

The New Worship *Barry Liesch*

Part One: Contemporary Worship Services

Chapter One: **Hymns or Choruses?**

Broader Options for Using Hymns and Choruses

- What can we do to keep hymn singing exciting?:
 - Sound a call for new hymns
 - Compose new tunes and rhythms to old texts
 - Encourage new musical arrangements of historic hymns that are in the public domain
- Hymns and Choruses Edify Differently:

Hymns

Enduring “stars”
Historic, classic
Lengthy, developed
Numerous thoughts
Transcendent
More intellectual
Appealing to mature believers

Full of content
Require attention to text
Lyrics dated
Rhythmically stiff

Medium for specific doctrines

Choruses

Momentary “fireworks”
Contemporary, popular
Short, repetitious
One general thought
Intimate
More emotional
Appealing to mature believers, children,
and the unchurched
Minimal content
Free attention to God
Vocally easy
Rhythmically freer

Medium for basic character of God

Chapter Three: **Free-Flowing Praise**

Psychological Underpinnings

- Praise normally precedes adoration
- People simply cannot come to church and plunge into adoration without preparation. People need time before they are ready to express true adoration and intimacy.

- Most people need to wake up and be energized by upbeat music early in the service – especially in early morning services.

Avoid Jerkiness

- If there is an abrupt change of tempo in beginning a new song, have the supporting group gradually emerge two or four measures after the leader.

Accumulation, not Repetition

- Accumulation: On each repetition, the insightful musician will do something subtle – change the rhythm, the chords, or the dynamics – to add life and a sense of unfolding newness.

Scriptural Support: Psalm 95

- Espinosa discerns scriptural support for the Five-Phase model in Psalm 95:
 - Invitation
 - Engagement
 - Exaltation
 - Adoration
 - Intimacy
- In choosing songs, be guided by the following principles and techniques:
 - Worship that has a goal and direction
 - Worship that respects the psychological dimension
 - Worship that reflects the character of God (transcendence, intimacy)
 - Lyrics that point to function (singing about and later to God)
 - Mixing of hymns and choruses (richness, variety)
 - Commitment to smooth transitions (linking both pieces and phases)
 - Commitment to avoiding distractions (not jumping around)
 - Use of common tempos
 - Use of common words
 - Use of common keys
 - Being prepared but still open to the leading of the Spirit

Chapter Five: Designing the Service

Thematic Worship Planning

- The following deficiencies may accompany free church worship:
 - Lack of planning
 - Too little time devoted to prayer
 - Insufficiently prominent Scripture readings(s)
 - Meager congregational response opportunities
- Consider this logical and sensible sequence of questions:
 - What is the *target* of the service?
 - What are the *givens*?
 - What *resources* are available?
 - What *sequence* of events would give the service a logical progression and be psychologically sound?
 - What *title* or *captions* would integrate the service?

Developing Procedures for Open Worship

- “Open worship” means worship where “rather than keeping strictly and exclusively to the preplanned program [note: there is preplanning], all the participants are seeking to be led creatively by the Spirit into a flow of events unique to that group of people at that point in time.
- In open worship we must “expect the unexpected” and “be free to alter or abandon the plans we have made.”
- Kendrick says, “If, however, a dangerous or hurtful thing has been said, then it should be refuted and corrected immediately or else the meeting may never recover.

Suggestions for Small- to Medium-Sized Churches

- A short paragraph on the central thrust of the sermon, prepared by the pastor two to three months in advance is invaluable.
- Disband the instrumental prelude. Have a five- to ten-minute preservice of praise choruses.
- Consider placing the announcements and welcome either at the beginning or end of the service but not in the middle.

- Remember, the main purpose of announcements is
 - To create a climate for ministry
 - To share concerns
 - To establish a “family” environment
- Introduce guest musicians during the welcome and announcements. This helps the flow.
- If your offertory time is not meaningful use that space for a vocal solo, a memorized congregational song, or for learning a new hymn or chorus.
- In general, discourage the practice of lengthy, flow-killing verbal introductions to special music.
- If you desire but can't seem to find enough time for free-flowing praise in your service, try:
 - Starting a praise preservice
 - Omitting the preoffertory prayer and merging your singing into the offering
 - Lengthening the service
 - Timing the parts of the service for a month

Chapter Six: **Creating Drama**

Enriching Worship with Slides

- If you plan to project the words of hymns or choruses on a screen each Sunday, my recommendation is *don't use overheads*. Invest in two projectors, and use slides with nature backgrounds instead.

Having Fun with Video Announcements

- These presentations spark interest – and they conserve time by avoiding rambling announcements.

Chapter Seven: **Inspiring the People's Singing**

- Leading worship requires both practical skills *and* spiritual perception.
- Graham Kendrick says, "It is impossible to draw rich worship from poverty-stricken hearts."

What can Pastors Do?

- Ensure that the people's song gets priority over individuals or group performers in worship services.
- Communicate the purposes of congregational song to all.
 - Serve to unite the congregation, link belief to feelings, express and inspire prayer, instill fundamental doctrines of the faith, and draw people into the presence of God.
- Invest on a variety of musical materials
- Nest new hymns and choruses
 - Work on and continue to review them for several weeks in a row until they take hold.
- Paraphrase hymns during prayers and in congregational readings.
 - Paraphrasing a hymn (just before singing it) is often more effective than just reading the stanzas.
- Arrange for testimonials
- Share hymn stories
- Encourage the purchase of hymn and chorus books and CDs for home use.
- Eliminate the wordy, intruding hymn announcements.
- Educate! Motivate! Model Spirituality!

What Can Musicians Do?

- Make learning hymns and choruses enjoyable.
 - Learning by listening
 - Learning by direct performance
 - Introduce no more than one new song at a time.

- Pitch Songs Intelligently
 - Find the right pitch for every congregational song
 - Allow for early service warm-up
 - Modulate to build forward momentum
 - Seek restful feelings during times of prayer and adoration
 - Avoid vocal fatigue
 - Obtain feedback and evaluate

- Get the men singing

- Employ a worship team to improve response

- Employ choreographed hand movements

- Here are a few more guidelines for encouraging the people's song:
 - Present a positive attitude.
 - Welcome or acknowledge God's presence.
 - Stand for praise, sit for adoration.
 - Conduct praise with your hand, adoration with your voice.
 - Don't close your eyes too much while leading – seek to be aware.
 - Keep a spirited tempo for praise songs
 - Perk up dragging hymns with a percussive or staccato keyboard touch.
 - Vary organ registrations and articulations.
 - Seek contrast: all singers or instrumentalists shouldn't perform all the time.
 - Practice the hymns during the choir rehearsal.
 - Have the choir stop and sing in the aisle with the people during processions.
 - Use the choir and congregation antiphonally.
 - Plan a "Hymn of the Month," a "Hymn Sunday," or "Hymn Festival." On "Hymn Sunday" (morning or evening), the

pastor can preach on the text of a hymn. A good series of messages can result.

- Keep records. Record the date each hymn or chorus was sung.

The Sound Booth and Church Acoustics

- Seek in your sound booth a person who technically knows the sound board and has a musical ear.

Body Language

- The body language that pastors display is important.
- Total attentiveness and delight in God's presence should be our constant attention.

Part Two: **Pressing Issues**

Chapter Eight:

Is Worship a Performance? The Concept

Kierkegaard and Performance

- In corporate worship:
 - The people should be the *performers* of worship
 - The pastor and worship leaders the *prompters* of worship
 - God, the *audience*
- Worship leaders bear the added complication of being both *performers* and *prompters* of worship.

The Unseen Prompter

- The prompter sits hidden from the audience.
- He cues every singer and knows the mind of the conductor, the weaknesses in each opera, and the individual stumbling blocks of each performer. If trouble comes he must unscramble it.
When his job is well done, it normally goes completely unnoticed by the audience.

Performance in Webster's Dictionary and the Bible

- Webster's refers to "showing off" – the negative aspect – more importantly it brings out an additional aspect that interests artists: skill.
- Musicians equate performance more with quality and excellence than "showing off."
- Numbers 4:26-27
- Exodus 35:30-33
- Numbers 3:7

Operational Definition of Performance

- To perform is...
to do
something complicated or difficult
with skill
in public
with a view toward serving or ministering

Chapter Nine:

Is Worship a Performance? The Implications

Television Has Upped the Demands on Quality

- When churches reach the 100- to 250-people range, *growth is strongly tied to excellence in performance.*
- Unchurched persons stepping into our churches are bored with worship. For many of them, worship is sheer monotony.
- People notice and appreciate quality.

Performance: A Function of Size

- Schaller says, "The biggest barrier to mission and outreach...is the tendency for the members of the middle-sized congregation to see it as a small church. This widespread tendency has three common results:
 1. First, and most serious, it creates a self-perpetuating low self-image of modest expectations based on a perception of inadequate resources and limited potential.
 2. It offers a limited range of programs, often experiences an excessively high turnover in ministerial leadership; it rarely

- challenges the members to reach their full potential, and it frequently is underorganized.
3. The combination of these first two tendencies has turned out to be the most effective single approach to turning the middle-sized congregation into a small church.

Self-Examination for True Service:

Self-Righteous Service

Comes from human effort
 Frantic, anxious
 Seeks titanic, impressive ministry (big crowds)
 Craves applause
 Concerned with results
 Concerned with reciprocation
 Picks *whom* to serve (the high and powerful)
 Serves when the “feeling” is there
 Uses technique for ego enhancing
Must perform (even if destructive!)
 Exposes frailties of other leaders
 Fractures community

True Service

Comes from divine urges
 Dependent on God
 Welcomes all opportunities (large or small crowds)
 Content with hiddenness
 Leaves the results with God
 Delights only in service
 Serves *enemies* as well as friends (servant of all)
 Serves when the “need” is there
 Submits technique to function
 Can withhold service, wait in silence
 Covers frailties of others
 Builds community

Chapter 11:

The Look of Music in Evangelism, Fellowship, and Worship

How Do These Modes Relate to Biblical Models of Worship?

- The local church’s mission is to incarnate all these modes “regularly, creatively, systematically, and carefully.”

Summary of Kerygma, Koinonia, and Leitourgia Music:

<u>Kerygma Music</u>	<u>Koinonia Music</u>	<u>Leitourgia Music</u>
Proclaims forgiveness through Jesus Christ	Communicates belonging	Celebrates God and his presence with us
Call to faith, discipleship	Call to love, care	Call to pray, praise
Confronts with message	Comforts with people	Praises and petitions God
Soloist, specialized group to congregation	Semi- or nonspecialized group to congregation	Both specialized group and congregation to God
Hierarchical relationship	Egalitarian relationship	Integrative relationship
Boldness	Warmth, togetherness	Desolation to jubilation
Formal format	Informal format	Formal format
People face forward	Half or full circle seating	Either
Monodirectional	Omnidirectional	Bidirectional
One to many	One to another	God to many, many to God
One sings, all listen	All can sing, all listen	All sing, God listens
Stylistically diverse (innovative)	Stylistically relevant (midway)	Stylistically familiar (learnable)
Low replicability by audience	Medium replicability	High replicability
Performer and listener separate	Performer and listener close	Performer and listener merged
Performer-orientated	Relationship-orientated	Participant-orientated
Singing "about" God	Singing to one another	Singing "to" God

Chapter Eleven:

Resolving Tensions over Musical Style: Peter

- The greatest revolution in the area of modern church, says Elmer Towns, is erupting in worship.
- The worship revolution is the source of the greatest controversy.
- "The music of the baby boomer generation [predominantly rock'n roll]," writes Doug Murren of Eastside Foursquare Church in Kirkland, Washington, "is likely to dominate the culture of our society well into the next century."

Why Is The Issue of Musical Style So Divisive?

- We all too often *think of our self-interests*. This reveals several truths about us:
 - We are entertainment orientated
 - We are not mature
 - We are not willing to die to self
 - We don't ask the primary questions: Is the mission of the church being well served by this music? Does it advance the kingdom?

- Music is a language.
 - We know some music languages better than others.
- Some music languages offend our aesthetic sensitivities.
- Often we equate or imbue music style with moral qualities and values.
- Music triggers associations, good and bad.
- Younger people can listen to more volume than those with “menopausal ears.”
- Music carries forward *traditions*.

Chapter Thirteen:
Resolving Tensions over Musical Style: Paul

Biblical Arguments for Variety

- I take the position that the Bible encourages Christians living today to be open to a variety of materials.
 - The created order displays immense variety.
 - The Psalm texts manifest enormous stylistic diversity.
 - The early church employed a variety of materials – psalms, hymns, and spirited songs.
 - The descended sheet reveals all foods are clean.
 - The Pentecost of languages indicates all languages can propagate the gospel.
 - The eating of meat offered to idols teaches that idolatry doesn’t spoil the goodness of the materials.

Give Your People Lead Time

- Don’t rush change. Give your people lead time to process.

Part Three: **Ministering With Others**

Chapter Fifteen: **Identifying and Attracting Church Musicians**

Your Favorite Style

- Your favorite style of music is likely to be the one that was most part of your life in *adolescence*. No matter how many years have passed, that music is your type of music, your music dialect, if you will.

How Do You Attract Good Musicians?

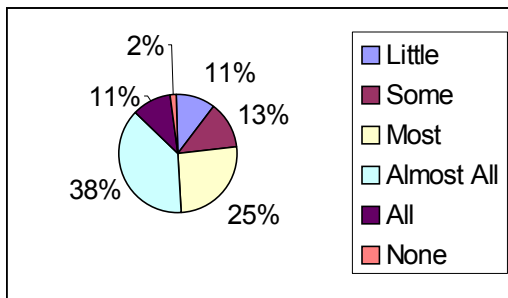
- Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
- Understand that one good musician attracts another.
- Indicate your commitment to minister pastoral care to musicians.
- Adequately compensate those who are professionally equipped.
- Search large churches for potential musicians.

Appendix 2:

Results of Poll on Church Music Styles

In 286 randomly selected American churches, the poll found that Protestant churches fall into three groups: traditional churches (more than 75% of the worship music is traditional), moderately traditional churches (50 to 74% is traditional), and nontraditional churches (less than 50% is traditional).

Portion of Sunday Morning Music Than is Traditional



How Often Instruments Are Used

