . (please circle only one)

	Agree						Disagree
Worship in the Old Testament	1	2	3	4	5		
Worship in the New Testament	1	2	3	4	5		
The Tabernacle Model of Worship	1	2	3	4	5		
Worship in the lives of Biblical Characters	1	2	3	4	5		
Role of Music/Arts in Biblical Worship	1	2	3	4	5		

Principles of Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Worship as a Lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5
Relationship of Worship Leader					
.....with Pastor	1	2	3	4	5
.....with Family	1	2	3	4	5
.....with Instrumentalists	1	2	3	4	5
.....with Choir/Singers	1	2	3	4	5
.....with Congregation	1	2	3	4	5
Current Trends in Worship	1	2	3	4	5
Cross-Cultural Issues in Worship	1	2	3	4	5
Various Worship Models	1	2	3	4	5
Worship Evangelism	1	2	3	4	5
Liturgical Worship	1	2	3	4	5
Practical Issues Related to Leading Worship	1	2	3	4	5
Working with sound system	1	2	3	4	5
Rehearsal Techniques	1	2	3	4	5
Current Worship Resources	1	2	3	4	5
MIDI/Computer Use	1	2	3	4	5
Age-graded Choir Program	1	2	3	4	5
Special Production Events	1	2	3	4	5
Worship Leader Internship	1	2	3	4	5
Hymnology	1	2	3	4	5
Contemporary Worship/Music	1	2	3	4	5
Blending Traditional/Contemporary	1	2	3	4	5
Drama	1	2	3	4	5
Transition from Traditional/Contemporary	1	2	3	4	5
Working with a Rhythm Section	1	2	3	4	5
Working with a Vocal Ensemble	1	2	3	4	5
Songwriting	1	2	3	4	5

IV. Please indicate any additional topics which you think should be addressed in a Master of Arts in Religion with a concentration in Worship Studies program.

APPENDIX C

COMPARISON OF ALUMNI AND CLASSROOM SURVEYS

	AGREE		NEUTRAL		DISAGREE	
	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM	ALUMNI	CLASSROOM
Worship in the O.T	76.32%	94.29%	15.79%	2.86%	7.90%	2.86%
Worship in the N.T	83.53%	94.29%	11.40%	2.86%	5.26%	2.86%
Tabernacle Model	54.39%	80.00%	31.58%	14.29%	14.04%	5.71%
Biblical Characters	75.44%	88.57%	17.54%	8.57%	7.02%	2.86%
Current trends in worship	82.30%	74.29%	11.50%	17.14%	6.19%	8.57%
Various worship models	80.53%	85.71%	13.27%	11.43%	6.19%	2.86%
Worship evangelism	80.53%	85.71%	10.62%	8.57%	8.84%	5.72%
Current resources	76.99%	68.57%	17.70%	20.00%	5.31%	8.57%
Contemporary worship music	82.30%	64.71%	14.16%	29.41%	3.53%	5.88%
Drama	72.32%	45.71%	23.21%	34.29%	4.46%	20.00%
Hymnology	61.06%	68.57%	27.43%	31.43%	11.50%	0%
Age-graded choirs	51.33%	54.29%	35.40%	37.14%	13.27%	8.57%
Special production events	71.68%	62.86%	23.01%	28.57%	5.30%	8.57%
Liturgical worship.	36.04%	48.57%	36.94%	37.14%	27.03%	14.28%
Blended worship	88.50%	68.57%	7.08%	22.86%	4.42%	8.57%
Transition traditional to contemporary	81.42%	68.57%	11.50%	20.00%	7.07%	11.43%
Practical issues related to:						
leading worship	80.70%	82.86%	12.28%	11.43%	7.02%	5.71%
working with sound system	80.36%	68.57%	12.50%	28.57%	7.15%	2.86%
rehearsal techniques	76.99%	65.71%	18.58%	22.86%	4.42%	11.43%
MIDI/ Computer use	74.11%	68.57%	18.75%	22.86%	7.44%	5.72%
working with a rhythm section	65.18%	65.71%	26.79%	31.43%	8.03%	2.86%
working with a vocal ensemble	79.46%	71.43%	15.18%	20.00%	5.36%	8.57%
worship leader internship	80.00%	74.29%	12.73%	11.43%	7.27%	11.43%
Relationship of worship leader with;						
pastor	88.50%	91.43%	6.19%	2.86%	5.30%	5.72%
family	86.61%	88.57%	7.14%	5.71%	6.25%	5.71%
instrumentalists	84.07%	91.43%	7.96%	2.86%	7.96%	5.71%
choir/singers	84.96%	91.43%	9.73%	2.86%	5.31%	5.71%
congregation	87.61%	88.57%	7.08%	5.71%	5.30%	5.71%
Principles of leadership	87.82%	94.29%	5.26%	2.86%	7.02%	2.86%
Worship as a lifestyle	87.50%	88.57%	6.25%	8.57%	6.25%	2.86%
Role of Music/Arts in worship	87.83%	88.57%	6.09%	5.71%	6.09%	5.71%
Song writing	39.82%	71.43%	34.51%	20.00%	25.66%	8.57%
Cross-cultural issues in worship	63.72%	71.43%	23.01%	22.86%	13.27%	5.71%

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