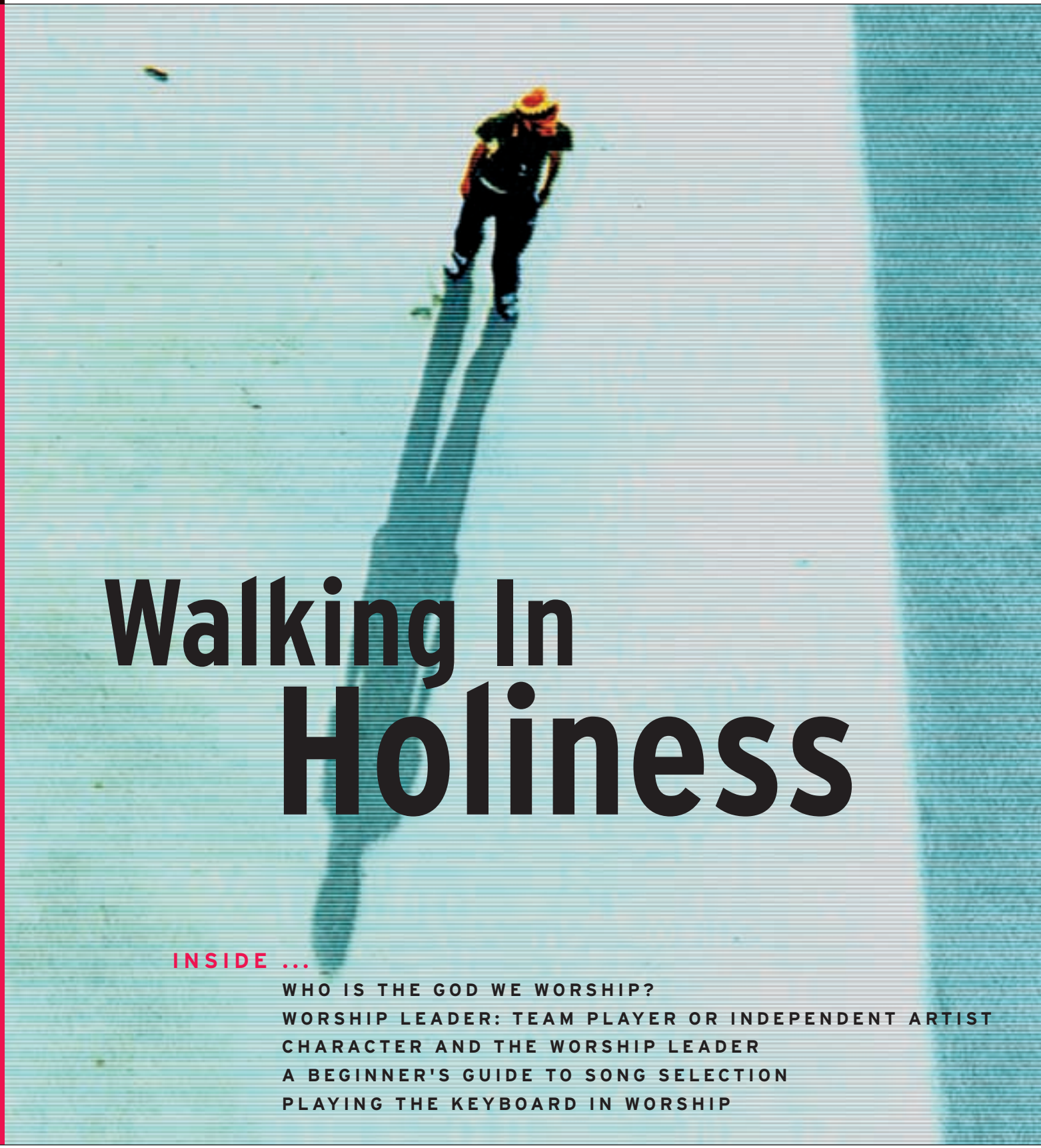
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VOLUME 46 | FEBRUARY 2002

inside worship™

A DEEPER LOOK



Walking In Holiness

INSIDE ...

WHO IS THE GOD WE WORSHIP?
WORSHIP LEADER: TEAM PLAYER OR INDEPENDENT ARTIST
CHARACTER AND THE WORSHIP LEADER
A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SONG SELECTION
PLAYING THE KEYBOARD IN WORSHIP

PLUS: THE VALUES OF A WORSHIP LEADER BY THE LATE JOHN WIMBER

Do You Prefer Happiness To Holiness?



I think it was AW Tozer who offered a simple list of challenges to help keep us living the Christian life, and one of them was *"Do you prefer happiness to holiness?"* Immediately what springs to my mind is the thought that the two may be mutually exclusive. In reality I often think we have a mindset that suggests to us that holiness and happiness do not always co-exist. That may be true, but I do believe that true happiness (so far as it is a biblical concept) can only be found through holiness.

One of the great paradoxes surrounding holiness stems from our knowing how to lead a holy life, but that in and of itself doesn't always seem to lead to holiness. In other words, we all know what the Bible says about life and the way we are to live it, but knowing that something is wrong or sinful doesn't necessarily keep us from doing it. In pastoral life, I have never come across someone caught in sin that didn't know that it was both wrong and unbiblical and yet they still went ahead and did it. So what is the answer to this dilemma and what has it got to do with worship? I believe that both questions can be answered with this same answer: the only way you can avoid and overcome sin is to love Jesus more than the sin. And worship is the very foundation of our expression of love to Jesus. It is precisely because we have had a revelation by faith of whom Jesus is that we worship Him by laying our lives before Him and allowing Him to both form and inform that life. Hence, it is the call of every Christian to pursue a life of holiness that is powered by our love for Him and which we express through our worship. It would be inappropriate for us to lay our lives before Him for His purposes and to ignore His pressing and profound call to holiness, which, in my opinion will eventually lead to a life of peace and contentment. That is biblical happiness.

Jeremy Cook

President, Vineyard Music Global

insideworship™

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Letter From The Editor

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music. Awake my soul! (Ps 57:7)

As I read this verse I am struck by the connection between David's steadfastness and his ability, indeed his desire, to sing songs and make music. And that, in turn, awoke his soul to praise God among the nations. But what does steadfast really mean? The dictionary definition states steadfastness to be "firm and determined." Steadfastness is not passive, it is wholly active; it is not weak, it is strong; it does not give up, it perseveres. Steadfastness means working hard to fulfill God's calling on our lives, being resolute in our beliefs and aiming toward a place of holiness.

And as you think about that, it is my privilege to introduce this issue of *Inside Worship* which focuses on the holiness of God and what that means for His people. Dr. Don Williams and Brenton Brown have put their very creative and intelligent minds together to bring us an inspiring article exploring the identity of Christ and the Godhead whilst Dan Wilt explores the importance of Godly character in worship leaders. An excellent article by the late John Wimber gives some helpful and foundational guidelines on the values that should underpin the spiritual life of anyone involved in worship leading.

As usual we have also sought to equip you with practical content and to that end we have included a superb excerpt from Andy Park's new book exploring the balance between being a worship leader and a solo Christian artist. Nigel Hemming's article will encourage all keyboardists in their worship leading role and Larry Levy gives a concise and useful guide to good song selection.

Finally, it is my pleasure to present to you the new worship album from Vineyard Music UK – *Holy.* My prayer is that it will be an inspiration to you and, above all, a blessing to God as the songs contained within it are used to bring thousands in worship before the throne of our Lord Jesus.

So, as we sing and make music in our churches, in our homegroups and in our ministries, remember to be steadfast in seeking after the Kingdom of God because, as you do so, your soul will be awakened to praise God among the nations.

Chris Whitelock
Guest Editor

vineyard music™ Every tongue, every tribe and every nation.

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Who Is The God We Worship?



BY DR. DON WILLIAMS
AND BRENTON BROWN

This is an excerpt from a theological paper written for worship leaders by Dr. Don Williams and Brenton Brown. The passionate contention of the whole paper is that an understanding of God's identity, and the biblical doctrine of the Trinity, will focus, improve, demand and stir up our worship of Him. If you would like a copy of the paper in its entirety, please contact Vineyard Churches UK at 44 020 8336 1734.

The Biggest Mystery Of All God is greater than our minds or any formula we construct about Him. We cannot package Him. He exists in unapproachable light. He is scary and fascinating at the same time. He is magnificently vast, eternal and mysterious. Yet He allures us in His love. Some have said the parable of "The Prodigal Son" should be re-titled the parable of "The Running Father."

God is a person, and personality is self-revealing. And we only know Him as He discloses Himself to us. Our proper response is not to speculate about His nature, but to bow down in worship. Augustine defines Christianity as faith working toward understanding. He writes, "I believe in order to understand." The biggest mystery is not the Trinity, but that God chooses to reveal Himself to us at all!

Why Trinity? Central and unique to the Christian faith is the belief that the one God has disclosed Himself eternally as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As a result, Christians are monotheists, but "complex" monotheists. There is plurality within the identity of the one God. The Word of God and the Spirit of God are a part of who God is. They also function in His creating and ruling the world.

Why do Christians believe this, especially when it contradicts reason (how can one be three?) and opens them up to the charge of a veiled polytheism: believing in three gods rather than one? The answer is that the earliest Christians were forced into this by the sheer weight of revelation and their accompanying experience of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We must remember that all of the earliest Christians were Jews.

What The Jews Believed About God The Jews defined themselves against the pagan world of polytheism as monotheists. The worship of only the one God was at the heart of their faith. They recited the Shema twice daily: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one." And of course the first commandment was to have no other gods before Yahweh, the one God. As they exalted Yahweh as one, they renounced the many gods and goddesses of the surrounding world and engaged in bitter confrontation with them. Any good Jew was ready to pay in blood rather than worship the pagan deities.

However, the Old Testament also clearly reveals Yahweh to be more than the transcendent God. Within his identity there is the Spirit of God, the Word of God, the Wisdom of God and the Glory of God. He is the creator and at the same time the Spirit which hovers over the waters in creation. He is the creator and at the same time speaks creation into being through His Word and Wisdom. He is sovereign and at the same time rules through His Messiah/Son who bears the divine name and through the Son of Man who receives His Kingdom and is the object of worship. He fills heaven with Himself and at the same time, in the book of Kings, fills the temple with the Glory of His presence.

The Retelling Of The Story When we turn to the New Testament we find the astounding fact that this branch of Judaism – the original church - sees Jesus in the identity of God. In the prologue of John's gospel we are shown that He is the Word of God through whom creation came into being; He is the Word of God through whom revelation is given; and He is the Word of God who becomes incarnate as Jesus – fully human as well as divine, in order to save this fallen humanity. John calls him God, but not all of God: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." No wonder his Gospel ends with Thomas confessing to Jesus: "My Lord and my God!"

There is no doubt that the first generation of Christians worshiped Jesus within the framework of Jewish monotheism. That's why Paul expands the Shema to include both God and Christ: "...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live." Here, claiming that Jesus pre-existed creation, Paul puts Jesus into the most sacred Jewish confession but still distinguishes the Father and the Son from pagan polytheism. N. T. Wright notes, "From here on, we must say that if Trinitarian theology had not existed, it would be necessary to invent it."

Moreover, the Spirit of God, who is within the identity of the one God in the Old Testament, reappears in the New, prophesying the coming of the Messiah, impregnating Mary, filling Jesus in His Baptism, empowering Him for His Kingdom ministry and filling the Church (rather than the Temple) with His power, glory and presence at Pentecost.

So the New Testament contains the raw materials for the doctrine of the Trinity. For example, in the Great Commission, the Risen Lord commands his disciples to baptize in "the name (singular – the name expresses identity) of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." And with this raw material, the church fathers shaped the doctrine that God is Tri-une in His very being. From all eternity He is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

What Sort Of Salvation? But what does the doctrine of the Trinity mean for us today as Christians? The Bible is the great love story of God the Creator who is also King, intervening in His fallen creation to restore it to Himself. As King, He binds Himself to Israel in an eternal covenant, promising to bless her and the nations through her. "Blessing" is a salvation word. While God sends charismatic leaders to rescue his people (beginning with Moses), His ultimate promise is that He Himself will come and accomplish salvation. This He does in His Son. So it is crucial that the Son is part of the identity of the one God. If not, then it isn't God who comes and it isn't God who saves us.

The crucified Jesus, dying for the sins of the world, is not an innocent third party upon whom a wrathful God pours His judgment. The crucified Jesus is God Himself, in His Son, bearing away His own penalty for sin in Himself. Herein is God's love, pure and free. To place this on ourselves as human accomplishment is to pierce the gospel at its heart and turn God into something other than He is. We steal the glory from God and take it for ourselves. The old ruse of the Garden of Eden is back, "You shall be like God." But because of the Trinity, salvation is not our work. It's God's sheer grace.

An Empowering Spirit When the Spirit of God enters, it is God Himself who takes up His residence in us. The Spirit is part of the one God's identity, and God Himself lives in us, transforming us and empowering us and making us like his Son. Just as He filled the Jerusalem temple with His Glory, so He fills us with His Glory. Supporting evidence for the fact that the Spirit is part of God's identity is Jesus' promise to His followers of "another Counselor" when He departs physically from them (John 14:16). The Spirit can take His place and complete His work in them.

The Case For Community If the one God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit from all eternity, then to worship Him in spirit and in truth, we must worship Him in the fullness of His self-revelation. Since we become like what we worship, as we worship the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, our churches will be conformed to Him and experience the full life of the triune God in our midst. More and more, we will reflect His eternal community in our communal life.

Living in community is not optional. Because God is Trinity, He always lives in community and calls us into community with Himself and with each other. We do not accept Christ and then join the church. When we are joined to Christ, the Spirit joins us to the church. Our faith is personal but not individualistic. We live with and for each other. And through our worship, God draws us into community with Himself (represented by our "I" songs) and with each other (represented by our "We" songs). Paul makes the startling statement that we are to address each other with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs as we make music in our hearts to the Lord. Worship is relational and communal to the core.

The Meaning Of Worship Remember, worship leaders have a powerful role in moulding the faith as well as the experience of the church. They need both to honor and experience God's Trinitarian fullness more and more. For it is our joy and calling in the Vineyard to be faithful to the truth of God as he is self-revealed. Exclusive focus on the Creator will weaken the church; we need to worship and adore the Redeemer. But focus on the Creator and Redeemer to the exclusion of the Sanctifier will also weaken the church. It is the Spirit who brings New Birth, empowering, revival, gifting and community – conformity to Christ. Awed by His majesty, allured by His love and transformed by His Spirit, we will become the holy people God has called us to be. Sharing His character, we will share intimate fellowship together with Him as he repopulates this planet with images of Himself.

The Sound Of Your Life

Character And The Worship Leader

BY DAN WILT

Many times I have had both the privilege, and the challenge, of sharing with worship leaders on the topics of integrity and godly character as primary hallmarks of an effective worship leader. I often prompt the discussion by asking a leading question, such as "What is the strongest, and most powerful instrument you lead with as a worship leader?" The responses are as varied as the musical preferences in the room. "My voice." "My guitar." "My keyboard." "My drums." (yes, many worship leaders are pulling it off!) Someone inevitably speaks up, in a commonly shy manner, and gives the answer behind the answers: "My life." All heads in the room nod in agreement as we strike a profound spiritual chord together.

The Sound Of Your Life Biblically and experientially, we understand that a powerful life is the most permeating, inspiring, transforming and impacting leadership instrument the Lord wields in His hand. Put another way, your life and mine are God's "worship leading instruments" of choice – especially when they make a "sound" that is pleasing to Him.

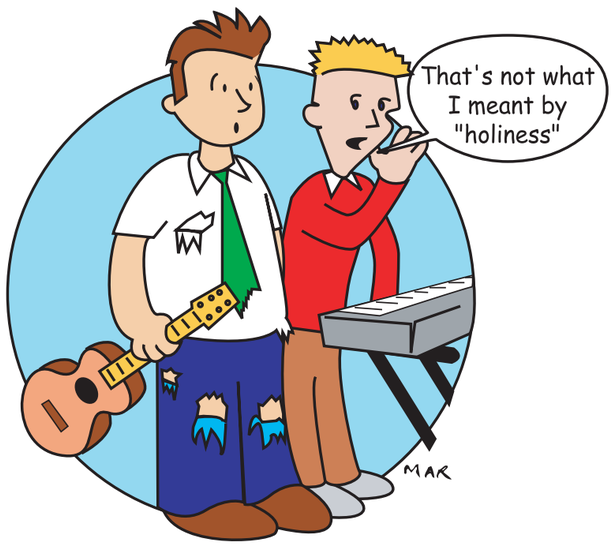
The lasting quality of our worship leadership depends on the lasting quality of our character.

Our musical gifts notwithstanding, God seems intent on finding worship leaders (of any age, I might add) marked by a richness of spiritual tone – tone derived from private intimacy with Jesus, personal integrity with others, public commitment to Kingdom activity and purified motives within. Such virtues are simply given musical voice through the instruments with which we lead.

A musician searching for a beautiful instrument listens for depth, richness and sustain. God searches for beautiful hearts – deep, rich and sustaining — to lead His people in worship.

The Frequencies Of The Heart Every worship leader must eventually embrace that a great guitar sound thick with tone does not hold a candle to a great life thick with spiritual authority. That elusive "sound" we as worship leaders are endlessly looking for starts in the frequencies of the heart.

To deepen the analogy, the sound of the heart is made up of notes, rhythms and lyrics which are primarily forged in the deep fire of our daily choices through joy and suffering. We call the music of our heart our "character." Horace Mann once said, "Reputation is what men and women think of us. Character is what God and the angels know of us." Your character is the hidden you, the music you live by, the postures of your heart with which you approach life.



In Galatians 5:22-23, we read about the fruits of the Spirit. For our application, we will call them the "sounds of the Spirit." Essentially, the "sound" we seek to manifest is the character of Jesus, meant to be alive and expressed through men, women and children filled with His Spirit. Hear how Eugene Peterson translates this important passage for us:

"But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard – things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely."[1]

We will briefly look at three areas of character, or sounds of the Spirit, that should resonate from every worship leader's life:

1) The Sound Of Holiness
Holiness is pure living. Holiness is manifest in a heart that chooses innocence and honesty in the face of a world bent on self-indulgence. The sound of holiness is heard from a heart postured to honor God at all costs by following His ways, living honestly, openly and accountably to God and others, convinced that by those means God empowers us to live "blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation" (Phil. 2:15).

2) The Sound Of Faithfulness
Faithfulness is committed living. Faithfulness is manifest in a heart that keeps its commitments vibrant to God, and to people. The sound of faithfulness is heard from a heart that is involved in "loyal commitments": showing up on time, doing tasks thoroughly and being consistent with our promises. We expect God to then, according to His promises, show Himself to be faithful and dependable to us (2 Sam. 22:26).

3) The Sound Of Integrity
Integrity is consistent living. Integrity is manifest in a heart that lives a public life consistent with our private beliefs. The sound of integrity is heard from a heart that is righteous in both their hidden, and overt, dealings. Integrity is about "truth in the inmost places" (Psalm 51:6) ruling and reigning in our motives and attitudes, making us men and women of our word.

The Character Of The Worship Leader John Wimber continually reminded Vineyard worship leaders throughout the years, "We value character above gifting." Christ-like character is central to the worship leader's calling because our heart attitudes, on such a visible leadership platform, eventually influence every member of the congregation or group that we lead. We disciple not just by "how we are" as a worship leader, but more concretely by "who we are" as a worship leader. The audible music and notes are not the only song we are singing.

A few years ago, a man walked up to me after a worship set, and paid me one of the highest compliments I've ever received. "Dan, your guitar was not played nearly as beautifully as your heart was this morning. Your heart led me to the throne of God." Humbled as I was, I have never forgotten that my authority to lead people in worship in public life is rooted in my secret life with God.

The lasting quality of our worship leadership depends on the lasting quality of our internal character.

Used By God Every worship leader I know hungers to be "used by God" in some profound way. Yet, over the years I have witnessed many life battles won and lost on the ground of the "hidden issues" in a worship leader's lifestyle. Even those with a tremendous desire to be "used by God" have ended being "used by" and "used up by" the enemy of our souls.

If we want more of God's power to work through us, we must first allow His purpose to be worked in us. Our interior foundations must be able to bear the weight of our spiritual responsibilities. True character is never conferred in a momentary miracle; true character is purchased over time. Godly character is formed in us, over time and experience – there are no shortcuts or power encounters that remove those two elements.

Lead With The Sound Of Your Life Lead worship from the foundation of a life that, both privately and publicly, resounds with love, obedience and honor toward Jesus. Your strongest leadership instrument will become the sound of your life, and your worship leadership will manifest the favor and strength that only God can give.

1 Peterson, *The Message* (NavPress Publishing Group, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000), p. 472.



DAN WILT

Dan is the worship development coordinator for the Association of Vineyard Churches Canada, and the global worship resource coordinator for Vineyard Music Global. He and his wife Anita, along with their three children, attend the Cambridge Vineyard in Ontario, Canada.

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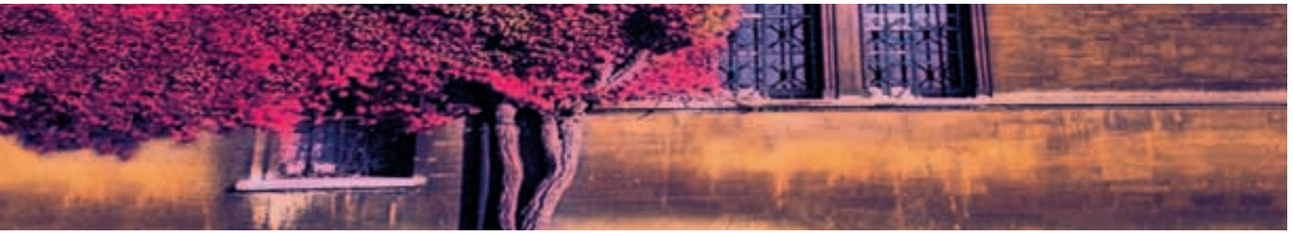
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Any Given Sunday

Worship at the Cherwell Vineyard, Oxford.

10:30. Sunday morning. Milham Ford School, Oxford. A classic school hall, theatre stage, plastic chairs and a wooden floor, scuffed by gym markings. On stage is a worship band - one guitarist, a bass player and a female vocalist. At the front are two loud speakers and a projection screen to the left. Filling the hall are about 200 people of all ages and from many different walks of life. The adults are catching up on the week. The children are running around excitedly. At the back, bleary-eyed latecomers grab free coffee and doughnuts. Then the worship leader begins the first song. Within seconds the whole congregation stands up, faces forward and joins in the worship. Some people raise their hands whilst others keep them in their pockets. Some people shut their eyes – others look to the projection screen for the words.

BY JAMES MUMFORD



Looking Forward To Worship This is the Cherwell Vineyard and this is what the people there do on any given Sunday of the year – they come together to worship God. The service begins with music because, as the senior pastor Andrew Myatt explains, "The songs are not just a warm-up. Worship is the end in itself." Ever since he and his wife, Mandy, planted the Cherwell Vineyard almost nine years ago they've wanted worship to be one of the church's highest values. You can tell straight away that this is true. Worship is the priority. The half hour devoted to it is, as one member pointed out, "Uninterrupted." The setup is designed to make it as easy as possible for people to enter into worship - there is little to distract you from praising God. The church is just trying to express truth about Jesus in the common language of the day. That may be by turning pub drinking songs into hymns (as Charles Wesley did) or rock 'n' roll music, or whatever.

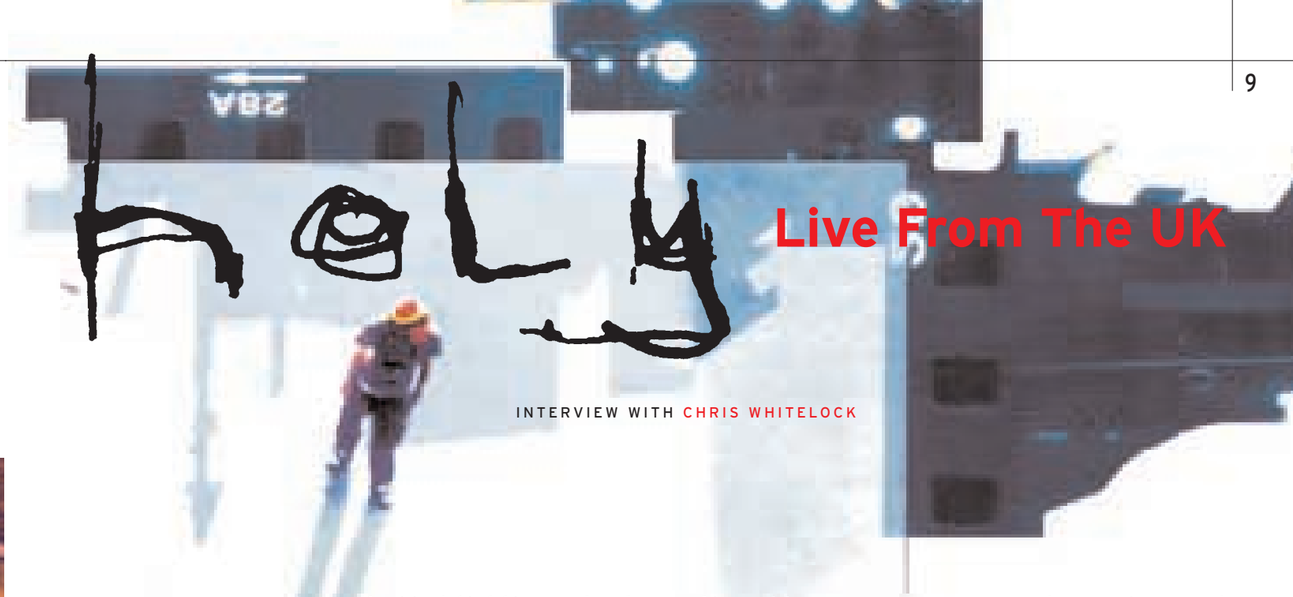
Since it's a priority, the church spends a lot of time training people in worship. "You reap what you sow," Andrew argues. "That's why we've spent so much time teaching people who lead on Sundays and at weekly house-groups what it means to worship God. Often people have expectations about worship that are more cultural than biblical. For example, we look for character and commitment rather than gifting in our worship leaders. While we do want to improve our musicianship, at the end of the day we want worship leaders, not performers."

"We don't worship because we feel like it. We worship because He's worth it. Worship is about the present and the future. It's both thanksgiving and petition. Right now, we are telling God we love Him. But we're also asking Him about the future – we're asking Him to hear our prayers, to help us and to change us," says Brenton Brown, worship leader of the church. Consequently, the church doesn't make you pretend that everything's okay if it isn't. You don't have to sing songs totally disconnected from your daily life. God visits His people corporately.

Taking Church To The People The Cherwell Vineyard believes very strongly in taking worship outside the church. "We've always wanted to worship where people are at," Brenton explains. "And if people aren't coming to church, that means taking church to them." Last year, after English weather had ended the band's attempt at holding an outdoors worship service, Brenton and Andrew rang the owner of a local nightclub. They asked him if they could hold a worship service there on a Sunday evening. Not only did he agree, he said they could have the place for free! So the evening was set, the event was named "The Gathering" and flyers were distributed all around the city. At the first event they had just over 100 people; people who had no idea about God. Some just observed from the back, unsure what to make of it all. The barstaff watched, fascinated, from a safe distance. Others were really open, even singing and dancing. Brenton said, "The worship was freer than at the worship conference we'd just had." Oxford is a city in which intellectualism – the worship of the mind – has deep roots.

"I have this one picture in my mind," Brenton recalls, "of one person who came. He was holding a pint of lager in one hand. The other was lifted in worship." Another guy had earlier found in his pocket a Gathering flyer, which he'd completely forgotten about. He decided to go and was astonished by what he called "a soupy texture in the room." Later he realized it was the presence of God. "That's the wonder of worship," Brenton concludes, "and people don't know how good it is. That's why it's part of our job as worship leaders to sing in nightclubs, streets, pubs and other public places. It's about taking the love of God to the people and giving them a chance to taste and see that the Lord is good."

Used by kind permission from *Equipped* magazine, a publication of Vineyard Churches UK.



holy

Live From The UK

INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS WHITELOCK

IW: *What was the vision behind this album?*
Chris: The vision of *Holy* was to capture and record songs that were written predominantly by sub-25-year-olds. To that end, 11 out of 14 tracks are written and performed by under 25-year-olds. As usual, we wanted to ensure that the songs were accessible for people to worship to and I think we have succeeded in doing that. We also concentrated on ensuring that the songs were theologically sound and passed them all through Dr. Don Williams, a theologian, to check for that. And finally, in terms of style, we wanted to push the envelope more toward the younger end of the market. However, remarkably, I think it actually spans a wide generational range - much as *Hungry* succeeded in doing.

IW: *Describe the recording night.*
Chris: The recording night was amazing. We had about 250 people attend (the venue only holds 300) which was really cool as it provided a wonderfully intimate atmosphere. For past recordings we've had upwards of 1000 people attend which has been great. However, for this project we wanted to have more of a 'club' venue and so we decided to go for a venue that seated 300. God really ministered powerfully to people on the night which was wonderful and is something we have tried to retain on the album.

IW: *There's an interesting range of songs and styles on this album.*
Chris: Yes! The album is all-at-once thought provoking, celebratory, passionate, fun and interesting. There are fast songs, slow songs and mid-tempo songs. We held on to our core values of making the songs accessible, intimate and authentic. There is a danger that in our quest to produce intimate worship songs we can tend toward being too inward-looking. I think we've got a healthy balance here.

IW: *The graphics are interesting (and very cool!). Why did you title it Holy and how did you arrive at this illustration?*
Chris: So far with our titles we've tended toward using the strongest song on the album. This has worked well. In this case it was actually very difficult to decide which was the strongest song but "Holy" is probably the one that will be used most widely. However, we then thought, "How do you illustrate such a title?" As the producers and I talked with the designer we felt we wanted to create some sort of tension between the purity of the word and the reality of everyday life. We wanted to illustrate the connection between us and God that comes through His mercy and the fact that He became man to free us and bring us into a place of holiness. So, we created that tension and connection by writing the word "Holy" in a rough, organic way and overlaying it onto a very ordinary, everyday image as seen through a street CCTV camera. And, instead of looking through the lens of a guided missile on its way to destroy, we're looking through God's lens – He loves this man! It brings to mind the Damascus road conversion seconds before God's power and holiness overcame Saul! I could go on...

IW: *Are there any newcomers on this project?*
Chris: Yes. For every project we do we look to incorporate some new talent. It's all part and parcel of our remit to train and equip and we've got a great bunch of experienced musos and worship leaders whose hearts are to bless and encourage others. Brenton Brown & Nigel Hemming (who co-produced this album) are fine examples of people who were identified and recruited for the first project we did (*Come Now Is The Time;* a.k.a. *Winds Of Worship® #12*) in 1998 and were encouraged and trained to the point where they're now excellent producers. They are now doing the same to the "new" talent on this project.

IW: *Finally, you are developing a "micro-site" for Holy. What is that?*
Chris: It's basically a mini-Web site on which we'll feature information specific to this album. It can either be accessed directly www.vineyardmusic.com/holy or via our global site www.vineyardmusic.com.

CHRIS WHITELOCK

Chris is the general manager of Vineyard Music UK and international development coordinator. He lives in Hull, England with his wife Janie and their two boys, Harry & Jack. They worship at the Hull Vineyard where they run a kinship group for students and Chris helps lead worship. Harry & Jack lead them in a merry dance!

Team Player Or Independent Artist?

Worship Leader:



BY ANDY PARK

My generation is famous for its resistance to authority. The culture of drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll from the '60s and '70s was all about freedom from authority. My peers highly valued their right to independence and "doing your own thing." Being able to "make your own way in life" is respected by our culture. I feel pulled away from being a committed churchman by all these influences. When you add to all of that the non-conformist artistic mindset and the rebellion that is in the heart of every son and daughter of Adam, you have a potential problem!

Independence and self-determination are high values for the modernist and post-modernist. I want to make my own plans and control my own destiny. But since I'm just one member of an integrated community, and I'm responsible to the other members, I can't make all the rules and always get my own way. I enjoy lots of artistic freedom in leading people and leading worship, and my pastors are happy to give me lots of freedom. But it's all within the greater context of *serving* in the church. I'm part of a body of people. Though my personality tendency is to be solitary and self-sufficient, I am constrained by my connection to the greater whole.

If we import the value of self-determination from the modern age into Christianity, it's like oil on water – it doesn't mix. In the spirit of an entrepreneur, I would use every opportunity to promote myself and my music. But is that what worship is all about? Not according to the Bible. As far as I can see, worship is about surrender – giving yourself as a living sacrifice.

The strange and challenging thing about worship leading is that we are using a musical model from our culture, but we are turning it upside down. In any secular concert, the guitar-playing, band-leading vocalist is *the focal point*. It's all about the skill, cleverness and magnetism of the performer. The performer is there to further their reputation, to demonstrate their prowess, to impress people.

In worship leading, we might be doing a popular form of music, but we come for the purpose of furthering the reputation of Jesus. We come to show off *His* exploits, to reveal *His* personality, to make people fall in love with *Him*.

In his book *Music, The Brain And Ecstasy*, Robert Jourdain describes the personality profile of the great composers of history. "Studies of the great classical composers show the same kinds of personality profile as all kinds of creative people. They show strong independence in every respect, tending to be solitary and socially reserved, shunning group activities and establishing few close friendships."[I]

Shades of these artistic traits can be seen in Charles Wesley, the preacher and hymn-writer. "What are we to make of his paradoxical nature – patient yet impulsive; retiring, yet resolute; frail, yet a fighter; controversial and hot-tempered, yet gentle and forbearing; otherworldly, yet intensely human; introspective, yet exhilarating; a rigid conformist, yet a bold pioneer..."[II] Isaac Watts, the outstanding hymn-writer, "was fond of studious retirement, and so devoted to his books, that in the early part of his career he seldom went out."[III]

My generation, the "baby-boomers," has an inbred desire for self-determination. We don't like it when people tell us what to do. Many of my peers have no sense of community or social obligation – all they're committed to is themselves. In 1979, sociologist Robert Bellah surveyed a couple hundred average, middle class Americans. "Many had no sense of community or social obligation. They saw the world as a fragmented place of choice and freedom that yielded little meaning or comfort. They even seemed to have lost the language to express any kind of commitment to anything - church, family or community – other than themselves."[IV]

Nevertheless, nowadays it's very common to find people who love God but have no felt need for the church. This flies in the face of the New Testament definition of church. The New Testament is filled with references to the community of believers – the saints in Christ Jesus, the people of God, the family of God, etc. The believers are always together – eating together, worshiping together, sharing their possessions, encouraging one another. The early church father, Cyprian (250 A.D.), strongly stated: "You cannot have God for your Father if you have not the church for your mother!"[V]

I know several people who have quit going to church because they've had disagreements and disappointments in church relationships. Ironically, the process of working through those misunderstandings is the *only way* to maturity. It's impossible to mature in Christ apart from being joined to the church.

Rodney Clapp, author of *The Church As Culture In A Post Modern Society*, describes "freelance" Christianity as a dangerous rejection of the body in which Christ dwells. The view that church is optional "misconstrues human personhood as fundamentally atomistic (rather than social) and the church as a collection of individuals- rather than as a corporate body whose members have identity and purpose by being part of a church."

Unless I'm working and serving in the church, I won't grow. The only way I can mature is to serve others. "As each part [of the body of Christ] does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love."

Unless I'm worshiping God, hearing Bible teaching and praying with others, I stagnate in my faith. When I attend a prayer meeting, I'm impacted by the zeal of other Christians as they intercede for the lost and cry out for more of God. My indifference is confronted as I hear their passion for the Lord and His work. My enthusiasm is like water in a leaky bucket – unless I keep filling up the bucket with more water, it all drains out. I find that water in fellowship with other Christians. The way I gain compassion for the poor and the lost is by hanging out with people who have that kind of heart.

If I spend too much time away from the vitality of Jesus' body, I become narrow sighted, focused on my own problems. I lose vision for God's kingdom. I am tempted to blend in with my culture rather than being about my Father's business. I am tempted to rationalize my indifference and make compromises.

I relate to John Piper's statement – "I wake up carnal every morning. I have to get saved all over again everyday."[VI] How do I do that? I push myself into prayer, worship, service and fellowship with Christians. I don't do it because I always feel like doing it. I do it because it's the only right choice. Sometimes I don't feel like going to leadership meetings, but I do it because it's the only way I can play my part on the team.

John Wimber made it clear that he was interested in raising up pastors who could lead worship, not specialists in worship leading who had no pastoral heart. In order to cooperate with the direction of the church, be sensitive to people's needs and benefit from the counsel of other leaders, I have to join hands with the other pastors.

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I Robert Jourdain, *Music, The Brain And Ecstasy*, Avon Books, Inc., 1350 Avenue of the Americas, N.Y., N.Y. 10019, page 191.
II Frederick C. Gill, *Charles Wesley, The First Methodist*, published by Ebenezer Baylis and Son, LTD., The Trinity Press, London, England, 1964.
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V Cyprian, On The Unity Of The Church, AD 250
VI quoted from a message by John Piper given in Parksville, British Columbia in 1999.

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The Values Of A Worship Leader

BY THE LATE JOHN WIMBER

Values affect what we think and, consequently, what we do. Our values are an intrinsic part of us, although we seldom think about them in a conscious fashion. They determine the ideas, principles and concepts a person or group can accept, assimilate, remember and transmit. They can be fallible and must be constantly revised and reviewed in the light of Scripture.

According to this definition, values play a critical role in the life of a church. Therefore, pastors need to articulate their congregation's values. This is an attempt to define the values that give our congregation its distinct mission and culture at this time.

This document is written for pastors and lay leaders with several goals:

- To help us understand and articulate our values.
- To provide a grid for evaluating the goals and effectiveness of our areas of ministry.
- To encourage us in pursuing ministries that conform to our values.

Values tend to cluster into several categories that determine our approach to and motivation for our priorities. Our values are best expressed by the following:

Pursuers Of God The depth of God's relationship with us is inexhaustible (Ps. 41:1; 1 Cor. 2:6ff; Phil. 3:8-10). Therefore, we seek Him and wait expectantly for His presence in all that we do (John 4:34; 5:19-20).

The Bible The Bible is our final authority over opinions, dreams, revelations, visions and any other authoritative source that we may look to for direction. At our core we are evangelical Christians. Our approach to life and ministry should be shaped by the counsel Scripture gives us (2Tim. 3:16-17).

Unity Our brothers and sisters are not our enemies. Therefore we relate to one another honorably, seeking to preserve the bond of peace. We will love what Jesus loves: the whole church. This means we will love those in our local congregation, those in the Association of Vineyard Churches and Christians across denominational lines (Eph. 4:3-6).

Compassion And Mercy We desire to accept into our fellowship any sincere believer who is attempting to walk in obedience to God, is repentant of his or her sins and is in submission to the authority of the church. God's mercy always triumphs over judgment (James 2:13; John 8:1-11).

Equipping God calls and enables believers to express the talents, gifts and ministries that He has set aside for them. The orientation of all ministry is toward the integration of biblical truth into everyday living that impacts out community and beyond—not limited to individual improvement or self-fulfillment (Eph. 4:11-13).

Relationship Caring for people is our highest priority after submission to God, because the purpose of the cross was the redemption of men and women. To the best of our ability we will treat each person with respect, dignity and loving patience—always seeking what is best for his or her life and growth (Rom. 12:9-13; 1 Cor. 13:4-9; Col. 3:12-14).

Family We deeply value the building up of families and believe in the priority of children, while at the same time embracing and valuing all adult believers who identify with out church family (Matt. 18:1-10; Col. 3:12-15).

Generosity We are stewards of God's gifts and resources (Matt. 10:8, 39; 13:45-46). This means that when God directs, we will be willing to give away what we have, to risk the security of current success in order to advance the kingdom on earth in greater ways. We do not own our ministries, so they are not ours to keep. We "give to get to give."

Simplicity We want to be "naturally supernatural," avoiding behavior that draws attention away from God and to ourselves. Simplicity affects our worship style, how we pray for the sick and minister to the poor, carry out discipleship, teach the Bible and so on (1 Cor. 2:2-5; James 3:13; 1 Thess. 4:11-12).

Risk-taking We are willing to let people make mistakes as they grow in their gifting. We know that gifting develops in an environment of trial-and-error, so we are willing to be patient with people's weaknesses and failures while they learn (John 21:15-19; Gal. 5:22-3).

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Playing The Keyboard In Worship

BY NIGEL HEMMING

In the heady world of rock'n'roll there seems little room for keyboard megastars. If a band has a keyboard player, they are usually destined for the sidelines, unable to dance around with the guitarists or pose like the drummers. Although they rarely make "superstar" status, they are usually an integral part of the band's overall sound, and therefore, in their own way, essential. The role of the keyboard player in a worship band can range from a rhythmic piano style to a more peripheral synth part and anything in between. Keeping up with these diverse styles can certainly be a challenge, and how you cope with it will probably depend on the way in which you learned your music technique.

Most piano players learned by the classical route and had music lessons from an early age. If that's you, then regardless of the level you reached, this basic grounding in technique and music theory will be a major help as you approach new songs and styles. You'll probably be able to sight-read a song to some measure, which can be really useful if you're called on to accompany at short notice. Most pianists find that their biggest problem is playing alongside drummers and guitarists who use a completely different musical language. Instead of bars and beats, they talk about groove and feel, and they seem to be playing rhythmic patterns which aren't written down anywhere. They use words and guitar chords which have little or no reference to printed music. It's easy to see how classically trained pianists can feel out of place in a worship band, but don't worry, all is not lost!

Here, hopefully are some suggestions to help you improve your general keyboard style, including tips on getting to grips with rhythmic playing:

Let The Music Be Your Servant If you're used to written music, practice using just the chord sheets, and try learning the songs off by heart. As you get used to forming the chords, try exploring different inversions so that your hands don't have to jump around. Make sure that your top notes never go above the melody line so as not to detract from it, and try experimenting with accompanying the melody in different ways.

Learn To Play Along With The Groove The easiest way I've discovered to learn to play with the groove is to practice with a drum machine. The sort you get on a home keyboard is ideal. Set up the groove then listen very carefully to what the bass drum and snare drum do. Try matching them on the keyboard with your left hand following the bass drum and your right hand following the snare. It's probably easier to start with a simple song that has minimal chord changes (e.g. "Come Now Is The Time To Worship" or "Blessed Be The Name Of The Lord"). As you become more confident with playing along with the drum machine, try varying the tempo or changing the groove. (The bass/snare pattern will be different for different grooves). As you progress you'll be able to get some rhythmic variation within each song. Don't take it too fast and don't expect miracles overnight. Having established your part in the music by following the drummer's rhythm, watch that you don't play too heavy on the left hand or you'll frustrate the bass player, and also be careful that your mid range parts don't clash with the rhythm of the acoustic guitar. It can be a minefield!

Get Some Lessons If you're more of a self taught player, you'll probably find it much easier to improvise and fit in with the rhythm section of the band. If anything, you will struggle with technique, timing and sight reading, and you may be the sort of person that needs plenty of time to get to grips with a new song before you can actually play it through with the band. Aim to improve your skills by finding someone who can teach you the basics of music theory without going into too much unnecessary detail. In addition, it might help to learn some scales and practice at different speeds using a metronome.

Spend Time With Your Equipment It's essential to get to know how your gear works and the kinds of sounds you can make. If you're mainly a piano player, invest in a digital piano with weighted keys, and don't be afraid to experiment with the electric piano sounds as well as acoustic ones. If you can afford it, a synth or sound module can add extra depth to your sound (connected via midi) with strings or pad sounds. Be careful to vary the sounds through a worship set so it's not all the same, and depending on your situation, try sometimes just holding long chords and letting the guitars or percussion take the rhythm. If you're more of a synth player, look for a good all round model with a range of organs, pads, accordions, strings and choir sounds, and find ways to use them sparingly for color and sparkle.

Lastly, Learn To Exercise Restraint Remember that the keyboard has a wide frequency range and the temptation to fill up all the musical space can be great. Remember that as a band, the goal is one and therefore in a band of five players, your part should make up one fifth. It helps to take plenty of time to practice together, listening carefully to the overall sound, even going so far as to tape the rehearsal for scrutiny later. It takes determination, as well as an investment of time and energy to get to grips with some of these techniques, but remember that improving your technical skill will allow you a much greater degree of spontaneity and freedom in your own worship. Go for it!



NIGEL HEMMING

Nigel is on staff at South Birmingham Vineyard. In addition he works as a freelence musician, producer and teacher.

A Beginner's Guide To Song Selection

BY LARRY LEVY



One of the most basic questions we ask as worship leaders is "What songs should I do?" Whether you are preparing for leading worship at a home group of nine people for the first time or leading 500 people in a conference setting, or at your Sunday morning service for the tenth week in a row, the question doesn't go away. I believe song selection is to the worship event what Scripture is to preaching and teaching. It's not everything, but it is the main "substance" from which we build other elements.

Worship leading is often like driving a car. When you first start, everything seems mechanical: Adjust your mirrors...turn the key...put your foot on the brake as you put it in drive...try not to run over your mother...keep your hands at 10 and 2 o'clock...use your signal lights.... After a few years of driving you do these things without thinking about them. In the same way, experienced worship leaders are processing many different things quickly as they are preparing for worship and actually leading worship.

Hopefully this article will help many of you who are beginning to lead worship, as well as encourage those of you who have been leading for a while, to think on the song selection process.

Here are some questions to ask of yourself:

What Is The Nature Of The Worship Event?

Is it a small group who is going to worship for the first time? A group of worship "animals" where you have to beg them to stop? An evangelistic event outdoors? A conference celebration time? A regular Sunday morning with the theme of repentance? Is it for children, youth, adult or mixed?

The event will be one factor in your song selection. When we did community barbecue and worship parties on our land one summer we used some familiar secular songs that went over really well and gave the people, many who were unchurched, something to identify with. One was a Great Big Sea song entitled "Ordinary Day." The song went over big, and it may have been our most anointed song. It fit the context well.

Song selection is to the worship event what Scripture is to preaching and teaching.

Some songs are better suited for small groups, and some for larger groups (I bet you've all found that out, at times painfully). You never knew that song was so high until you did it with a group of seven: five who could not sing, and the other two who just left to go to the washroom. When I led worship in jail, the guys loved the hymns, which gave them a connection to their childhood and a longing for the God they had once encountered.

What Is God Doing In The Group?

Congregations go through different seasons, and it's wonderful when the worship experience reflects that. What is the pastor speaking on? What's been happening in the lives of the people? What is the emphasis in your church right now? Right now in our church we are emphasizing fellowship and friendship with one another, and how transparency before God and one another is key to that being rich. In the midst of having communion last Sunday the worship leader did a song he had written about coming and dining at the Lord's table and not letting our "stuff" keep us away. It was powerful!

What Songs Have Really Touched Me?

Let's face it, it's hard to do songs that don't move you, excite you, inspire you or break you. You've heard a song and you know "I've got to do that song." It doesn't have to have the same effect on you every time you do it, but somewhere along the road it has grabbed your heart.

I'm not leading worship as often as I once did, but giving myself to helping and mentoring other worship leaders. Because of that, I get lots of opportunity to just worship and observe people worshiping in many different contexts. I encourage all regular worship leaders to do this. You learn and observe some things along the way. Along with asking yourself these questions, let me offer some suggestions in choosing songs:



LARRY LEVY

Larry pastors the Halifax Metro Vineyard in Nova Scotia, Canada and is the regional overseer for the Vineyards in Atlantic Canada. He loves spending time with his wife Karen and their three teenagers Chris, Andrea and Michelle. Their church is presently building a Family Ministry Centre with a cafe and ice cream parlor.

Some Quick Tips For Song Selection:

1. Choose some songs that declare the great themes of the Christian faith: The Glory, Love and Holiness of God. The Cross of Jesus. The Free Grace of God. The Kingdom of God Among Us. Intimacy in worship grows as we truly understand what kind of God we are expressing our love to.

2. Select primarily songs that are familiar to the people. If for example, you are doing six songs, you may have three that are really well-known, two that are fairly well-known and one that is new. There have never been so many worship songs around! There's a thick collection of old and new Vineyard songs. The British invasion of new worship songs continues. There are songs that come from writers in our congregations. I believe there's a rich reservoir of hymns that can be adapted to our style, that provide a needed connection to the historic church. Sadly, we won't be able to do them all!

3. Have some songs that are simple in lyrics and melody. Everything is constantly evolving, often moving from the simple to the complex, and then back to the simple. It's true in all music, and it's true in worship writing. People really need some simple songs where they don't have to be straining to read the next line from the overhead or lyric sheet, and their left brain can take a break. They are overloaded with information all week, and oh, the sweetness of a simple truth, in simple words, with a simple melody line.

4. Arrange your songs to "flow" together. Too many themes become confusing. Ascending key changes can help (i.e. C to D to G). Try going from one song to another at times without a musical break. Don't be afraid either of having a time of quiet and reflection before going on to the next song.

5. Choose a song that allows you do some spontaneous worship at the end. Some songs lend themselves to singing in tongues, having one of the singers singing over the congregation, leading the people in singing a short prophetic song back to the Father, etc. This becomes too "old hat" when you do it after every song, but at the right time it reinforces what we are doing. The goal is not to get through the songs. The goal is to lead the people in worship so that the Bride (the Church) and Groom (Jesus) kiss and embrace one another.

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