

Understanding Musical Worship.

This is a shortened summary of some of the main musical revelations for true worship received we believe from the Holy Spirit for the 'JustWorship.Org.Uk 2017 study of Worship'.

The information in this study is not exhaustive and as such we envisage will be subject to future revisions.

This study's authority lies only in how well it proves to be a source of guidance from the Holy Spirit to your worship as He brings any God given truths here to your remembrance.

This study is not intended to be a 'DIY' kit for great worship.

We believe worship goes beyond being only a musical concept and that there are other ways we can give or express worship to the Lord. **John 12:3** for example records one such act of worship where Jesus had his feet anointed with perfumed oil by Mary and no music is recorded to be involved there. This was however an act of worship.

This particular study however deals only with musical worship.

Musical worship is not the product of just following a set of guidelines such as we seek to illustrate here, but instead is the musically supported expression from our hearts of our awe in Him. It is heart to heart in music with God and therefore if it is true cannot be manufactured by following study guides.

We believe however it is of value to take time to stop and seek understanding about how we relate musically to God, especially during worship, so this is what we endeavour to do here.

Singing, playing instruments and creating music itself can become a focus unless we take care, but if **God** is at the heart of the reason for doing it, the singing, playing instruments and music can then become worship, a truth echoed in lyrics of songs like 'When the music fades'
If our musical worship doesn't take us to the remembrance that

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God is the one and only source of pure Love, if that remembrance doesn't melt us to the core of our being and if that melting doesn't leave us in an awed state of perpetual desire for Him then it is safe to say the worship isn't true! Music has God given power to arouse the soul and inspire the thoughts of our hearts. There is no better direction in which to exercise that power than towards God!

For the purpose of this study download we have included four of the twelve study points as a preview from the main publication 'Just Worship!' available through the website home page.

Lord teach us to fear the consequences of separation from you and teach us about worship with it's power in helping to keep us close to you.

May our worship we pray Lord come from hearts that are truly in love with you.

Amen.

1) Saturated 'In spirit'.

There is a point in time during worship at which we are moved by the music from 'being in the flesh' to 'being in the spirit'. This applies equally to private or public times of worship. This point we are naming '**saturation point**', where our soul is literally soaked long enough in the musical atmosphere that our consciousness becomes saturated and begins to switch its focus. It is the point where the soul begins to be raptured or caught up by and identify with the words of the songs. This point may come at different times for different people or publically can be reached at the same time simultaneously for everyone.

'**Being in the spirit**' is explained further in the chapter on 'Worship in spirit' in our publication.

When 'spirit' is spelt in scripture with a lower case 's' it is referring to the spirit of mankind, our spirit as people. To be 'In spirit' therefore is us moving from being conscious of our physical realm to what is happening spiritually for us in the spirit realm.

Being in the Spirit is also explained further in the same chapter of the publication but whenever 'Spirit' is spelt in scripture with an upper case '**S**' it is referring to **His Holy Spirit**. **Being in the Spirit** therefore in this case (where the 'S' is capitalised) refers to us **being led** by His Holy Spirit once we ourselves are already in the spirit and have moved beyond consciousness of our flesh and physical realm.

So **saturation point** is just a term we are using to refer to a point of transition at which our flesh becomes saturated with the atmosphere of worship and music, releases it's grip on our physical consciousness and transports us into our spiritual consciousness to be led by His Holy Spirit beyond the boundaries of what we are* to revel in who God is.

*See the 'Just Worship' publication, 'Worship in spirit' chapter for more about this.

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It is a point at which during worship the thoughts of the mind begin to be quietened and the cares of this life stilled. It is a point where only concentration on the current atmosphere and the words being sung begin to pervade our consciousness. Once we are moved from flesh conscious to spirit conscious, His Holy Spirit guides us on from there. We wait on the 'quickenings' and enabling power of His Spirit as we 'dissolve' the influences of the flesh, a good reason why worship shouldn't be rushed. Waiting for a 'Saturation Point' privately and in public meetings also resisting a temptation to just follow what others may be doing is valuable in making our worship true.

'Saturation point' is like the point at which we stop thinking about whether the dog is ok, the children have tidied their rooms, we remembered to put the rubbish out, set the sky box to record a favorite programme or whether we've paid a recent parking fine and our minds are clear to be lead first by our own spirit into what our hearts might be feeling and thinking and then further on by the Holy Spirit into the musical appreciation, acknowledgement and acclamation of the Lord as He is revealed by him.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians:2:11

So at **saturation point** we begin to turn the eyes of our heart on Him.

There is no prescription for when people or after how long people will reach this point. For those regularly worshipping a **saturation point** comes easier and quicker, for others that point may be reached just as the last song is sung.

True musical worship may begin at **saturation point** where like an actual saturated sponge enough 'living water' has been soaked up to in turn begin to drip outwards from us. At **saturation point** we begin

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to 'reconnect' with our own hearts and are brought back in touch or in tune with what from it's depths or abundance we might say.

Music/worship has the power to 'switch on' the spiritual part of us but this takes different lengths of time to happen for different people and subject to their conditions. For instance trying to worship when we are cold, tired or hungry will make it harder to move beyond the concerns of our flesh.

So '**saturation point**' or whatever we want to call it is something we should wait for, look for, acknowledge and then move beyond. It is worth us recognising and being honest with ourselves that we need differing lengths of time to switch our minds away from the cares of this life and concerns of the flesh before beginning the transition spiritually towards true worship.

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

Revelation:4:2

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

Revelation:1:10

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you....

Romans:8:9

For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present,.....

1 Corinthians:5:3

In our current world sin and our sinful nature has dominion and more often than not prevails upon us. During worship we are inviting the

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manifestation of His Spirit instead to prevail over us and our sinful nature begins to loosen its grip in His manifest presence. The point at which this begins to happen is a '**Saturation Point**'.

2) Worship Him with the 2nd person pronoun.

The presence of God resides in the spirit of every believer in Christ. Worship is not so much calling the presence of God down from heaven therefore, it is more about wooing Him to manifest His presence which is already within us so that we can become increasingly conscious of Him and increasingly less conscious of ourselves.

We are inviting Him to magnify that presence which is already within us. In Luke 1v46 Mary said it was her soul that was doing the magnifying. This is what should be happening during true worship. The parts of us that make up our soul become engaged in a desire to magnify Him.

Most people accept the soul comprises of the mind which is the memory and intellect, the will and the emotions.

Increasing its consciousness, appreciation and acknowledgement of Him is what becomes the focus of the soul's concentration during worship.

**My soul shall make her boast in the Lord,
Psalm 34:2**

**O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name
together. Psalm:34:3**

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So what we are saying so far in this section is that true musical worship In part involves the manifesting and magnifying of His presence, which is already in us. To do this however here is what might seem like an obvious point to make but is actually also quite a big revelation to draw out.....

True musical worship should always be in the 2nd person pronoun narrative and lyrics.

This means using the words 'You', 'you're', 'your' , 'thy' rather than 'He', 'Him', 'He's' or 'His' in the words of the worship songs we sing to Him. Singing directly to God means we should address Him directly and grammatically.

Sometimes we sing as if we are trying to convince ourselves but it is important to think about who we are addressing and how.

There is a time to sing to ourselves about the Lord and this has much value....

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Ephesians:5:19

This however is not the same as magnifying Him in worship.

Singing 'you are the saviour of my soul' is direct to Him .

Singing ' He is the saviour of my soul' is like we are trying to tell ourselves or someone else!

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts* to the Lord.

Colossians:3:16

Both these last two scriptures are saying almost exactly the same thing but although both verses are indirectly **to the Lord** the first verse says speak to **ourselves** the second verse says speak to **one another**.

So there is a place for addressing ourselves and one another or others musically. When we admonish, teach and uplift each other, then we can use the 3rd person pronoun, 'He', 'Him' and 'His' for example.

If our worship is to Him however, we should always address Him correctly and grammatically in the same way we would in our communications with one another.

It helps the soul to 'zoom in' on where the words are being directed when we use the correct pronoun.

How can the soul magnify Him unless He is grammatically the object of the words being sung?

If God is to receive our worship, He deserves to see and hear that He is being addressed directly. How our words are directed is an important part of worship. We must lavish our words on Him.

God is spirit, so we struggle sometimes with knowing He is the object of our adoration because we don't physically see Him.

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He hears nonetheless and is able to acknowledge what is coming straight from our hearts to Him. In that process however He is owed the courtesy of words that are sung and addressed directly towards Him in his honor.

As we conclude this point we are able to see the way we direct our worship fits into main categories .

1. **Singing to the Lord** privately as just the Lord listens.
2. Singing to ourselves privately about the Lord as we and the Lord listen.
3. Singing to ourselves about the Lord as we, an audience and the Lord listen.
4. Singing to an audience about the Lord as we and the Lord listen.
5. **Singing to the Lord** publically as an audience and the Lord listen.

We will find that many songs themselves will automatically fit into one or other of these categories by the way they are written.

Only Category 1 by nature is true private worship and only Category 5 by nature is true public worship. This is because categories 1 and 5 are the only categories where we are singing directly to Him and we are therefore too lost in our focus on Him to be able to effectively listen to ourselves.

The journey from category 1 to category 5 is the process from **private** to **public** worship.

Notice that the Lord listens with every category but only receives the worship in categories 1 and 5 that is directed to Him!

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3. Worship ‘in truth’, singing songs to God based on what scripture already declares about Him and with lyrics that reflect our revelation of these scriptural truths.

The Holy Spirit leads and guides us into all truth, including when we sing and worship. He is the Spirit of truth. So it is He who during musical worship helps us surrender to the authority of truth which is in God’s word.

Only scripture can provide us with truth that we can use to construct the lyrics of our songs. The verses and choruses of our songs must echo what the Word of God already declares.

The Holy Spirit empowers true worship if there is truth in it but for Him to do this what we are singing and saying about God must therefore be true and scripturally accurate.

How would we like it if someone sang a song in our honour only to find that most of the words and lyrics of the song were factually inaccurate about who we are or what we may have done . Nobody likes to hear things said, yet alone sung about themselves that are untrue. How much more should this apply to Almighty God! No matter how great the musical tune or great sounding the melody if the words of a song are scripturally inaccurate, that song will never become true worship. The only way to avoid this is to rely on His word for inspiration.

Often as strange as it sounds, the best worship music will literally come from taking what God declares about himself in

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His own word and singing it back to Him from our own understanding!

Worship in truth is worship which takes its inspiration and originates from God's own words about Himself!

When we worship God in this way there comes a point when the scriptural truth we are celebrating in song comes alive in our heart as if our life is reverberating and echoing that truth.

Suddenly we feel like the personification of that truth, as if every fibre of our inner being is identifying with that truth and celebrating the reality of it in our heart. There becomes no distance at all between what our heart is feeling and what our ears are hearing.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts:...

Psalm:51:6

I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel.

Psalm:71:22

The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

Psalm:145:18

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4. Our worship must make sense.

Every song should be telling Him something intelligible which must first make sense to us if we intend it to make sense to Him. A song should have a message or something specific it is saying to Him.

Here are four well known songs as examples.

‘Amazing Grace’ is a very well known song which builds a picture as it progresses of the soul’s exclamations in response to revelations of His grace. The lyrics reflect this, highlighting the wonder of how His grace is able to cover over the sinners wretchedness.

‘Great is thy faithfulness’ is another which illustrates in its verses the way God is true to the very end in all His ways and dealings. His dependability and steadfastness is the cornerstone of celebration in this Song.

‘It is well with my soul’ is a great song of encouragement despite hardship. Written by Horatio Stafford who endured repeated personal tragedy in his family and circumstances. This song is a victory song of triumph over adversity for the soul because of faith in God.

‘Oceans’ (Where Feet May Fail) is one of my recent favourites and is a ‘song-story’ based on Matt 14v 24-34. At its heart therefore the song

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is all about 'faith to walk on water' as we look to Jesus the author of our faith.

All of these songs have a clear intelligible message or theme behind it's lyrics and verses. When we listen to these songs we know exactly what the song is highlighting and what the verses are trying to communicate.

Can you spot a deliberate mistake here however in listing these particular songs?

Only one of them strictly speaking is a true worship song!

The others are a great psalm, hymn or spiritual song but only one of them qualifies as a true worship song, with God as the focus of most of the attention and lyrics.

'Great is thy faithfulness' is the answer!

A way to weigh this up is by applying our 2nd person pronoun test from **section 2** above onto how much 'I/me/my/mine' is used in the lyrics of the song compared to 'You/you're/your/thy/thee/thine' .

A good worship song draws attention to Him and His attributes not us and our attributes.

In conclusion of all these study points we summarise that our musical worship must first engage our soul as we are immersed and saturated in the musical atmosphere. The soul is then guided by His Holy Spirit through the truth in our songs into a process of magnifying, exalting, celebrating and revelling in who God truly is, as revealed to us in His own word. This process ultimately engages our understanding or gives us revelation of something we are celebrating about God and not about ourselves.

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