

CREATING A WORSHIP SET

WORSHIP MODULE #3

We desire to create worship sets that are intentional, inviting people to encounter God.

Competency: Creating an intentional and thematic worship experience with the Holy Spirit

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1: Read Psalm 100 and answer the questions.

Assignment 2: Read articles and answer the questions.

Assignment 3: Read and answer questions.

ASSIGNMENT 1

Psalm 100

A psalm. For giving grateful praise.

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Questions:

1. Where is your joy found today?
2. What are you thankful for today?
3. Take a moment to thank God for who He is. Praise break!

ASSIGNMENT 2

Read the following articles by David Santistevan about selecting songs and answer the questions that follow each article.

8 Questions Every Worship Leader Must Ask When Choosing Songs

8 Song Choice Questions

Before we begin, it's important to remember that song choice isn't about you – your voice, your preferences, your creativity. It's more about who you're serving, who you're leading, and what will engage them in worship.

We are co-laboring with the Holy Spirit. What is on the heart of God for His people to experience? What is the Holy Spirit ready to breathe on, and lead you through?

Think about your church. Do you lead for:

A group of wild and crazy Middle Schoolers?

Children with a very short attention span?

A multi-generational service?

An edgy, young adult experience?

Senior citizens?

Be sure to keep that in mind.

With that being said, here is the list of questions you can apply to your next song list:

1. Is Jesus at the center? – Now, every song I lead isn't solely about Jesus. But I find this to be the most helpful question. If a song isn't directly about Christ and His character, I need to know why. Because Christ-centered songs are the best songs, in my opinion. I desire the majority of my worship sets to be filled with these kinds of songs. This is what I want my church to be mindful of.

2. Is it engaging? – I want the songs I lead to be interesting, catchy, and fun to experience. There's not enough time to lead poorly written songs. I'm looking for songs that capture a room.

3. Is it singable? – Just recently I had my two summer interns suggest some new songs we should do for July & August. I found myself saying "no" to most of them. The main reason? They weren't singable for our congregation. They didn't possess an "easily digestible" melody for our people.

Sure, they were popular songs. Sure, they would work in certain contexts. But I'm always thinking – "what will work for Allison Park Church?" You should ask the same. Remember, most of the people in your church are not musicians looking for something creative and challenging. They simply want Jesus.

4. Does it teach an important truth? – The best songs are songs that speak directly to what your congregation is experiencing. Of course, that's different themes at different times. I remember back when "You Never Let Go" by Matt Redman was released. Such an important song for our church at that time.

A well chosen song can unite a church in a special way. Ask – “What is my church going through right now?”

5. Can my band play it? – Want to know why Phil Wickham and Hillsong songs find their way into so many setlists? They create methodical, simple, easily-understood arrangements. When I’m listening for songs, I’m thinking – “Can my band pull this off? Is it challenging, yet accessible?”

6. Is it declarative? – The songs I like to do most are songs that declare truth. They call people to rise up. They inspire people to sing at the top of their lungs. So I’m looking for songs with powerful choruses. I envision my church singing them acapella. How would it sound? Every aspect of a song is important, but a soaring bridge and chorus really does the trick for me.

7. Is it popular? – Now, I never start with this question, but it is something I consider. If a song is making its way around the world, I want to know why. If other churches are using a song, oftentimes it can mean there’s something special about it and I’ll give it a try. But never lead songs simply because someone else does. Consider it, but be sure to factor in the other questions.

8. Does it flow? – I like songs I can “land” on and flow with. These are the kind of songs I can lead with a full band arrangement but also work in a simple, acoustic guitar context. A great song possesses a simplicity, sing-ability, and arrangement that makes it hard to stop singing. The more you sing it, the more it stirs your heart.

1. What stood out to you from the 8 questions the article states above?

2. Are there any questions you disagree with?

3. Which is the most challenging for you when it comes to choosing songs?

Do You Make These Mistakes When You Choose Songs?

Choosing songs for worship is hard. It’s an acquired skill, akin to riding a bike in that you can eventually learn to do it well every time. Over the years I have made some mistakes in choosing a setlist and I hope to spare you the pain.

1. Your songs are in a bad range

This is the peril of many modern worship songs: In the verse, they are too low for people to sing, and in the chorus they are too high. I’m not saying to abandon songs with an octave jump, but be aware of what is comfortable for people to sing. The goal is engagement and if they are struggling to sing your songs, it will be a frustrating experience for them.

2. Your songs don't flow together

Beyond key and familiarity, your songs need to flow together. Doing "I Love You Lord" into "Unrivaled" into "Amazing Grace" into "Battle Belongs" reflects poor planning. Work to reinforce theological themes with your songs. Take your people on a journey. That's not to say you can't change direction in the moment if the Holy Spirit is moving. Just don't throw together a hodge podge of top worship hits. Connect your songs by KEY, by THEME, and STYLE.

3. Your songs are too rushed

This is more of a focus on "how" you lead your songs. Don't just barrel through your setlist. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit within your songs and between your songs. Getting through your songlist without a train wreck is only a small measure of success. Engaging the hearts and minds of your congregation with God is what we're after. That doesn't mean each song needs to be 15 minutes, preceded by a mini-sermon. Just be sure you're truly worshiping and not simply 'getting it done'.

1. What is something from these articles that we do well at Real Life Church?

2. What is something from these articles that we can improve upon?

ASSIGNMENT 3

Read and answer the questions below.

Being a Church Unchurched People Love to Attend

Our vision is to be a church that unchurched people love to attend. Our mission is to help people find and follow Jesus. We strive to have a posture and culture that are both welcoming and intentional from the time people step out of their car, get their coffee, drop off their kids, to the time they leave the worship service so that they can clearly hear the Gospel and respond. So, how do we invite people to engage in the worship service if they are not followers of Jesus?

As worship leaders, when picking songs for our services, we consider if the song has lyrics or concepts that most unchurched people don't know, or that may sound strange. Ex. Altar, sanctify, names of God like Jireh, Yahwah, anything about blood flowing. We can sing songs with these lyrics, but we need to set them up well in the service first. That may be a verbal set up, or it may have to do with placement in the service, i.e. after the message or communion, etc. One question we can ask is, how would I explain this word/concept to an elementary aged student? If that is challenging, spend time studying what it means before leading it.

1. Have you had experience leading a song that you didn't understand its meaning?
2. Would you be willing to start planning 30 second song setups/intros with the goal of making songs easier for people to understand?
3. See the song lyrics below to O Come to the Altar. How would you set this up in a service?

Verse 1

Are you hurting and broken within, Overwhelmed by the weight of your sin, Jesus is calling
Have you come to the end of yourself, Do you thirst for a drink from the well, Jesus is calling

Chorus

O come to the altar, The Father's arms are open wide
Forgiveness was bought with, The precious blood of Jesus Christ

Verse 2

Leave behind your regrets and mistakes, Come today there's no reason to wait, Jesus is calling
Bring your sorrows and trade them for joy, From the ashes a new life is born, Jesus is calling

Bridge

Oh what a Savior, Isn't he wonderful, Sing alleluia Christ is risen
Bow down before him, For he is Lord of all, Sing alleluia Christ is risen

Verse 3

Bear your cross as you wait for the crown
Tell the world of the treasure you've found