

THE WONDER OF  
**WORSHIP**

WHY WE WORSHIP THE WAY WE DO

KEITH DRURY

*The Wonder of Worship: Why We Worship the Way We Do*  
Keith Drury

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**Editor's note:** *The dates given in this book are all in the Christian era (AD) unless otherwise noted. (AD is the abbreviation for the Latin phrase, anno domini—"in the year of our Lord.")*

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To my students who reach for the future  
without discarding the past.

And to their parents  
who preserve the past  
without rejecting the future.

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Keith Drury  
Epiphany 2002

## PREFACE



Teaching university students the subject of worship for a half-dozen years has brought me several realizations. First, I've learned how little the average person knows about our worship history—the roots of our current worship practices. Worship to many of my students (almost all of whom come from conservative evangelical churches) is a contemporary experience largely cut off from its roots. Many assume that the church has always worshiped in about the same way up to the 1980s and that recent innovations were the first time worship has ever shifted styles. To my delight, these same students light up when they discover the rich history of worship streams feeding into the present. Following a reading in class, one girl burst out in astonishment, “Why, they’ve *always* changed worship!” Knowing our roots of worship brings perspective and maturity to planning and leading worship.

Second, my students are not alone in knowing little about our past worship practices. This is also true of their parents. While the parents may have more historical knowledge, that knowledge is often limited to the last fifty years. Many of these parents (and others of their generation in the church) have succeeded in changing the worship styles practiced by *their* parents. Having finished their “revolutionary work,” they have set about the business of defending their innovations (now considered to be traditions by their children). But their view of history is a short one—just fifty years or so. When adults become aware of the overall flow of worship history, they often gain a deeper maturity and perspective in assessing the effectiveness of their own innovations—and in dealing with the *next* generation’s suggested changes.

So, this book is for both my students and their parents (and, of course, other church leaders). It is designed to be both a “reader” for students in college worship classes and a study book for parents in Sunday school classes or small groups.

I have tried to write for the average reader, keeping this book easy-to-read, so that any person—college student or adult—can grasp its contents. I have

also tried to remain unbiased, allowing the reader to make up his or her mind about the issues. However, no writer is totally without an opinion or a leaning toward one or another view. Each of us writes from personal experience. Even as I attempt to remain impartial, I should outline my background and the personal assumptions that have influenced the making of this book.

**1. *I have a Revivalist-Holiness-evangelical background.*** I was reared and continue to serve in a church with strong roots in the Methodist Revivalist-Holiness Camp Meeting tradition. My denomination considers itself “evangelical” and a member of the “Holiness Movement.” I suspect that this background has nudged me to inflate the importance of the Revivalist and Camp Meeting streams in worship. On the other hand, as an insider I doubtless feel more free to criticize this aspect of worship history, as well. But you should know that I am not Anglican or Catholic—I am a Wesleyan rooted in the worship of Camp Meeting Revivalism.

**2. *I am present-biased.*** While I love worship history, I am more concerned with the present and the future than the past. This is precisely why it is important to study the history of worship—to know how to build today’s church on a good foundation as it enters the future. I don’t believe that everything we now do in worship is wrong, or that the solution is to turn back the clock to the way we worshiped three hundred years ago. I don’t even believe that getting back to “early church worship” is our best course. True, our present worship could use considerable upgrading. However, I believe that has been true in every age—even during the first century.

So, this book does not give equal treatment to subjects based on their role in all of history. If I had done that, I would certainly have given more space to baptism and the Eucharist (and little to the altar call or the testimony meeting). My intention is not to cover worship history in some mathematically precise treatment. Rather, I start with our current worship practices—the things we do in worship today—and trace them back to their roots. Thus, I include a whole chapter tracing the “greeting handshake.” My hope is that the reader will see that almost all of our present practices have some historical roots. And a familiarity with these roots increases our chances of intelligently designing and redesigning future worship.

**3. *I am Protestant.*** Many Protestants tend to inflate the importance of the early church and post-Reformation periods of history, treating the in-between time as the “Dark Ages.” For them, the “Dark Ages” began in 313 when Constantine converted and continued until the 1500s when Martin Luther “restored the church again.” I don’t believe this is true. However, like most other Protestants, I am probably guilty of depreciating the thousand years between 500 and 1500.

On the other hand, having been raised in a somewhat anti-Catholic environment, I may veer off on the other side of the road at times, as I try to correct some of the myths Protestants have about the Middle Ages and Catholicism.

**4. *I am an American.*** This book is especially written for people in the Americas. Many European histories of worship inflate their own role in history (of course, they *did* have a corner on just about everything for 1,500 years). European worship histories easily overlook the wild and crazy happenings in North America’s short worship history. I probably do the reverse by upgrading the importance of worship happenings here in America.

**5. *I am Charis-friendly.*** I am friendly to the recent Charismatic worldwide movement. A book on worship cannot ignore a movement that represents as much as one third of the world’s Christians. I am not a Charismatic, but I value this stream as part of the current worship milieu of Christianity.

**6. *I don’t want to answer all your questions.*** If I have done my job right, you will finish every chapter with more questions than when you began. This book is not an exhaustive, conclusive history of worship. It is just a “reader”—something to introduce you to deeper thinking and study. My hope is that you will come to the “Books to Read Next” chapter, near the end of this book, hungry to know more—callously tossing aside this introductory book and devouring deeper works by the likes of James F. White, Robert Webber, Bernhard Lang, and others reviewed in that chapter.

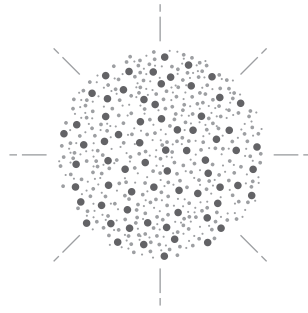
**7. *I am an educator.*** My craft involves more teaching than writing. For many years, I got up each day, prepared for my courses, went to class, and coached students into learning. I do not approach this book as a church historian—there are plenty of excellent worship history books out there—but I write as an educator. This book’s primary intent is to get you to *learn* and to *think*. It



is an educational tool—for classroom or church. Each chapter begins with a contemporary story to engage your interest and get your mind in gear for the subject. The story is followed by a series of questions designed to arouse your curiosity—to generate your interest in attempting to find answers. (The chapter does not try to answer all the questions as if it were a legal brief. Instead, it attempts to open doors for the reader, encouraging him or her to begin thinking about the answers.)

Each chapter then moves through the history of the particular worship practice (baptism, preaching, etc.). While this necessarily involves some repetition, as an educator, I see such repetition as a good thing. Usually, I begin with the biblical practices, then trace them down to the present. After this sweep of history, each chapter closes with a series of discussion or learning questions. These questions will help the reader (or a class) think deeper and clarify personal positions on a variety of issues in worship. Many chapters also include actual historical quotations—enabling the reader to decide on an individual basis what an early church writer meant.

**8. *I am indebted to many other writers.*** As I mentioned above, this book includes a separate chapter reviewing quite a few superb worship histories—books you will want to read next. The three writers who have influenced me most are James F. White, Robert Webber, and Bernhard Lang. To these three scholars I am deeply indebted for molding and influencing my thinking. They have written excellent texts for study and I hope you'll buy their books next. What I have written here is a “reader” to get you started—to get you moving on your journey toward a deeper study of the rich roots of Christian worship.



## PART 1

# THE PRIMARY ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP



What are the primary elements of worship? That is, what are the elements we consider indispensable, the things we'd do no matter what—even if we dropped other parts of our worship service?

This section focuses on five primary elements. You might argue for other elements to be added, but for the purpose of this reader as outlined in the Preface, we have settled on these five:

- Music/Praise
- Public and Private Prayer
- Scripture and Preaching
- Baptism
- Lord's Supper

## MUSIC/PRAISE



*Karen had graduated from college in 1979 with a music degree. She was having a hard time adjusting to singing the simple melodies that were projected on a large screen at her church. She pleaded with Shawn, her worship leader: “Can’t we sing at least **some** hymns? These simple praise choruses have no depth. Isn’t God a God of variety and four-part harmony too?” Shawn smiled and replied, “Someday . . . someday your style of music might come back.” Feeling strangely old all at once, Karen shrugged hopelessly and walked slowly to her car. “But God expects our best—and these simple melodies are not the best we can offer him.”*

How did music come to be such a dominant part of worship? Was it always that way? Have musical styles changed in the past as often as they’ve changed recently? When did we start using music in worship? Is it “biblical”?

Music is a central part of today’s worship. However, that was not always so. This chapter could have been titled “Praise,” since that is probably the “primary element” of worship. But, we are looking at the elements of worship from today’s perspective. And since music is the primary form of praise today, we have titled this chapter “Music/Praise.”

## Old Testament Music

Music and worship are intertwined inextricably. Music is such a powerful medium of expression that it was bound to be used in worship, and it has been—in almost all religions of the world. The Jews of the Old Testament are no exception.

As soon as the Hebrew people became Israelites—immediately after they crossed the Red Sea—they held a worship celebration. Miriam led the singing, complete with tambourines and a trail of dancing, singing women accompanists. Before the tabernacle or temple or even the Ten Commandments were reality, there was praise through music.

### Martin Luther (1500s)

“. . . next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits. . . . Our dear fathers and prophets did not desire without reason that music be always used in the churches. Hence, we have so many songs and psalms. This precious gift has been given to man alone that he might thereby remind himself that God has created man for the express purpose of praising and extolling God. . . . A person who gives this some thought and yet does not regard music as a marvelous creation of God, must be a clodhopper indeed and does not deserve to be called a human being; he should be permitted to hear nothing but the braying of asses and the grunting of hogs.”

Foreword to Georg Rhau's *Symphoniae*, a collection of chorale motets published in 1538. Accessed May 21, 2005 from <http://www.eldrbarry.net/mous/saint/luthmusc.htm>.

When Samuel met a collection of prophets descending from a holy site, musicians were leading them with lyres, tambourines, flutes, and harps—an ancient orchestral procession. When King Saul lost control of his emotions, David played his harp to soothe him.

In the tabernacle-tent and in Solomon’s temple, music became formal and extravagant, including full-time professional musicians (1 Chron. 15:22). The complexity and splendid performances lifted the hearts of the people. The Levites appointed singers and choirs who were accompanied by instruments, including lyres, harps, rams’ horns, metal trumpets, flutes and reeds, tambourines/hand drums, and cymbals (1 Chron. 15:16). The temple musicians used strings, wind, and percussion instruments. The temple choirs were splendid, and the Jewish hymnbook, the Psalms, provided the text for the performances. These were probably sung in a chant-like form or with a simple melody.

Music in the many local synagogues was less extravagant and professional than in Jerusalem’s impressive temple. Local synagogue worship leaned toward Scripture and prayer more than celebration and praise, but there was always some singing. At the very least, the worshipers chanted the Scriptures without accompaniment. One or two cantors probably led recitations in a rhythmic chant-like tone, and the people responded with easy-to-remember responses—antiphonal singing of sorts. The notion of “parts” or varied complex harmonies was still centuries away. If you had asked a first-century Jew if he sang, he would surely say he did, but that singing would probably sound to us more like a chant than melody or harmony.

## **New Testament Music**

The New Testament, of course, begins with an angelic host saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will . . .” (Luke 2:14 KJV). The disciples sang a hymn with Jesus—presumably a psalm—as they left the Last Supper and headed out to the garden (Matt. 26:30). The most famous song-singing service was that of Paul and Silas in the jail at Philippi (Acts 16:25–26).

When the apostle Paul wrote the Ephesian Christians, he assumed the Spirit-filled Ephesians would “be speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19 KJV). When he corrected other excesses in Corinth, he mentioned, “When you come together, everyone has a hymn,” while others would offer a variety of other contributions to the informal stew of early church worship (1 Cor. 14:26).

Of course, the New Testament was not written down until decades after Christ rose from the dead. Until it was available in written form, the gospel was handed down orally. It is likely the first-century church—before it had a written New Testament—preserved and passed on some of these stories through hymns and songs. What that means is the earliest portions of the New Testament may have been sung for years before it was even read. It makes sense—it is much easier to remember Scripture by singing it than by reciting it. Luke records several hymns that are likely candidates for such sung Scripture, but perhaps the best example is from chapter two of Philippians (the “Kenosis Hymn”), which Paul recorded. Many other possible Scripture hymns had circulated as sung pieces before being written down.

## **The Early Church**

The early church was a singing church. These believers sang hymns that told stories and affirmed what they believed. The “Kenosis Hymn” previously mentioned is an excellent example of a creedal song. The first “Apostles’ Creed” may have been sung before being written, since chanting/singing was the preferred method of memorizing things. Certainly the early Christians continued the synagogue practice of singing/chanting the Psalms of the Old Testament. Participation was a governing principle of early church worship, so it seems likely that the worshipers may have sung “Amens” or “Alleluias” as part of their worship.

However, don’t get the idea that their singing was always a thunderously joyful celebration. The Christian church was not an authorized religion for

several centuries, so worship music was perhaps subdued. But they did celebrate, as we can gather from the reports on the Corinthian church.

By the 300s, Christian worship was legalized, freeing the church's worship considerably. The Christians no longer were forced to meet quietly, dispersed throughout the city in quiet cells or at various homes across the city. They could now unite, gather in large groups, and construct magnificent church buildings.

Physical settings affect the kind of music we use in worship. Groups of thirty to forty (or at the most 100 in some North African locations) Christians quietly assembling in a private home use a different kind of music than 1,000 Christians gathering for multiple services in a massive, metropolitan basilica. The simple songs quietly sung in private homes became increasingly more complex and professional. By the late 300s, Ambrose introduced antiphonal singing—with one part of the congregation “answering” the other. Antiphonal singing is probably not something a small group in a home setting would think of doing. (Ambrose, a Western bishop, may have been “beaten to the punch” by Ignatius of Antioch before him in the East.) It had been a part of the “super-church” Old Testament temple, of course, but now was reintroduced. However, don't get the idea that their music was anything like the complex piece you may have heard last Sunday. The tunes were simple folk tunes and only the melody was sung. If we actually heard them today, we might not consider them “real music.” Most early church leaders rejected instruments in worship, perhaps due to their pagan association.

### **John Calvin (1500s)**

“To sing the praises of God upon the harp and psaltery, . . . unquestionably formed a part of the training of the law and of the service of God under that dispensation of *shadows* and *figures*, but they are not now to be used in public thanksgiving.”

*On Psalms LXXI* (1500s). Accessed July 21, 2001 from <http://www.swrb.com/newslett/actualnls/InstCalv.htm>.

## The Middle Ages

In the thousand years from approximately 500–1500, the role of music continually grew both in importance and excellence. Performance replaced participation as the goal. While the Eastern church dragged its feet in adopting the aesthetic value of music (i.e., beauty itself inherently being important to worship), the Western church considered the beauty of music important enough to provide it a principal role in worship.

In the late 600s, Pope Gregory II gathered the many melodies of his day into what are now known as “Gregorian Chants.” These simple melodies were sung unaccompanied. The text was dominant and affected the rhythm of the vocal line. While variations existed, the “Gregorian Chant” was the dominant musical style for almost a thousand years.

When the organ appeared in the 500s, it was at first opposed by the Christians as pagan and inappropriate for churches. The organ came to be used to signal praise in the emperor’s court (in a sense filling the role of the traditional trumpet flourish). However, it soon appeared at the Pope’s court, used for a similar purpose—to signal the entrance of the Pope. By the 700s and 800s, it had emerged in the church but did not yet rule, and by the 900s it was used in the Benedictine monasteries.

### **Martin Luther (1500s)**

“I always loved music; whoso has skill in this art, is of a good temperament, fitted for all things. We must teach music in schools; a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard him; neither should we ordain young men as preachers, unless they have been well exercised in music.”

*Table Talk, of Universities, Arts, etc.* DCCXCIV. Accessed July 17, 2001 from Christian Classics Ethereal Library, Calvin College, Grand Rapids.



The organ eventually found solid footing in the church. The Christians were at first suspicious and thus limited its use to sounding out the note to kick off the chant—a sort of elaborate pitch pipe. However, it gradually came to accompany the singing itself, eventually using its full range of pitches to increase the complexity of the relatively simple musical format of the chants. By the 1100s, the organ was widely accepted. By 1300, every significant church possessed an organ.

For a thousand years, the church had survived without singing “harmony.” Instead, worshipers sang their songs in a single tone or “melody.” From 1000–1100, polyphonic music emerged. By the end of the 1200s, the polyphonic music revolution had swept the Christian church. Complex musical pieces were produced by talented professional composers and were sung by gifted professional musicians. Five centuries later, the leading composers of the day, including Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, wrote religious masses along with their secular work. Musical masses were performed as entire services, with music instead of the spoken word becoming the medium of the mass.

Monks could read and write, so monasteries became a focus of musical development and promotion. In the early 1100s, Bernard of Clairvaux wrote the text for “Jesus the Very Thought of Thee” and “O Sacred Head Now Wounded.” St. Francis wrote “All Creatures of Our God and King” in early 1225.

In one sense, this period was the height of complexity and quality in church music. The composition was professional and the music was performed with a penchant for excellence. Composers were paid for their work, and their professional compositions were performed by paid singers. Kettledrums, violins, and full orchestration became a common part of worship. Aristocrats could attend these services and “go home proud” of the quality of their church’s worship.

The church often oscillates between the two ends of the performance-participation axis. During the Middle Ages, performance and professionalism tended to displace participation and involvement, especially in the music. The congregation increasingly became an “audience” whose only task was to listen, then come forward at the end of service to receive the Eucharist.

### **John Calvin (1537)**

“There are psalms which we desire to be sung in the Church, as we have it exemplified in the ancient Church and in the evidence of Paul himself, who says it is good to sing in the congregation with mouth and heart. We are unable to compute the profit and edification which will arise from this, except after having experimented. Certainly as things are, the prayers of the faithful are so cold, that we ought to be ashamed and dismayed. The psalms can incite us to lift up our hearts to God and to move us to an ardor in invoking and exalting with praises the glory of his Name.”

*Articles Concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva, Proposed by the Ministers and the Council January 16, 1537, trans. J. K. S. Reid, Library of Christian Classics, XXII, 53–54.*

## **Reformation**

The Reformers changed doctrine more than worship—at least, that was their initial intent. Invariably, Protestant worship gravitated away from Roman Catholic traditional worship even in musical forms. The Reformation was a great movement, and great movements almost always develop great music.

Martin Luther, who began penning hymns in 1523, was probably the first great evangelical hymn writer. Many churches still sing his “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” The first “hymnals” as we know them emerged in Luther’s time and included his hymns along with those written by others.

Reformation choirs still sang complicated polyphonic compositions, but simple congregational singing again came to the forefront. By the late 1600s, the Pietistic movement in Germany had influenced a shift in musical lyrics. Songs of that time emphasized objective truths about God—they were musical creeds of sorts. The Pietistic movement nudged songs more toward subjective personal experience. This was a minor blip on the historical screen

at the time, but it was the first foretaste of what would become a massive trend two or three centuries later.

Zwingli was probably the most accomplished musician of the Reformation period. But when he discovered that the wonderful organ in Zurich's cathedral was being used for classy, non-gospel entertainment, he destroyed it. Radical Reformers and the "Free Church movement" attempted to strip all the extras from the Catholic mass. John Calvin even eliminated all music from worship. However, the resulting service was so cold and sterile that Calvin relented and restored singing, but required that it be simple, modest, and without showiness. For groups like the Puritans, singing was accepted, but musical instruments were considered excessive.

### **Charles Finney (1835)**

"Choirs. Afterwards, another innovation was brought in. It was thought best to have a select choir of singers sit by themselves, so as to give an opportunity to improve the music. But this was bitterly opposed. How many congregations were torn and rent in sunder by the desire of ministers and some leading individuals, to bring about an improvement in the cultivation of music, by forming choirs! People talked about 'innovations,' and 'new measures,' and thought great evils were coming to the Churches, because the singers were seated by themselves, and cultivated music, and learned new tunes that the old people could not sing."

*Lectures on Revival XIII: "How Churches Can Help Ministers."* Accessed July 17, 2001 from CCEL, Calvin College.

## 1700s

At the turn of the eighteenth century, most hymn lyrics were largely limited to Bible texts, especially to the Psalms. The notion of singing words written by a modern person (instead of the inspired Word of God) was yet to be accepted. Two “outsiders” (or really people on the fringes of the church) changed all that: Isaac Watts and John Wesley (along with his brother Charles).

Isaac Watts, considered the “Father of English Hymnody,” moved beyond Scripture to paraphrasing and rearranging Scripture into modern hymns. He told the Bible in his own words. Many churches still sing his “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” and “O God Our Help in Ages Past.”

John and Charles Wesley were more radical and more subjective than Watts. The Wesleys wrote and promoted hymns based on scriptural ideas, but not necessarily Scripture itself. They promoted catchy melodies (sometimes popular barroom tunes) and lusty congregational singing. Many congregations still sing Charles Wesley’s “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing.”

### **Charles Finney (1835)**

“And there are many churches now who would not tolerate an organ. They would not be half so much excited to be told that sinners are going to hell, as to be told that there is going to be an organ in the meeting house . . .”

“Measures to Promote Revivals” (1835). *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, ed. William G. McLoughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960).

## 1800s

As the nineteenth century saw revivalism emerge, music came to be used in even more powerful though controversial ways. Charles Finney, lawyer-turned-preacher, taught the use of “right means” to bring about a revival. Finney used the first part of the service—where music was emphasized—to warm up the audience for the sermon. Music as testimony and witness increased, along with a generous dose of sentimentalism and subjectivism. William Bradbury launched what was then called “Sunday school hymns” (now called gospel songs) and included the tune along with the words of a song, an innovation at that time. Gospel songs swept the church, though not without great resistance to forcing all songs into one mold by actually specifying the tune for each.

The Camp Meeting movement and Revivalism, along with Holiness and Pentecostal worship, kept energetic gospel singing alive. The “song service” (the first part of the service) became an exciting and animated part of revivalist meetings.

## Modern Times

Fanny Crosby, the premier gospel songwriter, took gospel songs even further into subjective testimony style. To this day, many churches still sing her “Blessed Assurance” and “I Am Thine, O Lord.” D. L. Moody recruited Ira Sankey to travel with him as his singer on campaigns; thus Sankey became the first modern “song evangelist” to kick off the trend of matching preachers and singers in meetings. (Actually one could argue that Thomas Hastings, Charles Finney’s music leader, may have been the first.) The Jesus People in the 1960s and 1970s led a return to simple Scripture choruses (accompanied by guitar), reversing the trend away from Scripture to experience. A temporary trend, it was not widely adopted, though it may have become the forerunner of the later “praise chorus movement” that also returned to the practice of singing Scripture.

The Charismatic movement most directly spawned the late twentieth century “praise and worship” movement with “praise choruses,” moving the

focus from personal experience back to God again. Somewhat ironically, the “praise and worship” movement is itself highly subjective and experiential, yet the songs of this movement have returned to the simple melodies and objective truths of an earlier era. One might argue that this movement uses repetitive music to create a kind of subjective altered state of feelings, even though the words themselves are objective.

The piano had eventually joined the organ as one of two primary instruments, especially in evangelical and revivalist churches. In some camp meeting churches, the piano and organ were joined by a brass band. Later the organ began to lose ground to the piano, but then both lost ground to what was dubbed “the worship team”: a collection of attractive singers with microphones, accompanied by guitars, an electronic keyboard, and a drum set.

Where will worship music go in the future? The answer is partly found in another question: Where will the culture go? Worship music often reflects the culture’s music, though admittedly there is a delay in the church’s adaptation of cultural patterns. Music is a cultural expression, as is most of worship. The musical forms and instruments of worship in West Africa will differ from that of Nebraska simply because the cultures are different. Each will use different rhythms, styles, instruments, and traditions. And the musical forms of a downtown church full of middle-aged folks will differ from that of a brand-new church full of singles and younger couples, because their cultures are also different. As musical forms change and old musical instruments fade away, worship music will also shift. Just as the organ, kettledrums, accordion, and xylophone found places in various cultural expressions of worship, so will the electronic keyboard, guitar, and other instruments find a place as musical culture shifts. Ultimately, worship is an expression of the people—and that articulation is almost always expressed in a way that is culturally comfortable.

## To Think About



1. What new discovery did you make from reading this chapter about music in worship?
2. Since the early church apparently sang quietly and in a subdued manner for fear of attracting attention to their secret gathering, should we try to “get back to doing things the way the early church did them”? Was this house-church setting *ideal* or a mere necessity of the day?
3. What do you think about the notion that the early church first preserved Scripture in song, before it was later incorporated into the writings of the apostles? If this is true, would it be “cheating” on the apostles’ part to include in the Bible texts that were already sung, or would it be OK?
4. Think about the transition from small house-church music to large basilica “super-church” singing, which took place between 300 and 500. What are the comparative advantages and disadvantages of both small house-churches and large super-churches when it comes to music?
5. What about singing only the melody in unison versus singing “parts” in polyphonic style? Make a chart of the advantages and disadvantages of both styles.
6. Reflect on the resistance, then reluctance, then grudging acceptance, and finally approval of the organ in the Middle Ages. What insights and generalizations would you make from this account that might relate to other “innovations”?
7. So many songs mentioned in this chapter have lasted hundreds of years, while others have disappeared. Which modern songs do you think might last several hundred years into the future? Why? What gives a song endurance through time?
8. Discuss these shifts: (1) from objective hymns, (2) to gospel-testimony songs, (3) to God-directed praise choruses. What are the advantages of each? Disadvantages? Relating to these three shifts, how would you draw a pie diagram of your own church? What would you shift if you could?

9. Some think the preferable worship musical style for adults is “frozen in” during their 20s and early 30s. That is, whatever worship style adults preferred in their 20s and 30s will become their lifetime preference or their “tradition.” Test this notion on yourself and friends. Where it is true, ask what contributes to this phenomenon.
10. What compromises and halfway points have you seen that exist between styles of worship? How should a church handle the diverse worship “needs” or “preferences” of a congregation?
11. This chapter was titled “Music/Praise” but the author believes the real primary element should be “praise.” Music is presently the primary means of praise. So, to learn more about the real primary element, make a list of all the ways we can accomplish praise *without* music.