

Some Thoughts on Worship Ministry at MBF

What is Worship?

A brief definition of worship can be illustrated from the Old English term "*worthship*", reflecting on the expression of ascribing to God His worth, value, honor, and glory, as in Psalm 29.1,2

"Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array." (Psalms 29:1-2 NAS95)

The term translated *ascribe* is an Hebrew word meaning to *give*. But one does not 'give' to the Lord glory and strength, but rather acknowledges and declares it to the Lord. This is a major component of worship, ascribing to the Lord His character and attributes. Moses ascribed greatness to God in Deuteronomy 32.3. Moses does not give greatness to God, but rather declares it.

Praise is a closely related term to worship; but praise is declaring God's attributes to others, while worship is declaring those attributes to God, as in Revelation 4.11:

Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.(Revelation 4:11 NAS95)

Another major Hebrew term for worship, is the term 'serve'. Worshiping the Lord is an act of service. The New Testament term etymologically referred to bowing at the feet of another and kissing their feet or the hem of their robe. Thus worship is a humbling of oneself before the Lord and in so doing, exalting Him.

Worship could be verbal declaration or it could also be formal. In other words, there are different postures and forms one could take that indicated worship, such as bowing, raising hands, prostrating oneself, or singing. These forms of

worship were outward visible expressions of an inward attitude.

Thus worshipping the Lord is a declaration of the attributes and glory of God, for who He is and for what He has done. While worship is often associated with singing and music, worship is much more than singing. True worship of the Lord is worship that is in Spirit and in truth. This is the kind of worship God desires (John 4.24). This can be done through singing, prayer, praise, and any other expression that declares the glory of the Lord.

Purposes of Worship?

While there are a number of purposes for worship, a primary one is to exalt and magnify the Lord Jesus Christ, and not ourselves. A worship team will edify and encourage the people of the Lord to turn to the Lord in worship, joy, and humility. A further purpose is to prepare the hearts of the people of God for the hearing of the Word of God.

Worship Teams?

The background to worship teams can be seen in King David's appoint of Levitical singers and music to accompany the return of the ark of the Covenant (1 Chronicles 15). Singers, instrumentalists, and song leaders are appointed from among the Levites, to lead the congregation in raising sounds of joy (1 Chron 15.16). The psalms of David are filled with calls to sing to the Lord, and to praise Him with song and instrument (Psa 150). Paul encourages believers to sing and admonish one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph 5.19; Col 3.16). There is singing in the midst of God's throne in heaven (Rev 5.9).

Qualifications

Participation in a worship team means that you are leading the congregation in a most serious role. It is a privilege granted the faithful, not a right based on human talent. Thus we take that role seriously. The worship team ministry is not a performance. Our goal is to invite the congregation to join us in the worship of

our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The qualifications for worship ministry include the following:

- You must be a baptized believer in Jesus Christ
- Your life must exhibit an evident growth in faith and love for Christ
- Have a good testimony with those both in and outside the Church
- Demonstrate a heart for worship and not just for singing or playing an instrument
- You represent Jesus Christ first, MBF, next and your team - both within and without the church
- Commitment to the ministry and leadership of MBF
- Regular attendance and support of MBF
- Willing submission to worship team leader
- Ungrudging commitment to team unity
- Commitment to weekly rehearsals
- Prepare yourself during the week
- Attitude of Selflessness - putting Christ first, others next, yourself last
- Attitude trumps aptitude - Character outweighs competence

Some Reminders

Singers must sing

The team leader leads

Worship team members worship

Vocal priority - Music supports the vocals, not vice versa

Choose and teach songs that congregationally suitable and theologically accurate

Choose and teach songs that are conducive to congregational singing

Don't let the instruments overload the singing - in other words, allow the congregation to hear themselves singing