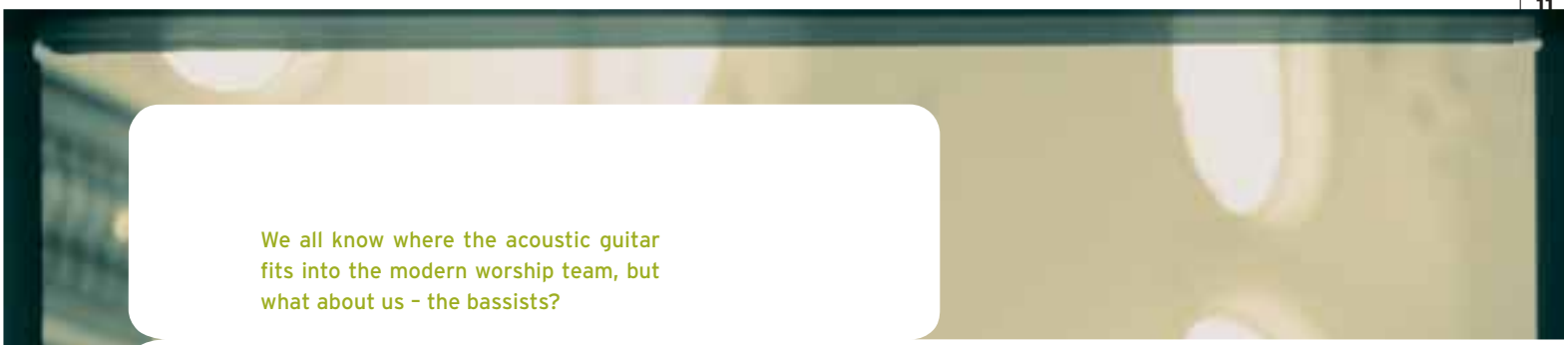


We all know where the acoustic guitar fits into the modern worship team, but what about us – the bassists?



The Place For Bass

PETER DAVYDUCK

With the ever-changing styles that are found in worship services, it can be a little confusing to know just what our job is. Should we all be like Abraham Laboriel, Sr. and chord up a storm, keep it rock steady like Jon Thatcher or do we funk it up like Fred Hammond? Even with these great bassists there is common ground that they stand on - and that's function.

The Power Of Listening How do you arrive at "functional" bass playing and find your place in worship settings? The answer is...listening, and lots of it! It starts by listening to the song you are about to play.

1) Rhythmic Listening
Rhythmically, is it an "up" song that will need a syncopated sixteenth-note line or is it a contemplative song that calls for whole notes? Most importantly though, what are the drums doing? As bassists, it's our job to be the bridge between the harmony and the rhythm of the song. Our fingers need to be working in tandem with the kick and snare drum. This alone will tighten up a loose sounding rhythm section.

2) Harmonic Listening
Harmonically, is the song needing root support or is there some room for a tasteful fill? This is perhaps the trickiest spot for most of us. Who wants to just play "root – 5 – root – 5..."? But to be clever for the sake of being clever is never a good option, no matter what the gig. This statement is not meant to stifle your creativity, but rather to encourage you to wait to play just what is needed. Remember that we're providing the backdrop for some great lyrics.

3) Leadership Listening
Of course with all of this listening, we have to listen to and follow the worship leader. Cultivate a good working relationship with them, and get to know what kinds of lines they like to hear.

Take Your Place, Bass Finally, don't forget to listen to where the Spirit is leading. Not only does the Holy Spirit guide us in our day-to-day life, but also in all of our artistic endeavors. Listening will help to serve the song, and in this setting, being a servant is what it's all about. Take your place, and serve with all your skill as a bassist.



Peter Davyduck is a freelance bassist and bass instructor in the Vancouver area. Along with playing for numerous recordings from Vineyard Music Canada, Peter also keeps a busy schedule playing with Graham Ord, Brian Doerksen and others. Peter and his wife Shelley attend the Friends Langley Vineyard in British Columbia, Canada.