

Bless His Holy Name

God's Pattern of Worship



Dr. Jay Worth Allen

Bless His Holy Name

The Worship Of God

by

Dr. Jay Worth Allen

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness;

Come before His presence with singing.

Know ye the Lord, He is God;

It is He that made us, and not we ourselves;

We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving,

And into His courts with praise;

Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting,

And His truth endureth to all generations.”

Psalm 100

Let me first clarify my expression. When I use the term “worship,” I am referring to what some would call a song service: the musical interim before the teacher - pastor, preacher or priest - begins his homily; when the choir sings; when the musicians break into choruses or hymns and the whole congregation joins in; or, as it is in some Churches, the two or three songs the congregation sings precisely before the announcements are read followed by the rhetorical hymn played by the Church organist during the tithing collection - that’s what I refer to as “worship” - the musical portion of a Church service.

In all of our Father’s sovereignty there are patterns - order. This is true in all the Lord’s work. This order - or pattern for worship - can be seen very clearly in Psalm 100. From “Make a joyful noise” to “Come before His presence” to “Enter His gates” to “bless His name . . . to all generations” - there is an order, a pattern.

There is an interesting aspect to the meaning of the word, *Psalm*. The word itself is more of a title. The Hebrew text ascribes our book of Psalms as *Sepher Tehillim*, which means Book of Praises. In the New Covenant, “Psalm” is derived from the Greek word *psalmos*, which means or denotes a poem or a verse sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments. I placed this word study here for those dear believers who are convinced that instrumental music does not have a place in the New Covenant Church. I disagree. The early Church disagrees. The apostle Paul disagrees. In fact, Paul loved

the playing of instruments and the singing of songs, hymns and Psalms during the Church service and states that very clearly in 1 Corinthians 14:26, Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. If instruments are not for the Church today - the New Covenant - how do you explain, "And when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying Thou art worthy . . ." (Revelation 5:8,9); "And I heard a voice from Heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sang . . ." (Revelation 14:2); "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sang . . ." (Revelation 15:2,3). I do believe the Revelation is found in the New Covenant record, is it not? If musical instruments are good enough for the Throne of God, they're certainly good enough for the Church. Although the use of instruments and the method of their use can be taken to extreme.

"And they sat the ark of God on a new cart . . . they brought it out of the house of Abinadab . . . David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals . . . Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error, and there he died by the ark of God" (2 Samuel 6:1-11).

Blessings do not follow even our best intentions unless the service is rendered in God's way. Directions had been given as to how the ark should be borne - "The sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die" (Numbers 4:1-1) - David borrowed a Philistine technique and failed in his mission - though his intentions were good - he failed in his effort. This, I feel is why so much of our modern day Christian music falls short of blessing and mature fruit - we're utilizing a new Philistine cart (the particular flavor of the day) to carry the message of the LORD. The Lord wasn't upset with Israel's music or dancing, but rather with their rebellion against His stipulation.

His Presence

God has implanted Himself within each and every believer. We are already in His presence. He has set up His dwelling within us. So the question arises, "Do we need to ask the Lord to come near to us, to visit our gathering by the use of worship?" as some teach: "So the Church can be in His presence. So we can *feel* Him. So the Holy Spirit can come down and be among His people." I think not. To convey the idea that

we need to do anything more than believe on His Son to bring Him - the Holy Spirit - to us, or we to Him, is ludicrous! How much closer can He be? He lives in us! "Where two or more are gathered, I am with them." The mystery, which was hidden for ages, has been revealed: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:26,27). The idea of the Holy Spirit coming to visit your Church service or coming upon you in a supernatural way is Old Covenant. In the New Covenant economy the Holy Spirit has made "His dwelling" - not upon us, not upon our gathering - but rather "within us."

We may be conscious of the Holy Spirit comforting, drawing, cleansing, assuring, transforming, conforming and the like while we gather with the saints - or during our private time with Lord - but what we sense is not something we have made happen, that is the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of all believers - together or alone. We need not make Him (the Holy Spirit) more or less than He is. He's perfect.

Many Christian people seeking to have the Lord come upon them within a specific musical (so-called spiritual) experience have become self-centered, small-minded and conceited through thinking too much about themselves and too little about God. Many have succumbed either to a piggish asceticism which equated a particular feeling with holiness and a separation from the world or else to the cult of some special experience identified with separation and thus a feeling of sanctity ("a second blessing", "the fullness of the Spirit", "Spirit-baptism", etc.) in the individual which they have pursued sometimes to the neglect of common or garden variety Christian morality.

The Holy Spirit is first a witness for Christ, and then He is a witness to us of the Lord's infinite love and the sufficiency of the Lord's finished work. But we are a needy bunch. We see so much in ourselves which appears to be altogether unlovable. We have fears, attacks from the Devil and a myriad of junk in our lives which seem to be destroying us and our walk with the Lord. So we cry to the Lord, "Help!" Then we feel the loving arms of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. The One who comforts, draws, cleanses, assures, transforms, conforms, etc., us privately and in our gatherings and we know then, that "all is well with my soul." Music didn't bring Him, the Father sent Him and we just enjoy Him.

So the purpose of Psalm 100, given to us as a pattern or order of worship - for the Church today - is not to bring God into our midst, but rather to recognize that God is in our midst, and therefore, we, as a community of believers can enjoy Him (and one another - in Him) in a corporate gathering of worship.

This "worship," which Psalm 100 seeks to guide us into, is a "corporate worship," a heavenly fellowship with Him and with one another, in heaven and in the earth; a means by which the Lord Himself is acknowledged publicly as who He is: Lord, King, God, Everything! We, as believers, are called to join the heavenly choir - pick up your harp, open up your mouth and join in the song - in a corporate agreement of that fact:

“To the One sitting on the Throne and unto the Lamb [be] the praise and the honor and the glory and the dominion into the ages of the ages.” We are called to be worshipers. So let’s learn from the One who has called us to worship, exactly how we are to worship Him - corporately - who only is worthy to be worshipped. Let’s heed Him who calls.

God’s Pattern

A paradigm from Psalm 100.

Psalm 100 was given to us by the Holy Spirit through the pen of a Spirit-led believer, King David. But, as most have likely experienced, in most Church services today, we as modern believers begin the pattern at verse 4 instead of verse 1, as the Psalmist suggests. Long before David instructs us to “Enter into His gates,” he calls us to “Make a joyful noise” and “Come before His presence with singing.”

This Psalm, we must remember, was first written to the Hebrew people - the Old Covenant people of God, Israel. The first people separated by God for Himself. Given, as Paul suggests, to us, the Church as a physical example of what we are in the Spirit. To these people, who were first to read Psalm 100, this order of worship must have been a given. The Hebrews were accustomed to singing and making a joyful noise as they journeyed to Jerusalem for the feast days. They sang the ceremonial Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134) each year they approached the Holy City. Why then, we must ask, would God call them to sing, to “make joyful” noises to Him, as they approached the Holy City?

God had three purposes for this singing. First, to remind His people of the purpose for their visit; second, to stir up their faith in the Lord their God; and third, to unite their hearts and minds with one another - to transport them from their poverty, into His storehouse.

Singing about God, I believe, was and is, the easiest and most efficient means for God to remind His people in any age of the great distance between His thoughts and ways and our thoughts and ways. Maybe that’s why the Hebrews were given 15 songs to sing, not merely three or four. This, more than likely, is where our modern-day concept of a song service first appeared. But it is sad to see how demeaned it has become in so many Churches. In many congregations, this beautiful pattern in Psalm 100, has become no more than a call to order, or a space-filler for the latecomers entering the building and filling the pews. And sad to say, in some gatherings, music has taken over the service entirely! Lord, forgive us.

Through worship we, as the Church can be united as one body in acknowledgment of Him. We can be lifted up from the pressures of this life into the peace of God. But worship is not something that just happens - singing itself does not accomplish worship. Although singing can unite the hearts and minds of the believers in a bond of faith and a united expression of love, it can, and many times does,

immobilize and sidetrack an entire service; though the desire of the people is worship. This is where the worship leader enters the picture.

Little Shepherds

“And He gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors (shepherds) and teachers, for (the) equipping of the saints to (the) work of ministry, to (the) building up of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11,12).

God has leaders in His Church. Shepherds. Some Churches call these shepherds, pastors. Others call them elders, priests, or preachers - whatever the title, they are seen by God as shepherds - leaders. We are called the “sheep of His pasture,” the Lord Jesus being, “The Chief Shepherd.” But the Lord has given, to some, the “office” of shepherd. (The word pastors, *poimen*, is the word for shepherd in the Greek language.) The apostle Peter understood this very clearly when he wrote, “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight of it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre [dishonest gain], but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords [as leaders, not as taskmasters] over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock. And as the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away” (1 Peter 5:2-4 KJV).

So why do we need someone to lead us in worship? The reason is simple: we are “the flock of God” and “sheep” need a shepherd.

Physical Sheep

Sheep are sweet, loving, gentle animals; only with reservations will they swat a fly. They are also very simple creatures. Here’s what you can expect from sheep: sheep will stand in one spot of thick grass and eat until the grass is completely consumed. Then, after all visible grass has been depleted, they will become terrified, thinking they will ever eat again. One of the odder aspects of a sheep’s nature is their inability to stand back upright after they have over-eaten and fallen on their side; so, without a shepherd to pick them up, they will lie there and yes, they will die. Sheep also tend to wander off from their home pasture, get tangled in a neighbor’s fence, become overly excited, and because they are so simple-minded they cannot untangle themselves from the fence, they stand there, tangled in silence and eventually die. Do you see a pattern here? Sheep are also considered juicy fare by wolves. So we, as “the sheep of His pastures,” must have shepherds too. Leaders, who will keep us moving in the right direction, who will tend us within the pastures of God, who will defend us from wolves, who will help pick us up when we fall. Or we, like sheep, will grow weak, faint-hearted, fat and dead.

When the welfare of the sheep is in question, the pastor or shepherd of the flock is the man the Lord holds responsible. If the sheep are well-fed, it is the shepherd of

those sheep who has led the sheep into green pastures. If the sheep are weak and frail, it is the shepherd of those sheep who has not done his job; he has not shepherded the sheep - the Lord holds the pastor, the shepherd, responsible for the sheep under his care.

Some wonderful examples of shepherds can be found in Philip Keller's book, *A Shepherd looks at Psalm 23*. It's a wonderful glimpse at sheep from the point of view of a real shepherd - which Philip is. Philip's book illustrates the love of the good shepherds and the apathy of the bad. The same is true of those who hold the office of pastor in the Lord's Church today. So many of God's people are under the care of shepherds who use them for nothing more than their produce - treating them as sheep fit for the slaughterhouse; fit only for the money they can place in the pockets of the dispassionate pastor - weep for those sheep.

How different is the loving, caring pastor who the Lord has made the keeper of His sheep - a doting man whose delight is in caring for the Lord's people. The shepherd of those sheep finds no greater reward than seeing the Lord's sheep happy, content, well-fed, safe and satisfied.

There are over 40 references to sheep and shepherds in the New Testament. Many of them deal, specifically with the roll of the shepherd overseeing the sheep. When God uses so many illustrations to illustrate one similar work, we should take Him at His word.

God has placed Leaders in His Church to lead - not to follow - not to accommodate the wishes of the Church, but rather to help conform His Church to the wishes of the "Chief Shepherd." Leaders are given to the Church to care for and grow-up the Church. But there is a considerable difference between leading the Church in singing, and leading the Church in worship. Many a man can induce a bunch of people to walk and sing aimlessly around the streets of their hometown for some enlightened cause. But it required a called shepherd to organize the original "March For Jesus" in the streets of London, England. The former can, at times release an emotional, sometimes soulish response. The latter is someone who can lead the people of God into worship. One loves to lead people in singing. The other loves God, and because of that love, can lead the people of God with singing into worship. One is like Saul, the other like David. Saul was a great man for the causes of the people of God, David was a great man for the causes of God.

Like the Shepherd-King David, a worship leader must be a worshiper himself. If a leader is going to lead, he must know where he's going - the only way to know where he's going, is to have traveled the road before. The worship leader must know where they are, where they are going, and most importantly, when they arrive. Although, I've met a few leaders who remind me more of Alice than David:

*"Would you tell me, please,
which way I ought to go from here?"* sighed Alice.

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said a grinning
Cheshire cat, roosting on a tree limb just above her.

"I don't much care where . . ." said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

". . . so long as I get somewhere," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat.

A worship leader must know where they are, where they're going and how they're going to get there - before they can lead others to the destination.

Leading people always requires a beginning point. The best place to begin is where the people are spiritually. The first action a worship leader must take is locating precisely where the people's spiritual position is; or the worship he is seeking will be missed entirely. But locating the spiritual position of most people is usually an easy task.

Most everyone has entered the Church-house from the world - they are very world conscious. They are the people of God, but their minds are usually elsewhere. The worship leader, on the other hand may have been in a no-holds-barred prayer meeting for the past two hours; earnestly seeking guidance for the service. But I will venture to say that no more than 5% to 10% of the entire congregation has thought anything at all about the service they are entering, other than what they and their family are wearing; the traffic on the way to Church; the parking place they barely missed; and where they and other Church members are going to eat after the service. Remember we are sheep. We are entering the Church-building, concerned not so much with God, but with ourselves. This is only natural. The Lord Himself said to Peter, "I need to wash your feet." Why? Because the Lord recognized that Peter had been in the world. Peter had been walking around the streets of Jerusalem and he needed the dust of the world washed from his feet. Peter's entire body didn't need to be washed; belief took care of that. But Peter's feet did need washing. So the Lord washed his feet. So it is with our brothers and sisters who work in the factories, and the offices, and homes of the world. We've all been walking in the world, and our feet are dusty and need to be washed. That same dust clings to the feet of those who work in the Church-houses. There is no superior class of brothers which exists in the Church. Even preachers and priests have dusty feet. All of us need to be refreshed - washed. The worship leader's job is to begin the process of refreshing, of washing the saints' feet.

Recognizing the condition of the congregation, the worship leader needs to start with a song or a chorus of a more personal nature, a testimony, songs which have an “I am” or “I have” musical texture. This catches the people right where they are. This will also give the people something to identify with early on in the service. Songs and choruses, sung about personal conditions or testimonial experiences, are compositions Psalm 100 refers to as “outside the gate.”

Entering The Gate

When most of us hear the phrase “entering the gate,” what comes to mind? Matthew 7 of course. “Enter through the narrow gate, for wide (is) the gate and broad (is) the way leading to destruction and many are the ones entering through it. How narrow (is) the gate and constricted the road leading to life and few are the ones finding it.” But the gate to which Psalm 100 refers, and the Lord Jesus points to, is the gate which led into the Tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness (An illustration of the Tabernacle is found later on in this text).

Beginning in Exodus 24, we are provided a beautiful picture of God’s dwelling place with man: His tent of dwelling. The word Tabernacle (GK, *skene*), actually means a booth, a tent - the tent where the people of God, Israel were called to meet with God (Hebrews 9:8,21).

In the book of John we read, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt [or tabernacled] among us” (John 1:14 KJV). A literal translation of this verse gives us an image into what we are now in Him: “And God [Jesus] was made flesh, and made His tent of dwelling [tabernacle] within the hearts of the believing ones.” That’s incredible! God, the One true God, Jesus Christ Himself, who created all things seen and unseen, has made His dwelling within us. Remember, Jesus is the gate, or door we enter through - He’s the narrow gate - into the vitality of God (John 10). The Hebrews, at the time of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, did not have this privilege; they met with God only one day a year, the “Day of Atonement.” That day, and only that one day each year, could the people of God, Israel, meet with God and only through the priest. Those “things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.” We use as examples, all of what was “in times past” to help us occupy and understand, all of what is today. That’s why we still have the Old Testament - “for our admonition” - so we’ll know how to walk in this world.

On the “Day of Atonement,” the Hebrews would sing and make joyful noises as they approached the Tent of God. They were coming to meet with God, and they were joyful. This was (and is) the time songs of personal experiences and songs of testimony were sung: this was outside the wall which surrounded the Tabernacle. This was also the place where the Old Covenant priest, Aaron, and his sons lived - outside the “gate”

of the Tabernacle. The priest camped close to the Tabernacle and, like the other Hebrews, could not worship until they entered the Tabernacle. They went from outside the wall of the Tabernacle through the “gate” to reach the presence of God. Why, then, did the Hebrews want to enter through the gate? Because they believed! So we, as they, must “enter through His gate” before we can enter His Tabernacle - His presence. We, too, must believe. Remember the people of God, Israel, were the people of God, whether they were on the inside or outside of the surrounding wall of the Tabernacle. We are the Church, not Israel, yet the purpose for corporate worship is the same: First, it reminds us of the purpose for our gathering; second, it stirs up our faith in the Lord our God; and third, it unites our hearts and minds with one another. Worship transports us from our temporal, into His authentic. We, as the Church, are not entering the gate to receive salvation - to offer a sacrifice for atonement - we are here to adore.

During the beginning of worship - outside the wall - the worship leader should make prime use of personal-experience songs. By doing this he can gently capture the attention of the people of God. But it's was more than one step from outside the “gate” to inside the Holy Place, the dwelling of God. Never follow personal songs or songs of personal testimony with songs about God's greatness and His glory. The people are just now remembering why they came to Church. The purpose of gathering together is to worship, and the goal of each service should be to bring the people of God into a worship experience. But don't rush the sheep! The worship experience will occur inside the believing hearts - but don't rush it. The people must be translated from their material world into the spiritual realm of God . . . in small steps. Psalm 100 urges us to, “enter into His gates with thanksgiving,” which may take a long or a short period of time. The spiritual condition of each gathering is different. Whatever the case, let the people enjoy the singing until they are sufficiently united and begin to move closer to the One they are there to worship. But don't leave the people outside the gates forever.

Move them through the “gate” into “the outer court.” This move separates them from the secular, and carries them into the sanctified. This move requires songs of thanksgiving. The people are brought from a perception of what has been done for them to an awareness of Who did it. This is thanksgiving. Advancing through the gate into the outer court must be a joyful walk, almost a dance. Songs of thanksgiving are never expressed in a sorrowful or lugubrious manner. While this procession is in process, the people will begin to think of themselves and of God. The more they sing songs of thanksgiving, the more they will realize what God has done for them - their thought patterns turn more from the temporal to the Eternal.

Singing at this point may bring about a certain level of praise, but this is not worship. The people are still in the outer court. Give them a little time. They are enjoying giving thanks to God for all He has done. Let them.

The Lord's deepest desire is to reveal Himself to His people. Keep in mind, He does this corporately through songs; first of testimony, then of thanksgiving, then of praise, and then, ultimately of worship. From "Make a joyful noise" to "Come before His presence" to "Enter His gates" to "bless His name . . . to all generations," is a pattern for worship, not a technique for singing. Singing and worship are not synonymous.

We, as individual believers, are the dwelling place of God - His Tabernacle of meeting, the tent of His sanctuary - which was the Lord's ultimate desire all along, to dwell in and with His people. We know this from the example given in the Old Covenant. "Make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8). This is our physical example from the Old of what is now spiritually experienced in the New.

His Present Mercies

"Through Him therefore, let us offer up a sacrifice of praise always to God, that is to say, the fruit of our lips confessing the Name of Him" (Hebrews 13:15).

Once the hearts of the people have been lifted up in thanksgiving for what the Lord has done for them, the next natural or should it be said, supernatural, step is to "enter His courts with praise." The thanking Him, for what He has done will produce in the people a necessity to praise Him for who He is. The progression at this time must move from songs of thanksgiving for past blessings to songs of praise for His present mercies, "which are everlasting!"

As the people "enter into His outer court," the worship leader must be aware that more time will be necessary here for singing songs and choruses of praise, before the people will be ready to move toward the Holy Place - the believing hearts - the Lord's dwelling place - our corporate worship. The Worship Leader needs to mobilize the people of God into a hunger for the Lord and only the Lord - from thoughts of what is in the world, to thoughts of the Lord - only. The outer court was a rather large area so the movement from praise to worship may take much longer than the movement from thanksgiving to praise. The people pass through His "gates with thanksgiving in their hearts" far more rapidly than they advance through "His courts with praise."

As the people proceed from the attitude of thanksgiving to the posture of praise, the worship leader may need to speak a few words to help make their transition smooth. The goal of the worship leader is to lead the people into worship, not talk them to death. The leader's words must be brief and weighed carefully. Most of us have sat in worship services where the good-hearted worship leader has talked so much, and so long, with such vigor about what the Lord is doing, we forget what the Lord was trying to do only minutes before. These long, talking intermissions only serve to break the spiritual concentration of the people. All that needs to be said can be said in a few

sentences or less. The people are here, at this point, to praise the Lord in singing. The teaching will come later.

We have started this journey from outside the wall and have passed through the gate into the outer court, and we will end the journey within the Holy Place, where nothing speaks of man or the world, only God. So once more, allow me to “stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.” We are preparing to enter an arena where the natural man, the unredeemed man - the mortal who only looks and acts like a Christ-centered man - will not be able to enter.

This Place - the hearts of the believer - is the Holy Place, the Holy of Holiest Place. This time of praise will lead into a exigency to worship, an essential, which lies deep within the hearts of the redeemed, yet is nowhere to be found within the natural, unredeemed man of the world. Worship can be achieved only when the natural gives way to the Eternal. Natural man can never obtain or occupy this place of worship, for only God is there - natural man knows nothing of the presence of God.

Man, natural man, must be born again before he can enter into the presence of God, the Father. For he, born of woman, is like his father, Adam, or one might say like Adam’s son, Seth. “And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image and called his name Seth” (Genesis 5:3). So all natural, born-once men are in the image and likeness of their father, Adam. Like Seth, they are sons of Adam - “made in his own likeness, after his image” - they are not sons of God. Not until natural man is born-again by the Spirit of God through belief in the Son, Jesus Christ, can natural man become a son of God, and can then call God, “Father.” Our sonship “imputed” to us by our Father in heaven gives us the privilege of entering into worship. “Therefore let us approach with boldness to the Throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace for timely help” (Hebrews 4:16). Natural man cannot approach the Father, except he first go through the Son, “Truly, truly I say to you, unless someone is born of water and Spirit [born twice] he is not able to enter into the kingdom of God. And the thing having been born of the flesh is flesh [like unto Adam], and the thing having been born of the Spirit is Spirit [born again unto the likeness of God]” (John 3:5,6).

Natural man seeks to be within a Church where he can worship as he desires: naturally. Natural man loves to sing songs which speaks of the commonplace earthly manner which God deals with His creation, never the supernatural or heavenly. This is the precise reason why many Churches today, who claim to embrace genuine worship, in reality do not. They have thanksgiving and at times praise, but never worship. Why? Because natural man can only thank and praise God for His goodness, for what He has given, but he cannot truly worship God for Who He is. Our Churches today are full of the natural and very little of the Eternal, even among the leadership of the Church. Because of this, the Worship Leader must know the people he is leading.

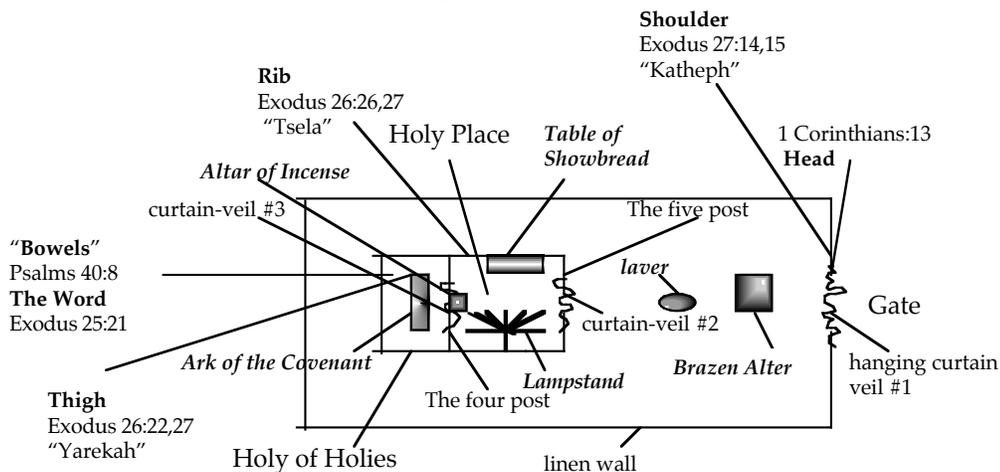
The closer the people are to worship, the more the songs must be focused upon God Himself and less on His dealings with man. Just as we started singing songs about ourselves from outside the walls, we will conclude our singing with songs about God from inside His Holy Place. Most of the renowned old hymns depicting the grandeur and glory of God were written by men who had experienced the presence of God from within the Holy Place. These wonderful old hymns can more easily direct the people of God into a higher expression of God than some of the more simple choruses we find in the Church today. But if your ecclesiastical persuasion is more chorus oriented, make sure the choruses are ones which direct the attention of the people totally upon God. (These, God-centered choruses, are becoming more and more difficult to find.)

As we move closer to worship, all of the soulful, emotional reaction songs will be replaced by an eminently spiritual response from the Spirit, directed entirely upon the Lord God Himself: Who alone is worthy.

The Physical Illustrates The Spiritual

“Brothers, having therefore, boldness for the entering of the Holiest by the blood of Jesus which He opened for us a new and living way through the curtain (veil) that is to say, the flesh of Him, and since we have a great Priest over the house of God, let us approach Him with a True heart with full confidence of faith your hearts having been sprinkled from a conscience of evil and the body having been washed with pure water. Let us hold firm the confession of the hope without wavering, for trustworthy is the One having promised” (Hebrews 10:19-23).

Every spiritual truth of God is illustrated in His physical creation. God uses the known, those things which relate to the physical, to illustrate the spiritual. God transports us by the known into the unknown. The Tabernacle is the pattern of a human body, the illustration of the incarnate Body of Christ.



The Tabernacle of Moses

The whole of the tabernacle speaks of the incarnate Body of the man Christ Jesus.

By the use of distinct Hebrew words with diverse meanings – *katheph* (shoulder), the outer corner of the walls; *tesela* (rib), the covering wall of the Tent; etc.– God (the Father) patterned the man Christ Jesus who, as John most truthfully writes ‘tabernacled among us’ (John 1:14) and now tabernacles, within us His body, His bride, His Church (1 Corinthians 6:19). The Tabernacle in the wilderness was a picture of what was to come.

The Brazen Alter

This Tabernacle of Moses was surrounded by a hanging wall of white linen - the wedding garment of the bride, which expresses her virgin character, (Revelation 19:8). For the believer to enter the Holiest Place he must first pass through the surrounding wall, and the three curtains (gates, veils) separating the Eternal from the natural - there to enter the Holiest. Only the high priest had this privilege in the Old Covenant; nevertheless each believing Israelite penetrated the Gate, or the first veil or curtain, and entered the Outer Court. There, in the Outer Court, the believer approached the Brazen Altar.

The Brazen Altar is a picture of the shedding of blood for the cleansing from sin.

Each year - the Day of Atonement - a sacrificial offering, an unblemished lamb, was placed on the Brazen Altar and slaughtered, the blood shed, and the body burned. This act of, shedding of blood, put the sinning Israelite in right relationship or justified relationship with God. The death of Christ is illustrated vividly here.

The Brazen Altar was fashioned of brass, the metal of judgment. The unblemished lamb was killed and thoroughly consumed (burned) before God. The sweet smell of the offering came before God’s presence; the blood spilled and placed on the altar satisfied Him and discharged the sins of all the believing ones of Israel who had entered through the first Gate. This illustrates the judgment for all sin, which is death, taken by Christ Jesus on His cross. “And on behalf of all He died, that the living ones [the believers] may live no longer to themselves, but to the One who died and has been raised” (1 Corinthians 5:15).

The Blood

We are made right before God, the Father, by the blood of His Son Jesus, which came before the presence of the Father to satisfy, or pay the price of death for us, on behalf of us, the believing ones.

I was watching christian (I’m using a small “c” here for a reason) television the other day. The speaker on this program was going into extreme details explaining the need for the people of God to, “Plead the blood.” “Brothers,” he said, “we need to always plead the blood. We need to remind God about the blood. We need to always plead the blood. If we are to get anything from God, we need to plead the blood.”

How ridiculous, I thought. How pagan. Where in the Word of God is the slightest suggestion made that we, "Plead the blood?" - there isn't a need for us, His people to "plead the blood." This approach is not Christian faith, but rather akin to pagan divination.

Divination by pagan cults - "arts," as it is called - is grounded in human wants, needs and experiences. Although some of these "arts" are very attractive to some of us good Christians as well. (We are, at times, a very gullible and selfish lot.)

The practice of tribute, and sacrifice paid to the gods is as ancient as our known world. Men in all ages have wanted ownership - home, diamond ring, car, prosperity, whatever. And the way to receive the goods was to ask the gods - or the possessor of the resources needed - for whatever the happy little pagan heart desired. Although to receive your desires, a pledge or sacrifice needed to be made and a spoken reminder of the sacrifice prayed before, or soon after - which helped appease the gods. The story is told of a pagan gentleman, Lydia, who apologizes to his god for his less than avowed offering - apparently he had signed a pledge card with more faith than means - but he asked his god to accept it, as he was unable to pay the entire sacrifice which he had previously vowed. (Again, more confidence than coin, I suppose. Sadly, I've witnessed the same scenario within the body of Christ.) Apparently his god accepted the offering and Lydia made it back home to pledge another day.

"With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God?" says the prophet of God, "Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? . . . He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 5:6-8 KJV). Even in the Old Covenant the Lord was concerned with the ethical more than the external. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Hebrews 9:14)? Our God has already been appeased!

Our Christian faith is not built on avowed offerings. "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building (creation), neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:11,12). The words, "once," and "eternal," are keys to our faith.

Pagans have always borrowed from the ways of the Lord. And, sad to say, the reverse is true as well.

So what was the blood of the Lord Jesus for? Who wanted to see the blood in the first place? The Father. The blood shed by the Lord Jesus was for the Father - once and

for all time. The Father wanted (and needed) to see the blood, we didn't. We weren't concerned with the blood, He was. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." The blood was for the Father. He must first see the blood to forgive the Sin. We didn't need to see the blood - or plead for Him to see the blood - He was the One who wanted to see the blood in the first place. "Unless I see the blood". . . and He saw the blood. This is an eternal witness to the glory of the redemptive price paid. He saw the blood. So why should we remind Him of something He is continually aware of? We do not need to remind God of the reason for our redemption - it was His idea in the first place. He wanted to see the blood to save us - to bring us into His presence. So He saw the blood and saved us. A simple plan - on our part, anyway.

Our Father's Love

There's a Homeric verse which goes, "Perhaps some god has conceived spite against us, angry because of the sacrifices: hard indeed, is the anger of a god . . ." These types of verses, though not spoken as such, are still causing widespread fear and attitude. "If God is dishonored," the TV preacher went on to say, "the devil might send his anger against the community, in the form of famine, plague or drought. We must plead the blood so God will hear us and bless us and not allow the devil to curse us."

The idea of curses, which is so widespread in the annals of TV-preaching-land, is also a thorn in my side. "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all the things having been written in the book of the law to do the law." But, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law having become, on behalf for us, a curse" (Galatians 3:10-14). If, as the Bible states ever so clearly, "Christ became a curse" for us, where do we get off praying for Him to remove the curse (or curses) - family curses, finance curses, sickness curses, feet too big curses, down the street neighbor curses - whatever curses these "natural brute beasts" tell us we are cursed with. Christ Jesus took upon Himself our curse - becoming a curse for us - on His cross sometime ago - we bear the curse(s) no more! I'm laboring a bunny trail in the matter of voodoo innuendos within today's Church. But that's for another day.

Our Father disciplines us as sons. He's not angry at us because we fail. For we are all big failures. The things I want to do, I don't do them. But the very things I do not want to do, you can be sure I will find a way to do them (Romans 7). Is God angry at me because I am a big failure? No. Because of His grace and the love with which He loves me, I know that when I fail I can go to my Father and sit in His lap and He will love on me. "God is love." Love is not only what God does . . . love is what God is; "God is love." He may not care for the things I've done, but He will not reject me because of them - nor will He require some type of pleading or begging from me to appease Him back into loving me. As saints we are free to fail, but we are not free to be irresponsible. We are given, because of the - "once" - sprinkling of the blood by the

Lord Jesus, the birthright of sons. And as sons we can “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” We do not need to solicit our Father by pleading for anything. He’s our Daddy (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6). He loves us. “He has remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations” (Psalms 105:8). To “plead the blood” is not a Christian or even a Hebrew doctrine, it is pure paganism. Nothing more. We should not be so concerned with the faith that we hold, but rather the faith that holds us. “Search the scriptures,” to see “whether those things be so.”

The Lord’s Passover: Our Redeemer

The Lord told the children of Israel to kill an unblemished lamb and take the blood and “strike it on the two side posts and on the upper doorpost of the house wherein they shall eat” the Passover. “This is the Lord’s Passover.” This Passover is a type of our Redeemer. From the unblemished lamb, to the blood, which answers to appropriation by personal faith and constituted a perfect protection from judgment - we are protected from the judgment of God by the blood of His Son, the Lamb of God. The Passover feast typified Christ as the Bread of life. To observe the feast was and is a duty and a privilege, but not a condition, of safety. The believer is saved by the blood of the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” and is strengthened daily by feasting on the Word of God - the living Word, Christ, and the written word, the scriptures. Eating the Lord’s supper, or “taking communion,” as some say, “is a means of justification,” - which is untrue. Neither will save us from sin. As water baptism is a duty of the believer, so is communion, yet, neither will justify us. Both are given to the Church for entirely different purposes. Our justification, our salvation has come because of His blood shed on His cross, not the water in the pool, and not the wine and the bread of the Sunday communion. Why are we baptized? Because He told us to. Why do we share communion? Because He told us to. Again, a simple plan. (For a fuller explanation of our outward and visible sacraments, signs of inward and spiritual divine grace, see my book, [*A Brief History of Redemption.*](#))

With the cross, the Brazen Altar of the Lord Jesus, God has drawn a line between what we were before the cross and what we are now in Christ Jesus. Because of the cross of Jesus, God no longer reckons (or counts) us guilty. Because we believe! He has imputed (or put on) all our sins, and the sins of the whole world for that matter, on the man Christ Jesus. All Sin was put on the man Christ Jesus at the cross some 2000 years ago. Literally, Jesus became Sin for us; the Father reconciled the world unto Himself by Jesus Christ; “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses (sin, Romans 3:23) unto them, and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19) - the Father is reconciled (or does not count the world guilty because of sin), but requires all men to repent.

I am not speaking of Universalism in any form or fashion - that inauthentic, impious teaching, which is usually stated as an optimistic form of "a second chance" - a purgatorial *gehenna* for a time to bring them to their senses, is clearly not Christ's own view (Matthew 12:32, 26:24) and most assuredly not mine. A man without Christ will die in his sins and be in Hell forever. I realize that this position concerning eternal loss is not pleasant or comfortable to live with; I maintain only that it is actually taught by Christ and by the New Testament, and must be reckoned with accordingly. We are "saved by grace, through faith" in the eternal God, Christ Jesus! "Justified freely (as a gift) by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). It is our mastering of death, if you will allow - our belief in the sacrificial death of the man Christ Jesus, which saves and secures us. For the mastering of death is, from one point of view, the Bible's central theme - the theme which the learned Puritan, John Owen summed up as, "the death of death in the death of Christ." (Colossians 2:13-15.)

If you think about it for a moment, all of our sins, which were taken by Jesus on His cross at that time, were future sins - sins we had not committed, as yet. The sin we will commit tomorrow was there too! We bear it no more! Jesus took our Sin, and all our sins past, present, and future on His cross. Once we have believed on Christ Jesus - having been justified by His shed blood - we couldn't go to hell if we wanted to - not that anyone would want to. Jesus Christ has become our sacrifice, our substitute, on the Brazen Altar (His cross) in the presence of the Father for all the sins we are doing now, all the sins we will ever do, all the sins we have ever done: God is now beholding us in the person of Christ Jesus, on our behalf, eternally right, forever forgiven before Him. No matter how we feel. Enough said.

The Laver

The Two Agree In One

So, we enter through Him (the Gate) with Him (as our Sacrifice) so He can present us (His virgin bride) before His Father. We are saved by the blood of the Lamb. Let us now be washed by His word.

The next article the believing Hebrew approaches was the Laver. (The image given in the New Testament as washing of the word.) This Laver was a two-sectioned bowl, filled with water - used as a washing bowl by the Old Testament priest. The Laver had a bottom (foundation) and a top (a sink to hold the water). God always witnesses His work in a two-fold revelation, i.e., "the mouth of two witnesses." The bottom, or the foundation of the Laver is an illustration of the Old Testament Scriptures. The top, or sink which held the water is an illustration of the New Testament revelation: God gave the foundation and then added the water, the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God came "on" the Old Testament saints, but the Holy Spirit was never "given" as a gift to the believers in the Old Testament economy. This was an illustration of what God was

going to do. The bottom or base of the Laver was the foundation of what God was going to do in the future. In other words, this is what "I am going to build in that day" (Romans 8:1-4).

So we come to the water of the Laver - the Lord Jesus - His Word. To learn of Him, to be cleansed by Him, to be refreshed by Him. When we advance to the Laver we reach the two that agree in one; they move together. The Father thought it, the Son spoke it, the Spirit brought it about by the uttered Word of God - the Spirit gone out of the Son of God - the Holy Spirit - the Person of the Godhead who came forth for the believer, out of the mouth of the Person, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 20:22). We, at this time, have through the Living Word (the Lord Jesus) "Rivers of living water flowing from our bellies," the Holy Spirit!

"There are two that bear record in Heaven, the Spirit and the Word, and these two agree in One." The Laver - the written word of God - is where the Word of God does the work of God in the believer, and the Spirit of God floods the believer to empower, to cleanse, and to refresh. "The Word and the Spirit," John says, "agree in one." Thus in the laver (the Word, and word of God) we reach the two which agree in one. The words which Jesus spoke are spirit and life. What does the written word do? It confirms what has happened to us. Jesus has captured our sins on His cross (the Brazen Altar) and has given to us, redeemed sinners, His Holy Spirit. The two, the Word and the Spirit, agree in one.

So we come to the Laver, to procure our cleansing, "the washing of the word," which washes us inside and out. Then we can move into the remainder of the Tabernacle full of the Holy Spirit - to receive the revelation of God. But, beloved I pray that none of us feel we can progress so far into the Spirit of God that we no longer need to go daily to the Laver, that we might be washed by His written word. One of my favorite scriptures is Job's declaration, "I have seen Thy word more necessary than my necessary food." If Job had to make a choice between the two, it would be better for him to stop eating food and keep eating the word of God, for there he knew he would survive. "I have never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread."

Being filled and then being led by the Holy Spirit of God is the wonderful position of all the redeemed. But with that position comes responsibilities. We learn our responsibilities through His written Word: our New Testament Laver. God has supplied "the blood" in His presence to maintain our position in the heavens; He has provided "the Word" in the earth to maintain our walk in the world. The blood cleans us - reconciliation - so we need not bathe again; the Word keeps us - washes our feet - so we might daily walk the right way. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy ways prosper, and

then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1:8 KJV). Lord, let us, Your New Testament Church, follow the words of this Old Testament saint.

So, our declared purpose for gathering, is to worship. If we have been successful in going through the Gate, and step by step we have walked through the Outer Court, the journey into His Holy Place will be easy. The worship we have been anticipating will occur, soon, in this Holy Place. There the illumination of the Holy Spirit (The Lampstand) will make the fellowship and communion with God (The Showbread) and the communication with God (The Altar of Incense) possible and fulfilling.

All emotional responses, such as clapping, dancing and shouting (if that is the practice of your assembly), will be replaced with adoration responses such as raised hands, upturned faces, tears, and a knowing and wanting of "Jesus Only." At this point a change of uttered tone will be noticeable. Where there was once a loud happy burst of joyful noise, we will soon hear the quiet whispers of the people of God, singing in solemn prayers to their Maker and Lord. The people of God will begin to sense they have come to The Living, Holy God. They have stepped from the frivolous into the Authentic.

Worship Him

"Now Christ having become the High Priest of the good things having come about through the greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands that is, not of this creation, neither through the blood of goats and of bulls but through His own blood he entered only once into the Holy of Holiest eternal redemption having secured" (Hebrews 9:11,12).

As the believers enter through the first veil - the second curtain - of the Tent into the Holy Place, the first object he sees is the Lampstand; the golden ingredient which holds the seven burning lamps (Exodus 25; Revelation 1).

The Lampstand

In Moses' Tabernacle the Lampstand was crafted from pure beaten gold, which speaks of divine workmanship: seven golden lamps which sat on six golden branches and one golden shaft. The lamps were filled with pure beaten olive oil (Exodus 27:20), not wax. This is a Lampstand, not a candlestick! There was no wax used then or now in the Holy Place of God! The lamps burned oil, a picture of the Holy Spirit within the New Covenant believer. The Lampstand itself is a picture of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, "And in the midst of the Lampstand, One like the Son of man . . . the seven Churches are the seven Lampstands" (Revelation 1:13-20).

There are many wonders in this Lampstand - as it pictures the Church today - far too many for us to undertake in this one treatise, but one or two wonders we must entertain.

If you will notice, after a reading of Exodus 25, there were, twenty-two knobs, bowls, and buds (flowers) on the Lampstand. There were, if you will remember, 22,000 Levities who began their ministry before the Lord in the days of Moses. And those 22,000 Levities are a picture or a figure of the Church of the Lord Jesus.

“How?” you may ask.

If you will recall, before the Levities were separated by God for the office of priest, there was a class, or group of people who were chosen to be priests unto the Lord God: the firstborn of Israel. “Israel is My son, My firstborn . . . Let My son, My firstborn go!” the Lord said of Israel. Then, God stated He had, “set the firstborn aside and has chosen the Levities to be priests” unto the Lord. Now, God is declaring in this day, “I am now setting aside the first born,” in a figure Israel, “and I am now choosing out a unique tribe altogether to be a priestly ministry unto Me.” (My paraphrase.) It was prophetically a figure of Israel, the nation, being set aside and the Church, the believers, being brought in to minister before the Lord. So this Lampstand speaks of Israel, the Levities, and it also speaks of the Church, His New Covenant “priests” (1 Peter 2:9).

You will notice - as you read through the Exodus description of the Lampstand, the branches grew out of the Lampstand. Thus the question may be posed, “if the branches are growing out of the Lampstand, what then is the Lampstand?” The Lampstand, if you will recall is described as “the shaft.” The shaft is the Lamp’s stand. The question then is, what is a stand? Isn’t a stand something stands on? And if the shaft is a stand, and something must stand on the stand, doesn’t it stand to reason that Jesus is the Stand (shaft) on which “the seven Lampstands” stand on?

What does the Church stand on? What, for that matter, does all the world and the universe stand on? Jesus of course! “For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him, and for Him; And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:15-17, KJV). Jesus Christ is the Glue which holds the whole of all matter, seen or unseen, together!

So, in fact and in parallel with the Book of Revelation, Jesus is the Lamp’s stand. And out of Him is growing six branches. (Six is the number of man.) On top of each of these branches will be a lamp (light) “the light of the world” which Jesus was first called, and now He calls us, the believing ones. Under each of these lamps will be a set of knobs, bowls, and buds. Each of the branches have three sets of these knobs, bowls, and buds - three sets of three of these knobs, bowls, and buds on each one of the

branches - (a wonderful picture of the nine gift ministries, found in 1 Corinthians 12) until you reach the shaft, the center of the Lampstand, which has four sets of these knobs, bowls, and buds (this of course, is a splendid picture of the four perfecting ministries Christ gave His Church in Ephesians 4). The whole of the Lampstand - "the seven Lampstands" in Revelation - speaks of the Lord Jesus and His gifting and His Church (Exodus 25:30 ff). These, three sets of three, knobs, bowls, and buds found on each branch of the Lampstands, just to add some more food for thought to you my dear reader, is also a picture of the nine graces of the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22,23.

Spirit Fruit

The fruit of the Spirit can be divided into three sets of three:

1. Love, joy, peace.
2. Long suffering, gentleness, goodness.
3. Faith, meekness, temperance.

These three are divided into pomegranates, calamus and spikenard, in parable form in The Song of Solomon (4:12-14).

The first of the three are nourishing agents, the *pomegranates*, which parallels love, joy and peace. They are, in the body of Christ our food, our nourishing agents.

The second of the three is *calamus*. This was used as a medicine, a healing agent. This is a lovely picture of long suffering, gentleness and goodness, which heals the body of Christ.

The last of the three is *spikenard*. This was used as a perfume. This is faith, meekness and temperance, which has a sweet smell to all who are blessed by its fruit.

"It is a garden of the Lord that is growing the Lord's fruit." Paraphrased from, *Failed Yet Forgiven*, by Dr. Keith Lamb. All nine of them. All three sets of three.

We glory in the fact that the Shaft is the Lamp's stand - a picture of the Lord Jesus, who, "is the light of the world" - the Holy Spirit, the burning oil of the lamp. All of the branches are growing out of Him - we are giving light to the world.

What does John 15 call us? "The branches." Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches," growing out of the vine. It is interesting that the Lord did not say that He was the stem of the vine or the root of the vine. He said He was the Vine! That includes the root, stem, branches, all of it! He said, "I'm the whole thing!" We are small segments in Him. We are the branches growing out of the Shaft, filled with the Holy Spirit (the oil), giving His light to the entire world.

A very interesting Hebrew word, *yarek*, is translated in Exodus as the word "shaft." This same word also appears in Genesis as the word "loin," and in, "the loins of" (Hebrews 7:9,10). So, could we not agree that we, the Church, are the branches growing out of the loins of the Lord Jesus. God has given birth to His Church, out of His loins, in the person of the Lord Jesus.

So, He, the Lord Jesus, is the Lamp's stand and the Lampstand; we are all growing out of Him. And how do we grow? We grow out of Him with fruit that blossoms into light: the knobs, bowls, and buds. He is the Shaft, the Stand, the Vine. We are the branches. The place of Life produces the branches. And in turn the branches produce fruit. The Holy Spirit providing the burning fire.

There is another interesting fact about the twenty-two knobs, bowls, and buds found on the Lampstand. It is the same number of gift ministries given to His bride, the Church: twenty-two gift ministries were given by the Father, (Romans), the Son, (Ephesians), and the Holy Spirit, (Corinthians). We, as the Church, release His light to the world. And we cannot give light or life (fruit) apart from the ministering work of the Holy Spirit living in us - His gifts, His anointing, His setting us apart for the work of the ministry.

God has provided us spectacular personal and corporate illustrations through this wondrous golden Lampstand found so long ago in the Tabernacle of Moses.

Table of Showbread

The next piece of furniture we encounter in this oil illuminated room - as we are back in the Tabernacle of Moses - is the Table of Showbread. This speaks of a simple "table." "A place for food, for communion where we, the sons, gather together for fellowship over dinner with our Father, 'Thou preparest a table before me . . . my cup runneth over.' The table sets forth Jehovah's feast of love for His saints and for Himself in fellowship with them." Arthur W. Pink, *The Life of David*.

"And you shall set upon the table Showbread before Me always." "What," you may ask, "is Showbread?" This was simply bread; twelve loaves of bread, which sat on a golden table within the Holy Place of the Tabernacle (the Table of Showbread) - always before the Lord God Jehovah. This symbolized our Lord identifying Himself with the twelve tribes of Israel and speaks prophetically of His identifying in communion with His bride, the Church, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a sharing of the body of Christ? Because we, the many, are one bread, one body" (1 Corinthians 10:16,17). These twelve loaves describe ever so aptly the connection our Lord Jesus shares with His body, the Church. This table, sitting so still, so relaxed in this Holy Place, speaks of Christ, positioned at rest, at the right hand of His Father in glory,

waiting for the time when He will catch up His Bride in the clouds, so the wedding feast can begin! Come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Two Altars, One Christ

Next we come to the Altar within the Holy Place. As you know, there were two Altars in the whole of the Tabernacle structure. The first being the Brazen Altar (made of brass, located in the Outer Court, which speaks of the judgment of Sin), the second and last altar, the Golden Altar of incense, placed within the Holy Place (within the Tent itself), which speaks of prayer, praise and divine intercession.

This Golden Altar, located in the Holy Place points to Christ Himself, in that it was made of wood covered with gold - a graphic picture of Christ's human form (the wood) and His Divine form (the gold). Jesus was, while on earth, fully God and fully man, wood (flesh), gold (divinity). The incense, placed on the Golden Altar, which continually burned, was and is an illustration both of the intercession of our Great High Priest (Revelation 8:3-4) - the intercession of the Lord Himself in the presence of the Father: "He has an unchangeable priesthood. From which also He is able to save completely the ones coming through Him to God, always [ever] living for the purpose of pleading [interceding] for them" (Hebrews 7:24,25); and the praise, prayers and worship of His saints (Malachi 1:11). "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of mine hands as the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2 KJV).

Worship, broadly speaking, as prayer, includes confession of sin (humiliation), petition for the supply of needs (supplication), and the homage of our hearts unto the Giver Himself (adoration). Thus, a we may say worship's principle branches are humiliation, supplication, and adoration.

Psalm 100 makes clear that "blessed be God" is itself a form of a prayer in worship: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful to Him, and bless His name." The incense which was offered in the Tabernacle consisted of various spices compounded together (Exodus 30:34-35), and it was the blending of one with another that made the perfume so fragrant and refreshing. So, the spices of our humiliation, supplication, and adoration should be proportionately mingled in our approaches to the Throne of Grace in worship - not one to the exclusion of the other, but a blending together.

Christ Jesus was made Sin for us at the Brazen Altar of the cross, suffering and enduring judgment, bowing His head beneath the fearsome wrath of God the Father. But now seated at the right hand of God the Father, at the true Golden Altar, in the Heavens, He is alive, risen from the grave, always maintaining the interest of His Bride before His Father, presenting all the Believing Ones in all of His Excellency and completeness. "For if being enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of

the Son of Him, having been reconciled we will be saved in the life of Him . . . Who will bring a charge against the chosen ones of God? God is the One justifying. Who is the one condemning? Christ Jesus is the One having died, but rather having been raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who intercedes on behalf of us, who will separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 5:10; 8:33-35).

The Holy of Holiest
The Ark of the Covenant

We have now arrived at the Holiest. We have gone past the Table, past the Altar, past the Lampstand, and we have entered the Holiest Place through the torn veil (the final curtain), where the Father is seated upon the Mercy Seat above the Ark of the Covenant: The Holy of Holiest. The Ark, within the Holiest speaks of the person of Christ Jesus Himself, then and now, and it is hardly necessary to pause here to offer proof of that fact. But, I will offer a few short statements concerning the Ark of the Covenant of God.

This Ark was also made of two materials, wood and gold. Clearly speaking of the two natures of Christ Jesus: human and Divine.

There were three articles inside the Ark.

The first: two stone tables, the Ten Commandments, written by the finger of God, given to Moses on the mount, preserved within the Ark, "Thy law is within My heart" (Psalm 40:8).

The second: "Aaron's rod that budded." The dead wooden rod of Aaron "brought forth buds, blossomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" (Numbers 17). This is an illustration of what was to come. Moses entering the Tabernacle found there the evidence of God's resurrection power - Aaron's dead stick brought forth life and fruit - reminding us of the disciples entering the empty tomb and beholding the signs of the risen Christ. This is also a picture of us: once dead, now made alive and secure within the person of the Lord Jesus - bringing forth "fruit unto life."

And lastly, the third: the golden pot of manna (Hebrews 9:4). Interestingly the word *manna* is a transliteration of two Hebrew words meaning "*what is it?*" (Exodus 16:15). Manna: angel's food - falling from heaven - with which the Lord fed His people Israel, during their journey from the house of slavery to the land of promise. As to the believer, it is Christ continually feeding us with "the bread of life" - the Person of Christ Jesus being the food for His pilgrim people. Manna in the Old Covenant, the Bread of Life in the New - the grace of God meeting the needs of the people of God - Jesus being the "Golden pot," "full of grace and truth" as John tells us.

The Mercy Seat, which rested upon the Ark of the Covenant, is where God received His representative: the priest of His sinful, yet blood-cleansed people. "For we have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:15,16).

Just Worship

So we have arrived. We are in the Holiest Place, the presence of God - the heart of the believer; the hearts of His believing people. But what do we do now? We worship. Just worship. Nothing more. Clever music is unnecessary. Talk is inappropriate. Directions for responses are superfluous. Just worship. Silence may be threatening to the worship leader, but it is golden to the worshipers. A soft, sustained chord on an instrument or a gentle song of the Spirit on the lips of the worship leader will be sufficient to carry a worship response throughout the entire congregation for an extended period of time.

"But that's not singing!" You're right. It's not singing. It's worshipping. That's why we sing, so we can worship.

At this point too many worship leaders make a serious mistake. They jerk the people back into the Outer Court with an emotional chorus of thanksgiving or a gentle song of praise. Worship takes time. Do not rush the people. Let them worship. Some may sing a soft song in the spirit. Others may only bow with humble tears before the Lord.

It may be that the entire congregation begins to sing a chorus or the verse of a hymn that directs worship to Him who sits upon the throne. All of these are honest expressions of what the people are feeling and doing at the moment. The worship leader must remember that the mind can jump from one concept or song to another far faster than the spirit can. Allow the Holy Spirit time to blend in among the people. Let Him refresh the people. They need to savor the Lord. A change of a chorus or a different hymn can destroy the entire worship attitude.

Remember these are the saints of God and they are worshipping their Father and their Lord. This is why we lead them in singing. Don't let the tool of the song destroy the worship response. Everything we have done up to this point has been for this one intent: worship. Stop doing! Let the worship flow through the entire congregation.

Singing should never be considered an end in itself. Singing should be a release of the Holy Spirit unto God in a worship expression. Remember the people have been led from the natural into the Eternal, from the expression of self-needs to an expression of Spirit-worship. When the majority of the congregation seems to have finished their

worship, the worship leader may want to invite them to sit down. This is a period of time when the people can gather their thoughts about Who the Lord Jesus is and how wondrous it is to be one of His chosen ones and among His chosen ones.

The worship leader may choose one more choruses or hymns to unite the saints in one final expression of worship to God. "The Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations" (Psalm 100). If the worship leader has been successful, he will be known as a leader of worship more than a singer of songs. Worship is the goal, not singing - worshiping the Father through the Son by means of His Holy Spirit, the Three in One; in spirit and in truth.

Now that the Lord of Glory has refreshed us, let's go out and offer that refreshing to someone else. Let His waters flow from our bellies. Let His light shine through us. Let our voice declare the glory of the Lord through all generations. To God be the Glory. Amen!

(A fifteen song *Worship Set* follows starting on the next page.)

15 Songs

These are only my suggestions and should not be taken as injunctions.

How I Love You

G DC G C G C D
How I love You, You are the One, You are the One!

G DC G C D G D G
How I love You, You are the One for me.

*I was so lost, but You showed the way, 'cause You are the way.

I was so lost, but You showed the way to me.

*I was lied to, but You told the truth, 'cause You are the truth.

I was lied to. But You told the truth to me.

*I was dying, but You gave me life, 'cause You are the life.

I was dying, and You gave Your life for me.

*How I love You. You are the One, God's risen Son.

How I love You, You are the One for me.

*Repeat chords
from first two
lines.

God Has Redeemed

G C G D
God has redeemed, God has redeemed my soul. From the power of the grave.

G C G D G
God has redeemed. God has redeemed my soul. For He has received me.

G C G A7 D7
Sing alleluia. Praise to the Lord. For Jesus, He has received me.

C G C D7 G
Sing alleluia. Praise to the Lord. For He has received me.

Ah, Lord God

C F C
Ah, Lord God. Thou hast made the heavens,

F G
and the earth, by Thy great power.

C F C
Ah, Lord God. Thou hast made the heavens,

F G
and the earth by Thine outstretched arm.

C Em F
Nothing is too difficult for Thee.

G7 F C
Nothing is too difficult for Thee.

C Am F G C Am . . . F G
Great and mighty God. Great in counsel, and mighty in deed.

C Am F G
Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing

C G C
nothing is too difficult for Thee.

15 Songs Worship Set

I Believe In Jesus

C F G
I believe in Jesus.

C F G
I believe He is the Son of God.

C F G
I believe He died and rose again.

C F G
I believe He paid for us all.

F G C
(men) And I believe that He's here now

F
(women) I believe that He's here

G C
(ALL) Standing in our midst.

F G C
(men) Here with the power to heal.

F
(women) With the power to heal

G C
(ALL) And the grace to forgive

I believe in You Lord
I believe You are the Son of God....

Thanks To The Lord

D Bm7 G D
It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
G F#m Em A
singing praises to our God on high.

D G F#m Bm7
See the mercies throughout the day,
G A Bm7 A
and Thy faithfulness by night.

G A D
And Thy faithfulness by night.

Because Of The Lord's Great Love

chorus: D G A A(sus)*
Because of the Lord's great love
A(sus) D Em7 A A(sus)
I've been redeemed.

*3rd time - hold until "been" on next line.

verse: A D A G
Yet this will I call to mind.
D A G
And therefore I will hope.
D G A
Because of the Lord's great love,
A(sus) D
I've been redeemed.

15 Songs Worship Set

The Lord is gracious and kind.
To all who call on His name.
Because of the Lord's great love,
I've been redeemed.

Know of His steadfast love,
His mercy renewed every day,
Because of the Lord's great love.
I've been redeemed.

Washed in the blood of the Lamb,
Guiltless forever I stand,
Because of the Lord's great love,
I've been redeemed

Salvation Belongs To Our God

G D Em
Salvation belongs to our God

C G C D
Who sits upon the throne

G D Em
And unto the Lamb

C G
Be praise and glory

C G
Wisdom and thanks

F C D
Honor and power and strength

G D C D
Be to our God forever and ever

G D C D
Be to our God forever and ever

G D C D G C D
Be to our God forever and ever, amen. (repeat)

Now we the redeemed shall be strong.

In purpose and unity

Declaring out loud

Praise and glory.

Wisdom and thanks,

Honor and power and strength,

Be to our God forever and ever.

Be to our God forever and ever.

Be to our God forever and ever, amen. (repeat)

Lay Hold

G Bm7 C D
Lay hold, lay hold of the good things of the Lord. (repeat)
G C D C D G
And let your conversation be acceptable in the sight of the Lord.
G D/B C D
Let me be an instrument of Thy peace. (repeat)
G Bm C Am D G C(sus)
That the world may see the love of God in me.

Ascribe Greatness

G Bm C Am
Ascribe greatness to our God the Rock.
G Am D
His work is perfect, and all His ways are just. (repeat)
G Bm C Am D G (G/C)
A God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He. (repeat)

Jesus We Enthroned You

G Em
Jesus we enthrone You.
C D
We proclaim You are King.
Em Bm
Standing here in the midst of us,
C Am/D D
we lift You up with our praise.
C Bm Em
And as we worship, build Your Throne.
C D G Em
And as we worship, build Your Throne.
C D G Em
And as we worship, build Your Throne.
C C/D G
Come, Lord Jesus, and take Your place.

You Have Been Given

G D/G C/G D/G G G/B
 You have been given, the name above all names.
 C D C Am G C/D [i.e. C(sus)]
 And we worship You, yes we worship You;

G D/G
 You have been given,
 C/G D/G G G/B
 The name above all names.

 C D Em
 And we worship You.
 C D G C/ D [i.e. C(sus)]
 And we worship You.

We are Your people, Made for Your glory,
 And we worship You, Yes we worship You
 We are Your people made for Your glory.
 And we worship You, And we worship You.

You have redeemed us, From every nation,
 And we worship You, Yes we worship You.
 You have redeemed us from every nation.
 And we worship You, And we worship You.

Isn't He Beautiful

G	C	G	C			
Isn't He . . .	Beautiful?	Beautiful . . .	isn't He?			
G	F#m	Em	Am	D		
Prince of peace,	Son of God,	Isn't He,	isn't He?			
G	C	G	C			
Isn't He . . .	Wonderful?	Wonderful . . .	isn't He?			
G	F#m	Em	Am	C	D	G
Counselor,	Almighty God,	Isn't He?	Isn't He?	Isn't He?		

O Lord, You're Beautiful

G G/B C G/B D
 O Lord, You're beautiful.
 G C G/B D
 Your face is all I seek.
 Em B7/Eb Em D G
 And when Your eyes, are on this child,
 C G/B D C/D G
 Your grace abounds to me.

I Love You, Lord

G G/C G D G
I Love You, Lord, and I lift my voice.
C G/B Am G/B D
To worship You, oh, my soul rejoices.
G G/C G D G
Take joy, my King, in what You hear.
C G/B Am D G
Let it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.

Reigning In All Splendor

Em D C G
Reigning in all splendor
Em D C D
Victorious love
Em D C G
Christ Jesus the Savior
Em D C D
Transcendent above.
C D Em
All earthly dominions
C D Em
And kingdoms shall fall,
C D Em
For His name is Jesus,
C D B Bsus7
And He is the Lord
Em C D
He is Lord.
Em C D
He is Lord.
Em C D
He is Lord.
D Em
He is Lord.