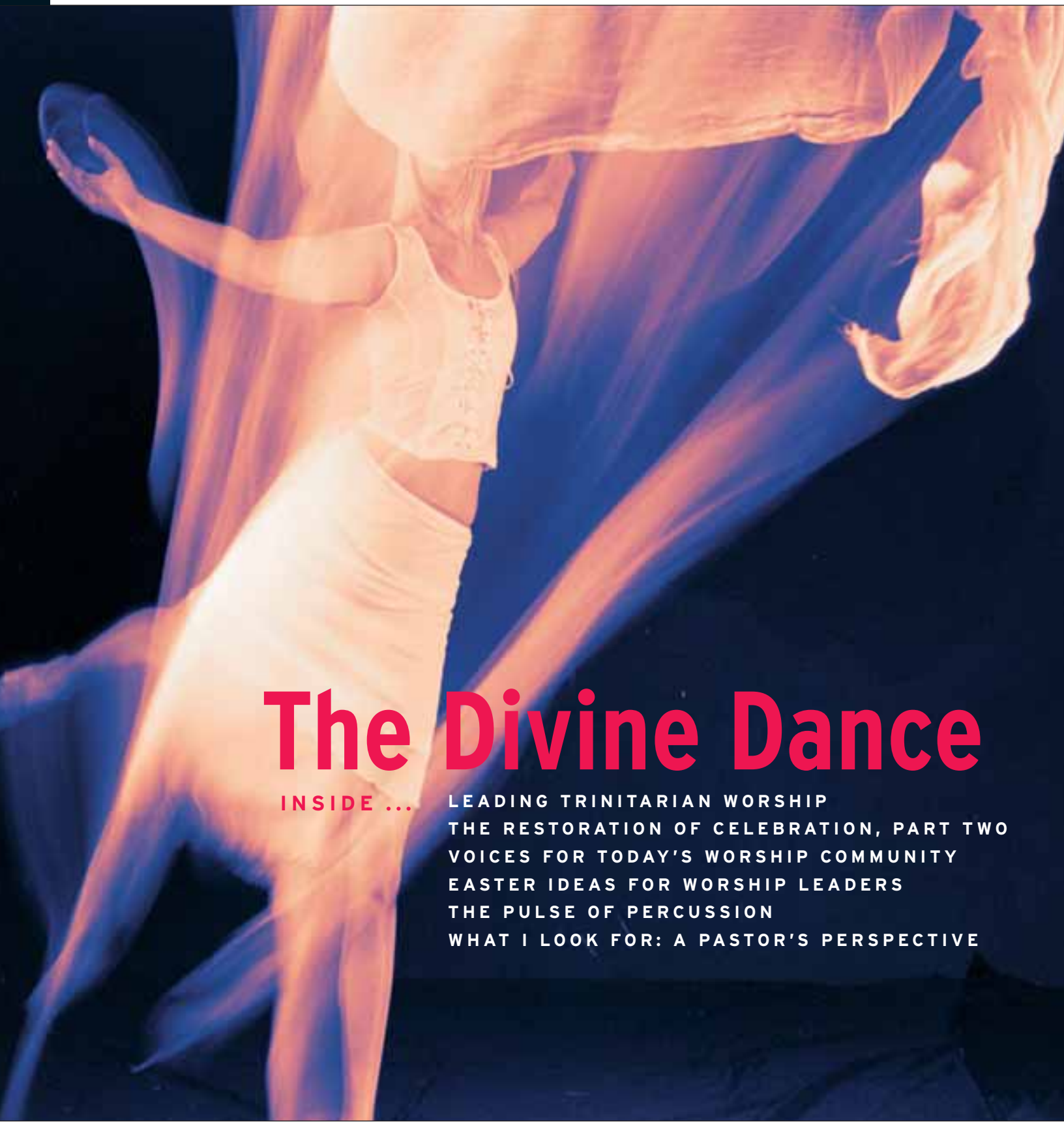
vineyard music™

VOLUME 52 | FEBRUARY 2004

insideworship™

A DEEPER LOOK



The Divine Dance

INSIDE ...

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THE RESTORATION OF CELEBRATION, PART TWO
VOICES FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP COMMUNITY
EASTER IDEAS FOR WORSHIP LEADERS
THE PULSE OF PERCUSSION
WHAT I LOOK FOR: A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

PLUS: INTERVIEW WITH MIKE PILAVACHI

From Suffering To Glory

According to the Bible, suffering and glory are inseparable. Look closely at the life of Jesus. We remember that He could only embrace His heavenly glory by embracing the cross. Any theologian worth his salt will tell you that pain and gain are integrally linked.



The power held in the words of Romans 8 reinforces that our groaning fear will transition to glorious hope if we will be patient:

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently" (Romans 8:18-25 NIV).

We desperately want to experience the glory of God, but we want to avoid the vehicle by which it often comes – pain and difficulty. Because Jesus, our model, embraced suffering in light of the glory to come, we as Christians must be prepared to embrace suffering. Outside of the Western world, the Church has had to embrace suffering in significant degrees, and these brothers and sisters will attest to the transformation of the heart that occurs in the place of trial. In my view, it is in the embracing of suffering that the revelation of the glory of Christ increasingly comes to us.

His glory is the fullness of His revelation.

The celebration that awaits us is worth enjoying now, in the midst of earthly struggle. When we embrace our suffering, we are embracing the hope of heaven even before we can see it. Fix your eyes on Jesus, and join in the dance.

JEREMY COOK
President, Vineyard Music

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Letter From The Editor

Gutteral, primal melodies, resonant tones and jagged motion seem to capture the viewer in a kind of trance. This night was no exception. The Zulu men would rumble in sacred voice, while the women would screech in tongued percussion. All of the proceedings were for us, a small group of visitors to Drakensburg, South Africa, and the musical performance was an impromptu delight.

Yet somehow, as the dancing of this beautiful people continued, my soul was swept away. The pulse of the music, mingled with jutting arms and hiking legs, put the audience to laughter. Though I laughed as well, I was also put to a robust and thrilling prayer. Then the voices left the motion behind. Unison throats echoing unison passions; now I began to softly weep. I felt the dance of the Triune God swirling around me once again, inviting me into His beauty and love for a broken world.

This issue of ***Inside Worship: The Divine Dance*** reminds us of the joy we have in being invited into the greatest of all celebrations – the Kingdom of God. Berten Waggoner, national director of Vineyard Churches USA, outlines an understanding of the Trinity essential to every worship leader. Guest contributor John Eldredge, well-known author, reminds us of the theme of joy in worship. Derek Morphew continues our study on "The Restoration Of Celebration," and other writers round out this issue with practical tips for worship leaders and songwriters.

From the beginning of time, there has been a dance between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. May the words in these pages sweep you up again into that divine dance all around us – a dance you and I are invited to join.

DAN WILT
Editor, Inside Worship

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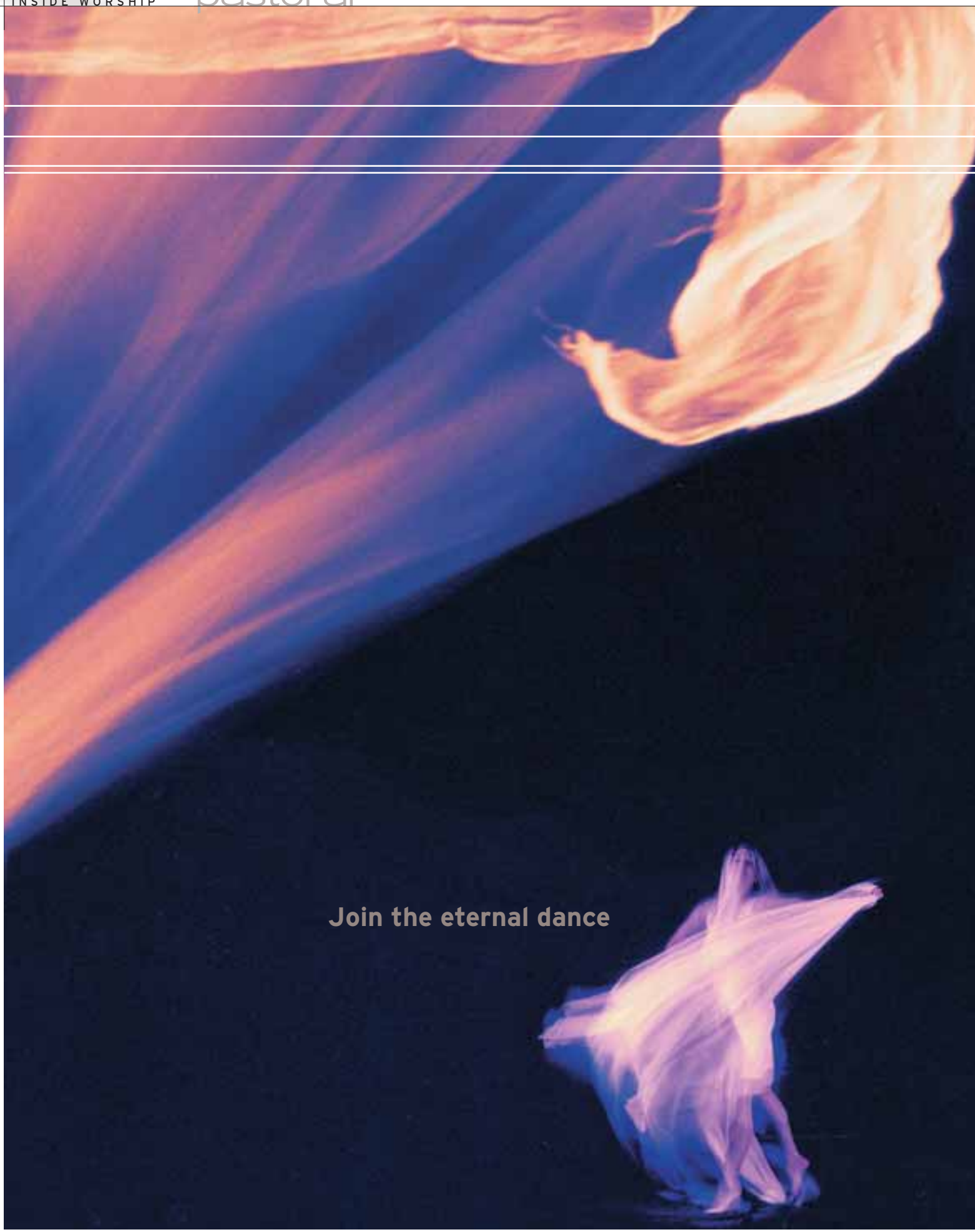
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Join the eternal dance

Leading Trinitarian Worship

BERTEN WAGGONER

The Treasure Of The Trinity

The God we worship is a Trinitarian God. We know no other God than the one revealed in Jesus Christ - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. John Calvin put it well, "Unless we think of God as Trinitarian we have no knowledge of God at all, only the word 'God' flutters through our brain naked, and void of meaning" (Quoted by Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine Of The Trinity*, p.15).

The Triune God is the boast of the Christian faith. Samuel Taylor Coleridge called the doctrine of the Trinity the "idea of ideas." "It is," he said, "that great truth, in which are contained all treasures of all possible knowledge" (Colin Gunton, *The One, The Three And The Many*, p. 144). The truth of the Trinity is priceless and incomparable. It is a teaching about God's life and our life with Him that explores worship, relationship, personhood and community in light of the revelation in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sadly, the Church has neglected this treasure. Catholic scholar Karl Rahner's assessment might be a little extreme, but he is certainly right in his emphasis, "Christians are, in their practical lives, almost mere 'monotheists,' and were the doctrine to be eliminated as false, the major part of religious literature could well remain virtually unchanged" (*The Trinity*, p. 10). The prayer and thought required to more clearly understand this blessed truth is seldom given. Thus we have a cacophony of prayers and praise that confuse the Trinitarian persons, hide their unity and randomly assign their work.

Worship Leaders Shape Our Theology

Much of the blame for this demise in Trinitarian thought can be laid at the feet of the theological community who became enamored with the Enlightenment and pushed this rather embarrassing doctrine to the periphery of theological discussion; but the worship community must also bear part of the blame. Worship influences doctrine and doctrine influences worship (*lex orandi, lex credenti* - "the rule of prayer as norm for belief").

This pattern of mutual influence can be seen in the New Testament. Paul consistently corrects the worship of the Church by applying theological criteria (I Corinthians 11 and 14). He also used the liturgy of the Church to support theological points (Romans 10:8-13 and Philippians 2:5-11). Who ultimately has the most influence in formation of faith – the theologian or the worship leader? Though this truth may be frightening, worship leaders are much more influential in shaping the theology of the average worshiper than is the theologian, teacher or preacher. That really places a high responsibility on the worship leader and causes me to ask: "If the worship of the Church plays such a vital role in faith formation, and if the most fundamental reality in our faith is the Trinity, how should the worship leader prepare him- or herself to lead in the worship of the Triune God?"

Leading Trinitarian Worship

There are several options, but in my judgment it is most important that a worship leader become a prayerfully and thoughtfully informed Trinitarian. Disciplined study and reflection brings us to a point of conviction in terms of a model (doctrine) of the Trinity; the model helps us worship. As Miroslav Volf states, "A...doctrine of the Trinity is a model acquired from salvation history and formulated in analogy to our experience, a model with which we seek to approach the mystery of the Triune God, not in order to comprehend God completely, but rather in order to worship God as the unfathomable..." (*After Our Likeness*, p.198). If this is true, then one of the most important things a worship leader must do is to define a Trinitarian model in his/her mind.

Several models have been proposed in the flow of church history. In this short article I cannot either introduce or evaluate the multiplicity of models. Some such as Arianism were clearly destructive to our faith as they denied the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Others such as Modalism were rejected because they failed to recognize the diversity of persons in the godhead.

I would recommend the doctrine of *perichoresis* for your study. The term means mutual indwelling or, better, mutual interpenetration and refers to the understanding of both the Trinity and Christology. In the divine perichoresis, each person has "being in each other without coalescence" (John of Damascus ca. 650). The roots of this doctrine are long and deep. Recent Evangelicals that have worked at clearly defining the model include such notables as Millard Erickson, Royce Gordon Gruenler, Gilbert Bilezikian and Miraslav Volf. It is seen most clearly in the passages in John where Jesus speaks of his relationship with the Father:

> *"But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father"* (John 10:38);
>
> *"Jesus answered: Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father*



Learn to worship the Triune God

> *and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves"* (John 14:9-11);
>
> *"...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me"* (John 17:21).

In no other place in the teachings of Jesus are we provided with such a clear window into the divine relationships. The picture Jesus gives us here is that of an eternal community (of two persons at this stage), totally dwelling in one another, totally interpenetrating each other so much so that when one speaks it can be said that both speak. The Son totally dwells in the Father, and the Father totally dwells in the Son. We do not have a human analogy to divine perichoresis because one human cannot indwell another. The closest we can come to this reality is human empathy.

The dynamic quality of the perichoritic Trinity is symbolically captured in the vision given to the prophet Ezekiel (1:3-28) which pictures a tri-personal being who is full of energy, life and love. It speaks of mutuality and relationship, of love that is eternal. It has been called the divine dance, the polyphony. It presents the three persons, in perfect harmony, giving without reservation to one another, interdependent, bound together in love, all involved in a celebration of life, love, peace and joy.

Joining The Divine Dance

I have given only a brief introduction to an idea that has captured my heart. I do not have time to develop it further, but I would like to share some implications for worship and worship leaders that I have drawn from my study of the perichoresis. This is not meaningless theological minutia. If it is true, it has tremendous implications for all of life and especially for worship.

1. The perichoresis is already happening when we begin to worship. Worship leaders lead the community of faith into what has always been happening in the divine perichoresis. Worship leaders simply help God's people join the eternal dance.

2. The perichoresis reminds us that we are not the worship leaders. God is the worship leader. The Son is the one that leads us into worship of the Father. He is the mediator of all worship (see T.F. Torrance, *Worship, Community And The Triune God Of Grace*). But within the divine perichoresis any one of the persons might lead us in glorifying the others (John 17:5).

3. The perichoresis makes clear the distinctness and diversity of persons in the Triune God. Each person who abides in the other, remains uniquely what He is. The Father does not become the Son, the Son not the Father, etc. Each has a unique role to play in redemption and should be praised for His unique work. To lead the Church in worship, the worship leader must join with the persons of the Triune God in praising them according to their unique glory and work.

4. The perichoresis informs the worship leader that worship is always a corporate activity. True worship is never singular. We do not come to Jesus alone. We come to the Father who is in the Son and to the Son who is in the Father. The object of worship is a divine community.

I've written to challenge you, our worship leaders, to become students of theology and especially of the Trinity. You play such a vital role in the continuation of the faith of the Church. I have only begun to understand this model of the Triune God, and the applications I have made from this wonderful truth are only initial possibilities of the significance it holds for the Church's worship. Come join with this pilgrim worshiper and "wanna-be" theologian, as together we learn to worship the Triune God.



Berten Waggoner has served as the national director of the Association of Vineyard Churches USA since 2000. He also pastors the Vineyard he planted in Sugar Land, Texas. He has a Master's degree from the Nazarene seminary. He has served as a college professor, church planter, international speaker, pastor, and in several different leadership positions in the Vineyard. Berten is married to Evelyn and has two sons and five grandchildren.

A Great 28 Tips For Songwriters

TERRY AND RANDY BUTLER

1. Let God be your promoter.
2. Floss every day!
3. Don't obsess over a song that seems hard to finish - move on - you can always come back to it.
4. Take the long way home. Take in the trees, flowers and green grass. Roll down your windows and feel the breeze.
5. Learn the meaning of three new words every week.
6. Buy a new CD once a month, and explore new styles/artists.
7. Remember that God writes the best worship songs!
8. Be on the lookout for that co-writer that's a match for you.
9. Read these books...
   - *The Knowledge Of The Holy* by A.W. Tozer
   - *Lyric Writing* by Sheila Davis
   - *To Know You More* by Andy Park
   - *Dangerous Wonder* by Mike Yaconelli
   - *Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard
   - *Raggamuffin Gospel* by Brennan Manning
   - *Leap Over A Wall* by Eugene Peterson
   - *The Message* by Eugene Peterson
   - *Desiring God* by John Piper
   - *What's So Amazing About Grace* by Philip Yancy

   (Remember... Amazon.com is your friend!)
10. Hang out and play guitar/piano with someone better than you. Watch what they do. Ask questions. It's a great way to learn new stuff.
11. Say over and over again to yourself,"I'm a lifelong learner!"
12. You need solitude to write songs.
13. Shoot the TV!
14. Remember: 10% inspiration, 90% perspiration.
15. Get honest feedback about your new song. Be selective. Find people who will nudge you toward growth.
16. Schedule time to write and edit. Even if you never pick up your instrument, read and think.
17. Remember, some songs come seemingly in an instant. Others come in installments.
18. Writing a song can involve all these feelings... exhilaration, frustration, desperation, exhaustion, euphoria and fragility.
19. Give at least seven hugs a day.
20. Stop the comparison trap. No, you're not Matt Redman.
21. Caution! Don't over analyze your song. Don't throw stuff away too quickly.
22. Read a children's book.
23. Don't "should" on yourself.
24. Remember, the overwhelming majority (80%) of the top Grammy winning songs were co-written (two or more authors).
25. If one of your songs gets published, you're still a "dufus" who needs God.
26. Laugh a lot more. Laugh at yourself. If you're looking around at all, you'll see that a lot of things are truly funny!
27. Get a good instrument. Good instruments inspire.
28. At the end of the day, when it's all said and done, walk humbly. The gift was given by Him, it's not yours.



Three-Word Lessons For Worship Leaders

Linger With God

Preparing to lead a worship set can be one of the most intimate times a worship leader can have with the Lord. Set aside space for those times of integrating thematic truth with harmonious set flow, and linger in worship as you prepare to lead God's people.

Up The Ante

Sometimes when the quality of our worship music and spiritual temperature is waning, is the best time to raise the bar. Extended rehearsals, blending musical workouts with worship opportunities for your team can be just what the doctor ordered to awaken a sleeping giant.

Lighten The Load

Keep a close eye on your worship team for signs of wear and tear. Breaks, seasonal tech/setup support teams, and even better planning to get songs and materials to your teammates before rehearsals can bring much needed lightening to the servant's load.

Turn The Tide

When in doubt, press in as a worship leader. If your congregational worship experience seems to be stagnating, don't give in to the delusion that it's "just a season." Assume there is something God wants you and your Church to learn, seek counsel, and make changes.

Keep The Faith

Your own spiritual growth is essential to your effective leadership of the congregation God has given you to steward in their worship expression. Use bible study plans, develop spiritual friends for prayer and accountability, and pursue your own spiritual development with passion.

Don't Be Shy

It is true that a congregation can feel used when a worship "cheerleader" is leading them. However, it is also true that a congregation can feel aimless when a worship "non-leader" is leading them. Learn the tools of your trade, apply yourself to growth, and then lead with confidence. God will help you.

The Restoration Of

DEREK MORPHEW

For Part One in this series, see the previous issue of ***Inside Worship: Caring For Creatives.***



Israel, As God's Holy People, Were Called To Regular Celebration

God commanded regular times of national assembly for the purpose of celebration. Each festival was a time of great joy and rejoicing, but such rejoicing was regarded as a solemn requirement. They had to celebrate. This was no optional matter. Three times a year every male had to appear before the Lord for a festival (Deut.16.16). At Tabernacles, the most festive of all, God commands his people,

> *"You shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite who is in your town, and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your towns. Seven days you shall celebrate a feast to the Lord your God ...because the Lord your God will bless you...and so you shall be altogether joyful* (Deut.16.14-15 NASB)."

Notice the command to be joyful. The "altogether" would seem to include both the total community, high and low, and the total person, with all his heart.

An examination of the festival calendar reveals how frequently this type of assembly was to occur. Some of the gaps between these official festivals were filled with other less known ones, such as weekly Sabbaths, monthly new moon festivals, the feast of sheep shearing and the feast of wood cutting.

Marking High Points With Festivity

Every high point in the history of Israel was marked by festivity and dancing, especially the times when God's mighty acts were experienced or when the covenant was renewed. When they were delivered from Egypt, Miriam took up the tambourine, all the women followed her, "with tambourines and dancing," and Miriam sang the song of the redeemed (Ex.15.1-21). When David, having defeated all the enemies of Israel, finally managed to take the ark of the Lord into Jerusalem with triumphant procession, "David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the Lord, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals" (2 Sam.6.5).

"Celebrating" in the Hebrew here is *sihek*, to play, sport. When David "danced before the Lord with all his might," the Hebrew is *karar*, to turn or whirl (2 Sam.6.14). Michal despised David because she saw him "dancing and celebrating." Here the Hebrew is *radadh*, to leap, hop or skip (1 Chron.15.29).

Dancing was common in the time of David, as for instance when he returned victorious from battle (1 Sam.18.6-7). One may also notice the references in the Psalms (149.3; 150.4). When Solomon had completed the temple, he "observed the festival, and all Israel with him - a vast assembly... They celebrated it before the Lord our God for seven days" (1 Kings 8.65). When Josiah led the nation in repentance and revival, they kept a great feast of the Passover (2 Chron.35.18-19). When Ezra and Nehemiah led the nation in restoration, they "celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles" (Ezra 3.4) and "for seven days they celebrated with joy the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because the Lord had filled them with joy..." (Ezra 6.22; also Neh.8.18). It was the expectation of the prophets that the Messianic era would be filled with celebration (Zech.8.18-23; 14.16-17; Isa.25.6; Jer.31.4).

Dancing played a part in every festival, but particularly at Wood-cutting, Atonement and Tabernacles. According to the Mishna (Tàanith IV.8), young men and maidens of Jerusalem danced in the vineyards on the evening of 15th Ab (i.e. Feast of Wood-cutting) and on the eve of the Day of Atonement (Encyclopedia Britannica).

According to the Talmud,

> "Whoever has not witnessed the joy of the Festival of Water-drawing has seen no joy in his life" (Jewish Encyclopedia Vol. 4, p. 426).

On the night of the first day of Tabernacles, huge assemblies of people gathered in the women's court of the Temple bearing lamps of gold and vessels of water, while every house in Jerusalem was brightly illuminated.

> "Pious men and men of affairs danced with torches in their hands, singing songs of joy and of praise, and the Levites made music with lyre and harp and cymbals and trumpets and countless other instruments" (p. 426).

This would continue until dawn. Two great galleries were built for the spectators. This section finds a fitting conclusion in a saying of the Mishna, which captures the Jewish concept of God. According to this saying, when God finally judges His people, He will not only judge them for the things they have done, but for the good things which He gave them to do which they failed to enjoy. He will want to know four things:

> Did you ever find yourself playing with little children?
> Did you ever enjoy a fine wine?
> Did you court in the springtime?
> Did you ever find yourself dancing for joy, without knowing why you were dancing?

Jesus Is The Centre And Focus Of Celebration

Jesus began his ministry by announcing the year of Jubilee (Lk.4.18-19; Isa.61.1-2; Lev.25.8-55). This has rich significance. At the begin-



Part Two

ning of the year of Jubilee, marked by the Day of Atonement, a trumpet blast would announce "liberty throughout the land" (Lev.25.9-10). This liberty was comprehensive. Land mortgaged, any property sold previously out of poverty, including one's house, any money borrowed and any sale of an Israelite into slavery, had to be unilaterally cancelled, restored and released. Imagine what would happen in our day were this to be literally applied! Our community would experience a joy that knows no bounds, apart perhaps from the directors and share-holders of banks and building societies!

Jesus announced the beginning of this year-long festival, but with him the festival has continued for the entire age of grace. The liberty has not been a material one in particular. As Jesus proclaimed the kingdom, the sick, the demonized, the guilty, the bereaved and the dead were released from the bondage that had held them. The entire presence of Jesus, God with us, is therefore regarded as one long festival. He is the bridegroom. While He is with us, only festivity is appropriate (Mk.3.18-22). Jesus was of the habit of extending table fellowship to the outcasts of society. These occasions were foretastes of the Messianic banquet. They extended the grace of the kingdom through the festive meal (Jn.2.1-11; Lk.5.27-39; 14.7-24; 19.1-10).

Celebrating The Kingdom Experience

It is not surprising, therefore, to find Jesus portraying the experience of forgiveness and reconciliation with God as a moment of celebration. "Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it." When the elder son came near "he heard music and dancing" (Lk.15.22-25).

While the synoptic gospels record this historical sense of the ministry of Jesus, John's gospel gives a theological/historical emphasis on Jesus as the fulfiller of the entire festive calendar. The story of Jesus is structured around feasts attended by Jesus. With each one, Jesus is shown to be the true meaning of the feast and each feast becomes another occasion for one of His "I am" sayings.

- At the Passover Jesus cleansed the temple and announced Himself as the real tabernacle of God (Jn.2.13-22; 1.14).
- At the next unspecified feast, Jesus cured a man on a high Sabbath and then announced Himself to be equal with God. As the Son of Man He is to judge all men with eternal life or eternal judgment (5.1,18,27).
- At the next Passover Jesus fed the five thousand and revealed Himself to be the true Bread of Life that comes down from heaven (6.4,10,33,57-58).
- At the Feast of Tabernacles (7.2) Jesus deliberately made Himself the focus of the whole occasion. "On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, `If a man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink...'" (7.37). It was the normal practice for a ritual of pouring water to take place at that moment of the feast. Jesus chose just that moment to offer Himself as the provider of streams of living water.
- At Hanukkah or Dedication (10.22), Jesus declared that "I and the Father are one" (10.30).
- Finally, at the last Passover, Jesus died as the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world (19.14,31). The exact chronological differences between the Synoptics and John are not the point here. In the flow of John's gospel, the climax of the ministry of Jesus coincides with a Passover, just as the beginning of his ministry began with a Passover.

The meaning of all of this is quite clear. In the Old Dispensation it was legitimate for each feast to point ahead to the coming One. Now that He has come, He must replace every feast as the true focus of celebration. He brings the era of celebration (Jubilee), and thereafter all celebration finds its source and meaning in Him. He "demonstrates in His life, suffering and death the proper festal celebration" (NIDNTT, 1, p 628).

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Voic

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN ELDREDGE

Voices is a series of video interviews conducted by *Inside Worship* with influential teachers, worship leaders, writers and theologians across the streams of the Church. Our goal is to give these leaders a platform to address the 21st century worship leader and worship songwriter, from their unique vantage point.

Let's listen in, as we hear from John Eldredge, respected author of books such as *The Sacred Romance, Wild At Heart, The Journey Of Desire* and *Waking The Dead.*

On Authenticity

There are a few things that I would want to say to the 21st century worship leader, or to the worship songwriter - both camps, both artists. The first - forgive the painfully obvious - regards *authenticity*. To assume that you are leading or writing for a worshiper assumes *you've been there*. It assumes that you are speaking about things of which you know. To lead is to say, "I know the trail; I've been there, and this terrain is familiar to me." I don't mean by that the worship experience - I mean walking with God. It assumes that you know what that means, and that everything you write, everything you speak, everything you sing, play and bring to the moment comes out of your personal experience.

The pressure when it's your job is to create an experience that, frankly, is beyond what you know. You're not even there yet yourself, and all of a sudden you now have something that's not genuine - it's not true. You will either write things that are unreachable, overspiritualized and sound silly. Or, you will pretend. Your leading worship will become a performance and, frankly, haven't we all been there and seen that?

What this means is that you must know *the way of the heart*. Worship is an experience that flows from our heart to the heart of God. It is a heart-to-heart experience, so you must know the way of the heart. You must know the way of brokenness, hardship, desolation and the way of intimacy, connection, healing and life. You must know the way of the heart, and I would bet that most of what God is doing in your life right now, either as a leader or as a writer, is to take you on the journey of the heart. His work is to take you into those heart regions of your soul so that you can speak from experience, and so you can say, "I know what that's about, I have been there, I'm familiar with the terrain and I will bring you along like Aragorn led the Fellowship of the Ring, or like Morpheus led the Nebuchadnezzar group in *The Matrix*." Those people were leaders because they had a wealth of experience they were bringing to the situation.

On Religious Fog

The second thing I would want to say regarding 21st century worship is imperative. We have got to strip away this "religious fog," this "culture," this "over-spirituality" that we've created in the Church - which is a counterfeit of genuine religious experience, and of genuine spiritual connection with God. What I mean by that are phrases such as "We will worship God forever, and won't that be great!" Frankly, most of the people are sitting there thinking "No, no, not really."

See, the idea is so common that we will spend forever "worshiping" (ed. note: the activity of worship) God and it is unbiblical, it is untrue. In the Parable of the Talents, for example, Jesus says that when He returns and rewards those who have lived well in His kingdom, the faithful, the true friends - what does He give them? He doesn't send them to church! He gives them 10 cities to rule over, and He gives them the rest of the estate. In other words, we enter into the *fullness of human activity*, creativity, love, friendship,

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Words For Today's Worship Community

adventure and exploration. That's why it's heaven, you see, and this idea that we will "worship forever" is that religious drapery that we bring to the worship hour. I think that creates a sort of disassociation for people. They sing because they think they ought to, and everyone else is singing so "I'll try and enter into this." It's false; it's a counterfeit spirituality. We've got to strip all that away. I was in a worship experience recently and the worship leader was saying something like "We're going to press into the holy of holies." That may be describing some true experience that does take place in the spiritual realm, but that is so very far from most people's experience. People don't talk like that, and it creates this distance, this counterfeit spirituality. We've got to strip all of that away. It has to be true, it has to be genuine to human experience, and it has to be free from this religious fog, this religious veil.

On The Major Theme Of Joy

I think that the third thing that I would want to offer to the 21st century worshiping community, be they leaders, writers or participants, would be something Schaeffer said years ago in one of his works. Francis Schaeffer wrote that the gospel has two themes to it. There's a major theme and a minor theme. The major theme is hope, love, life, freedom and resurrection. The minor theme is suffering, brokenness – it is darkness and it is the cross.

Both are true, both are part of our lives and both need to be a part of our worship. If we present a worship experience only in the major theme, it will be hollow. People will know right away, "this is not true of my life," because life will break your heart. We have to acknowledge that. However, I think there's been a shift, and I think we're actually headed toward making the minor theme the major theme. It's now all about the *journey* and *struggle* and, "Isn't God distant, but still we believe and we hold on." That is not true.

That pain is part of our journey, but it is the minor theme - and we need to keep the minor theme minor, and present the major theme as major. You *can* walk with God, you *can* know Him and He does heal our brokenness. He wasn't joking when He said, "I come that you may have life and have it fully." Let's keep those (themes) in their place, and be true to both as we lead people in the Christian journey through worship.

John Eldredge is one of today's most popular writers and communicators. He is co-author of *The Sacred Romance*, and author of *Wild At Heart, Journey Of Desire* and *Waking The Dead*. He lives in Colorado Springs with his wife, Stasi, and their three sons. To find out more about John's resources and events, go to www.ransomedheart.com. *Inside Worship* is grateful for his enthusiastic participation.



Easter And The Passion Of Christ

Special seasons and holidays of the Church calendar necessitate special celebrations, worship sets and reflective activities. Serve your community in the celebration of the Easter and the Passion season by trying one of these ideas:



Ideas For Worship Leaders

Offer Passion Reflection Nights

During the Passover week (the week before Easter Sunday), invite the church to "Passion Reflection Nights," providing an hour of meditative worship music, scripture and ancient Church readings/prayers centering on the theme of the cross. This is a great way to join with the wider Church in preparing our hearts for the Easter Sunday celebration ahead, while also serving the need for contemplation in your congregation.

Try A Traditional Sunrise Service

Consider having a traditional Easter "sunrise service" in addition to the service being held at the normal time. Many denominational churches have, for centuries, had a simpler, early morning worship time - or even a full service - just as dawn is breaking on Easter Sunday. The sun rising is a powerful image of the resurrection theme being celebrated on Easter morning. For innovative, post-modern churches, this is so traditional it just might work!

Target Your Song Selection

On Good Friday, when many churches have a special service commemorating the reality of Jesus' crucifixion, choose songs that "leave" the resurrection celebration until Sunday. Songs such as "At The Cross," "Once Again" and "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross" can nurture both reflection and anticipation in the hearts of the congregation. Many worship leaders feel a need to "get to the real business of celebrating Easter," and neglect reflection on the power of Christ's suffering – to set us free.

Also, choose songs appropriate to the Easter resurrection celebration of the community. Negro spirituals, such as "I Looked Up," modern worship songs such as "He Is Risen," hymns such as "Christ The Lord Is Risen Today" and many other songs embody the themes of Easter in a beautiful way.

Read A Devotional On The Passion Or Resurrection

There are many wonderful books on the Passion of Christ, and on the Resurrection, on the market today. Authors such as Max Lucado, Brennan Manning and Michael Card have unique reflections on this holiday season that can minister to you as a worship leader.

Don't Neglect The Need For Familiarity

In many contemporary churches, worship leaders forget the vital importance of the congregation connecting with God and the season via songs and music they know. Bend your worship sets to engage the congregation in seasonal favorites, and watch the joy rise as you celebrate Easter and the Passion week as a community.

ROSS McDOUALL



The Pulse of Percussion

What is the role of percussion, and the percussionist, in the worship band setting?
In some ways, the answer to this depends on whether the worship band in question has a drummer. If a percussionist is playing as the only source of "rhythm" (I use "quotes" because some pianists-guitarists-bassists will tell you that they provide the rhythm as well – we know better!), then our role is to rhythmically support the song. We add much needed dynamic changes to help create a "feel" or "groove." However, above all this is our real need to understand that we are helping people to connect with God, and in order to do so we must be sensitive. If we are playing with a drummer, then we can add new flavors and textures to bring life to songs. I find it a joy to work with a good percussionist if I am playing the drumkit, as we can both support and work with each other.

What is the most common mistake you see percussionists make?
Like any musician, the most common mistake percussionists make is overplaying. There are often times in worship when tinkling around on some random items of percussion can be a real distraction. Music needs space, so keep an ear and eye out for musical changes, and for how the congregation is responding. There is no point in beating insanely on a large djembe during a quiet reflective song in ministry time! This sounds like obvious advice, but I speak from experience.

What tips would you give to young percussionists trying to learn their instrument?
Here are a few of the best bits of advice I ever received:

- Keep it simple. Don't over-play.
- Use variation (i.e. use a shaker on the verse and congas on the chorus).
- Find a good teacher. There is no substitute for an experienced instructor.
- Buy an instructional video or DVD. There are loads out there. Pick a basic one and you will get some sound advice and some great tips on playing some well-known patterns.
- Listen to as much music as you possibly can. This is my most important tip. Every time you watch a concert, or see a live band, watch the percussionist and listen to what they are doing.
- Play as often as you can.
- Have fun.
- Remember to worship while you play.

What is your favorite combination of percussion to use in a worship setting?
My ideal combination would be to use congas, a djembe (medium size), a tambourine, shakers (different sizes make different sounds), a wood block and a cowbell. Additionally, I would use a cymbal (thin crashes are best) and if possible - a bell tree. They can seem cheesy - but great in the right moment! Soft cymbal sticks are always a good tool to have on hand.

What can percussion add to the music that other instruments can't?
I feel percussion can add an earthy, natural feel to worship. There is something very powerful, not to mention biblical, about a pounding drum. In particular, the djembe has become very popular as it has a deep, resonant bass note. A rhythmic pulse can help us to concentrate, and in worship this can be helpful when connecting with God.

What important things should a worship percussionist remember?
Just remember that it is a real privilege to play in a worship band. Helping people to worship is a very important thing to do. Remember that if you can worship while you are playing, then in most cases so will other people. Remember that you are not performing as a solo artist. The goal is not to be noticed as a percussionist, but to play as a great worship band. This takes practice and prayer. In playing, if in doubt, leave it out.

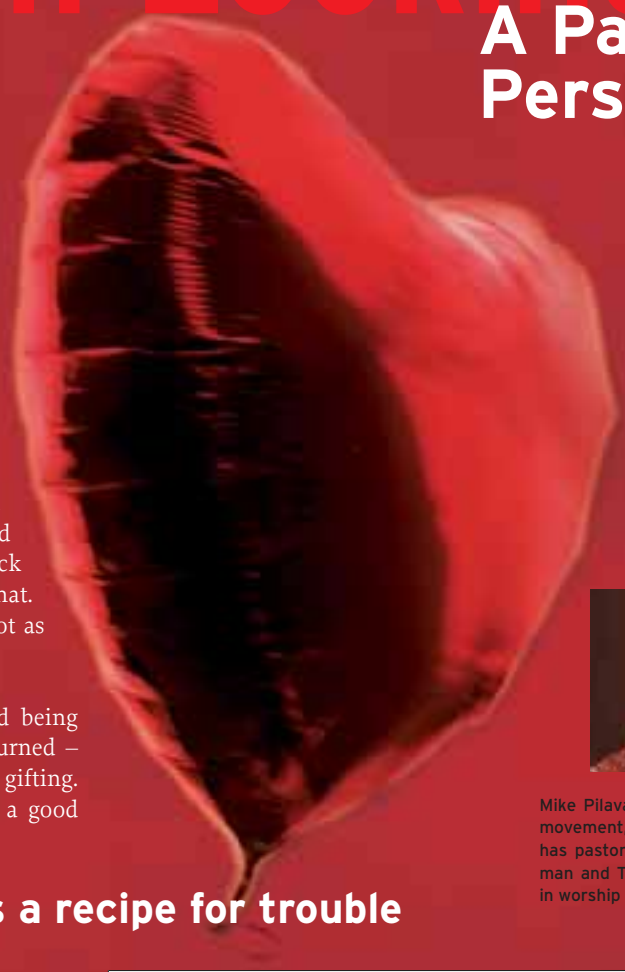


Ross McDouall lives and works in Nottingham England, and is a member of the Trent Vineyard. He has been a professional drummer/percussionist for the last four years, and has been playing the drums since he was 11. Ross has just completed work on *Hold On* (Vineyard Music UK). In his spare time he enjoys winding up worship leaders, and playing out of time in rehearsals to confuse other band members.

What I'm Looking For:

A Pastor's Perspective

AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKE PILAVACHI



What do you look for in a worship leader?
If I'm looking for a worship leader and asking, "Shall we take this person on?" or "Should this person start leading worship?" there are five qualifications that I look for in the person. Number one, I look for heart attitude. That is followed secondly, and pretty closely, by heart attitude. Then, after that, we just check that their heart's okay. Number four, I ask, "How are they doing heart-wise?" Number five, and last of the five I suppose, would be the question, "Is their heart right before God and other people?" Then, only after that, I check for musical ability and all that comes with that. Musical ability is quite important, but it's not as important as those first five.

Honestly, having done this for a while and being involved in worship pastorally, I've been burned – frankly – by picking people based on their gifting. Someone with a lot of gifting, and lacking a good heart and a right heart - for God, for worship, for people – is a dangerous person. He's not a neutral person; that person's a dangerous person. Gifting without heart is a recipe for trouble, particularly for those leading worship.

Gifting without heart is a recipe for trouble

First of all, the person I look for has got to be a worshiper. If they don't know how to worship on their own, then they can't lead people. We've made a distinction that you have two kinds of worship leaders: there's the worship leader musician and the worship leader pastor. I think there is a place for the worship leader musician, but generally I think the worship leader pastor is a much better model.

I hesitate slightly saying that because I don't want to rule out the other level completely, but the person's got to have a heart for God, a heart for the people and a heart for music – and I think it has to be in that order – it's important to have all three.

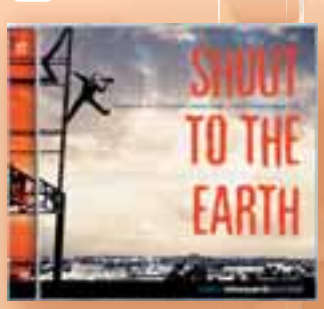


Mike Pilavachi is the leader of the Soul Survivor movement, and a great friend of the Vineyard. He has pastored such worship leaders as Matt Redman and Tim Hughes, and speaks internationally in worship conferences and festivals.

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// SHOUT TO THE EARTH

Featuring Scott Underwood, Casey Corum, Billy Somerville, Martin Reardon, Larry Hampton, Greg Hjelle, Rachel Milstead, and Jeremy Riddle.

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// HOLD ON

Featuring worship leaders Nigel Briggs and Kat Regester.

Inspired by the past, but looking to the future, *Hold On* features fresh-sounding worship songs birthed out of the UK's Trent Vineyard, Nottingham. Drawing on influences such as Coldplay, Radiohead, U2 and the Doves, these songs are a contemporary cry to God to "take my hand and walk with me through this day." If you enjoy the current British music scene, you will love the sound of *Hold On*. Sit back and listen or join in and sing your praise to the Father.



// SET ME FREE

Featuring the talents of Nigel Hemming (HUNGRY), Kat Regester (HOLD ON), and introducing Dave Miller and Charlotte Whittington.

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// WASH OVER ME

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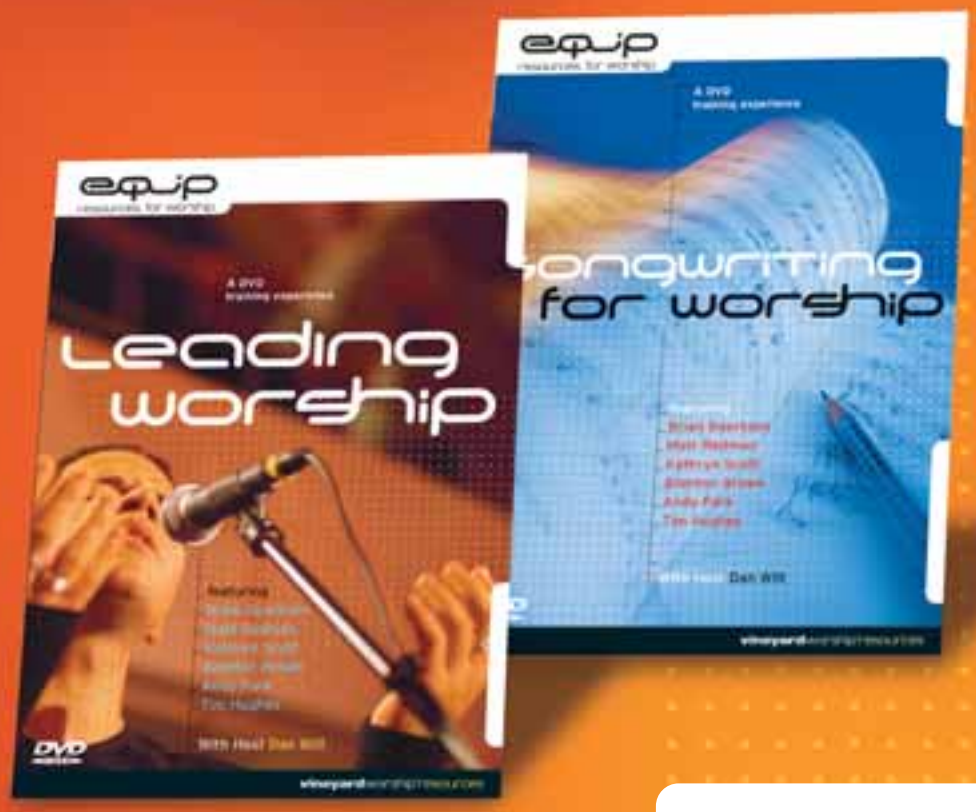
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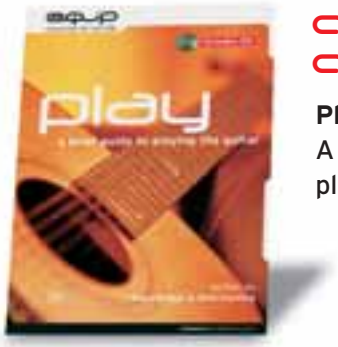
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