

# **The Various Arts of Worship**

## **Anchored in Worship series week #3**

### **by Bill Aumack**

Today we wrap up our series anchored in worship. Remember, on week one, Pastor talked about personal worship and how that's important for us. Last week we talked about communal worship, and we all come together in worship and the importance of that. And today we're going to talk about the various arts of worship, and we'll kind of wrap up the series with that. Next week, we have the president from the Southern California Conference coming, John Cress, so you'll want to be here. He's going to be talking about waves of grace. I don't know about you, but I like grace. So come next week, hear our newly elected president, John Cress, come and share with us.

All right, so before we talk about the parts of worship, I kind of wanted to talk real quickly about different types of worship styles, because sometimes we hear these words. You hear these words traditional and contemporary and modern and liturgical. And what do all these things mean? So real quick, let's just go through that. So we have kind of a common understanding. So let's start with liturgical. Liturgy literally means by the people. And so what kind of services is this? Services led by the people, and they do things like readings and praises, and sometimes there's music responses. This is the kind of worship style that you often see in an Anglican, Episcopalian, a Catholic, sometimes even Lutheran churches. So if you've ever been to one of those, you've experienced a liturgical service.

Then there's the traditional service. Now, traditional services base a lot of their stuff in hymns. And hymns, as you know, are often complex songs that are written with kind of deep theological concepts in them. And so we see things like choruses and choirs and sometimes even orchestras, the organ, as we express these musical beliefs in traditional. And almost every denomination that I know of has some of their churches doing a traditional worship service. You see them almost everywhere.

Then there's a blended service. Now, a blended service would be a service where we kind of take a little bit of this one, a little bit of that one, and we kind of mix it up. Often times, this is done with a traditional service and a more contemporary or modern service, and we mix and match pieces through there, often done to try and reach multiple demographics. We want the old people and the young people to feel happy, so we're trying to do both. Okay.

And then there's contemporary. And contemporary is, I think, the most misunderstood worship service, because contemporary music is really a style of music that was from about 1980 into the early 2000s. And as far as worship music goes, and this is music that's very Vertical in nature. We get songs like How Great is Our God? Right. It's very vertical in nature. It's Chris Tomlin. It's some of the early Hills song stuff. It's stuff like that. And this kind of deals with, like, who God is in this kind of worship service. But in truth, what we most usually mean when we say contemporary is whatever my church is doing is contemporary. Right. And so whether you're singing songs from 1970 or you're singing songs from 2007, we all call it contemporary. Okay.

And then there's modern. Now, the modern style is a style that attempts to be the most relevant to culture. And it often deals with topics like social justice, the brokenness that we have, how we can be transformed inside. Sometimes they even use music that was not Christian by label in their service because it makes a point that they're trying to bring out. One example might be a song something like Harry Chapin and Cats in the Cradle. And this song talks about the dad's broken relationship with his son. So they may use a song like that in the worship service.

And so those are some of the kind of the main types of worship services you hear and talk to a lot. And if you look at our worship service, we don't perfectly fit into any of those categories, by design. Okay. We've thought a lot about our worship services and the people that do these different styles of worship service, and none of them are right and none of them are wrong. They're just different. Okay. They've thought a lot about their worship service, too, and why they do things a certain way. We have kind of a blended service. We do worship music and we sing a hymn. That would be a blended service. Our sermons, we try to be very modern. We're trying to touch the heart of culture

around us. Right. It doesn't do any good for me to come in here and talk about what it was like to be a rancher in 1920. Because none of us are ranchers in 1920. Right. Anybody here alive from 1920 still? Just checking somebody could be. That's only 100 years. Okay. So, you know, we try to be contemporary, and we have kind of an informal style here. We don't do high church, where there's a lot of pomp and circumstance, and we see people doing things in a very rigid, certain way, a little more informal, try to be a little more accessible to everybody. And these are chosen very carefully, with much thought and deliberation and prayer.

And so I thought it'd be fun this morning to talk about Some of the parts of worship that we have, I put them up there. This is kind of what we would do in a typical week. We have our welcome, responsive reading. We have prayer, and there's prayer several times in the service, So I just put it kind of there once. We have our worship music, we have children's story, a hymn, message offering, and I put communion, because we don't do communion every week here, but we do communion regularly. Okay, so what I want to do is we're going to go through and vote what you think is the most important part of worship. Okay. We're going to just go through each one. Give me an amen when we get to the one that you think is most important, and we'll kind of see which amen is the loudest, and that's the most important one. Okay. Welcome and responsive reading. A couple. The person who did the welcome this morning. What about prayer? Is prayer the most important? Oh, that's a good one. What about the worship music? Oh, you guys are voting multiple times. I see what's happening here. What about the children's story? I was hoping to hear some young voices. Maybe they're all back in the other room. What about the hymn? What about the message? Yeah. What about offering? Yeah, that was a low one. What about communion? Amen.

Alright, now let's do the same thing, except this time you only get one vote. And we're going to vote what you think God thinks is the most important part, and you only get one vote. Okay. Which one do you think God thinks is the most important? The welcome and responsive reading, the prayer, worship music. Oh, well, we got one band member said amen or something there. Okay. Children's story, the hymn, the message, the offering, communion. It was kind of tough to tell. I think prayer won that one. Hmm. Would it be a weird

church service if you came and the only thing we did was pray? I can't kneel that long. My knees just. Of course, my knees are shot, so I can only kneel about 15 seconds anyway, so that's very interesting.

Now, I don't know what God thinks is the most important part. He doesn't tell us in the Bible, but I wanted to talk about why we do these things. Take out your sermon notes real quick. We're going to go through these. We don't have time to look up all the verses by foot. The verse is there in your notes, so. So that you can check my work this afternoon. Okay.

So the first one is singing, and we know we're Supposed to sing. The Bible tells us to sing. Ephesians 5:19 says, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, sing and make music from your heart to the Lord. We've heard this verse, right? And we've got a whole book of songs in Psalms, right? And the Bible tells us over and over again, make a joyful noise. Sing with the harp and the tambourine so we know we're supposed to sing.

What about praying? We know praying is important. The Bible tells us to pray a lot. Matthew 6 is where Jesus gives us the Lord's Prayer and he teaches us how to pray. Certainly talking to God is important and is worthy of putting in our service.

The next is preaching. Preaching. Second Timothy 3:16 and 17 says, now remember, this is Paul writing to Timothy to encourage him, okay? And this is what Paul tells Timothy. All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. You've probably heard that text before if you've been around church at all. But he also tells us in 2 Timothy 4,:1-5, and I want to start with verse 2, he says, the end of verse 1, I give you this charge, Preach the word. I don't know how it gets any clearer than that. Right? You know when your parents stop using a lot of words when you were little and they're kind of frustrated with you, you know, and they tell you, stop doing that. Don't do that anymore. I'm telling you, stop doing that. Stop. Right? The less words, the more serious they got. Right? Three words. Preach the word. Is preaching important? Yes. Right. Just be prepared in season and out of season. Correct, rebuke and encourage, and with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when

people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist. Preach. Discharge all your duties of your ministry. Right? Preaching is important. Preaching is important.

What about giving? Giving the offering? Of course, there's a lot of times the Bible talks about giving starting all the way back from Abraham, giving one tenth all the way through the whole Bible. But one example is in 2 Corinthians 9, it says, remember this, whoever sows sparingly reaps sparingly. Whoever sows Generously will reap generously. For each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. Not reluctantly, not under compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. Okay. We try to give you opportunities to give. We try not to twist your arms too much, just a little.

What about communion? Is communion important? Certainly communion is important, and we do that here. Matthew 26 is where Jesus talks about doing the communion. It's one of the times where he is talking, is recorded, where he does the communion. And at the end of that he tells you, I tell you I will not drink from the fruit of the vine from now on till that day when I drink it with you in my Father's kingdom. Right? It's important.

Now, I haven't told you anything you don't know. If you've been to church, you've heard those texts, you know this stuff. I haven't told you anything new, so. But I want you to know that when we do these things in church service, it's for a reason. We don't just randomly sit down and go, huh, what should we do this week? I don't know, right? We pick these things for a reason when we do them in the service. So I just wanted you to know that.

But there's other ways to worship, right? What about people have other artistic skills besides music. They can draw or paint or sculpt. Some of you will remember some years back when we had somebody paint a picture while the pastor preached. Hangs in our lobby, right? The church used to be, when I say the church, the big Christian church, used to be big in this, right? We used to commission artists to paint great works of art. They hang in museums now. We even hired one guy to paint the ceiling. I'll be honest with you. If our ceiling

was painted like that, I'd spend the whole service. Right? What about people that are writers, they write poetry or stories, or maybe they write parables that teach us a lesson that we need to know. Some places they even use dance. I know. Don't nobody get out the pitchforks. I know we don't talk about dancing in the Adventist church, but there are places where they do dance for the Lord. Okay, what about drama? We do some drama here sometimes. And even the people that prepare things and help and are behind the scenes, maybe they never set foot up here, but they do a lot to help us get ready and do decorations and make things and just help us prepare. And there's just a lot we can do.

And maybe some of these things you might do in Private, for example, I love to draw. I really enjoy it. And my skill level is about that of your average elementary student. I am not very good at it. The engineer in here gets in the way all the time and the artist is just bashed down. Okay. I would never have my pictures hanging here in church because everybody would be walking around to one of the little kids. Isaiah, did you draw that picture? Sarah, did you draw this? No, Bill did. Oh! Right. But maybe you do those things in private for yourself. Buy a notebook and draw while you're praying or talking to God or contemplating on what you've read in the Bible or you're waiting for God to answer or write your poetry or whatever it may be. Some of these things we could do in private as well.

So this is like one hour of the week, right? How many hours in a week? Yeah, but how many hours are in a week? 168. That's a number you should know, like 24 in a day. 168 in a week. Okay, 168. Thank you. So what do we do with the 167? Nobody talks too much about those, right? Nobody talks too much about those.

So open your Bibles with me to Romans, chapter 12. Romans, chapter 12. We're going to hang out here pretty much for the rest of time. I think we've got one other verse we're going to go to, but Romans, chapter 12, starting right there at verse number one. Again, this is Paul talking. And he says, therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship. So we're supposed to offer our bodies as what? A living sacrifice that is holy

and pleasing to God. Does it say you can only listen to the FISH radio station? You can only watch videos from Christians? You can only read books written by Christian authors? You can, right? Does it say that? No. Now, there's nothing wrong with listening to those or reading those books, okay? But the Bible doesn't say you have to do that. You have to offer something that's holy and pleasing to God. Doesn't necessarily have to be Christian, but in nature, but it has to be holy and pleasing to God. So you have to guard your hearts and make sure you're doing the right thing because nobody else will do it for you, okay? And in fact, there's plenty of people that want to get you to do something that's not holy and pleasing to God. So just be aware of that, okay? Be Aware of that.

The Bible tells us to offer ourselves a sacrifice, not to just be Christians stuck in the Christian community. I used to call it the Christian ghetto, but somebody told me I wasn't allowed to say that anymore. So the Christian community, right? And we never come out and we never talk to anybody that's not in the community. We never interact with anybody on Facebook that's not in the community. We don't read books. We don't understand how they think. So how can we reach them and bring them in? Okay, but you have to guard your hearts.

Okay, number one here. It's not enough to simply like God. The truest worship is when we go all in, right? It's not enough just to like God. There's a lot of people in the world that like God. They have no issue with God. God's cool. God does his thing, I do my thing. We're cool. I think they may be surprised at some point. Okay, so there's a lot of people that like God, but that's not enough. We got to go all in. We got to go all in. And scripture does provide many examples of going all in. Real quick.

= Abraham worships through obedience when he offers his son Isaac in Genesis 22.

- Hannah faithfully worships God despite many years of sadness and hardship because she couldn't have a child. And then she has Samuel and only keeps him for a couple of years and turns him over to the temple, right? She acknowledges God's timing and control.

- The poor widow worshiped by giving all that she had. And she worships by trusting God to take care of her. Mary brings a valuable possession, maybe her most valuable possession, and pours it out on Jesus loving worship. And she acknowledges that Jesus is worthy of all we can offer.
- Paul and Silas worship in song. And it's not like it is here where, you know, it's heated and air conditioned and we got pretty lights and a screen with words. And they're in a dungeon after being beaten within an inch of their life. You know why? They would give them 39 lashes. His 40 lashes was considered a death sentence. So we give them 39 and then we put him in the stockades. And then they sing. I don't know about you, but it doesn't seem like a great time that I'd feel like singing.

Okay, so we have these great examples and there's many more of people that worship God. And so for the first time ever, when I was doing the sermon, I was looking at Romans 12. I kind of had the feeling that Romans 12 is about worship. And I never really looked at it that way. Yeah, the first part is. But the other part was about other stuff. But I want you to look at that with me in the way of worship now. Okay, so Romans 12, we're going to go through some of the rest and talk about other ways that Christians can worship, mostly outside of the worship service.

We're going to look at six different ways.

- One way is that Christians who refuse to lower their moral standards. Right? Maybe somebody at work is trying to get you to do something. Maybe one of your friends is trying to get you to do something. You say, I'm not going to do it. I am not going to conform to the patterns of this world. Romans 12. 2, right?
- Christians who give their free time to serve God are worshipping. They acknowledge that their gifts and abilities come from God and they should be used to further his kingdom. So basically, whenever you use your spiritual gifts.

I want to take a quick little side thing here. Hold on to Romans 12. We're going to go somewhere else for just a second, and we're going to come back to Romans 12. Okay? For you programmers, Ethan, we're going off

into a subroutine and we're going to come back. Okay? Anybody else here get that reference? Man, that makes me sad. Okay, well, Ethan, you and I got it. All right, so how many of you have ever done the spiritual gifts training where you read a book or you go through some kind of process and you learn about your spiritual gifts? You know, the spiritual gifts of preaching and teaching and music and helps and all these things that we have hospitality. And who here has done something like that? Like six of us? Pastor, maybe time to do that again. Okay. And then you learn what your spiritual gift is. You say, I have the gift of music, or I have the gift of helps, or I have the gift of hospitality, whatever it is. And then you think that that's my ministry. I have the gift of music and I minister with music. That's not what the Bible says. Turn with me real quick to Second Corinthians. I didn't even put it on the screen. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. We're going to go back to Romans 12, but let's go to Second Corinthians, and it's right after Romans. We've got Romans 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians. We're going to 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. Now, this is Paul talking again. You got to kind of work through what Paul says. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. You ready? Verse 17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, a new creation has come. The old is gone, the new is here. Right? We know this talk about rebirth, right? Being born again. All this is from God, who was what reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of what? Reconciliation. That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore, Christ ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. And we implore you, on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. What is your ministry? We just read it. What's your ministry? Reconciliation. That's your ministry. That's my ministry. That's pastor's ministry. That's our new president, John Cress's ministry. That's everybody's ministry, is to reconcile people who are far from God to God. That's it. There's only one ministry. There it is. Now, how you do that is your spiritual gift. Some of us may do that with music. Some of us may do that with art. Some of us may do that by being helpful or being hospitable or being what all those other spiritual gifts are. Okay? So we express our ministry of reconciliation through our spiritual gift. Okay. And I always thought Romans 12 was about our spiritual gifts, and it's not. It's

about reconciling people to God through the ministry of reconciliation, which is worship. Y'all are looking at me like I'm green. Anybody follow with that at all? That was a complete epiphany to me this week. I'm excited about it because I learned something. Okay, back to Romans 12. So when we talk about. We're going through Romans 12, and we're not covering all of Romans 12 here just due to time, but we're talking about these ministries, these spiritual gifts we have, and that's to help us reconcile. Right?

- So continuing on, Christians who share with the needy, they're worshiping the Lord. They acknowledge the call to love and show hospitality. As Romans 12:13 tells us.
- Christians who share joy, or maybe they cry with the grieving, right? They're worshiping Romans 12:15.
- Christians who maintain a humble attitude are worshiping.
- And Christians who live in a spirit of peace and forgiveness towards others are worshiping.

I gave you all those texts. That's your homework this afternoon just before nap time. Read through those. Make sure I'm telling you the truth. I am. But make sure. Check my work. Okay. And then take A nap and sleep on that. Okay. See, because worship is so much more than one hour Saturday mornings. One hour Saturday mornings is important. I implore you to continue to come to group worship, corporate worship. It's important. It's good for us. The Bible tells us to do it. But worship is so much more than that. Okay? Worship is so much more than that. Remember to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship.

Reflection. How's your worship? One hour a week. Are you living a life that's holy and pleasing to God? If not, what changes need to be made?

You know. I don't know how all your lives are going. I know in my life what I need to change. And you probably know in yours.

Challenge. Pick one of those six things that we just talked about from Romans 12 and work on improving in that area. And when you feel like you've done a little bit there and you've improved, move on to number two.

Okay. There's a lot there just in that one chapter. Keep you busy a while. That's our challenge, to be holy and pleasing. Not just from 11 to 12 Saturday mornings, but all 168 hours a week.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you so much, Lord, for the things that you do for us. Thank you so much for these words that you've given us that have been saved for us, that show us what it means to worship, what it means to be holy and pleasing, Lord. Help us to have the courage to do that. Some of these things are easy to say and hard to do, Lord. Give us the courage to do that. Give us the courage to begin a ministry of reconciliation where we're reaching people that maybe we love or people we know, our neighbors, our co workers, our family, and moving them from a life far from God into a relationship with God. Help us to have the courage to know how to do that. There's lots of ways to do it. Give us wisdom as we embark on this journey, Lord, and our ministry of reconciliation, be with us now. In Jesus name, Amen.