Theological Defense

Worship Resource Guide
Songs and Media

Kim Anthony Gentes

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St. Stephen's University

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Introduction

This project, *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media,* is a focused handbook meant to help local church worship ministries with finding, understanding and selecting song and visual media resources for use in their churches. This project comes from the past two years of intensive study and over 20 years of practical experience in the field of worship, music and technology. Working in church and worship resourcing for over 13 years, it becomes increasingly obvious that many local leaders and churches do not have the time, expertise or money to evaluate the huge number of products and resources being produced and marketed.

Most local church worship leaders are tasked with the job of equipping their teams and ministries with resources. Yet many of those leaders are overwhelmed with the immediate tasks of planning, practicing and performing weekly services and many pastoral and leadership duties and have little time for investigating resources for others. Further, many resources meant for church environments and use in worship ministries are built on technology platforms that include websites, applications, software, hardware, media and audio— most of which are not within the expert skill set of the average worship leader. Additionally, many of these technology based resources, though powerful and capable of providing long-term benefits, are complex, expensive and time consuming to learn. This leaves many worship leaders in the position of having to find good resources by either trial-and-error or personal friends' recommendations.

The goal of the *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* is to provide a well researched book of reviews of the top 100 resources that are specifically meant for use in local churches to find and access songs and visual media resources. The guide is written and compiled by practitioners with years of expertise in both technology and local church worship leading fields. The purpose of the book is to serve local church worship leaders by provided the equivalent of a "consumer report" style collection of pre-qualified

resources that the reader can rest assured have been researched, evaluated and rated, so that the work of the investigation process is largely removed.

Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media is divided into three sections. This three-part approach begins with an overview of important recent historical concepts first, and then explores two general areas of specific needs and application within church worship resources.

Part I - A Brief Historical Understanding of Worship Resource Development

Part I begins with an introductory letter, and a few pages of explanation to orient the reader on how to use the guide. This is followed by an overview of the last 40 years of development of worship and music resources related to the local church, entitled "The Development of Modern Worship Music Resources: Impacts of History, Style, Promotion and 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 is to see it become captured with its holy passion once again – a fervent, world-changing love of God.

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 time-frame 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.
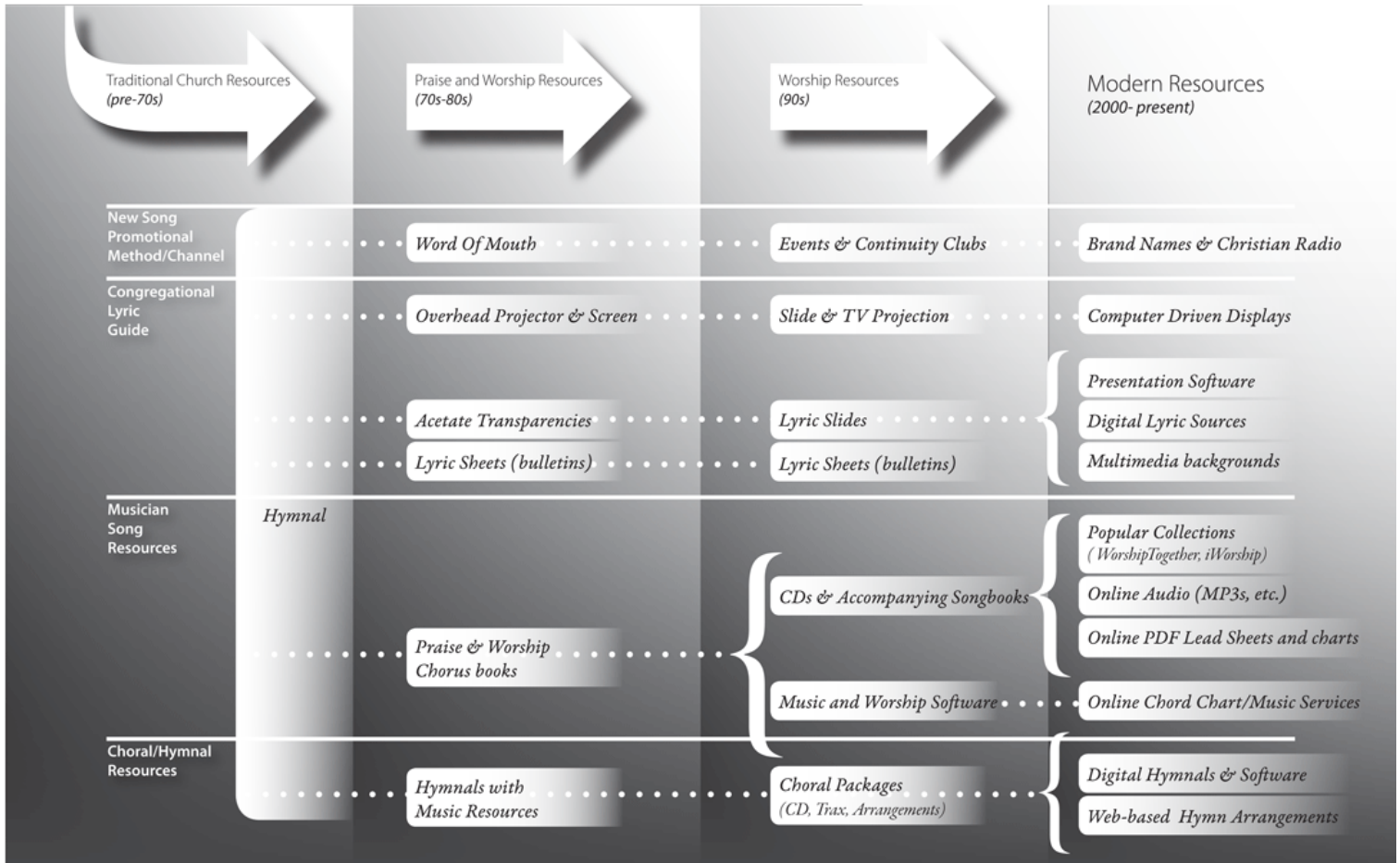
Each of the areas of change simultaneously impacted and transformed church worship music and media. It is clear that four major areas of change have altered church music and resources irrevocably: a) **Style**: historical change in music style – hymns to popular music; b) **Methods**: change in liturgical music tools and methodology – piano and choirs gave way to guitar-driven rock bands; c) **Tools**: technological changes in music and media – hymnals to computer driven screens for the congregation and digital PDF sheet music and online audio for the musicians; d) **Repertoire Source**: change in promotional channels for popularizing new songs – hymnals gave way to continuity clubs, popular events, and eventually Christian radio as the promotional vehicle for songs to the local church.

As the following diagram illustrates, each one of these areas was previously governed by the hymnal. Originally, the hymnal was the lyric source for congregations. This has now changed to computer driven video screens (and software). The hymnal was once the music source for the organist or pianist. That changed to separate musician songbooks and collections, and is now PDF sheet music and online resources. The hymnal was once the source for songs in developing a local church repertoire. This has now changed to radio (and some Internet promotion).

With the development of modern worship, much of the hymnal functions were replaced by a number of other resources. The result was an explosion of need in worship resources. With so many resources available, it soon became confusing for churches to understand how to make good decisions on which resources were best for them. It is out of that need that this book has been written. The hope is that the pages of the book help leaders save time and money in searching for the resources they may need for their local church.

Much of what we have explored in these sections explains how the hymnal has been replaced by other tools as the primary worship resource of most churches. This does not mean the hymnal is gone or is without value. In fact, for churches that choose to use the hymnal, it can be a simplifying, helpful resource that rids them of the complexities of many "modern" solutions. The following diagram details the transition through the recent decades for many churches. One benefit of viewing the changes in worship resources this way is that it allows us to see how the functions of the hymnal dispersed into the various online, digital and media resources that exist today.

Forty Years of Church Music Resources.

	Traditional Church Resources (pre-70s)	Praise and Worship Resources (70s-80s)	Worship Resources (90s)	Modern Resources (2000- present)
New Song Promotional Method/Channel		Word Of Mouth	Events & Continuity Clubs	Brand Names & Christian Radio
Congregational Lyric Guide		Overhead Projector & Screen	Slide & TV Projection	Computer Driven Displays
				Presentation Software
		Acetate Transparencies	Lyric Slides	Digital Lyric Sources
		Lyric Sheets (bulletins)	Lyric Sheets (bulletins)	Multimedia backgrounds
Musician Song Resources	Hymnal			Popular Collections (WorshipTogether, iWorship)
			CDs & Accompanying Songbooks	Online Audio (MP3s, etc.)
		Praise & Worship Chorus books		Online PDF Lead Sheets and charts
			Music and Worship Software	Online Chord Chart/Music Services
Choral/Hymnal Resources		Hymnals with Music Resources	Choral Packages (CD, Trax, Arrangements)	Digital Hymnals & Software
				Web-based Hymn Arrangements

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DIAGRAM EXTRACTED FROM THE BOOK "Ultimate Worship Resource Guide".
TO ORDER THE BOOK GO TO http://www.ultimateworshipresourceguide.com

This diagram[1] does not reflect the earliest appearance of any resource. Certainly hymnals with music resources were available before the 1970's, for example. And continuity clubs were first available before the 1990's. The diagram represents the time-frame in which these resources were gaining widespread popularity and usage. From that perspective, you would have been more likely to walk into a church in North America and find these worship resources being used in the time-frame given in the diagram.

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[1] This diagram comes primarily from the business experience and knowledge of working in Christian music and worship resource retailing (i.e. WorshipMusic.com) for over 15 years, during which time products whose original publishing date could often be found to fit generally into the time-span of the categories listed above.

Part II - A Church Worship Song Resource Guide

Part II is a larger section of the book. It provides extensive reviews of over 60 useful song-related

resources available to local churches. It is divided into seven chapters, each addressing a specific resource

need. The chapters and needs addressed are:

1. Where To Find New Songs: Search and Discover
2. Where to Acquire Songs: Online Access and Purchase
3. Software/Digital File Song sources
4. Continuity Clubs - Contemporary Song Sources
5. Continuity Clubs - Choral Song Sources
6. Printed/Physical Product Song Sources
7. Music Instructional Resources for Song Learning

Each of the reviews within Part II contain several components. The review components are as follows:

1. Resource Title
2. Rating
3. Review Text
4. URL
5. Review ID
6. Telephone *(as applicable)*
7. Mailing Address *(as applicable)*

Part III - A Church Video and Image Media Resource Guide

Part III is the final section of the book. This section provides extensive reviews of 40 useful visual media

resources available to local churches. It is divided into three chapters, each addressing a specific resource

need. These chapters and needs addressed are:

1. Online Media/Image Sites
2. Physical Media/Image Sources
3. Song-Based Media/Image Products

Each of the visual media resource reviews within Part III contains the same components as the song

resource reviews in Part II.

Chapter 1: Biblical, Theological and Historical Basis

Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media is a resource manual that helps fulfill our call as pastoral

leaders to follow the scriptures by a) singing a new song, b) affirming the value of liturgy, b) being

culturally relevant in our expression, c) equipping churches by resourcing leaders, d) biblical instruction

towards musical excellence and e) joining with the community of faith across space and time. This

section attempts to address each of these areas through its implementation and adherence to them. These

areas not only form the core of the book's scriptural basis but are guiding concepts that impact each

evaluation of the resources reviewed within *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media*.

Sing a New Song

Psalm 33:3 says "Sing to him a *new* song; play skillfully, and shout for joy." Each person and generation

has a directive from the Psalms to bring their own voice, song and contribution to the devotional language

of our praise and worship. This resource helps local churches find and access new songs and fresh

renditions of ancient scriptural truths. Churches across time and space have spurred the devotion of their

members by participating in songs that have been sourced from both been ancient psalms of scripture and

new songs fresh from the local congregations. The scriptural encouragement to sing a new song

(sometimes as a directive, sometimes a declaration) reappears throughout the Psalms (40:3, 96:1, 98:1,

144:9, 149:1), Isaiah 40:10, and Revelation 5:9, 14:3. This instruction is echoed by NT. Wright in his

book *For All God's Worth*, where he explains the call of all church leaders to present fresh forms to the

ancient story of God:

> The church, after all, needs leaders who can *break new ground* for others to follow. The church
> needs teachers who can expound the scriptures and find *fresh ways of presenting the story of
> God's love*. But, above all, the church needs healers who can be channels of God's peace and love,
> who can be for her today what Paul was for Corinth, a wise and faithful friend who wounds in
> order to heal, who tells the truth not to hurt but to mend, who rejoices with the joyful and weeps

with the mourners, who teases and plays, who agonizes and prays, who shares the priestly and
healing work of Christ.[2]

This project focuses specifically on helping worship leaders find new songs and new visual media for use
in their local churches. To the extent which the book succeeds at this, it is helping pastors to fulfill the
scriptural call to sing a new song.

Jesus & New Testament Support for The Value of Liturgy

When reviewing the Biblical and theological support for musical resources, we must at some point ask the
question of the broader question of liturgy and its place in the New Testament church. Songs within the
Christian faith are one of the most historic forms of liturgy, dating back to the earliest times of the
Israelites during the exodus from Egypt (Exodus 15), through to Jesus with his disciples at the last supper
(Matt 26-17-30), forward to Paul (Acts 16:25-27) and on to the very culmination of the scriptural record
(Revelation 4, 5, 15). Songs are a deeply embedded part of life, praise and liturgy. Other sections of this
paper will explore how some of this tradition of songs continued as liturgy throughout history for the last
2000 years of Christian faith life. But before exploring that we need to establish if and how liturgy is
specifically attributed to Jesus and his call to faith in him. Certainly the Psalms contain plenty of
instructive calls to sing, play and praise. But such instructions are not as easily found in the New
Testament.

Church tradition has dictated that both baptism and communion are clear evidence that Jesus both
supports and, in fact, mandates liturgy for the church, his body of followers. Jesus words in Luke's gospel
recounting the last supper use the oft-quoted phrase "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). This
statement is ratified by Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, who restates it twice attributing it to both the

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[2] N. T. Wright. *For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B Eerdmans
Publishing, 1997), Kindle Edition. Pg 100

body and blood, though the original text only assigns it to the body (1 Cor 11:24-25). Jesus words are also used as the confirmation of baptism's role in church as linked to the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20), which is reaffirmed extensively throughout the book of Acts (most clearly as instruction in Acts 1:5 and Acts 2:38), in Paul's letters (Romans 6:4; Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:12) and in Peter's first letter (1 Peter 3:21).

But all this understanding of worship, liturgy and practice must be unraveled by a careful understanding of its contextualization within the Jewish heritage from which Christian worship came. James White explains this poignantly.

> But we must beware of overemphasizing the contrasts when it comes to worship. It is fundamental that Jesus was a Jew as were his earliest followers. A whole gamut of Jewish concepts and practices underlies Christian worship to this day. The concept that the saving power of a past event is brought into the present through reenactment is basic whether one is celebrating Passover or Good Friday. The recovering of past events through the observance of commemorative time underlies what both Christians and Jews still do. The experience of God's self-giving through ritual acts is a permanent part of Christian sacraments just as it is in Jewish worship. We cannot tell precisely how the Jewish understanding of the way to give thanks taught Christians to do so except that early eucharistic prayers show Christians learned the lesson well from Judaism. And even where early Christians might have found mentors in the pagan world, as in concepts of sacrifice, they preferred only Jewish teachers (Heb. 9:11-14). Christians may have turned the world upside down but in the form and content of their worship it was still recognizably a Jewish world.[3]

This understanding of Jewish influence into the worship and liturgy intended for Christians is where we can begin to find further answers on Jesus' directions for us in our current case. The following research will intend to develop a theory regarding the validity and value of liturgical tools in a modern context. Reading through the gospels accounts (as part of the work of this course) a surprising inspiration for liturgy can be found in the very words of Jesus as he recounts his "greatest commandments". In the view of the author, Jesus affirms the use of daily, regular, liturgy for every Christian (beyond just communion and baptism) — a claim explored in the following research of the scriptures.

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[3] James F.White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993). Kindle Edition Pg 16

One of the most important teachings of Jesus was expressed in Mark's gospel. It was a reforming of core

Old Testament truths into Jesus declaration commonly called the "greatest commandment(s)". In Mark

12:29-31, we see Jesus recite a formulation of two separate scriptures from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and

Leviticus 19:18b. A "teacher of the law" poses the following question "Of all the commandments, which

is the most important?" (Mark 12:28). Jesus' response was as follows:

> Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord;
> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all
> your mind, and with all your strength.'
> The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
> There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31)

Without discussing the merits of the "first and second" commands that are included in this reply, for the

purpose of this project, we will focus on the initial section of this statement (i.e. excluding the "love your

neighbor" segment).

> Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord;
> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all
> your mind, and with all your strength.'(Mark 12:29-30)

By taking our cue from NT Wright's methodologies in "*Jesus and the Victory of God*", we will explore

the textual meaning against both the context of the verses and the tradition and expectation of the first

century culture in which Jesus was speaking. What we see here is that the Jesus brilliantly layers Jewish

tradition (and praxis) and theology into a response that must have sounded like a rally cry to Jews in first

century Roman occupied Palestine. But hidden amongst the subversive call for Jews to hear Jesus' re-

envisioned agenda for them, is an equally profound call to the Jesus-followers that would hear his

invitation for millennia to come.

Invoking Jewish Tradition (the Shema)

Jesus' answer to the teacher of the law begins with an invocation of the most core Jewish prayer and proclamation. Jesus is echoing the single most known phrase to the Jews, called the Shema Yisrael (or Sh'ma Yisrael or just Shema). The shema was (and continues to be) the liturgical lynchpin for the community of Israel, its faith and its historical narrative. Wright says of this verse and Jesus use of the shema,"the prayer which begins with these lines, was as central to Judaism then as it is now"[4]. Specifically, the shema is epitomized in the two words "Hear [O] Israel" which appears in the beginning of the response from Jesus. He is making a direct quotation from Deuteronomy 6:4, which says 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord'. More than any other artifact in Jewish tradition, the shema represented the daily, living liturgy and prayer of the Jewish people. During Jesus time, invoking the use of the shema was presumably of similar import and effect as the invocation of the doxology (specifically the Gloria Patri) would be to a Roman Catholic mass. It was sacrosanct and required a response.

Jesus brilliance in assimilating this Jewish liturgy is a masterful way of drawing in his 1st century contemporaries, who were looking for a "call to action" for the people of God to be engaged in the fervent "work of God". In one statement Jesus invokes liturgy, calls his hearers to prayer (shema), and articulates the response to the question of the greatest commandment(s).

Declaring Jewish Theology

By responding this way, Jesus is calling to account several core components of Jewish faith that resound powerfully in his response. He is reaffirming Jewish theology at its deepest level. If we take that verse and parse its components, the richness of its content becomes apparent:

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[4] N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996). Pg 305

- *Hear oh Israel* – identity and community of the Jewish people.
- *The Lord our God* – literally YHWH is God – using the name of God is, in itself, a powerful literal device in the Hebrew language. The Jews literally believed that the complete name and pronunciation of YHWH was so sacred it could not be said for common use.
- *The Lord is One* – the powerful claim of the Jews to an ardent monotheism
- *Love the Lord* – Devotion
- *Your God* – community, connection and identification with YHWH as the God of the Jews.
- *With all your heart, mind and strength* – holistic understanding of life and existence.

Said another way— Jesus is proclaiming that YHWH ("the Lord our God") is the monotheistic ("the Lord is One") God of the Jews ("Hear oh Israel"), whom they are bound to in community and identity ("your God"), and are called to completely trust with the entirety of their affections ("love the Lord with all your heart") and resources ("mind and strength").

Celebrating Life Giving Liturgy

Consider for a moment that Jesus is arguably being asked the "most important question" in the entire gospel narrative. Instead of just answering the question with the correct points (love God, love your neighbor), he chooses to wrap the answer not just in Jewish history and theology, but also within the compelling container of liturgy (i.e. the shema). Jesus was doing more than just alluding through language and tradition as a means to bring in the Jews (though he was doing that, as well). Since he was reconstituting the Jews and their faith around himself (as NT Wright puts it), Jesus' manner of response (again, the shema) rightly assumes that the effectiveness of the reply is pertinent not to just the current state of Israel, but to the future people of God.

I propose that by using the Jewish shema, Jesus was actually propelling forward the truth that liturgy builds positive tradition, teaches theology, garners community and changes lives. Further, I am saying that by the use of the shema, **this statement (Mark 12:29-31) from Jesus endorses,**

scripturally, liturgy as a proper container in which the people of God can "love the Lord their

God" and "love their neighbor as themselves".

The core of this exegesis I am proposing with this statement revolves around the premise that Jesus was

invoking, through his manner of reply (about the "greatest command"), a call to know the Lord (YHWH)

through liturgical or regular recitation of the basic truths of faith. Though not the exact point being made

above, James Dunn comes close to this same general thought in his book "*Jesus Remembered*", where he

says:

> "Since liturgy is in effect the most like oral tradition in modern western communities…"[5]

Dunn's point was specifically related to the various versions of the Lord's Prayer in the gospels, but he

punctuates his ideas with the clear concept that a verbal liturgy is the "oral" equivalent to the iconic and

physical symbology that is displayed in other liturgical practices such as the Eucharist. The primary

support, however, for our thesis here remains with the biblical text itself, and borrowing from N.T.

Wright's approach of interpreting Jesus in his historical context, believing that his delivery and form

spoke powerfully as an interpretive tool for his content in his speech. Through this last section, we can

say that Jesus affirmed for his followers the value (that the Jewish culture and practice had assigned) of

daily repetitive liturgy for personal use.

Cultural Relevance for the Current Generation

Beyond just creating fresh methods for presenting the story of God, we must also retain a connection with

our society that allows our artistic, musical expression to find its stride with the generation in which we

are serving. This is not just an expression of our current thankfulness, it is also a conveyance of larger

story of God and his good works from our present day to our children and for generations to come. King

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[5] James Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), Pg., 228

David articulates this as a part of the natural progression of faith through the generations in Psalm 145:3-7:

> Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
> his greatness no one can fathom.
> One generation commends your works to another;
> they tell of your mighty acts.
> They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—
> and I will meditate on your wonderful works
> They tell of the power of your awesome works—
> and I will proclaim your great deeds.
> They celebrate your abundant goodness
> and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

Evidently, David's psalms were working their script into his life, as later New Testament Apostle and martyr Paul would testify of David:

> Now when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. (Acts 13:36)

Since this statement is so terse one can miss the importance being implied. Paul writes a one phrase epitaph for David's life here, and it is significant. Notice what he says that David accomplished— "served God's purpose in his own generation." Present day Biblical scholars such as Stephen Dempster consider David not just the representative Christological figure in the Old Testament, but the pivotal figure of humanity for the Hebrews:

> "Saul is king in theory, David is king in practice."[6]

and

> "David has become the focus of world genealogy"[7]

also

> "Just as David is the supreme warrior, so he is supremely devoted to God."[8]

and finally, emphatically

> "Jesus is a new David, the culmination of Israel's history..."[9]

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[6] Stephen G. Dempster. *Dominion and Dynasty:A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press, 2003), Pg 139

[7] Ibid., Pg 140

[8] Ibid., Pg 141

The inference is that for the first century Christians (who were initially only Jews) you could invoke no

higher icon of religious significance than David. Even the Messiah himself is called "the son of David".

The point of Paul's invocation of David's life as being fulfilled by pursuing God's purpose *in his own*

generation can hardly have had any greater significance. If cultural relevance is Paul's point, Sally

Morgenthaler seems to agree:

> If language apart from experience has no meaning, then only that which somehow connects with
> the secular person's experience and knowledge base is going to be intelligible to... our society. If
> we truly want to reach them, we must... "enculturate the truth into the vernacular of a broken
> world." We must speak in terms a broken world can understand.[10]

Despite this scriptural and academic encouragement towards enculturation of worship expressions,

change of religious format has always been controversial. In fact, medieval worship transformation

became so hotly contested it spurred political and popular unrest:

> People everywhere were emphasizing what made them separate and distinct from other nations.
> As the scale of nation states increased, this brought fresh problems for conformity within
> countries and triggered various rebellions on the basis of worship.[11]

But this did not stop the Reformation, either related to the changes in the structural church organizations

or its worship.

> An important characteristic of the Reformation period is the richness and variety of possibilities
> that develop in worship. This richness consists in diversity and ability to serve a wide variety of
> peoples. Nor was change limited to Protestant traditions; baroque Catholicism saw entirely new
> types of piety, architecture, and music as worship evolved to meet changes in people. And even
> the Orthodox churches were not left untouched by social change.[12]

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[9] Ibid., Pg 232

[10] Sally Morgenthaler. *Worship Evangelism: Inviting Unbelievers Into the Presence of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), Pg 128

[11] James F.White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993). Kindle Edition Pg 105

[12] Ibid., Pg 104

To help congregations sing a new song we must offer them types of resources that will be culturally

poignant enough to communicate the gospel story terms they can understand. This book provides reviews

of many excellent resources that are culturally relevant. In doing so, this project helps assist local church

leaders to serve God's purpose in their own generation.

Biblical Direction to Equip the Church

One of the main impetuses for this project is the biblical call of leaders to "equip his people for works of

service". As the early church developed in the first and second centuries, its form of worship and liturgy

took shape. This shaping of liturgy and worship order has continued even to the present. The people

administering the worship have, from the earliest times, had to select and develop source material as

content for this liturgy/order of service. This project, ultimately, is meant to be a tool for those who are

searching for quality source content (in this case, songs which will develop as an important part of the

church liturgy) as they plan and administer worship in their local congregations. In this way, this project

is seen as a tool to help leaders equip their people for ministry. Let's start, first, by exploring what "equip

his people for works of service" really means.

To understand the phrase in context, we must read what Paul is getting at in the prefacing text.

> But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says:
> "When he ascended on high,
> he took many captives
> and gave gifts to his people."
> ...So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to
> equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach
> unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the
> whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7-8,11-13)

We can hear what Paul is saying more clearly here. Christ has gifted some people with certain groupings

of responsibility. Without exploring and dissecting the "fivefold ministry" in depth here (for that would

take us far beyond the scope of this paper), it is clear from the text that "Christ himself gave the [*leaders*

and leadership gifts]... to equip his people for works of service". In the context of local churches, worship

leaders are tasked with guiding their congregations on a weekly basis. In some cases, these worship

leaders are operating as pastors, walking alongside the congregation, welcoming them into places and

times which we hold as sacred space for the devotional lives of both the individuals and the

congregations. Development of this concept of creating sacred space has been part of the church since its

inception in the pages of the New Testament. A portion of Paul's letters to the Corinthians (Chapter 11)

directly addresses practical steps in how to administer the Lord's Supper, steps to take, and words to say.

> In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." … Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup... So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. (I Cor 11:25,28,33)

Notice the specific instruction Paul is giving— he is outlining some basic steps to help the community

provide a sacred space for all as they celebrate communion. Chapters 12 and 14 of that same letter then

talk about proper administration and order of spiritual gifts in the gathered settings.

> What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. If anyone speaks in a tongue, two— or at the most three— should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God. Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. (I Cor 14:26-30)

Paul is articulating very specific instructions on the order of worship, the nuances of pastoring variously

gifted people and those expressions in the gathered body. As time went on, these practices became

embraced and developed into what the larger church will later form as their liturgy. Liturgy comes from

the Greek word which literally means "work of the people". From the earliest times, this work of the

people outlined the practices of baptism, communion, prayers and even the earliest songs. For example,

part 2 of the Didache is sub-titled "A Church Manual" which outlined specific practices for baptism,

fasting, prayer, the Eucharist, Sunday worship and reconciliation among the members and even

eschatology. Notice the specificity given in this ancient document:

> At the Eucharist, offer the eucharistic prayer in this way. Begin with the chalice,
> "We give thanks to thee, Our Father...
> (Glory be to thee, world without end)"
> Then over the broken bread,
> "We give thanks to thee, Our Father...
> (Glory be to thee, world without end)"
> ...Maranatha! Amen! (Prophets, however, should be free to give thanks as they please.)[13]

This document has ancient origins, possibly as early as the first century, where some scholars believe it

might have possibly been written earlier than some of the books of the New Testament itself.[14] The

importance of this formation of liturgy and "order of service" is that this has become a pattern of gathered

church activity and tradition now for 2000 years. As you can see from the previous quote, prayers,

directions and chants quickly are being routinized and prescribed early in the Christian tradition. This

same prescriptive direction also happened with songs. Certainly, the Psalms were the earliest songbooks

of the Christian church, but Philippians 2, Jude doxology and the songs found in Revelation (1:5-7, 4:11,

5:9-10) all appear as clear representations of musical content that would quickly become liturgy for the

faith. This happened with non-Scripture based lyrics as well. In his "Epistle to the Ephesians", Ignatius of

Antioch (who lived in the first and second centuries) records verse that is considered[15] by many to be one

of the earliest Christian hymns:

> Very Flesh, yet Spirit too;
> Uncreated, and yet born;
> Good-and-Man in One agreed;
> Very-Life-in-Death indeed;
> Fruit of God and Mary's seed;
> At once impassible and torn
> By pain and suffering here below:
> Jesus Christ, whom as our Lord we know.[16]

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[13] The Didache, translated by Maxwell Staniforth, *Early Christian Writings* (London, England: Penguin Books 1968), Pg 194,195

[14] Ibid., Pg 189

[15] This is presented in note 3 on page 67- Ignatius of Antioch; The Epistle to the Ephesians, translated by Maxwell Staniforth, *Early Christian Writings* (London, England: Penguin Books 1968), Pg 67

[16] Ibid., Pg 63

The continued formation of liturgy and order of service embedded itself not only in gathered worship, but

in the rules that sprang up during the monastic period, of which Benedict's is now widely recognized as

the most influential.

> The most effective synthesis of Eastern and Western asceticism.. was made by Benedict of Nursia
> (480-547).[17]

Benedict's Rule articulates with clarity how the monastic order should observe prayers, songs and daily

celebrations of "office". For example:

> At Sunday Lauds Psalm 66 should be said through without an antiphon...
> Laud should be celebrated on ordinary days as follows: Psalm 66 (67) shall be chanted...
> The Alleluia is to be sung with the psalms...[18]

From the earliest times the Christian faith, both in its regular worship gatherings and in its private

communities (such as monastic orders), has developed liturgies which include music, songs and psalms.

The administrators of such services have used both direct scriptural sources (Psalms, songs in the New

Testament scriptures etc.) and newly created content (such as the Ignatius quoted song) for its content for

music within its order of service. Constance Cherry, in her recent book *The Worship Architect,* even adds

that our leading of these liturgies and worship forms/orders of service are not man-made, but are actually

in line with the priestly work of Jesus who desires to work with us in a transformation of our liturgies into

his leading of our worship. She says:

> Our resurrected Lord now functions as our true Worship Leader. As such, our Lord sings with us
> (Heb. 2:12), intercedes for us (Heb. 7:25), translates our selfish and uninformed human prayers
> into prayers that are right and good and therefore worthy to be presented to the Father, and
> converts our will to God's will. The author of Hebrews uses the Greek term *leitourgos* for
> Christ— "the leader of our worship" (Heb. 8:2). As our leader, Jesus transforms the imperfect
> *leitourgia* (work of the people) into that which pleases God. "This is the worship which God has
> provided for humanity, and which alone is acceptable to God."[19]

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[17] Benedict of Nursia, translated by Meisel and del Mastro, *The Rule of Saint Benedict,* (New York, NY: Doubleday 1975) Pg. 25
[18] Pg. 64,65
[19] Constance M. Cherry. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2010). Kindle Edition. Locations 570-573

Worship leaders today act in a similar way in our modern churches— they have the duty of planning and leading the modern liturgy and including songs as part of that. This isn't to say that what we now view in a worship service can be equivocated to the same formats that were used in the early centuries of the church. But to the degree that the common goal of administering gatherings included worship forms that were orders of service— and those orders included songs— both the overseer of such services and the needs of song sources for those overseers have a common bond. Leaders who oversee worship gatherings where songs are used ultimately are in need of ways to gather resources to help use those songs.

The purpose of this section is not to provide a comprehensive treatise on the development of music within liturgy across the ages, as might be done in historical musicology. Instead, the goal is to show a basic linkage of music as part of liturgy, and the necessity of equipping leaders with resources to perform that liturgy. One of the biblical foundations of this project is that *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* can be used as a tool for worship leaders/service planners to access song and media resources that help them plan and lead their services. In essence, this book is a tool meant to help "equip his people *(worship leaders)* for works of service (*planning/executing services*)".

Biblical Instruction Toward Artistic Excellence

Psalm 33:3 says "Sing to him a new song; play *skillfully*, and shout for joy." When music is a part of our praise and worship expression, as this psalm indicates by its verbs ("*sing*, *play*, *shout*"), we are instructed to pursue such endeavors with skill. This means that the project is to be guided by an editorial selection of resources that promote skillful artistic expression. The bible is clear that this pursuit of expression should never overshadow the fundamental heart issues of devotion, prayer and thanksgiving that are clearly at the heart of worship and praise, but this does not mean that we should abandon skillful artistry to gain these.

Well known worship leader and pastor, Andy Park, says it this way:

> ...if we are going to put our best foot forward in facilitating congregational worship, it follows that we should use our best musicians most of the time, while giving some opportunity for less experienced players and singers to develop.[20]

Bob Kauflin, in his book *"Worship Matters"* agrees with this and combines heart and artistic skill in his description for modern worship leaders:

> God wants us to pursue both skill *and* heart, like the craftsmen who built the temple. "Moses call Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsmen in whose mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work" (Exodus 36:2)[21]

The reviewers, and the review process that is used to evaluate resources, specifically focuses on selecting top quality resources for use in local churches. These resources, and the songs and media they contain, must meet strong quality standards of musicality and presentation to receive strong ratings in the review. Resources with less skillfully produced resources receive a weaker rating in the review. By focusing on the issue of quality, this project helps local church leaders access resources that can help them pursue increasing skillfulness as the artists that scripture encourages us to be.

Remembering Brings Life

Creating this resource is important not only because of its need to the church and its biblical basis, but because of its ability to help us remember. That is, we are part of a larger story of God that has continued through the ages. As Robert Webber puts it:

> Biblical and ancient worship is never about me and my worship. Instead, biblical and ancient worship is always about remembering all of God's saving acts in history.[22]

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[20] Andy Park, *To Know You More* (Downers Grove, Il: InterVarsity Press, 2002), Pg 101

[21] Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton, Il: Crossway Books, 2008), Pg 195

[22] Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), Pg 44

As participants in that story, we reap the benefits from the past, engage in the present, and look forward to our future. Drawing on the benefits of our tradition and faith from the past is possible because the generations before us have taken the time to archive their story for us. This has been the privilege and responsibility of all the previous generations of believers.

First century Christians were already using the Old Testament book of Psalms as their songbook and, according to James White, added to their worship tradition extensive New Testament works that include hymns such as Philippians 2:6-11, several songs in Revelations 4:11, 5:9-10; 11:17-18; 15:3-4, and other important texts[23]. By the 4th century, the remembering becomes so important that the formation of a written liturgy has already been laid down. As White says:

> These began the day with hymns and prayers in the morning and psalms and prayers in the evening according to Epiphanius of Salamis (377).[24]

In the first five centuries of the Christian church, the Psalms were certainly the center of the Christian song repertoire. Speaking of the pre-medieval centuries of Christianity, James White describes early examples of singing as "It is certainly musical liturgy", and "obviously, singing had become a highly organized matter by this time".[25] But the early church was busy writing their own hymnody as well.

> Various writers composed the many hymns, most famous of which are those of Ambrose. His "O Splendor of God's Glory Bright" is still sung today as are those of sixth-century Venantius Fortunatus: "Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle" and "Hail Thee, Festival Day."...The power of hymn singing as a teaching tool as well as praise of God was certainly recognized. And hymn singing had the advantage of a high degree of congregational participation.[26]

Then, as now, songs were occasionally used not only as devotional worship, but as a tool for teaching and promoting certain theology:

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[23] James F.White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993). Kindle Edition. Pg 37

[24] Ibid., Pg 53

[25] Ibid., Pg 71

[26] Ibid., Pg 71

> "The spread of Arius' ideas amongst the working class [of Alexandria] was stimulated by the composition of popular songs 'for the sea, for the mill, for the road', suitably set to music". The mob of Arius' followers were energized by the songs and the slogans...[27]

While their songs were written with various intentions (teaching, theology, etc.) songs written over the ages have continued to project the voice of the present into the future. Not only specific songs but even the methods of singing developed by some church leaders proved to be a way of remembering. Under the leadership of Gregory the Great— one of the best examples of papal leadership ever— sixth century Christians synthesized the use of chants which continue to be in use today (later named Gregorian chants).

> Gregory is popularly remembered for one contribution above all else— music. He was a music teacher, a musician, a composer, founder of the most influential school of music of his day, and the prime figure in the development of finely crafted Gregorian music. What other form of music can one name that has survived intact for more than a millennium?[28]

The tradition of remembering, by writing new songs for the present, continued over the ages. In the 16th century, Martin Luther wrote several new hymns and supervised the publication of a new musical hymnbook.

> Luther exulted in music, regarding it as one of God's greatest gifts. He endeavored to structure the German Mass so major portions of it could be sung in German paraphrase. … By the end of 1523, while the mass was still in Latin, Luther had begun to write vernacular hymns and the next year he supervised the publication of Spiritual Hymn Booklet with the help of his musical assistant, Johann Walter .[29]

Revivalists, John and Charles Wesley, Fannie Crosby and others archived new songs in the 18th and 19th centuries by writing faith-filled lyrics for their congregations. The Wesley's wrote so prolifically, in fact,

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[27] Roger E. Olson, *The Story of Christian Theology: Twenty Centuries of Tradition and Reform* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 1999). Pg 144

[28] Thomas Oden, *Care of Souls in the Classic Tradition*, ed. by Don S. Browning, Theology & Pastoral Care Series (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), Pg. 44

[29] James F.White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993). Kindle Edition Pg 137

that just one of the many volumes they published included a collection of 166 hymns all just on the

singular theme of the Eucharist.[30]

As each of our predecessors took their place in the history of the church, so we must take our place in

archiving the use of our modern liturgies, music and worship resources. This is not just an exercise to

glorify ourselves and archive our legacy. As Robert Webber puts it, we must remember.

> Biblical remembering makes the power and the saving effect of the event present to the
> worshiping community. . . . God loves our worship when we remember his saving deeds in Jesus
> Christ. Our worship tells that old, old, story. That's the story God gave the world, and that story is
> the content of worship. Through worship the world learns its own story. And how will others hear
> unless we do God's story in worship, calling people to remember God's story? . . . Forgetting
> brings death, but remembering brings life.[31]

If we are to live in community with the tradition and members of our faith across time, we must

participate by gleaning their contributions for our present, and by leaving our contributions for the

generations to come. In this way, our remembering of the past and our archiving of the present become

the contributions we leave for the community of faith in the future. This book, especially with the

historical narrative of the first section included in it, is an attempt to make such an archive of our present

contributions to our faith story, songs and media. The extent to which this book succeeds at archiving

resources that reflect the broader church of today helps current and future worship communities to

participate in remembering and in bringing life.

Summary of Biblical, Historical Basis

In summary, this thesis project has its biblical and historical basis centered in the concepts of a) singing a

new song, b) affirming the value of liturgy, b) being culturally relevant in our expression, c) equipping

churches by resourcing leaders, d) biblical instruction towards musical excellence and e) joining with the

community of faith across space and time.

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[30] Ibid., Pg 155-156

[31] Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), Pg 43-44.

Chapter 2: Why a New Approach is Necessary

A new approach is necessary for equipping churches to find and select worship resources because currently there exists no comprehensive tool to simultaneously address the major challenges of: a) archiving "this moment in history" for what is available in worship resources; b) addressing the dynamic nature of technology change; c) addressing the nature of technical complexity of many of these resources; and d) providing a trusted, editorial voice that rises above the din of marketing copy and commercialization.

First, *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* provides a new approach in the sense that it is uniquely archiving this moment in history for the broader church community. By doing this, it is marking our present day and providing those in need of such resources with a current, researched collection of reviews that are updated each year. The book is updated annually, and because of this, provides the unique opportunity for churches to access the most current information on such resources.

Secondly, because the approach of this book is an annually updated volume, the book addresses the ongoing pace of change related to technology. In a static publication, the further away from the publication date that the resource got, the less useful the book would be. Much of the resources available to modern worship leaders are based on technology such as websites, software, computerized hardware, online media and applications. All of these technologies are changing at a predictably fast rate. According to Moore's Law, a technology industry predictor developed in 1965 by Intel founder Gordon Moore about technological change capacity,[32] these technologies are literally outdated in functionality and capacity at a

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[32] Stokes, Jon (2008-09-27). "Understanding Moore's Law". ars technica. http://arstechnica.com/hardware/news/2008/09/moore.ars Retrieved 2012-03-20.

rate of two times every 18 months. Over 45 years have passed since Moore's Law was first postulated and

his prediction has proved startlingly accurate for both computer hardware and the software and

applications built on top of those platforms. Creating a new volume of the project on an annual basis

accounts for these changes, remains current and addresses the new approach needed for such resources.

Third, a new approach is needed not just to account for technology change, but also for increased

technological complexity. Just 15 years ago, most new song resources were available in printed music

form. One had merely to go to a Christian bookstore, browse through various songbooks and select the

one that suited their needs best according to the song content. Occasionally, a worship leader might have

to use a mail order option such as Vineyard Music's "Touching the Father's Heart" series, or Integrity's

"Hosanna Music" series to evaluate printed music offered by various publishers. That is no longer the

case. Today, physical printed music is shrinking quickly from the marketplace.[33] Sales of printed song

resources have been replaced by online services such as PraiseCharts.com, SongSelect and

WorshipTeam.com, all web-based providers of digital song charts, which have come into existence in the

last 15 years to meet this need. Finding, accessing and reviewing such solutions requires much more time

than physically opening a printed music book. Each of the services require payment for use beyond an

initial sample period, which is often needed to properly assess the service. Because of this complexity a

new approach was needed to help churches cull through the effort needed to evaluate such resources.

Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media attempts to address this by presenting only pre-reviewed

resources in its listings.

Finally, a new approach is needed because of the increasing commercialization and marketing of church

resources, products and services. This new approach is to provide a guide that is based on

recommendation and *trust*. Heretofore, we have understood that technology and resources are changing.

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[33] By 2010, sales of printed music worship resources had shrunk to 40% of their levels in 2005. Data based on sales charts from WorshipMusic.com.

As the church has leaned to outside vendors to meet the needs for resources, especially technological ones, some of the providers of such resources have reaped strong financial rewards for serving the church. To perpetuate sales of these resources, marketing has increased for all kinds of church resources. This marketing, and the sizable investment these resources represent for churches, has made leaders wary of vendors, and has made evaluation of products much more difficult. To address this issue, the *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* is written by a trusted name in church resources. It is also written and presented as an unbiased, third party review service, rather than a catalog of purchasable goods. The publishers of the book do not make sales commissions on the products listed in the guide. This means the reviews are written with the local church user as the primary beneficiary, not the product and service vendor.

In short, this project is necessary to address the issues of constantly updating product/service offerings, the technological rate of change, the technological complexity of resources and the lack of trust and recommendation available to church leaders needing expert insight and opinion to help them make resource selections for their local congregations.

Chapter 3: The Way Forward

Famous English preacher George Herbert said,

> ...because Country people (as indeed all honest men) do much esteem their word, it being the Life of buying, and selling, and dealing in the world; therefore the Parson is very strict in keeping his word, though it be to his own hindrance, as knowing, that if he be not so, he will quickly be discovered, and disregarded: neither will they believe him in the pulpit, whom they cannot trust in his conversation.[34]

While Herbert was giving directions on the integrity of life needed for pastors to be accepted and respected by their local congregations, his advice is no less appropriate for anyone wishing to serve worship leaders with resources or services meant to help them. Herbert specifically mentions that his parishioners (Country people) are used to the world of buying, selling and dealing with the world. The inference is that people are world-wise and that any kind of deception on the pastor's part will land him in a situation in which "he will quickly be discovered". There could hardly be a more apt description of the attitude of the general population of North America towards commerce and marketing. The level of suspicion and cynicism pervades not only the world but the church as well.

These points are important to consider in developing a resource such as *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media*, because this project is built on the premise that worship leaders are looking for a publication of trusted opinion about worship resources. The guide itself is not a music resource. Instead, it is an edited collection of reviews that honestly evaluate, rank and rate over 100 worship resources. In essence, this project is a buyer's guide for worship leaders. Nothing is more important in presenting such a guide than trust. The guide must not only be seen as trustworthy it must actually be so in its content.

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[34] George Herbert, *George Herbert: The Country Parson, The Temple, Classics of Western Spirituality* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1981). Pg 57

This means two things. First, the reviews must be done with unbiased attention to detail. Inclusion of products and services in the guide book cannot be purchased or done due to favoritism. Ratings must remain centered on the merits of the reviewed product only. Second, marketing of the *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* itself must be focused on the benefits of the reviews, without excessive puffery. The key is to build trust by, well, being trustworthy. This has be the way forward for development and marketing of the *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* to the church at large.

The book has already been offered for sale publicly in a 2011 version. Initially, it was made available only in printed format (162 page bound book), but later was also released as an e-book, available on the Amazon Kindle. A few hundred churches have purchased the guide, and one popular itinerant teacher, Tom Kraeuter, has written a very positive review and published it in his popular magazine. The real measure of the project's long term benefit will be in the time, energy, and money it saves churches, and in the new information about quality resources that they learn from the book. The goal is that this information equips those churches, improving their ministry in worship in the gatherings they attend.

In the future, the book will be recompiled and expanded each year allowing for an updated collection of reviews, adding new sections of content and generally improving the book to meet the changing needs of the worship leading community. Applying these principles, a new edition of the book is already under development for the next year.

Conclusion

In the last 40 years, the music played in churches has made a tremendous transformation. Following the rise of popular music, beginning in the 60's and tracing the style of popular music, church music for worship has moved from hymn-based style and repertoire to popular-styled songs that change as fast as a radio top 40 list. The rate of new music being produced for use in church worship has exploded as well. While the music industry itself has fallen on drastically difficult times, one of the remaining bright spots has been Christian worship music. This is primarily because the viability of the worship music genre is not based on sales of products (CDs) but on licensing revenue which churches pay for use of the songs in their meetings (the majority of which is generated from the company CCLI).

Worship music has proven to be a rare commercial income stream for music publishing during a time when almost every other music genre is vaporizing with the demise of physical product sales (CDs) and the poor ability of digital formats (iTunes) to remain viable against illegal copying/ripping of songs. The result has been that in the last 15 years increasing focus on worship music has resulted in more songs, albums and promotion of worship related resources. During this same time formats for delivering music have changed to digital files, both for audio and printed music. New services that incorporate website technology and mobile applications have also been employed for music delivery.

What this means for worship leaders and musicians in local churches is that the number and complexity of worship music products and resources have increased dramatically. With the increase of numbers of offerings, companies have also increased marketing of their products which further confuses the buyers who need these resources.

To address the large number of resources, the technological complexity of the resources and the confusing marketing messages, the *Worship Resource Guide: Songs & Media* is developed to provide a trusted, non-advertisement based, compilation of recommendation resource listings. Written by professional technology and music veterans, the resource combines expertise in both fields which will hopefully help worship leaders focus just on researching and accessing the songs and media that they need for their local church. The guide is built on the belief that biblical and historical support exists for equipping leaders (in this case worship leaders) as they serve in local churches. The project is built and centered on the principle of trust— that if a trusted, edited resource is created, it will serve the church through the value of integrity.

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