The Development of Modern Worship Music Resources: Impacts of History, Style, Promotion & Technology

While this book deals directly with many specifics aspects of resources related to music and media, my reason for serving the church in worship resources is deeper than music and products. The goal of resourcing the church, for me, is to see it become captured with its holy passion once again – a fervent, world-changing love of God. It has always been my goal to resource the church, and thereby to see the church change the world.

If you are interested in understanding more about the development of worship music in the last 40 years and how that change impacted church music resources, read on. If you would rather get right to the reviews and research, feel free to jump immediately to page 59 and read about "The Rating System" that we use in our reviews and the reviews themselves, which follow thereafter.

In the journey of resourcing the local church, we can learn much by looking at the brief history of changes that have taken place in the last 40 years – a timeframe in which church music has changed considerably. These changes are important to review, since they directly impact the music, media and resources that have been in a constant state of flux for the last three decades. It is not enough for us to a simply recognize that church music style has been changing, but one must also recognize that the methodology for implementing church music has changed drastically for the leaders and musicians involved in the worship services in local churches.

If the change in style and methodologies in our musical liturgy were not enough transition, technological advancement would

guarantee change to our local churches and ministries. While cultural changes were impacting music and style in the church, science and technological changes also began to exert their influence on our local churches.

Lastly, the way in which songs would become popularized for local church use has changed drastically as well in the aforementioned three decades.

These four things: the historical change in music style (across the decades of the 60s through present); the change in the popular liturgical music tools and methodology; the technological changes in music and media; and the change in promotional channels for popularizing worship songs are the areas we will cover. These areas of change simultaneously impacted and transformed church worship music and media. Each of these is dealt with in this following section.

The view presented here is reflective of my particular expertise and fields of work – church music resourcing and technology. Through a series of circumstances (and, I believe, God's direction), I have had the unique opportunity to participate in a number of different professional fields that stretched across the gambit of change that was occurring in local church worship and music ministries.

As a music industry insider, local church worship leader, professional technologist and business leader, I had the privilege of having contact with literally tens of thousands of churches in the last 15 years.

A word of clarity – while the perspective presented (mine) is specifically attuned to what has happened in church worship and music ministries, it does not reflect a complete survey of all Christian church music or all traditions, and is most certainly

North American in focus. That said, since I have dealt with such a large number of churches for so many years, I believe this fairly represents the impact and changes that praise and worship music (later called just worship music) has made across the broader church in the last 3 decades.