THE PROFILE OF A WORSHIP PASTOR IN A CANADIAN EVANGELICAL CONTEXT

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Summary/Abstract:

Effective worship ministry in Canadian evangelical churches requires gifting and skill in five areas: leadership, team building, music and the arts, administration, and communication technology. Effective educational preparation for this ministry also requires study in four disciplines of theology, history, pastoral ministry and the arts.
This paper provides a foundation for worship ministry preparation as well as the initial design of a M.A. program to prepare worship pastors (included in appendix C).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Introduction – Statement of the problem

In Canada, as in virtually all western countries, the idea of worship is convoluted by lack

of knowledge as well as radically influenced by consumer oriented culture. In this environment,

many Evangelical Churches are choosing to hire ministers in the area of worship. Often, these

churches and the prospective candidates are lacking adequate knowledge about what worship is

and how to be a "pastor of worship." Educational institutions that prepare people for ministry

have lagged behind the need in this area. Barry Liesch suggests that seminaries are failing to

exert *any* kind of leadership in worship ministry and training.[1] There are very few schools in

Canada attempting to provide graduate or undergraduate education in worship ministry and

related study. Some are attempting to address the artistic areas of worship (mostly music) but

few are dealing with crucial worship ministry training beyond the arts.

This project will address the problem of the lack of understanding of the role of a worship

pastor in a Canadian evangelical context as well as the need for effective graduate education in

this area. One result of the project will be the development of a masters degree program, at

Briercrest Biblical Seminary, in the area of worship ministry. Another result will be a fairly

comprehensive understanding of the worship practices and needs in the evangelical church in

Canada. To my knowledge, this will be the most comprehensive study of its kind to date. This

study is very important to the future effectiveness of worship pastors in Canadian evangelical

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[1] Barry Liesch, *The New Worship: Straight Talk On Music And The Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker
Book House, 2001), 229.

churches as well as the development of an effective degree program. Briercrest Biblical

Seminary is an excellent location for the development and implementation of this kind of degree.

Confusion About What Worship Is

There is significant confusion in many of the evangelical churches in Canada regarding

worship. In these contexts, worship practice has often degenerated into celebrating the believer's

dedication to God rather than celebrating God.[2] This, combined with the audience mentality of

consumer culture has become a significant barrier to a participatory understanding of worship.[3]

However, it seems there is a yearning for participation in worship at a deeper level in Canadian

evangelicalism. Part of the purpose of this project will be to define a biblical understanding of

worship. A biblical basis for the role of worship pastor will also emerge. This is an essential

step in both evaluating worship in a Canadian evangelical context as well as designing an

educational curriculum to prepare leaders for this kind of ministry.

Gordon MacDonald has summarized the development of our understanding of worship in

the evangelical churches.[4] Fifty years ago, churches looked for a "song leader" who conducted

the congregation as if they were a choir. This person "…fired up people to sing three gospel

songs, led in prayer, sang a solo, and turned things over in a timely manner to the preacher."[5]

Subsequently, paid choir directors who focused more on performance replaced this ideal. The

role of the congregation became more one of spectator or audience. Soon, churches added

padded pews for the comfort of the "audience." The full-time ministers of music replaced the

choir director sometime in the 1970s.[6] This new role included graded music programs, concerts

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[2] Robert E Webber, *Worship Is A Verb: Eight Principles for Transforming Worship* (Hendrickson Pub: Peabody, MA., 1992), 30.
[3] Ibid. 133.
[4] "*How we got here*" Gordon MacDonald *Leadership Journal,* Spring 2002 On line – <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2002/002/10.83.html> (accessed July 25, 2002).
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

and complex fine arts productions. The evangelical churches saw this as a classy improvement.

However, the congregation was becoming less and less participatory in worship. The

professional Christian music industry was beginning to flourish and the church became a

platform for a new kind of star.

Over the past twenty years, we have seen the advent of the "worship team", a group of

vocalists and instrumentalists who lead the congregation in participatory musical worship.

"Each team member was armed with a long-cord microphone (uniformly held). The team was

usually young, sincere, enthusiastic, often quite talented."[7] New instruments appeared in the

church, often with controversy. Guitars were followed by drums and keyboards as rhythm

became more central than harmony in church music. Words for songs appeared on screens, first

by overhead projectors and later by PowerPoint, replacing centuries of musical notation in

hymnbooks. Sound and lighting technology infiltrated church buildings. "We worshiped. But,

sometimes, we sacrificed the experience of worship to the…well, the experience itself."[8]

Many Canadian evangelical churches are at this point today. This is especially true of

those who hire worship pastors. Teams of talented musicians lead the congregation with high

tech lighting, sound and projection equipment. While this *can* lead to a participatory

congregation, it also can lead to a sense that the only real way to participate is by being on the

platform. It has also resulted in an extremely narrow understanding of worship as music.

Musical portions of a Sunday gathering are often identified as worship while prayer, corporate

scripture reading and offering (giving of money) are not.

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

The Need To Reconnect With The Vernacular

One result of this dramatic change over the past thirty years has been a sharp disagreement regarding musical style. This is partly a result of the challenge to the dominance of a revivalist style of ministry in the past century of evangelicalism. Much of the "tradition" of evangelical churches is rooted in the innovation of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Musically this included the dominance of the gospel song, a highly experiential approach to congregational music. Stylistic disagreement often appeals to the two poles of this revivalist "tradition" and a more culturally current approach.

Somehow, over the past thirty years, the idea of worship-as-music invaded our churches. It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when this happened but there appears to be a correlation between the rise of the Contemporary Christian Music industry (CCM) and this pattern in churches. In fact, most of the influence in worship music today comes from the CCM industry. This exacerbates an already convoluted understanding of worship. Rather than being congregational and participatory, the focus of worship has become the platform and quality of musical leader and band.

Seminary educators are faced with two potential approaches to the confusion about worship. One is to vigorously point out the theological and historical error in current practice and understanding.[9] While this has its place, in other areas of church ministry it has often alienated the seminary as an out of touch institution. A second and more helpful approach is to establish dialogue between members of the CCM industry, pastors and worship leaders. The goal of this dialogue would be to influence the thinking and practice of the church toward a more biblically and historically rooted trajectory. This will require a temporary assumption of

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[9] For example, see Carson's overly strong critique of the ludicrous nature of the equation of music and worship. This kind of attack is not helpful. D.A. Carson, ed., *Worship By The Book* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 47.

terminology like "worship leader", "worship band" and "worship set." The goal, however, will be to deepen our collective understanding and practice of Christian worship.

<u>Ministry Context – Appropriate Seminary Preparation For Worship Ministry</u>

The combination of the proliferation of confused ideas about worship and the increasing number of churches who are hiring pastoral staff in this area indicates that there is a need for seminary preparation in worship ministry. This preparation will require study in a number of related disciplines and skills. Much of the purpose of this project will be to identify the areas of study necessary as well as the gifting appropriate to the ministry position of worship pastor.

My ministry setting is somewhat unique. I teach in the areas of Worship and Church Ministry at Briercrest Biblical Seminary. Briercrest is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools and is a relatively small school. Current enrolment is somewhere around 100 students and the average student age is in the late 30s.[10] Students enter and complete their degrees at all times of the year. The seminary is trans-denominational and currently offers M.A. and M.Div. degrees. There are as many as sixty denominations represented at one time among the faculty and student body. Generally, this diversity is limited to those of evangelical backgrounds; however, we do have a few students from more mainline churches (i.e. United Church of Canada, Presbyterian, and Anglican churches). There are often a number of charismatic denominations represented as well. Students come to Briercrest from all over the world but the majority are from Canada and the US.

Briercrest has identified ten key outcomes that influence the design of all the programs offered. These outcomes are: Life-long Learning, Clear Sense of Vocation and Call,

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[10] This is somewhat difficult to accurately ascertain because almost all courses are offered in a modular one-week format and the curriculum runs year-round.

Commitment to the Church, Theological Astuteness, Integrity of Character, Spiritual Maturity, Relational and Ministry Competence, Reflective Leadership, Cultural Awareness , Passion for People. The worship degree program arising from this project will give attention to the achievement of these ten outcomes.

Briercrest Seminary is located in the rural Saskatchewan village of Caronport, surrounded primarily by grain farms. Caronport is 23 kilometers (13 miles) from Moose Jaw, a city of 35,000 people. Depending on the time of year, some 2,500 people make this village their home. Caronport is also home to Briercrest Bible College (the largest Bible College in Canada with approximately 800 students), a Christian high school (250 students – about one third of them resident in dorms) and a Christian elementary school (200 students). The overwhelming majority of the town of Caronport is made up of students, faculty or staff at the various schools. This has resulted in a "Christian community". Although there are some significant drawbacks to life in such a "pan-optical" kind of community,[11] it is an excellent place for Seminary education. It provides a pastoral setting that is a retreat from "regular" society. Many graduate students find Caronport a significant place of healing, renewal and preparation for further ministry.

Purpose Of This Project

The purpose of this project will be two fold. One component will be a fairly comprehensive study of the nature of worship ministry in Canadian evangelical churches. Part of the objective of this component of the project will be to clarify and bring some definition to the idea of what a worship pastor is and to identify some of the appropriate preparation needed for the role. The second component will be to develop a worship degree for Briercrest Seminary.

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[11] Michael Foucault's term for a community in which every behavior is monitored and gently adjusted. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York, NY:Vintage Books, 1979). Cited by: Peter Emberley, *Divine Hunger: Canadians on a Spiritual Walkabout* (Toronto, ON: Harper Collins, 2002), 58.

Research for this component of the project will include biblical and historical study as well as cultural analysis and attention to the uniqueness of the Canadian context. At this point, the name of the degree will be "Master of Arts in Christian Ministry: Worship Ministry Track." The field research will contribute toward an understanding of the landscape of worship ministry in Canada and give input to a degree that prepares worship pastors. The study will also be available to church leaders who want to hire worship pastors or increase their effectiveness in worship ministry.

Definitions, Limitations and Understandings of the Study

The focus of this project will be primarily related to the role of a worship pastor in the context of a Canadian Evangelical Church. As such, it will focus more on corporate worship and its leadership than a broader understanding of worship as individual act. However, the theological ramifications of a biblical understanding of worship will be addressed. This is an essential point of departure. In addition, the uniqueness of the Canadian historical and contemporary context will be considered in light of evangelical tradition. This will include a brief summary of trends in Canadian culture (as a whole) related to spirituality. Because of the strong missional history and passion of evangelicalism, it is essential that the non-churched culture be considered in an understanding of an appropriate role for a worship pastor.

In this project, the term "evangelical" will refer to a number of church traditions that share key values. Included are the priorities of mission as outreach in local and worldwide contexts, a high view of scripture as trustworthy and authoritative, and the expectation that a believer's relationship with God is not limited to corporate gatherings but permeates all of life. Evangelical denominations include Baptist, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Christian and Missionary

Alliance, Mennonite Brethren and Evangelical Free. In addition, there are some churches from traditions that have not historically been considered evangelical (i.e. The Anglican Church or The United Church of Canada) that share these key values. Variables among Canadian Evangelical Churches include the observance of the church year, weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper and corporate worship structure.

This project will include a discussion about the role of music and the arts in the general profile of a worship pastor but will also consider ideas of worship that are much broader than music. As such, there will be interaction with many information sources. Included will be conventional research in scholarly contemporary sources; a wide study about general church practice; a survey among college students who are preparing for some kind of ministry role; and input from senior pastors of evangelical churches who employ worship ministers. The breadth of this research will allow for a comprehensive understanding of a current profile of a worship pastor but will also allow for some helpful prediction of this role in the future. Effective seminary education requires attention to the possible changes in various ministry roles of the future. In light of the fairly dramatic change that has occurred in this role in the past two decades, it is important that some sense of continuing transition be a part of a project like this. Sensitivity to ongoing change is essential for effective training and practice of contemporary worship ministry.

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE STUDY

As stated earlier, the contemporary understanding of worship in Canadian evangelical churches is diverse and convoluted. In many cases, it seems that this understanding is more influenced by trends in culture than by biblical and historical definitions. Because of this, it is important to begin a discussion around the profile of a worship pastor with a serious consideration of biblical ideas and teaching regarding the theology and practice of worship. It is important that we clearly understand what we mean when we use the term "worship". We will begin with the Bible because we are discussing a biblical understanding of worship.[12] This project will also examine some key contributors in the evangelical church today. A few of these are worship practitioners but most are theologians and cultural analysts. Further research will examine the state of evangelical church culture in Canada. This will include a summary of the influence of postmodern thinking and implications for the potential of the evangelical church to reach contemporary Canadians

Toward A Biblical Theology of Worship

A biblical theology of worship must begin with the content of worship.[13] The content for Christian worship is found primarily in the Bible and, specifically, the gospel as found in the person of Christ. Both the Old and New testaments illuminate the work of God in the world

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[12] The theological and historical discussions here are based on a more developed theology and history found in **Appendix D** in the course notes and PowerPoint for "Theology and Practice of Christian Worship."

[13] This outline is adapted from personal email communication from Dr. Andrew Hill on February 13, 2003.

culminating in the redeeming work of Christ. Additional sources for worship content are found in church history. The work of the Holy Spirit through two millennium has given trustworthy documents, creeds and practices that frame contemporary biblical worship models. Secondary to content is the structure of worship. Examples of historical structure for corporate worship include the two-fold and four-fold models.[14] The structure of corporate worship in many contemporary Canadian evangelical churches is comprised of two parts. The first part includes an extended time of participatory and presentational music and the second is focused on preaching. Corporate worship structures have strengths and weaknesses and should be evaluated in light of effectiveness, however, they are secondary to content in importance.

A tertiary component of corporate worship is style. Worship style includes aspects of denominational tradition, local church practice and contextualization of content and structure to contemporary culture. In Canadian evangelical churches, this has often related to musical language, church architecture, dress for corporate worship and use of the worship space. While worship style can easily become central, especially when there is stylistic dispute, it must remain tertiary to content and structure.

The priority of content in worship requires that the Bible is the beginning point of study. There are two groups of words in the Hebrew and Greek that are translated "worship" in English Bibles. The first group is primarily related to labor or service and is generally associated with the tabernacle and temple. The second is descriptive of specific physical acts such as bowing down or bending the knee and acknowledging the worth of someone else.[15] Central to ideas contained in both of these groups of words is the fact that biblical worship is never passive. It is

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[14] The two-fold model, which focuses primarily on the apostles teaching and the Lord's supper is found in Acts 2. The four-fold model includes some kind of gathering ritual, the service of the word, the service of the table (Lord's Supper) and a sending out ritual.

[15] John M. Frame, *Worship In Spirit And Truth* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishers, 1996), 1.

active. One group seems to focus on assisting others in their worship and the second is descriptive of the physical acts of the worshiper himself. Liesch points out that the words in this second group are significantly more common than the first.[16]

Understanding the diversity of biblical ideas of worship is an important corrective to a simplistic contemporary perspective. Peterson suggests that the biblical words for worship are not discrete components but, instead, represent a larger system of thought about how humans relate to God.[17] Biblical worship is not an isolated act but a reflection of a holistic faith. For example, service (*latreuein*) could have included service for pay but generally was the kind of service a slave would render, which was not for pay.[18] The idea of adoration (*hishawa* or *sahah*) "…was not a form of intimacy with God or an indication of special affection towards him, but rather an expression of awe or grateful submission – a recognition of his gracious character and rule."[19] And while Old Testament use of the words for service almost always refer to the work of priests, the New Testament use of these words is more oriented around a lifestyle of service to meet the needs of others.[20]

Understanding the diversity of Greek and Hebrew ideas and words for worship is essential to a better and broader understanding of worship in a contemporary context. Worship has many expressions in biblical material. This is in contrast to the popular contemporary idea that worship is centered primarily around one kind of corporate act – music. Rather, biblical

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[16] Liesch, *The New Worship*, 155.
[17] David Peterson, *Engaging With God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 56.
[18] Ibid., 64.
[19] Ibid., 73.
[20] Ibid., 183.

worship is always some kind of act toward God or, occasionally, toward others on God's behalf.[21]

Examination of various encounters with God and acts of God in human history also informs the content of biblical worship.[22] God's presence as described in biblical material always results in response. Examples may include Moses' encounter with God at the burning Bush ((Exod. 3:1-6), Isaiah's vision (Is. 6:1-7), and the sin and judgment of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 9:22-10:3). Precise stipulation of worship practice is also helpful for contemporary practice. Biblical examples of prescribed worship practice include covenantal worship (Exod. 20, 1-8), procedures for sacrificial worship (Lev. 1-7), and Sabbath keeping (Lev. 23:1-4). The fear of the Lord or the sense of the numinous is also related to content and God as subject of worship (Exod. 3, Is. 6 and Heb. 12:25-29).

An appropriate understanding of the person (as worshiper) is essential to a biblical theology of worship. The tension of the image of God in man and acknowledgement of humanity's sin nature reinforce a biblical sequence of creation, fall, redemption and restoration. The Psalms provide a mirror of this in human experience. Corporate worship is affected by this understanding but personal worship that permeates all of life is also built on this appropriate view of the worshiper.

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[21] Examples of acts toward God are many (i.e., Gen. 24:26, Is. 27:13, Jn. 12:20, Rom. 12:1). Acts toward others that are identified as sacrifices are fewer (i.e. Heb. 13:16).

[22] For a more detailed discussion regarding biblical encounters with God, see **Appendix D**, course notes for "Theology and Practice of Christian Worship."

Biblical Worship Is An Act

Essential to a biblical understanding of worship is the central idea that worship is an act. Webber has emphasized this in the title of his book *Worship Is A Verb*.[23] Carson also emphasizes this but ties the act of worship to the heart attitude of the worshiper.[24] However, worship is not just a human act. A biblical understanding of worship begins with the act of God in revelation. Without the revelation of God, humans have nothing to respond to in worship. Both the revelation of God *and* human active response are essential for worship.

Activities of worship include expressions in words of worship, music and the arts, and the giving of resources. The corporate celebration of the Lord's Supper demonstrates the revelation of God as well as the response of people in "proclaiming the Lord's death" (I Cor. 11:26). Giving of time in the setting aside of Sabbaths and observance of the church year is also an important component of the activities of worship.

Pfattiecher suggests that this human response is contingent on the initial work of God in the life of the worshiper and worshiping community. "Worship is our response to what God has done. It begins with God's service to us and it continues with our response. It is the honor and adoration we pay to God for what has been done for us by none other than our Maker and Redeemer."[25] The profound importance of the community in this act of worship is clear. The Gospel is experienced in and through other people. This challenges the modern idea of privatized religion. In fact, if the Gospel comes to us when we are alone, it should normally drive us to seek out community. Therefore, worship – the active response of the worshiper – is ultimately experienced in community centered on the content and revelation of the Gospel.

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[23] See Robert E Webber, *Worship Is A Verb: Eight Principles for Transforming Worship* (Hendrickson Pub: Peabody, MA., 1992)*.*

[24] See D. A. Carson, ed., *Worship: Adoration and Action* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993).

[25] Philip H. Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 20.

It is reasonable to assume that worship would be the central act of the gathered Christian community. However, Carson suggests that the gathering of the believers is primarily oriented around edification.[26] This is based on the understanding that people are able to worship in private but gather together to build up the Body of Christ. Segler suggests that worship "…is basically a personal experience. It is a communion between persons."[27] The priority of edification is certainly evident as part of the typical church gathering in New Testament contexts. Hughes goes further to state "To call our public meetings 'worship' can unwittingly install a re-sacralization of time and space."[28] Hughes clearly sees this as negative, reflecting an evangelical perspective that is largely rooted in cerebral modernity. However, an understanding of the gathering of believers as primarily oriented around acts of worship does not necessarily exclude personal acts of worship elsewhere. It also does not necessarily preclude the importance of edification.

The tension between the horizontal and vertical emphasis in worship has been present throughout worship history. Carson makes a distinction between edification and worship. "The purpose and function of Christian gatherings is not simply 'worship' but edification of the congregation through the various ministry provided by the Lord himself."[29] Key to a helpful understanding of this issue is whether worship is merely participating in religious activity or performing specific kinds of acts toward God. Ultimately, the question may be: Do acts directed

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[26] D.A. Carson, ed., *Worship By The Book* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 25. Carson is appealing to David Peterson, *Engaging With God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1992).

[27] Franklin M. Segler, *Christian Worship: Its Theology and Practice,* Revised by Randall Bradley (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Pub., 1996), 61. To be fair, Segler includes the "person" of God. While this is true, this emphasis may result in inappropriate individualism. The question may be: Is this communion primarily between humans or between humans and God?

[28] Kent Hughes, "Free Church Worship: The Challenge of Freedom," in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 140.

[29] Mark Ashton with C. J. Davis, "Following in Cranmer's Footsteps," in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 90.

horizontally within the community qualify as acts of worship? Vaughan Roberts suggests that

worship "… is not an umbrella-term for what goes on when Christians gather together,"[30]

Keller questions Carson's idea that the primary goal of the corporate gathering is

edification. He defines worship of the gathered community as "…obedient action motivated by

the beauty of who God is in himself."[31] He cites Frame to support the idea that corporate

worship is unique and significant apart from everyday life.[32] This is distinctive from the normal

everyday work of glorifying God.

In John 4, we see that Christ challenges the Samaritan woman to consider the tenets of

spirit and truth in worship of God. This emphasizes the importance of worshiping according to

the will of God. Frame suggests that this is encapsulated in the regulative principle: "The

acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own

revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or

the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the

holy Scripture."[33] Piper writes that "Worshiping in spirit is the opposite of worshiping in merely

external ways. It is the opposite of empty formalism and traditionalism. Worshiping in truth is

the opposite of worship based on an inadequate view of God."[34] In this light, worship must

engage the emotions and thought of the worshiper. Piper continues by stating that truth without

emotion results in dead orthodoxy and artificial admiration, but emotion without truth results in

empty frenzy and shallow worshipers.[35] Biblical worship is active and holistic. Evangelicals

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[30] Vaughan Roberts, *True Worship* (Carlisle: Authentic Media, 2002), 40.
[31] Tim Keller, "Reformed Worship in the Global City" in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 204.
[32] Ibid., 205. Also see John Frame, *Worship in Spirit and Truth*, chapter 3.
[33] Frame, *Worship in Spirit and Truth,* 39, quoting the Westminster Catechism - The Regulative Principle (Quoted from the Westminster Confession of Faith (21:1).
[34] John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* (Sisters, OR : Multnomah Books, 1986), 76.
[35] Ibid.

have tended to emphasize a freedom model rather than the regulative principle. This is

encapsulated in Richard Hooker's idea that if the Bible neither commands nor forbids, the church

is free to choose activities of worship.[36]

Worship That Permeates All Of Life

Spirit and truth worship must be demonstrated in the entire life of the believer. True

worship is tied up in all that we are and not simply reflected in one particular form, festival or

event.[37] The corporate gathering *reflects* a "lifestyle" of worship. The language used at Mt.

Sinai (Exod. 19:5-6) indicates that worship of God involved "a total life pattern of service or

worship." This was living out the covenant.[38] There is no distinction between sacred and secular

in the Hebrew mind. There is also no dichotomy between the physical and spiritual.[39] However,

there is some distinction between the idea that worship affects all of life and that worship *is* all of

life. The Bible does not call all activities worship even though it is expected that the whole life

of the worshiper should be glorifying to God.[40] Hebrews 12:28-29 indicates that the way we

worship God must be different than the way we go about the rest of our lives.[41] In this way,

"True worship is not cheap entertainment, it's a costly experience."[42] It requires evidence of

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[36] Carson, *Worship By The Book,* 24.

[37] Carson, *Worship By The Book,* 38.

[38] Peterson, *Engaging With God,* 28.

[39] Andrew E. Hill, *Enter His Courts With Praise: Old Testament Worship for the New Testament Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 28.

[40] See I Cor. 10:31.

[41] Reverence and Awe are not necessarily important in all of the activities of life. The consuming fire of God is destructive when inappropriate things are done. An example of this is the action of Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10).

[42] Warren Wiersbe, *Real Worship: Playground, Battle Ground, or Holy Ground* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 22. This is in agreement with Reginald W. Bibby *Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 2002), Peter Emberley, *Divine Hunger: Canadians on a Spiritual Walkabout* (Toronto, ON: Harper Collins, 2002), and Thom S. Rainer, *Surprising Insights From The Unchurched and Proven Ways To Reach Them* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001).

"fruit" in the whole life of the believer. Moreover, corporate worship must be seen as an integral part of the worship life of the community. It is not an isolated event.

There is some distinction between the worship activities of the church gathered and the church scattered. Corporate worship (the gathered church) must be carefully enacted around the priorities of content, structure and then style. However, individual, personal worship (done by the church scattered) may reflect more spontaneity and a broader range of worship activities. In essence, the worship activities of the church scattered are reflected in the worship activities of the church gathered. In this sense, personal worship functions as the rehearsal for corporate worship. Without individual, personal worship, the corporate worship of the church is empty ritual. However, when personal worship is vibrant, corporate ritual becomes meaningful for the worshiper as it reflects a whole life acceptable to God.

Worship as Trinitarian

Torrance suggests that worship in spirit and truth includes a Trinitarian understanding.[43] He describes this as the opposite of a unitarian approach, which is to see worship as something that we do before God – our religious activity. "In theological language, this means that the only priesthood is our priesthood, the only offering our offering, the only intercessions our intercessions."[44] This kind of worship is human centered, non-sacramental and engenders weariness. "We sit in the pew watching the minister 'doing his thing', exhorting us to 'do our thing', until we go home thinking we have done our duty for another week."[45] Trinitarian worship, however, is "…the gift of participating through the Spirit in the incarnate Son's

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[43] James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 21-22.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

communion with the Father."[46] Accordingly, there is a sense of the celebration of the

relationship within the Godhead, relationship within the body of Christ and the integrity of the

individual believer. Trinitarian worship involves the whole person (heart and mind) and the

whole body of Christ. It includes a sacramental understanding of the gospel of grace. Minds and

hearts are unified as is the universal body of Christ. Torrance sees the Lord's Supper as the

supreme expression of Trinitarian worship.

Worship Practice – Tension rather than balance

The necessity of paradox has been discarded by much of modernity and especially

fundamentalist evangelicalism. Paradox is explained away using simplistic models, limiting the

idea of apparent contraction to the realm of language, or just saying, "if it doesn't make sense, it

can't be true." However, many profound truths do have seemingly contradictory poles. It is in

the context of this theological reality that four important worship tensions are evident.

The first is a tension between an understanding of God as immanent and transcendent.

Appropriate understanding of this truth involves holding these two poles in tension.

Emphasizing one to the exclusion of the other is error. Finding middle ground – some

immanence and some transcendence – is also error. We must hold tenaciously to both poles.

Possibly art has the potential to communicate this truth better than words because it is not limited

to precise definition.[47] If paradox exists outside of language, then more abstract ways of

communicating truth are not only important but are essential. This is the kind of truth that soaks

in when you contemplate a more abstract rendering. Music can be this – even without words.[48]

God is transcendent. Losing this in worship results in a God who just helps – the psychologist

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[46] Ibid.
[47] See Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality,* 24.
[48] Pfatteicher, Liturgical Spirituality, 24.

God – there for me – a servant of humanity.[49] Brueggemann suggests that this results in

attention to legitimacy to the exclusion of "pain and possibility." It then becomes a practice of

ideology and idolatry.[50] However, God is also immanent. Losing this results in a terror of an

unpredictable and uncaring God. Contemporary Canadian evangelicalism has tended to

emphasize the immanence of God over his transcendence. This is evidenced in much of

contemporary worship music where familiarity between God and worshipers is a common

theme.[51]

A second key tension in worship is the evangelical priority of outreach and the necessary

inward focus on edification and discipleship. The influence of Willow Creek and the seeker

service movement has done much to help Canadian evangelicals move toward the

contextualization of the truth of the gospel to contemporary culture.[52] However, some have also

criticized this movement as an inappropriate simplification of profound truth at the cost of the

gospel.[53] Others have focused on the possibility of the experience of God in the context of

corporate worship.[54] Keifert suggests that the attempts to either change the content of the gospel

to reach out to seekers or the attempt to create a sense of intimacy in the worship community are

equally flawed. His recommended approach is one of hospitality – welcoming the stranger.[55]

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Walter Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise: Doxology against Idolatry and Ideology* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988), 72.

[51] An example of this is the song "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" (© 1992 John Ezzy, Daniel Grul, Stephen McPherson / Hillsongs Australia (ASCAP) (Admin. in U.S. & Canada by Integrity's Hosanna! Music) Lyrics to this song include the phrases: "Jesus, lover of my soul; Jesus, I will never let You go"; and, "I love You, I need You. Though my world may fall, I'll never let You go. My Savior, my closest Friend."

[52] See G. A. Pritchard, *Willow Creek Seeker Services: Evaluating A New Way Of Doing Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996).

[53] See Marva Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship For This Urgent Time* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2001).

[54] The Vineyard movement is relatively strong in Canada and has strong association with the "Toronto Blessing" and "New Life Fellowship" in Kelowna, BC.

[55] See Patrick R. Keifert, *Welcoming the Stranger: A Public Theology of Worship and Evangelism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992).

Keifert suggests that the pursuit of intimacy results in a homogeneous group where similarity is essential and plurality is nullified.[56]

This tension is addressed in I Cor. 14. While the focus in worship is to remain on God (vs. 25), the edification of the church is also to remain as a high priority (vs. 12, 26). In addition, awareness of the need for intelligibility in light of the potential presence of the unbeliever – seeker – is also key (vs. 19, 23, 24).

A third worship tension exists between form and freedom. Almost all evangelical churches find their roots in the free church movement. One result of this is an anti-tradition sentiment that often perceives ritual and history as negative. However, there is a movement toward involvement of more historic and ancient ritual in evangelicalism.[57] Howard points out that historic ceremony and form is essential to usher us closer to the truth. This is because ceremony does what words cannot do – it "…carries us beyond the merely explicit, the expository, the verbal, the propositional, the cerebral…"[58] Keifert suggests that Christian worship can lose its public qualities when congregational ritual is lost. It simply becomes a gifted few performing for the rest who are an "audience".[59] Cultural analyst Neil Postman agrees and states that the loss of significant ritual will be accompanied by the decline of any sense of meta-narrative.[60] Corporate worship practice will be healthier when there is a strong sense of significant, historical ritual as well as a freedom that has been characteristic of evangelical tradition.

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[56] Patrick R. Keifert, *Welcoming the Stranger, 79.*
[57] See Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002).
[58] Thomas Howard, *Evangelical Is Not Enough: Worship Of God In Liturgy And Sacrament* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1984), 98.
[59] Keifert, *Welcoming the Stranger,* 97.
[60] Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1993), 173.

The fourth tension relevant to corporate worship is between presentation and participation. Much of evangelicalism is founded on the *kerygmatic* idea of the presentation of the gospel. The seeker service is an excellent contemporary example of this. In the *kerygmatic* scenario, the primary emphasis of the corporate gathering is horizontal – the preached word. The importance of worship as an *act* is missed in many of these contexts. There is revelation but no opportunity for corporate response. People simply receive but usually have very little opportunity to respond to the word or to God. While presentational components are necessary in corporate gatherings (worship services?), responses that emphasize congregational participation are essential to a biblical understanding of worship.

<u>Evangelical Worship – How Did We Get Here?</u>

Reformation Influence

Much of evangelical thought and practice is rooted in the Protestant Reformation. Reformation influence is primarily found in the ideas of the priesthood of every believer, the importance of using the vernacular in worship and the centrality of the printed Bible. The involvement of the laity in ministry remains a high priority in Canadian evangelicalism and the use of the vernacular is pervasive. However, the centrality of the printed word has contributed to a loss of corporate actions in worship.

Print orientation resulted in the rejection of many non-print methods of communicating and celebrating truth. For example, Zwingli, an important reformer, demanded a general rejection of the use of the visual (images) other than print.[61] Zwingli's practice centered almost

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[61] Leonard Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2000), 107. Words are a kind of image with very specific meaning.

completely on preaching and prayer and used very little liturgy or music.[62] The Lord's Supper had functioned as the central act of Christian worship up to the Reformation but was in jeopardy of being removed entirely. Followers of the prominent reformer John Calvin, relegated the Lord's supper to a tertiary place even though he desired that all worship services would include the ritual of Lord's Supper as a key congregational act.[63]

A print oriented approach to corporate gathering ultimately resulted in the elimination of most congregational action. The printing press made it possible to "…transmit all of the old wisdom through books rather than in the old ways… [story, ritual, etc.] The book, as a result, rendered the community redundant."[64] Senn suggests that one result of the print emphasis was that Western Europe "slid" into a preoccupation with the text (words) rather than acts of worship.[65] "…an even more profound consequence of printing was the divorce of word and rite."[66] Over time, the Bible could be cheaply put in the hands of worshipers. This allowed for truth to communicated through words rather than through events, symbols, ceremonies, sacred times and places. "Worshipers came together not to perform liturgical actions, for which the space had to be kept open to accommodate moving bodies, but to hear and read texts, for which pews were probably a welcome convenience and the reading desk an important piece of liturgical furniture."[67] Truth now lay in the text rather than on the walls, in the windows or in the liturgical activity. The key reformation influences continue in Canadian evangelical churches today, however, the centrality of the printed Word remains prominent.

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[62] Tim Keller, "Reformed Worship in the Global City," in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 199.

[63] Ibid.

[64] David F. Wells, *No Place For Truth: Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1993), 202.

[65] Frank Senn, *Christian Liturgy; Catholic and Evangelical* (Fortress Press: Minneapolis, MN., 1997), 300.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid., 301.

Enlightenment Influence

Evangelical worship practice is highly influenced by enlightenment thinking. During the enlightenment the foundation of the Christian faith shifted from the centrality of Christ to the centrality of the Bible. "Theology shifted from the God who acts to the God who spoke."[68] God's method of speaking was limited to a book and to the reasonable defence of the book. White suggests that this resulted in a new epistemology oriented around reason alone.[69] Prior to this, the supernatural, and especially miracles, had sufficed to give credibility.[70]

Two problems inherited from the enlightenment and the age of reason were an emphasis on pragmatism and an emphasis on individualism.[71] During the age of reason, the emphasis shifted from a focus on God to a focus on the needs of people and the "…role of subjectivity in the act of worship."[72] As a result, preaching and the sermon took center stage away from the Eucharist[73] downplaying corporate acts and elevating individual silent response. Contemporary Canadian evangelicalism often exemplifies this. The Lord's Supper is relegated to the status of serious, but ultimately superfluous ceremony where unbelievers are warned about the dangers of participation but, mysteriously, the ritual is seen as having no "real" power or presence. The primary and central component of evangelical corporate worship is the sermon.

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[68] Robert E Webber, *Ancient Future Faith; Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids, MI:Baker Book House, 1999), 13.
[69] James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), 143.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Webber, *Ancient Future Faith,* 75.
[72] Senn, *Christian Liturgy; Catholic and Evangelical,* 567.
[73] White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship,* 159.

The Holiness Movement and Revivalism

The Holiness Movement and Revivalism have profoundly influenced Evangelicalism.

Holiness worship traces its origins to the late 18th century and John Wesley.[74] Wesley's

methodology included "camp meetings" where individuals were challenged to convert to a costly

Christianity and experience the power of the work of God in community. The subsequent

development of Methodism "…can be seen as a counter-cultural movement in the midst of the

Enlightenment."[75] Methodists sought to return the sacraments, including the Lord's Supper, to a

central place of worship. John and his brother Charles were also prolific hymn writers who

contributed to the revival of congregational song in corporate worship.[76] Key holiness

movement influences on evangelical corporate worship include the use of repetitive gospel songs

and a regular call to conversion.[77] By the early 19th century, evangelists like Charles Finney

were using this model "…to meet the challenge of the new frontier, the unconverted city."[78]

Peck suggests that Finney adapted the backwoods revival model of the camp meeting to

reach the cities of the eastern seaboard of the United States.[79] Achieving the desired results –

passionate converts – was the primary goal, however, revivalist methodology was diverse. The

various pragmatic approaches focused on the end desire of connecting with listeners on a visceral

level and producing "true heart-felt religion."[80] It was implied that religion without passion was

not true religion at all.

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[74] Brad Estep, "Holiness Worship," in *The Complete Library Of Christian Worship,* Vol. 2, *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship,* ed. Robert Webber (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 1993), 97-98.
[75] James F. White, "Methodist Worship," in *The Complete Library Of Christian Worship,* Vol. 2, *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship,* ed. Robert Webber (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 1993), 86.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Brad Estep, "Holiness Worship," 97-98.
[78] Ibid., 98.
[79] James R. Peck, "American Revival Worship," in *The Complete Library Of Christian Worship,* Vol. 2, *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship,* ed. Robert Webber (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 1993), 88.
[80] Ibid.

Revivalism influenced contemporary evangelicalism in an additional way. The focus of the revivalist meetings required that church architecture become oriented around the proclamation of the "message." As a result, the stage became the focal point of corporate gatherings. [81] Essentially, what followed was more consistent with the model of the theatre, which focused on people as the audience, than the historical church building, which identified God as the transcendent audience.

Denominations in Canada

Evangelicalism worldwide has been plagued by fragmentation and resulting denominationalism. This is also evident in Canadian evangelicalism. Key denominational developments in Canada include the holiness movement, the Mennonite and Anabaptist movements, and the consolidation of a number of denominations into one uniquely Canadian United Church.[82]

Evangelical churches in Canada rooted in the Holiness movement include the Evangelical Missionary, Pentecostal, Nazarene, Free Methodist, Salvation Army and Christian And Missionary Alliance. The Anabaptist tradition has given root to the Mennonite and the more evangelical Mennonite Brethren churches. The many Baptist churches in Canada are traced to the Puritans and Anglicanism.

Canadian churches that are not normally included among evangelicals include the Reformed, Lutheran, United and Anglican Churches. Although there are exceptions, the majority of these churches do not emphasize all the evangelical priorities of mission, authority of the scripture, the lordship of Christ in the entire life of the believer.

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[81] Ibid., 89.

[82] This material is adapted from John G. Stackhouse, "What's in a Name? Christian Denominations in Canada," *Faith Today* 12 #1 (Jan/Feb. 1994):18-24.

There are some unique and independent churches in Canada that share evangelical values. Prominent among these are two formerly Vineyard churches: Airport Fellowship in Toronto, Ontario and New Life Fellowship in Kelowna, British Colombia. These churches represent a powerful influence in Canadian evangelicalism. They prioritize passion in corporate worship expression, signs and wonders and care for the oppressed.

Anti-tradition Sentiment and The Contemporary Worship Model

Generally, evangelicalism has reflected an anti-tradition sentiment. The roots of this partly stem from reformation thinkers and reaction to Roman Catholic practice. It also is rooted in a suspicion of ritual in general. Evangelicals often have a distrust of "forms" of worship. It seems that there is a false dichotomy between form and ritual and spirit and truth.[83] One result is a sweeping ignorance of church worship practice between the fourth and sixteenth centuries. In some cases, there is a deliberate attempt to return to the roots of the New Testament church, assuming that this church had no ritual or tradition. However, Senn points out that "Implicit in the idea of a return to roots is the assumption that all intervening history between one's origins and one's present time has been a negative development."[84] Moreover, it is extremely difficult to pinpoint precisely what the practices of the "New Testament" church were.

There is an assumption among some evangelicals that the New Testament church had no tradition and little variety. This is not true. In fact the New Testament church was built on deep Jewish tradition. This was the foundation and springboard of early Christian worship. There

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[83] Howard, *Evangelical Is Not Enough,* 47.
[84] Senn, *Christian Liturgy; Catholic and Evangelical,* 682.

was also great variety in worship practice, especially from city to city.[85] An additional concern

related to the desire to emulate the New Testament church is the fact that, in most of the Roman

dominated culture, practicing the Christian faith was subject to legal persecution. So, for

example, the lack of church buildings in early Christianity was more because of the legal climate

than because of specific choice. This is evidenced by the fact that church buildings appeared

almost instantly after the Edict of Milan proclaimed the legality of Christian practice.

Stookey suggests that evangelical attempts to create distance from tradition are

misguided. It is an attempt to create a sense of worship isolated to the contemporary. He says

that the present cannot be conceived in isolation.[86] Rather, the church must embrace the work of

God through all twenty centuries of Christian history. God's presence spans the entire two

thousand years. "The contrast is not between a God who is here and a God who is absent, but

between the work of God that is sometimes obvious and sometimes hidden."[87]

One additional result of an anti-tradition sentiment among evangelicals is the tendency to

embrace specific trends in worship style and practice and exclude previous practice. Each

generation of evangelicals has tended to adopt very specific expressions of faith and worship that

are often rejected by the next. As a result, the current model in most Canadian evangelical

churches is usually defined as "contemporary", and includes an emphasis on music, and the

platform. In this model, people often appear as an "audience" watching a selected talented few

express themselves in corporate worship while the rest watch or, at best sing along.[88] The desire

(hunger) for the exhibitionism of the talented few is almost voyeuristic. Susan White suggests

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[85] Guillermo W. Mendez, "Worship in the Independent /Free Church/Congregational Tradition: A view from the Two-Thirds World," in *Worship: Adoration and Action*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 172.

[86] Laurence Hull Stookey, *Calendar: Christ's Time For The Church* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1996), 20-23.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Keifert, *Welcoming The Stranger,* 25.

that this tendency to make one preferred style of worship [and worship leader] "the only way" is really a form of idolatry.[89] New research has indicated the beginning of a change in this regard toward a healthier and broader historic perspective.[90]

Peter Emberley, a Canadian researcher, suggests that even "boomers"[91] are searching for a kind of new tradition. However, it is not a search for "…an ordering of the human soul, nor truth and significance…" but rather "…a precious heirloom, a sacred grotto, an artful performance whose value lies in stimulating the feeling that something old and pure has been restored."[92] This idea is not compatible with the historical Christian tradition, a fact that is reflected in Emberley's subsequent comment, "[this sentimental pursuit]…is an idolatrous relation to tradition, for it is an attempt to arrest evolution and submit everything that is living to dead authority…[traditionalism] is magic and theurgy, using received formulae to transform reality by turning back the clock to an imagined time of purity."[93]

<div align="center">Fundamentalist, Charismatic, Seeker, and Liturgical Influences</div>

Four significant influences on contemporary evangelicalism include the fundamentalist, charismatic, seeker service and liturgical renewal movements. The first half of the twentieth century was largely the dominion of fundamentalists who focused on behaviorist orientation and dogmatic preaching in the tradition of the revivalist movement. Consistent with this is the methodology of Finney, who Ashton identifies as a "frontier" preacher.[94] The fundamentalist

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[89] Susan J. White, *Groundwork of Christian Worship* (Peterborough, England: Epworth Press, 1997), 22.
[90] See Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals.*
[91] While there is discrepancy regarding the definition of "boomers", it is generally understood that these are individuals who are born between the mid 1940s and mid 1960s.
[92] Emberley, *Divine Hunger,* 65.
[93] Ibid., 66.
[94] Mark Ashton, "Following In Cranmer's Footsteps," in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 148.

order of worship included preliminaries (music), sermon and invitation. Ironically, the emphasis

on the Bible and biblical inerrancy common to fundamentalism was replaced by emphasis on

preaching. This was reflected in a movement away from the public reading of the Bible.[95]

Passion in songs (about experience) and prayers became more important than biblical content.

Corporate worship became something that was done for people (audience) rather than done by

people (congregation).[96]

The second twentieth century influence on evangelicalism was the charismatic

movement. This movement is often traced to Pentecostalism and revival at the Azusa Street

Mission in 1906.[97] However, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, a Canadian revival movement

called The Latter Rain revival "…was a major source of the charismatic renewal."[98] This revival

movement was originally located in Edmonton, Alberta and North Battleford, Saskatchewan.[99]

One significant influence of this movement was the increased centrality of congregational song

in corporate worship. In addition, praise dance was introduced at a Latter Rain conference at

Crescent Beach, British Colombia.[100] There is some connection between the Latter Rain and the

Azusa Street revivals.[101] Controversy accompanied the influence of charismatic renewal in

Canadian Evangelical churches.

From 1960-1980, many Canadian evangelical churches were split over various means of

expression in corporate worship. This included everything from the simple raising of hands to

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[95] Ibid.

[96] This seems to be a recurring theme in church history. Eventually these trends seem to work their way to professionalism and a passive "audience".

[97] Robert Longman, "Azusa Street Timeline," Spirithome.com <http://www.spirithome.com/histpen1.html> (Accessed February 24, 2003).

[98] Richard M. Riss, "The Charismatic Renewal," in *The Complete Library Of Christian Worship,* Vol. 2, *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship,* ed. Robert Webber (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 1993), 122.

[99] Ibid, 123.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Jay Atkinson, "Azusa Street Mission," The Latter Rain Page <http://latter-rain.com/ltrain/azusa.htm> (Accessed February 24, 2003).

the more dramatic public charismatic expression of speaking in tongues. Most evangelical

churches were homogeneous enough that splits were acceptable. Unity of thought and action

was preferred. However, through the later years of the twentieth century, many churches

accepted the fact that homogeneity was ultimately neither healthy nor possible. The result was

that more expressive forms of worship began to regularly appear in the most fundamentalist

churches. Music was a primary influence in this. Increasingly, churches were adopting new

music from the "praise and worship" sources. Almost all of these sources were rooted in a

charismatic church tradition. [102] The result was often subtle influence. Fundamentalist churches

that would have been reticent to adopt the theology of the more charismatic churches were

willing to embrace their music. An example of this is the wide use of worship music from

Mercy (Vineyard) Publishing. Among non-charismatic evangelical churches in Canada, Mercy

is the number one source for music, yet is rooted in the charismatic renewal tradition. [103]

The third twentieth century influence on Canadian evangelicalism was the "seeker

service" introduced by Bill Hybels and the Willow Creek Community Church in South

Barrington Illinois. Bill Hybels pioneered the idea that Sunday mornings could be used as the

primary outreach event of the church. He reasoned that Sunday morning was the time a non-

churched person might consider attending a church, therefore, it should have evangelism as its

primary thrust. James White suggests that Hybels' idea was not entirely new but reflected

revivalist influence. White identifies the methodology of Charles Finney (1792-1875) as the

precursor to the "seeker service". [104] This reflects a pragmatism that characterized much of

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[102] Examples of publishers with charismatic roots include: Maranatha!, Integrity, Hillsong and Mercy.

[103] See "Church Survey" data in **Appendix A**.

[104] James F. White, *Documents of Christian Worship: Descriptive and Interpretive Sources* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 114.

revivalism and late twentieth century evangelicalism.[105]   Rodney Stark identifies this strategy as

the market model of religion, or rational choice theory.[106]   Stark maintains that the seeker service

is a result of secularization but that secularization is not entirely negative for the church.

Secularization stimulates innovation and new tradition in religion, according to Stark. This

results in the potential for greater success of religious organizations.

Many evangelical churches across Canada have embraced the ideas of the seeker service

movement and an event oriented evangelism. Critics identify the lack of spiritual depth common

among seeker churches as problematic. They suggest that in seeker churches, discipleship is

eclipsed by outreach resulting in immature believers. However, some churches that have

embraced the seeker church movement have also placed a high priority on the cost of following

Christ. This is consistent with the Willow Creek doctrine that all believers are challenged to

become "fully devoted followers" (FDFs) of Christ. Moreover, Stark suggests that for North

Americans, there is a direct correlation between cost and value.[107]   In many cases, for those who

are on a spiritual quest, the more costly it is to be involved, the more attractive the church. An

important implication is that the expectations must be the correct ones. High cost religion may

be attractive to these seekers whether doctrines are biblical or not.

The fourth influence in contemporary evangelicalism is one of a return to historical

liturgy.[108]   This trend is relatively new in Canadian evangelical churches and tends to be more

common among the young. For many, it is only evidenced in rituals like the ceremonial

(sentimentalist) lighting of Advent candles prior to Christmas. In other contexts, however, there

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[105] Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals,* 18.
[106] See Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 2000). Cited in: Reginald W. Bibby, *Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 2002), 31.
[107] Ibid.
[108] See Webber, *Ancient Future Faith* and Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals.*

is a desire to incorporate the more substantive rituals of the historical Christian Church. In Canada, this trend is still in its infancy, however, it is fair to assume that it will gain momentum as younger people gain more leadership influence in the church. A parallel observation is that there may be a new kind of "worship war" brewing between the younger evangelicals and boomers who tend to resist ritual and the adoption of historical tradition.

<p style="text-align:center">Consumerism and Preference</p>

The North American culture of consumerism has been widely influential in evangelical churches. This has resulted in competition between churches for the increasingly fewer second-generation evangelicals. Examples of this influence include the desire to appease a broad spectrum of tastes in the congregation. MacDonald observes that worship leaders must "…satisfy five culturally defined generations that now populate most churches. Each has its own taste in worship, and each thinks the other four are a bit off-the-wall."[109]

Best suggests that this hunger for taste gratification is a form of contemporary idolatry.[110] "When we commit idolatry we abuse our creative gifts in the most flagrant way by fabricating concrete connections between what we believe and what we make."[111] Ultimately, this is what happens when worship style or language becomes the primary consumer focus. Therefore, the desire to simply appease different tastes is an accommodation to consumerism. Howard suggests

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[109] Gordon MacDonald, *Leadership Journal,* Spring 2002 On line – <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2002/002/10.83.html> (accessed July 25, 2002).
[110] Harold M. Best, *Music Through The Eyes of Faith* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1993), 48.
[111] Ibid.

that the focus should be on giving rather than receiving. Worshipers should not be "auditors…spectators…recipients" but those who come to offer God the sacrifice of praise.[112]

However, the voluntary nature of the church in Canada has resulted in a desire for efficient recruitment of those who will participate in the organization. Ultimately, it seems people will choose to become part of the church based on what they may receive from it.[113] An important result has been professionalism in the key areas of consumerism. In the past, the sermon was almost exclusively evaluated according to what was received. Therefore, the primary church professional was the preacher. In today's climate, consumerism is much broader, resulting in the professionalism of many areas of ministry including youth work, children's ministry, and worship leadership. Wells suggests that this proclivity toward professionalism is dangerous. He states "…I shall go on to argue that one can make a virtual correlation between the degree to which the clergy are professionalized and the degree to which they will have forfeited, or deliberately abandoned, their fundamental task of being brokers of truth."[114] A dangerous result is the emphasis on satisfying the masses in order to keep them in your church. This erodes commitment to the centrality of the truth and downplays the cost of the Gospel. According to Wiersbe, "True worship is not cheap entertainment, it's a costly experience."[115]

Use of Media and Technology

Wright suggests that North American (evangelical) worship is founded on three things: the printed page, a sixteenth century appreciation of music, and existence in a Christian culture. These have changed dramatically in that contemporary culture is oriented around TV and image

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[112] Howard, *Evangelical is Not Enough,* 46.
[113] Stookey, *Calendar: Christ's Time For The Church*, 76.
[114] Wells, *No Place For Truth,* 221.
[115] Wiersbe, *Real Worship,* 22.

instead of print, contemporary music, and a pagan, post-Christian ethos.[116] Pragmatic

evangelicals have adjusted to this shift by incorporating new mediums of technology, often

without critical thinking. Marshall Mcluhan suggested that "Each new medium alters

permanently our psychic environment, imposing on us a particular pattern of perceiving and

thinking that controls us to an extent we scarcely suspect."[117] An excellent example of this in

contemporary evangelicalism is the replacement of the hymnbook by the overhead and later

PowerPoint and the data projector.

Babin comments on the idea of Ground and Figure in light of these developments.[118]

Figure is understood as the specific focus of our attention (i.e. the printed matter on the paper)

while ground is the context of the medium (i.e. the paper of the magazine, the white spaces, the

layout, etc.). McLuhan identifies the ground (the medium) as the determining factor.[119] In

preaching, the meaning of the words is the figure, while the ground (medium) includes voice

inflection, hand gestures, facial expressions, the entire worship service and the entire church

body itself.[120] Increasingly, the trappings of the worship service contribute more than the

content.

An additional technology in evangelical churches during the twentieth century has been

the use of buildings and architecture. In many cases, there has been very little critical thought in

this arena, other than the accommodation of a presentational approach to worship services.

Usually, the buildings were designed after the model of the theatre. The congregation was

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[116] Tim and Jan Wright, eds., *Contemporary Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), 17.
[117] Susan J. White, *Christian Worship and Technological Change* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 40.
[118] Pierre Babin with Mercedes Iannone, *The New Era In Religious Communication* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 8.
[119] Michael J. Glodo, "The Bible in Stereo: New Opportunities for Biblical Interpretation in an A-Rational Age," in *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* ed. David S. Dockery (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995 and 2001), 114.
[120] Ibid.

understood as an audience. In fact, Margaret Visser suggests that church "attendees" are present to witness a scripted performance.[121] Most evangelical churches in Canada are designed with a number of fixed pews facing a raised platform where "truth" is proclaimed. Over the past century, the proclamation methodology has changed somewhat from being oriented almost exclusively around preaching to becoming more inclusive of elements such as music, drama and the visual arts but the focus remains proclamation rather than participation.

The audience mentality is formed around the model of theatre and a consumer culture. This is exacerbated by the fact that, in Canadian culture, people want to be entertained. Wells suggests that central to evangelicalism (and democracy as a whole) are two ideas: the audience is sovereign and that ideas find legitimacy and value only within the marketplace (people give them their legitimacy).[122] However, Webber suggests, "…the audience mentality of many Protestant churches is the greatest barrier to the recovery of the involvement of all God's people in worship."[123] James White agrees that biblical ideas of worship dictate that the congregation should never be a passive audience.[124]

<div align="center">The Cultural Shift Toward Postmodernity</div>

The shift in western culture out of the modern era has been clearly documented. The succeeding era has been simply called postmodernity.[125] This shift is largely related to the rejection of modern assumptions as inadequate or simply wrong. Lyotard identified two flawed ideas of modernity. They are identified as myths, implying the need for some kind of faith in

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[121] Margaret Visser, *The Geometry of Love: Space, Time, Mystery and Meaning in an Ordinary Church* (Toronto, ON: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000), 12.
[122] Wells, *No Place For Truth*, 207.
[123] Webber, *Worship Is A Verb*, 133.
[124] James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 32.
[125] See Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

their embrace. Myth one is that "Through science, humanity rises up in freedom and dignity to emancipate itself by assaulting the bastions of ignorance and oppression" and myth two is that "Science… is legitimate because it facilitates the growth of knowledge."[126]

Dockery suggests that postmodernity is an in-between time as modernity ends and a new era begins.[127] Many identify the beginning of this as exemplified in the destruction of the Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis in 1972.[128] This low income housing project was the pinnacle of modernist architecture and ideology. "Instead of erecting some other structure on the rubble, secular postmodernism concentrates on the explosion."[129] Lyotard, a key postmodern thinker, writes, "Simplifying to the extreme, I define *postmodern* as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences: but that progress in turn presupposes it. [130] Whereas modernity placed faith in science and human reason, postmodernity tends to reject both as inadequate. Sire suggests that there are five aspects of postmodernism:

1. Things and events do not have intrinsic meaning – there is only continuous interpretation
2. Continuous interpretation requires contextual examination – the interpreter is part of the context
3. Interpretation depends on the interpreter rather than the "external text"
4. Language is not neutral but relative and value-laden
5. Language conveys ideology[131]

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[126] Stanley Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 47.
[127] Dockery, *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* 12.
[128] Gene Edward Veith Jr., *Postmodern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture* (Wheaton IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 39.
[129] Iid.
[130] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition,* xxiv.
[131] Dockery, *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* 14. Taken from: James W. Sire. "Logocentricity and Postmodern Apologetic: On Being a Fool for Christ and an Idiot for Nobody" (Unpublished paper presented at the Wheaton Theology Conference, 7-8 April 1994).

Leonard Sweet suggests that postmodern culture is EPIC – Experiential, Participatory, Image-driven and Connected.[132] Key postmodern thinkers include Lyotard, Derrida, Foucault, and Stanley Fish.[133]

Orientation Toward Truth

The incredulity toward meta-narrative has resulted in a general questioning of any sense of epistemological absolute. In this context, there has often been a linkage between modern ideas and the evangelical Christian worldview. Dockery observes, "A normative view of [absolute] truth and a Christian worldview are rejected or devalued, seemingly lost in our contemporary culture."[134] Both have previously been seen as "normative." Postmodern thinker Rorty suggests that truth is primarily pragmatic and is based on coherence between ideas and reality.[135]

Grenz identifies two foundational assumptions postmoderns have about knowledge: 1) All explanations of reality are constructions that are useful but not objectively true; and 2) We do not have the ability to step outside our constructions of reality.[136] Michel Foucault, following the lead of Nietzsche, identifies reason and rational discourse as problematic because they require we "squeeze the variety of reality into the artificial homogeneity" of sameness at the expense of diversity or "otherness."[137] The fact that reality must be described or explained contributes to the postmodern idea that language creates a world of its own and, therefore, has a reality of its

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[132] Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims*, 28.
[133] Dockery, *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* 11.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism,* 153.
[136] Ibid., 43.
[137] Ibid., 127.

own.[138] This allows for seemingly contradictory conclusions (constructions) to exist side by

side. Ultimately, it is not about what the idea "does" but, instead, is about its outcome?[139]

Nietzsche writes:

> "What, then, is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms –
> in short a sum of human relations, which have been enhanced, transposed, and
> embellished poetically and rhetorically, and which after long use seem firm, canonical,
> and obligatory to a people; truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that this is what
> they are; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power; coins which have
> lost their pictures and now matter only as metal, no longer as coins."[140]

In postmodernity, knowledge is manufactured and sold. The primary idea (goal) is not

knowledge itself, but the exchange of knowledge.[141] This is a direct challenge to the evangelical

foundation of the absolute truth of the revelation of God. In light of this, it is not surprising that

the focus of worship in many contemporary churches is not the content but the style. Style is the

vehicle of the exchange.

Heidegger proposes that to gain truth requires openness to mystery. This is not the

"modern fixation with calculative thinking" but "meditative thinking." Calculative thinking is

insufficient.[142] "Above all… postmodern, chastened rationality entails the rejection of

epistemological foundationalism."[143] This is the premise that there exists an absolute that you

can build on. For evangelicals, it has historically been the Bible. "The goal of the

foundationalist agenda is the discovery of an approach to knowledge that will provide rational

human beings with absolute, incontestable certainty regarding the truthfulness of their

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[138] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1970), xvi.

[139] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism,* 43.

[140] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism,* 91. Taken from: Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense," in *The Portable Nietzsche,* edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1976), 46-47.

[141] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition,* 4.

[142] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism,* 106.

[143] Ibid., 23.

beliefs."[144] Postmodernity assails the idea of foundationalism and, naturally, the foundations

themselves.

Reality and Meaning

Modern notions of reality are almost exclusively oriented around the physical. Referring

to Paul G. Hiebert, Zahniser suggests that the result is a "western two-tiered view of reality" and

the "excluded middle."[145] The top tier relates to issues of faith and things that are unexplainable

from a physical, scientific perspective. These were normally rejected as "unreal" in modernity.

The lower tier is the realm of science, observation and immediacy. The excluded middle refers

to the fact that western modernity has failed to reconcile issues of faith and science resulting in a

general hunger for reality that is more than physical.

The term "virtual reality" is evidence of this two-tiered understanding. Non-physical

reality is termed virtual because the general sentiment is that it is not actually real at all.

Postmodern thinking rejects this exclusively physical understanding of reality. In Canada, many

new "folk religions" are appearing in the excluded middle. These include the new age

movement and experimentation with First Nations religious practice.[146] This reflects a

somewhat naïve attempt to build a bridge between the upper tier of the spiritual and the lower

tier of the physical. Unfortunately, Canadian evangelicalism has offered few answers in this

excluded middle. In the past and at present priority has typically been given to the defence of the

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[144] Ibid.
[145] A. H. Zahniser, *Symbol And Ceremony: Making Disciples Across Cultures* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1997), 50. This idea comes from Paul G. Hiebert, "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle," *Missiology* 10/1 (1982), 35-47.
[146] Emberley, *Divine Hunger,* 56.

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upper tier based on methodology from the lower. For example, the historicity of the Bible is

defended based on archaeological discovery. This is "evidence that demands a verdict."[147]

Expression and The Arts

Coherence has emerged as a priority in postmodern thinking. It seems that there is a

sense of coherence based on the distance one is from an experience or a certain kind of reality.

This is related to the attempt to specifically describe something "real" in verbal or written

language. There is a closeness to that reality that is not there in more abstract "descriptions" like

art or music. As a result, the arts may provide a more meaningful approach to reality and truth.

Art focuses on a subject/object, but inadvertently creates a world for that subject/object to live.

This creative world is the extension of the subject/object that is inherent *and* created by the artist.

Gadamer states, "Through a work of art we experience truth that we cannot attain in any other

way." This challenges the scientific mind to acknowledge its own limitations. Gadamer begins

here (with art) to develop a new understanding of knowledge and truth.[148] Heidegger supports

this idea,

> "Art then is the becoming and happening of truth. Does truth, then, arise out of nothing?
> It does indeed if by nothing is meant the mere not of that which is, and if we here think of
> that which is as an object present in the ordinary way, and thereafter comes to light and is
> challenged by the existence of the work as only presumptively a true being."[149]

Pfatteicher concludes,

> "Art provides a way of approaching the deepest and finally inexplicable enigmas of
> existence, our own nature and our own death. … Well done, art is fresh, daring, and
> disturbing, a contrary occupation showing new modes of knowing."[150]

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[147] Citing the title of Josh McDowell's 'classic' of this particular genre of apologetics, Webber critiques this modern approach to apologetics in *The Younger Evangelicals*, chapter 6.

[148] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism,* 109.

[149] Ibid., 107. Taken from: Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought,* Translated by Albert Hofstadeter (New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 71.

[150] Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality,* 24.

In postmodernity, the arts have an extremely important role in relation to truth. Plato proclaimed that beauty makes truth splendid."[151] Babin suggests that beauty and pleasure are ways to God.[152] Consumer ideas of beauty, however, often focus more on stimulation than truth. Beauty and stimulation are not the same. The kind of beauty that draws us to truth interacts with our whole beings. It is emotional, cerebral and often, physical.

In modernity, artists were exalted as an elite group. They were trained specialists and the only ones allowed to "create". Postmodernity rejects elitism. Postmodern values include pop culture, consumerism, and kitsch.[153] This has implications for the arts in worship. Postmodern worship music is participatory and not elite. It is quite likely that the big stage and production values of the twentieth century will continue to fade as modernity fades. Rather than being elite and separate from community, Lyotard suggests that "Artists and writers must be brought back into the bosom of the community, or at least, if the latter is considered to be ill, they must be assigned the task of healing it."[154]

Conclusions about Postmodernity

Grenz states that the Gospel in postmodernity must be, post-individualistic, post-rationalistic, post-dualistic (holistic), and post-noeticentric.[155] A post-individualistic gospel is much more oriented around community. It is constructive and has the perspective of individual-within-community. A post-rationalistic gospel must begin with the realization that evangelicalism is rooted in modernity and rationalism but that faith transcends these. It requires

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[151] Babin, *The New Era In Religious Communication,* 111.
[152] Ibid., 113. Also see John Piper *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* (Sisters, OR : Multnomah Books, 1986) and his thesis of Christian hedonism.
[153] Veith, *Postmodern Times*, 97.
[154] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 73.
[155] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism*, 167-172.

a sense of mystery and the refusal to limit the idea of gospel to the intellect. A post-dualistic

gospel values the priority of biblical holism. It is not just about saving souls but recognizes the

value of saving whole persons. This involves a re-emphasis on relationship and community. A

post-noeticentric gospel rejects the idea that the goal of our existence is the accumulation of

knowledge. Rather, the purpose of knowing and of doctrine is the attainment of wisdom.

Postmodernity and Evangelicalism

Roots in Modernity

Assumptions of the modern mind include the notion that knowledge is certain, objective,

good and accessible to the human mind.[156] Evangelical Christianity with its foundationalist

emphasis on empiricism, reason and science is a child of early modernity.[157] Key to evangelical

thinking is the premise that truth can be known and that it is possible to describe it verbally. At

times, this has contributed to a simplistic, "black and white" understanding of reality. The

modern correspondence theory of truth asserts that things are either true or false and this can be

determined by comparing them to "reality" which is almost entirely based in the physical.[158]

However, the postmodern approach is that we don't just interact with the world "out there"

(basically, physical) but we participate in "constructing" it. Postmoderns claim that there is not

just one view that is correct.[159]

In many cases, evangelicals have given higher priority to individual values and negated

communal values. Emberley suggests that one result of a modern orientation is the willingness

to accept the loss of community in favor of individual liberty. As such, community exists to

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[156] Ibid., 4.
[157] Ibid., 10.
[158] Ibid., 41.
[159] Ibid.

promote the free and rational agent.[160] Individual choice and action is highly valued in the evangelical church. Individual function and highly personal expression in the church is also of great significance.

Modern revivalist movements have had a significant impact on evangelical thinking and methodology. Susan White suggests that D. L. Moody, a 19th century revivalist preacher, followed the technological model of the factory with the purpose of getting a large group of people together and getting them saved *en masse*.[161] Certain rituals were necessary to make this happen but the primary *rationale* was pragmatism. Results justified methodology. Much of the church growth movement of the late twentieth century followed this ideology. The definition of success was based on certain kinds of results, which were often oriented around gaining converts and filling church buildings.

Modern evangelicalism largely eliminated the idea and presence of mystery in faith. One result of this is an elimination of means of communication, like the arts, that are less precise. In twentieth century evangelicalism, for example, the music only has value if you can clearly understand the message of the accompanying words. However, in postmodernity, a sense of mystery is valued. The arts can contribute to this. If the act of creating art constructs truth and reality then interacting with the art also constructs truth. The Christian artist therefore works subversively in that the assumptions of faith are not necessarily obvious but are present in the work of art. This still leaves room for interpreters to "construct" truth in the context of the community of participants. It also allows for the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individual worshipers and the community as a whole.

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[160] Emberley, *Divine Hunger*, 6.
[161] White, *Christian Worship and Technological Change,* 96.

Evangelicals have historically rejected the use of images because of lack of precision in communication. "We modern people revolted from imagery in favor of words as the main vehicle for communication. Consequently, symbolic language became a lost art in our culture, and an uneasiness about signs developed."[162] However, Anthony Ugolnic, an Orthodox thinker, suggests that words are always bound to image. "The meaning of words is necessarily invested with the images that those words suggest."[163] He critiques the western preoccupation with getting meaning from words, from a book, suggesting that western educators fear that meaning will be lost if text is lost.[164] Effective ministry to postmoderns will generally include words, images and ritual as means to communicating truth.

For evangelicals to be effective in reaching out to a postmodern world, it will be essential that some of the trappings of modernity are reevaluated and, in some cases, exchanged for the postmodern. It is not a matter of embracing the anti-meta-narrative sentiment of the postmodern but may require a more communal approach that brings new emphasis to mystery, ritual and image in public and private ministry.

Rainer's Study

Thom Rainer's 2001 book *Surprising Insights From The Unchurched* raises some very important issues that relate to the profile of a worship pastor. Although Rainer's conclusions come out of a United States context, they have value for Canadian reflection. Extensive time is given to this study here because of its significance.

Rainer's broad study in the United States included interviews of people from a spectrum of denominational contexts. The focus of the study was people who had not been part of a

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[162] Webber, *Worship Is A Verb,* 81.
[163] Anthony Ugolnik, *The Illuminating Icon* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989), 46.
[164] Ibid., 49.

church prior to the preceding six months. Essentially, the study attempted to find out what caused unchurched people to choose to become part of a church and to remain involved. The conclusions of this study are quite different from much that is being written about reaching postmodern, unchurched people.

Key data in the study related to factors that led a person to choose a church. Over 90% of people studied identified the pastor and preaching as the key factor, followed by 88% who identified doctrine as primary. Only 11% of people identified worship style or music as significant.[165] Although issues of welcome and comfort (including relevant music, clean modern facilities and good child care) were important to get a person to return to church twice, preaching and doctrine were important to get a person to choose to remain in the church.[166]

According Rainer's study, the level of expectation the church placed on members and the likelihood that people would commit were correlated. For most people, the higher the expectation, the higher the likelihood that they would remain committed to the church. For example, churches that required a new members class, summarizing expectations and doctrine, were much more likely to retain people.[167] Rainer's study indicates that a high percentage of non-churched people who are joining churches today are looking for absolutes.[168]

Certain questions arise from a deeper consideration of Rainer's study. Does this study indicate that there are many people in our society who feel the disequilibrium of being part of both the modern and the postmodern world? It is possible that, in many cases, there is a modern remnant of society that is hungry for the "old days" and absolutes, forcefully proclaimed. If so, Rainer's conclusions will not remain true for the long run.

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[165] Thom S. Rainer, *Surprising Insights From The Unchurched and Proven Ways To Reach Them* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 21.
[166] Ibid., 90.
[167] Ibid., 112.
[168] Ibid., 130.

There is no question that the data from this study indicate that there are a significant number of people who respond positively to the methodology more consistent with modernity. However, there are large numbers, quite possibly a majority, of people who do not identify with modern ideology. The question remains as to whether the evangelical church can reach this group of people. According to Barna, 53% of evangelical Christians in the United States (66% of American culture) believe that there are no absolutes.[169] The modern remnant in society is significant and may be the people God wants the evangelical church to reach but the future demands that methods of reaching out to postmodern people be of high priority. This is important for the future effectiveness of the evangelical church as well as the preparation of those from the modern remnant who will lead in the 21st century.

Can Evangelicals Change To Reach The Postmodern Canadian?

One key question facing evangelicals today is "can we change to reach the postmodern?" According to Grenz, the Christian church in postmodernity must present a gospel that is: post-individualistic, post-rationalistic, post-dualistic (holistic), and post-noeticentric.[170] Postmoderns value the community above all else. Truth is found in the context of community and choice. In contrast to individualism, postmoderns value the whole rather than the parts.[171] While this is consistent with the idea of the "body of Christ" as found in the Bible, it reflects a paradigm shift for the evangelical church. Evangelicals have often reacted to the questions of postmodernity with suspicion as they are foundational – postmoderns question the possibility of absolute truth.

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[169] Veith, *Postmodern Times,* 211.
[170] Grenz, *A Primer On Postmodernism,* 167.
[171] Ibid., 208.

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Contextualizing the absolutes of Biblical Christianity to a postmodern world will require careful new language.

Reaching postmodern people will require the learning of this new language and a new way of thinking. It will mean admitting the error of the assumption that all people think and learn the same way – the evangelical way. This universalization of the thinking self and assumption that all selves resemble other selves has been referred to as "transcendental pretense."[172] The idea of the transcendental pretense has resulted in western imposition of ideas and values on non-western cultures. It has also resulted in imposition of modern ideas and values on postmodern people. For Canadian evangelicals to be effective at reaching the postmodern, transcendental pretense must be set aside. The truth of the gospel must be contextualized in relation to postmodernity just as it has been contextualized to other diverse cultures over the past twenty centuries.

Contextualizing the gospel to Canadian culture requires the understanding of Canadian people. Reginald Bibby has studied Canadian culture over the past three decades and provides some helpful observations. Bibby concludes, "In short, Canadians want good relationships. Sometimes they are finding them, sometimes they are not."[173] Quoting Peter Berger, Bibby observes that there is a desecularization happening in Canada (and around the world) that is evidenced in the general population.[174] This is contrary to the secularization theory that has dominated modern thinking.

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[172] Ibid., 79.

[173] Reginald W. Bibby, *Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 2002), 211.

[174] Bibby, *Restless Gods,* 3. Also see Peter L. Berger, ed., *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington: Ethics and Public Policy Center/Grand Rapids, MI: Billiam B. Eerdmans, 1999. p. 9-11.) Berger identifies two exceptions to the desecularization theory: Western Europe and a subculture of North Americans, especially in the humanities and social sciences. This group is relatively small but they are very influential, as they control the institutions that provide the 'official' definitions of reality. Bibby suggests that "What we have here is a globalized *elite* culture" – they

"The secularization thesis can be summed up as follows: with industrialization comes institutional specialization and changes in personal consciousness. Simply put, religion loses control over areas such as politics, economics, health care, and education… Religion's role becomes increasingly specialized and is relegated to matters of meaning, morality, and mortality, as well as to performing rites of passage. …individuals are not as inclined as their predecessors to participate in organized religion. They live highly compartmentalized lives that are not significantly informed by the gods." Religious groups are affected by culture rather than the opposite.[175]

Bibby identifies an increase – by about 12% overall during the 1990s – of spiritual interest and need in Canada. Women lead this increase. This indicates that about 1 in 10 people in Canada (3 million people) are more interested in spirituality than they were in the 80s. The largest age group indicating new interest is 18-34 year olds.[176]

Canadians respond to questions about spirituality in two distinct ways. Some define spirituality in conventional protestant terms – personal relationship with the divine – but some defined it more unconventionally. Unconventional responses included a more generalized, non-personal, tolerant and transcendent description of spirituality. These responses were predictable according to affiliation. Conservative protestant responses tend to be conventional (88%) while mainliners were split (56%/44%). People claiming no religion were unconventional (98%). Women were less conventional (54%) and men more conventional (62%). People between the ages of 18 and 54 years were almost exactly split between convention and unconventional but 71% of those older than 55 were conventional. Nationally, 53% of people were identified as conventional and 47% less conventional.[177] It appears that Canadians who identify with

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"…fall into the misconception that their views about religion reflect those of their respective populaces." (2002, p. 3) Seminary educators must be extremely careful to avoid this thinking in that it is common to many in institutions of higher learning.

[175] Ibid., 8-9.

[176] Ibid., 192.

[177] Ibid., 194.

mainline churches are more tolerant, honest and willing to ask hard questions. Conservative

evangelical Protestants seem less willing to do all these things.

Bibby documents the fact that, by and large, Canadians are not willing to change church

affiliation. Moreover, a very small percentage of people changed loyalty from mainline churches

to evangelical churches. They continued to identify with the church of their parents – including

mainline denominations (United, Anglican, Lutheran and Presbyterian).[178] Baby boomers were

not as likely to return to church in Canada as in the US. "Contrary to much media hype,

primarily American in nature, *Baby Boomers* were not returning to churches in the numbers

needed to replace aging Boomer parents and grandparents."[179]

Bibby identifies three key factors of latent spirituality in Canada: fascination with

mystery – largely ESP and other kinds of things; the search for meaning – "getting more out of

life"; and religious memory – not abandoning the religions of their parents. Canadians

identifying with this kind of spirituality do not necessarily attend church regularly, however, they

are resistant to involvement with an unfamiliar religious group.[180] In addition, Bibby suggests

that there are three (untrue) myths about the church in Canada.[181] Myth number one is that

people are switching church loyalty. He claims that these ideas come from United States

researchers Lyle Schaller and Robert Wuthnow. By contrast, Canadians have serious loyalty to

the church tradition of their parents. This is a macro-loyalty reflected in some shift among

similar kinds of traditions (i.e. Baptist to Alliance) but not radical shift (i.e. United to Baptist).

Bibby is not saying that shifting between significantly different church traditions never occurs,

but it is relatively rare. The second myth is that people are dropping out of church. Bibby found

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[178] Ibid., 14.
[179] Ibid., 23.
[180] Ibid., 28.
[181] Ibid., 39-54.

that people who have stopped attending church still see themselves as part of that church tradition. In other words, attendance was not an indicator of loyalty. This was evidenced in the fact that there was an expectation that the church would be involved in key rites of passage like marriage, birth and death. This reflects a strongly consumer approach to religion in Canada. Faith is not oriented around discipleship but around pure affinity. The third myth is that people are not receptive. Bibby found that most people want to be a part of something that is "worthwhile." Unfortunately, many perceive that the church is not currently doing the worthwhile. When this perception changes, however, a large majority of Protestants are open to increased church involvement. By and large, women are more open to this than men.

Canadians are less open to "conversion" and evangelism than Americans. "We don't look favourably on groups that aggressively want to 'convert' other people to their way of thinking, particularly vulnerable people such as children, immigrants, and the elderly."[182] Bibby points out that there is no parallel in Canada to a Pat Robertson or Jerry Falwell.

According to 2002 Stats Canada data, outside of Quebec, 23% of people claim to be Roman Catholic, 19% mainline protestant (Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, United Church of Canada), 8% conservative protestant (evangelical), 6% other (Including Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs) and 20% claim to have no religion at all.[183] The highest values Canadians have include freedom and family. Religion is of very low value for the majority of Canadians.[184] Weekly church attendees claim spirituality and religion as important but only as fifth and sixth, behind all values except "a comfortable life.[185] Canadians find a high level of enjoyment in family life (86%), friends (83%) and music (77%) but a low level of enjoyment in

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[182] Ibid., 65.
[183] Ibid., 37.
[184] Ibid., 106.
[185] Ibid.

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religion (22%). In fact, Canadians, overall, identified more enjoyment from household work (29%) than from participating in a religious group.[186]

When non-attending people were asked what would make involvement in church more desirable, 23% said changes in style and outlook (open to diversity, more contemporary, more positive, less formal, less conforming).[187] Peter Emberley found that non-churched Canadians did *not* identify doctrine and belief as significant factors. By far, the majority of Canadians (75%) consider their own beliefs more significant than official church teaching.[188] Although there is a renewed interest in tradition in Canada, this tradition is not time-tested legacy but a "simplistic simulacrum of the original spiritual discipline – it's old, it's dissident and it works healing power."[189] Emberley suggests that the interest in highly experiential churches like the "Toronto Blessing" is an example of this. The Toronto Blessing seems to be satisfying boomers craving for belonging but is doing so "without requiring either fidelity or discipline, those ingredients which stabilize and mature the need for community."[190] They [boomers] long for "…only the beautiful, fulfilling, and moving."[191] Emberley compares this to the renewed interest in First Nations spirituality. Regarding the sweat lodge: "There is ritual, but no doctrine. There are no 'men with hats,' for the 'men with feathers' accept and don't condemn."[192] This is in contrast to Rainer's conclusions.[193] A large percentage of unchurched Canadian people want experience, not doctrine. The formerly unchurched in Rainer's study were hungering for the absolutes of modernity. Reaching out to the vast majority of Canadians who want "experience" will require a significantly non-modern approach. For most Canadians, objective doctrine is

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[186] Ibid., 204.
[187] Ibid., 221.
[188] Emberley, *Divine Hunger,* 11.
[189] Ibid., 42.
[190] Ibid., 48.
[191] Ibid., 173.
[192] Ibid., 56.
[193] See Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched.*

devalued for the sake of subjective experience. Experience "…becomes the criterion for evaluating doctrine."[194] Grasping this phenomenon is essential to reach unchurched, postmodern Canadians.

Evangelicalism, as a movement of modernity, is definitely based in foundationalism.[195] The foundation is the Bible as revealed word of God. This is seen clearly in the historical centrality of preaching as the primary act of worship. As music has challenged preaching for dominance, the foundation has been threatened. In fact, the driving force behind much of contemporary worship is individual experience rather than an objective understanding of "the word." The resulting theological ethos is subjectivity. The question is: is this a departure from "truth" or is it a recovery of a more balanced, pre-modern epistemological understanding?

Webber suggests that leaders must restore congregational involvement in worship. Three things identified for worship renewal are: an orientation toward God rather than human beings; a restored sense of awe, reverence, mystery and transcendence; and a Christocentric focus through the retelling and reenacting of the salvation event.[196] Webber points out that, in postmodernity, experience precedes knowledge – this is the opposite of the enlightenment view which says that if your knowledge is right, your behavior will follow.[197] Experience shapes the way we believe and the content we believe. This is especially true among the young. Younger people are more interested in covenant relationship rather than dogmatic formulas. The beauty of God is more important than the verbal proofs for God's existence.[198]

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[194] Veith, *Postmodern Times,* 211.
[195] See Stanley Grenz and John R. Franke. *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001).
[196] Robert E Webber, *Worship Old and New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub, 1982), 193. These are three of Webbers 9 principles of worship renewal.
[197] Robert E Webber, *Blended Worship* (Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 87ff.
[198] Michael J. Glodo, "The Bible in Stereo: New Opportunities for Biblical Interpretation in an A-Rational Age," in *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* ed. David S. Dockery (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995 and 2001), 14.

Glodo contends that a simply verbal approach to truth is unbalanced and unbiblical. Evangelicals have a history of suspicion of imagery and metaphor but biblical writers did not. They included metaphors for God such as rock, tower, fortress, shepherd, warrior and eagle. The Bible is full of an image/word dialogue.[199] The problem in postmodern culture (and the church) is not necessarily the lack or absence of image, but the lack of connection between image and word. This is reflected in the common example of highly religious symbols (i.e. a cross) worn as fashion jewelry but seemingly disconnected from the rest of life. This is also exemplified in the lack of depth in ritual (sacrament) in the evangelical church. The words are often perceived as much more important than the act. Rituals are perceived as mere powerless symbols.

The Gospel is experienced in and through other people. This eliminates the idea of privatized religion. If the gospel comes to us when we are alone, it drives us to seek out community.[200] "Worship is our response to what God has done. It begins with God's service to us and it continues with our response. It is the honor and adoration we pay to God for what has been done for us by none other than our Maker and Redeemer."[201] By implication, an encounter with God that does not result in a desire for community is suspect. Autonomy is antithetical to the gospel. Postmodern thinker, Richard Rorty identifies an important contemporary value:

> "Our identification with our community – our society, our political tradition, our intellectual heritage – is heightened when we see this community as *ours* rather than *nature's, shaped* rather than *found*, one among many which men have made. In the end, the pragmatists tell us, what matters is our loyalty to other human beings clinging together against the dark, not our hope of getting things right."[202]

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[199]Ibid., 120.

[200] Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality,* 20.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism, 157. Taken from* Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism," in *The Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 166.

The worship pastor enters this environment with the potential to give healthy, theologically astute leadership. It is possible to raise up a new generation of church leaders who will have the passion and skill to contextualize the truth of the gospel for a postmodern culture in a way that satisfies the hunger for experience, community, mystery and holism. Those men and women who have passion for leading Canadians in pursuit of God, especially through the arts, have great potential to become these effective leaders in postmodernity.

Music and Art in Worship

Sometime over the past two decades, music became understood as the primary vehicle for worship in evangelical churches. In fact, for many evangelicals, music and worship are synonymous. This is evidenced by the almost universal understanding of the comment "the worship was good today" as meaning the music was good today. While this is certainly not a biblical understanding of worship, it does reflect the biblical value of participation in worship. Evangelical worship services have historically been focused almost exclusively on presentation evidenced by the centrality of the sermon. The new emphasis on music reflects a hunger for worship as the "work of the people". It is also assumed that this is a transitory trend that will result in a more holistic participation in worship. However, music appears to be extremely important to evangelical worship practice. It is likely that this will continue to be so for some time.

The use of music, and especially singing, has always been a part of evangelical gatherings. Singing has been able to do many things in the context of a worship meeting (service): Preach, pray, confess, exhort, encourage, teach, comfort. However, the emphasis of these acts has often been split between a horizontal focus on edification and a vertical focus on

praise and commitment. Trends toward the vertical reflect a *leitourgia* influence of the historical

liturgical traditions. Awareness of the difference is important for appropriate emphasis.

Discerning this is an important role of the worship pastor.

Evangelical tradition has historically approached music presentation from a participation

rather than a gifting perspective. Common to the worship service was the "special music" which

was an opportunity for some willing church member to be "on stage." Willingness to contribute

was more important than gifting. Observation of Anabaptist roots indicates an avoidance of

professionalism (and quality) as worldly. This represented somewhat of a reaction to the

Catholics who used professionals. The prominent reformer, John Calvin, took a middle way. He

avoided the use of professional musicians but did desire artistic excellence.[203] Some larger

evangelical churches today use only paid (professional) musicians but most are content to have

those who are willing to provide music.[204] This often reflects a weak sense of excellence in

worship offerings that is characteristic of much of evangelicalism. In this case, the modern value

of pragmatism is dominant.

James White suggests that in worship, we need to use music that is accessible to the

congregation. "… if we do not select music in accord with the culture and situation of our

congregation, we are apt instead to be elitist…"[205] Using professional musicians creates a

tendency toward elitism. In many cases, when professionals are brought in to the church, they

supplant someone in the body who is gifted for the task the professional does. It often lends

itself to a passive "audience" mentality among those who are less gifted. Hill suggests,

"Ultimately, the purpose of congregational participation in worship is to permit the expression of

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[203] Tim Keller, "Reformed Worship in the Global City" in *Worship By The Book* ed. D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 212.
[204] Ibid., 238.
[205] White, *Introduction To Christian Worship,* 111.

'full giftedness' for every believer-priest in the church."[206] This value precludes the extensive use of outside professionals.

Excellence in music has not been a historical value in evangelicalism. The willingness of participants has been seen as more important. This is changing in a positive way. The value of excellence in offerings for God is beginning to affect the musical worship offerings of the church. In the past, sentimentality has been the primary criteria of choice for music content and presentation. Sentimentality deals with imaginary (or very personal to someone else) experiences that do not deal with truth or reality. The focus is primarily on emotion.[207] "That is, it stirred the momentary emotions of the hearer without truly edifying or strengthening the enduring faith of the hearer."[208] A commitment to good art, with the parallel commitment to avoid elitism, is conducive to effective ministry in postmodern culture.

Best provides three helpful principles for the appropriate use of music in worship.[209] The first is to recognize that,

> "Our personal capability for evaluating a piece of music will be in direct proportion to our perceptual distance from it. The nearer we are practitionally and perceptually to a musical system, knowing it from the inside, the more capable we are of making musical judgments on our own. The further away it is, the less capable we will be to evaluate it."[210]

If we stand outside a system, we must depend on those who are inside for aesthetic judgment. This principle is difficult to convey in evangelical contexts where values have historically been egalitarian. It is also important that the sense of expertise necessary does not contribute to elitism which is neither helpful for the church nor relevant to a postmodern climate.

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[206] Hill, *Enter His Courts With Praise,* 133.
[207] Robert G. Rayburn, *Come Let Us Worship: Corporate Worship in the Evangelical Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980), 154.
[208] Senn, *Christian Liturgy,* 558.
[209] Best, *Music Through The Eyes of Faith,* 101-103.
[210] Ibid., 101.

Best's second principle is related to evaluation of similar musical styles. He suggests that the closer styles are to each other, the more potential there is for common evaluation. For example, an expert in 16th century music may not have the expertise to evaluate contemporary rock and roll, however a contemporary jazz musician might. This has important implications for training of worship pastors. Their artistic training must be in language that is consistent with contemporary ministry.

The third principle Best gives relates to popular and folk levels of music. He suggests that, although insiders perceive distinctive differences in language, it may be only simple variation in the same language. There is a common danger of dispute and claims of narrow expertise among those who are highly specialized in sub-genres of contemporary music. For example, expertise in one contemporary popular language (rock music) may qualify someone to discern quality in a slightly different one (rhythm and blues). This is where debate often happens in evangelical circles. However, when the focus is on preference around minute stylistic difference, the result can be inappropriate criticism of those who don't share the preference.

Because music is currently central to evangelical worship practice, it is important that worship pastors have good training in contemporary applications of musical leadership. This includes the ability to train and equip musicians and other artists, and the ability to discern quality and excellence in offering.

<center>Use of Image and Symbol</center>

Evangelical history includes a strong anti-image sentiment. However, in postmodernity the use of symbol and image is extremely important for effective communication. There is a great appetite for the holistic in postmodernity. Image is the preferred form of public discourse

<center>59</center>

over linear verbal communication.[211] However, it is possible to understand verbal, written, communication as image driven to some degree as well. The black marks on this page are images that have specific meaning. It may be more an issue of precision. Written words are deemed to be more precise ways of communicating than more abstract symbols or images. However, when written words are seen as largely influenced by the context (construction) of the reader, a postmodern assumption, they may be seen as less precise. This essentially puts them in a similar category to more abstract images. This idea is consistent with much of pre-modern and ancient forms of understanding and communication. Precision is not the primary value so using images is helpful and in some cases, may even be preferable.

Glodo asserts that truth comes in word *and* in image or embodiment.[212] This is a confusing idea for modern thinkers. Modernity can understand how a person can speak the truth but has more difficulty with the concept of a person being the truth.[213] But in biblical truth, image and word are reconciled in Christ. Glodo suggests the following in regard to the Old Testament prohibition against images: "The commandment against fashioning idols is not a commandment against image per se, but a prohibition against fashioning an exclusive image and therefore committing the idolatry of identification."[214] Therefore, a simply verbal approach to truth is unbalanced and unbiblical. As stated previously, evangelicals have historically been suspicious of image but biblical writers were not. They included metaphors for God such as rock, tower, fortress, shepherd, warrior and eagle. This reaffirms Glodo's image-word

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[211] Michael J. Glodo, "The Bible in Stereo: New Opportunities for Biblical Interpretation in an A-Rational Age," in *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* ed. David S. Dockery (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995 and 2001), 110.
[212] Ibid., 119.
[213] See Christ's claim in John 14:6 – "I am the way, truth, …"
[214] Michael J. Glodo, "The Bible in Stereo: New Opportunities for Biblical Interpretation in an A-Rational Age," in *The Challenge of Postmodernism,* ed. David S. Dockery (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995 and 2001), 119.

dialogue.[215] He purports the idea of the Bible in stereo – word and image, truth embodied in

person (Christ) and word. This fits well with historical ideas of the Orthodox Church and use of

icon. It also reflects a more sacramental understanding of reality, which is positively received in

a postmodern world.

The proliferation of projection technology and software (like PowerPoint) has allowed

for the easy and common use of images and symbols. In many cases, there is very little thought

that accompanies this use of images. There is neither awareness of the potential violation of

evangelical roots nor the potential power images and symbols have. As has been identified

earlier, this reflects the general trivialization of the use of powerful, historic symbols in

contemporary culture.

Postman writes, "There can, of course, be no functioning sense of tradition without a

measure of respect for symbols…Tradition is… the acknowledgment of the authority of symbols

and the relevance of the narratives that gave birth to them. With the erosion of symbols there

follows a loss of narrative…"[216] Postman feels that this is the erosion that has happened in

contemporary society. "What we are talking about here is not blasphemy but trivialization,

against which there can be no laws."[217]

Zahniser points out, "Modern Christians tend to lament secularism's effect on the virility

of belief, but they overlook, or perhaps even applaud, its effect on the validity of symbols and

ritual."[218] He suggests that healthy ritual and virility of belief are directly related. Evangelicals

have often identified symbols as related to "ritual" in a very negative way. However, all cultures

need ritual and symbol. If the church destroys them, the secular world will replace them. "…a

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[215] Ibid., 120.
[216] Postman, *Technopoly,* 171.
[217] Ibid., 165.
[218] Zahniser, *Symbol and Ceremony,* 74.

Christianity ignoring or debunking symbol and ritual amounts to a secularized Christianity. And a secularized Christianity seldom relates in a convincing way to the everyday, intimate needs and concerns of believers."[219]

McLuhan has given us the idea of ground and figure.[220] As discussed earlier, ground is the material used for communication. In print media this is paper, ink, spacing, layout, etc. In technology such as PowerPoint, the ground is the computer, software, light, screen, colors, etc. Figure is the direct focus of the attention. Generally, this is perceived as the "message." McLuhan asserts that the ground is the determining component of the mediated message.[221] This is the context of McLuhan's famous quote "The medium is the message."

Evangelicals are poised to use symbol and image in effective and thoughtful ways. However, there is already a trivial proliferation of symbol and image in evangelical churches. Often, this relates to visual art, used as projected images in worship services. Best has given us two principles of the use of art in a Christian context.[222] These are helpful in discerning the appropriate use of symbol and image in worship.

The first is based on an understanding that God is the original abstract, non-representational imaginer. What God crafted did not represent or imitate anything. It is appropriate that music and art should participate in original creativity. This allows for artistic expression that is beyond simple realism. In fact, much of evangelical art has been in the category of sentimental realism and has not reflected the creativity of God or the giftedness of humanity. The second principle relates to the continuation of creation and creativity. The true artist does not just attempt to portray something as it is but as he or she sees it to be. "Since

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[219] Ibid., 74.
[220] Babin, *The New Era in Religious Communication,* 8.
[221] Ibid., 8.
[222] Best, *Music Through The Eyes of Faith,* 20-21.

artistic style may be defined as the language of individual consistency, there can be as many

different re-presentations of a given object as there are creative individuals. Consequently,

uniqueness of personal style is far more crucial than the artistic or music procedures and systems

we choose."[223]

Conclusion

The worship pastor in a Canadian evangelical context serves a church that has stability as

well as significant turmoil. This exemplifies the culture shift between modernity and the

postmodern era. Tension exists between a pragmatic revivalist model that finds contemporary

expression in the seeker service movement, and the charismatic and liturgical renewal emphases,

which focus on personally experiencing God and re-enacting substantive ritual. Understanding

the biblical and historical roots of this context is essential for effective worship leadership into

the twenty-first century. Theological astuteness is crucial for navigating trends, which

sometimes seem contradictory. Cultural astuteness is also critical for ministry in this context.

Effective worship pastors must be aware of modern and postmodern thought. They also must

have the ability to give pastoral leadership to modern and postmodern people.

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[223] Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The Nature of Worship Ministry in Canada – the Three Studies

For this project, three field studies were completed between 2000 and 2002. The first was a study of 594 evangelical churches in Canada. It was completed in 2000. For the purposes of this project, it will be identified as the "Church Survey."[224] The second study was done among college students from two different Bible Colleges. There were 213 students who participated in this study. These students represented 200 Canadian evangelical churches.[225] The study was completed between spring 2000 and fall 2001. For the purposes of this project, it will be identified as the "Student Church Profile."[226] The third study involved an evaluation of 29 job descriptions for worship pastor in 28 Canadian evangelical churches. The purpose of this evaluation was to identify themes regarding qualifications for worship ministry leadership. For the purposes of this project, this study will be identified as "job description summaries."[227]

Churches in western Canada were well represented in this study. This reflects the number of students surveyed from western Canadian churches as well as the responsiveness of the western churches. Because Briercrest seminary has a large number of students who come from and will return to ministry contexts in western Canada, this data is helpful.

For the purpose of this study, the term "worship pastor" will be used. It is assumed that this designation is potentially very diverse. In some cases, churches refer to this person as a

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[224] See **Appendix A** for a sample of the instrument used in this survey.
[225] In some cases, there was more than one student from a particular church.
[226] See **Appendix A** for a sample of the instrument used in this survey.
[227] See **Appendix A** for a spreadsheet summarizing the data from this study.

music pastor and, occasionally, a minister of music. It seems that the term "worship pastor" is becoming more and more the norm. In this study, the "worship pastor" is used as an umbrella term for all participatory leadership as it relates to music and worship. However, it also includes the roles of pastoral care for those who make up the artistic community, shepherding responsibility for families of these individuals, and general spiritual leadership in the church.[228]

Church Survey Results

The focus of this study was to identify patterns in worship practice among Canadian evangelical churches. Of the 594 churches, 196 identified some kind of worship or music pastoral leadership. These numbers suggest that every third church in Canada has some sort of a worship leader. This is probably not precisely true. However, it is fair to say that one of every three churches represented in this study has either a part-time or full-time worship pastor. These churches are of significant interest for this study in light of the fact that most seminary students are in pursuit of some kind of vocational – paid – ministry.

Churches in western Canada are more likely to have a worship pastor. However, because churches in eastern Canada were less responsive to the survey, it may be that this data is not entirely accurate. Churches responding by province are indicated in Figure #1. This chart indicates the percentage of churches from each province that employed a worship pastor. The best and most accurate data will be from the four western provinces (SK, BC, AB, MB), and Ontario since these make up 91% of the churches represented in this research.

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[228] For a more detailed description of the role of worship pastor, see **Appendix D**: Course notes for "Contemporary Worship Leadership," and specifically, "Planning and Leading Worship as a Pastoral Task" by John D. Witvliet, unpublished Plenary Address at the Symposium on Worship and the Arts, January 10,1998.

Figure #1

Provinces in relation to having A Worship Pastor

Legend: BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Maritimes
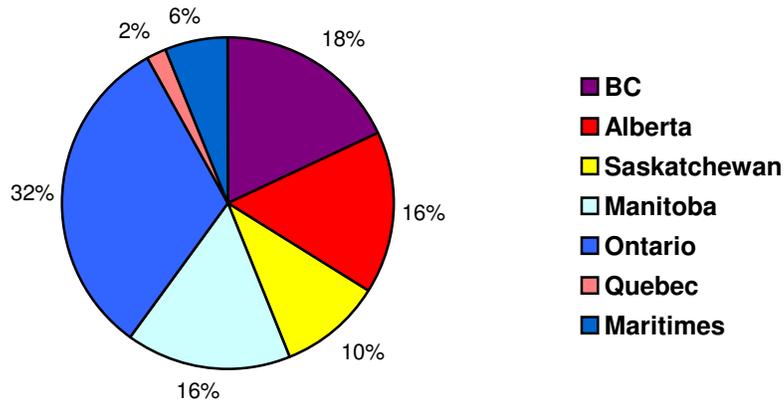
Virtually all churches that hire a worship pastor expect some kind of musical leadership from that person. Ninety-three percent of churches with a worship pastor expect leadership of a "band" while only 51% expect leadership of a choir. In addition, churches without worship pastors still tend to have people leading worship, usually with a worship band or worship team. An "official" worship pastor is very helpful in encouraging the church members to participate in this area, as well as give expertise in leadership. Churches employing a full time worship pastor also often produce complicated musical events and productions. In some cases, churches develop orchestras and choirs for this purpose. Twenty-three percent of churches that hired a worship pastor also have an orchestra of some type. Churches without a paid worship pastor almost never have an orchestra (only 2%).

The style preference in Canadian evangelical churches remains fairly diverse. However, churches that are likely to hire a worship pastor tend to exemplify some similarities. A large majority (81%) of the churches who hired a worship pastor use a "blended" worship (music) style. Contemporary style is used by 14% and traditional by 5%. It may be that churches who use a blended style also are the most financial stable which allows them to hire worship staff.

Sources for worship material, primarily music, illuminates an interesting trend in Canadian evangelical churches (see Figure #2). Almost all of the 60 churches (97%) who answered the question about sources for worship music use more than one source.

Figure #2

Label	%
Vineyard/Mercy	43
Hosanna/Integrity	37
Maranatha	32
Various	32
Hymnal	10
Original material	8

It is interesting that the number one publisher used among evangelical churches in Canada is *Vineyard/Mercy*. In most cases, the churches represented in the study are theologically conservative. They may not identify with the theological position of the Vineyard church. Yet, the primary musical influence is from this context. Other primary sources for worship music reflect charismatic roots. This reflects the importance of theological astuteness for the worship pastor. Discernment related to key doctrinal beliefs is essential for effective worship leadership.

Besides the publishers named above, many others are being used in churches. Other publishers were identified as: CCLI, Delirious, French language labels [TACF, ADP (Association des Psalmist du Québec), Luc Gingras/MCV], Good News Music (Seattle), Hope Publishing, individual artists (Darryl Evans, Matt Redman, and others), J&J Music, Kingsway (UK), Leslie Music, Lillenas, MakeWay/ Thank You, Northview Publishing (Abbotsford), Radio, Revival Generation, Saddleback, SignPost, Singspiration Music, Song Select, Upstream, Voices United (hymns), Willowcreek, and Word.

This study confirms the fact that worship pastors are in need of good music training that is relevant to contemporary styles. However, it also confirms that worship pastors need theological training to discern whether worship material is supportive of church doctrine. This is exacerbated because choices for worship material are extremely broad in Canadian evangelical churches.

Student Church Profiles

This study reflects observations and some preferences from those who are currently college students. Generally, these people would be between the ages of 19 and 24 years. According to a Canadian study done in 2000, 15% of people in this age group attend church regularly.[229] Evangelical protestant churches represent the majority of those who attend.[230] However, the number of younger people who retain loyalty to mainline churches is growing.[231] Input from this age group is helpful because it gives some indication of the future landscape of evangelicalism and worship practice.

Over 200 college students completed the "Student Church Profile" questionnaire from spring 2000 – fall 2001. These students were attending either Canadian Bible College in Regina SK or Briercrest Bible College in Caronport, SK. These students represented over 200 churches. The studies were done in the context of a college worship class where terms of the questionnaire like liturgy and "youthful contemplative" were clarified (for example, Taizé was defined as youthful contemplative).

Of the churches represented, 46 Canadian churches hired either part time or full time worship pastors. The data below is from these 46 churches. This data shows that there were 16

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[229] Bibby, *Restless Gods,* 77.
[230] Ibid.
[231] It rose from 16% in 1992 to 23% in 2000. Bibby, *Restless Gods,* 77.

full time worship pastors among these churches. There is some uncertainty here because the students were not always sure if the staff member was full time or part time. There is significant change happening in this area, however. In the city of Moose Jaw (near Briercrest Seminary), there are currently at least 3 full time or part time worship pastors where, four years ago, there was only one. This represents an ongoing change that should be considered in light of the data here.

Of the 46 churches that hired worship pastors, the following denominations were represented:

> Associated Gospel Church
> Baptist (a number of types)
> Brethren
> Christian and Missionary Alliance
> Congregational
> Evangelical Mennonite
> Evangelical Missionary Church
> Free Methodist
> Full Gospel
> Mennonite
> Mennonite Brethren
> Non-denominational
> Pentecostal
> Victory
> Vineyard

Western Canadian provinces (BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba) and Ontario were represented.

The sizes of churches varied greatly (See Figure #3). It is interesting to note that, in this study, churches under 200 in regular attendance represented 26 percent of those that hired a part time or full time worship pastor. It would be expected that larger churches would hire this kind of person but there seems to be a trend toward employing this kind of a minister in a smaller

context as well. This affirms the trend toward the importance of musical worship in evangelical churches.

Figure #3

Size of churches who hired worship pastors - from Student Surveys
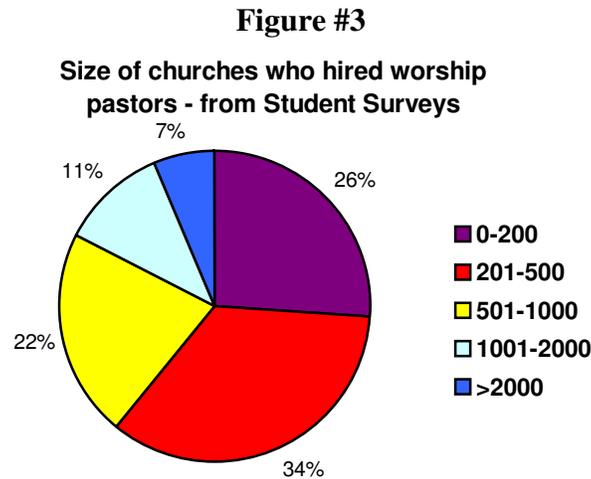
The student surveys asked students what kinds of worship language were used in their churches (see Figure #4). Language choices included: conservative evangelical, traditional (including older forms of evangelical worship), liturgical (rediscovering historical liturgies), celebrative (focus on the positive), loud, youthful contemplative (i.e. Taizé), adult contemplative (the hymnbook), quiet, and authentic. This was related to what they felt was missional (reached out to the unchurched) as well as what they felt was personally significant (oriented around personal preference). The results are quite broad and somewhat inconclusive. Students characterized their churches fairly evenly but the most significant response was that their churches worship language and style was celebrative. Student preference tended to be high in the area of celebration and authenticity.[232] Interestingly, students perceived a celebrative language to be significant in effective outreach. This would indicate that they feel their churches

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[232] This data is somewhat contradictory to Robert Webber's study, which found that younger evangelicals tend to value the contemplative over the celebrative. However, it may also indicate that the students involved in this study represent a transition phase. Many of the student's churches are quite conservative and may have yet to experience the trend Webber has identified. See Robert Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002).

are doing fairly well in this area. However, only half as many students characterized their church's worship as authentic compared to those who felt it was necessary for effective outreach. This would indicate that authenticity is and will continue to be an important value among the young. Unfortunately, determining authenticity is a very subjective judgment.

Figure #4
How Students Described Their Churches Worship Style – number of students responding positively in each category

Style	Current	Preferred	Effective Outreach
Conservative	14	5	4
Traditional	10	6	2
Liturgical	1	11	4
Celebrative	31	28	22
Loud	7	11	7
Youthful Contemplative	9	23	15
Adult Contemplative	11*	4	7
Quiet	5	7	4
Authentic	14	26	30

*Five described their church as "conservative" – they seemed to equate adult contemplative and conservative

Students were asked about the focus of the worship service in their church. The great majority (40 of 46) identified preaching as the primary focus of the service. In fact, 14 students said preaching was the sole focus and 26 said preaching combined with music was focal. Only four claimed a focus of any kind on presentation music and these were combined with a centrality of preaching. Two students said their gatherings focused solely on "worship" and four said the focus was solely on participatory music. It seems likely that these are essentially the same thing. These responses indicate that evangelism in Canada continues to be focused primarily on preaching and the sermon but that participatory music is also of significant value.

There was a strong consensus regarding the leadership of the participatory musical components of worship services in the student church profiles. In every church represented except one (45 out of 46), the dominant form of worship leadership was a worship team or worship band. It is interesting that only 28 churches had a choir. This indicates that for current

worship leadership, experience and training with a worship team and band is essential. It also exemplifies the growing importance of team leadership as a whole. In 35 of the churches, vocal solos were common. Eleven of the churches did *not* have vocal solos as part of their worship services.

The number of different musical instruments used in churches was very diverse, however, there were some instruments that appeared in virtually all the churches. Drums and acoustic guitars were used in 44 of the 46 churches. Piano, bass guitar and electric guitar were used in 41 churches. Forty churches regularly used a digital keyboard. Only 17 churches use brass instruments and 16 churches use the organ. Ten churches have an orchestra but 30 use percussion instruments. This clearly indicates that the common musical language used in churches that hire worship pastors is a contemporary, popular one. The fact that almost all the churches used drums, guitars and bass indicates that there is an attempt to speak a musical language that is consistent with popular culture. The implication for the worship pastor is that he or she must be familiar with contemporary musical language and be able to provide leadership in popular styles.

Students were asked what kind of communication and print was used in their churches. Twenty-eight churches used the hymnbook, 27 used PowerPoint and 23 used the overhead projector. Obviously, some churches use more than one of these. This indicates the need for significant breadth of understanding regarding communication media. However, the trend seems to be toward PowerPoint and data projection in most churches. In many cases, it seems the only hindrance to this is lack of financial resources.

The final question on this survey was related to the students personal satisfaction with their churches. A majority of 31 students said they felt *positive* about their churches. Five of

these students defined their churches as conservative and seven as traditional but none claimed to be liturgical. However, six students said they would personally prefer liturgy. A large number (25) said their worship language was celebratory; seven said it was loud; seven defined it as youthful contemplative, and six as adult contemplative. Four students said their church worship was quiet but 14 identified it as authentic. Just over half of these 31 students said they preferred authenticity in worship.

Thirteen students said that they sometimes felt positive or unsure about their church. Of these 13, six defined their churches as conservative, three as traditional, five as adult contemplative, six as celebratory, and one authentic. One student said their church was more quiet, one youthful contemplative, and one loud. Student comments in this regard were mostly around the issue of change and the churches struggle to make changes in worship style. In some cases they felt the changes would improve the worship of the church but in some cases the instability and conflict surrounding change was identified as negative.

Only two students said they felt negative about their churches. Both of these students defined churches as conservative. One said the worship was celebratory but neither identified it as authentic. Comments from these two students were somewhat sarcastic: "church is doing a wonderful job meeting many people's tastes", "difficult to worship; everybody wants their own needs met." It seems these two churches were experiencing a negative time of transition where satisfying the preference of the people was the primary objective.

Job Description Summaries

Twenty-nine worship pastor job descriptions were evaluated for this component of the project. One thing became apparent immediately. Many of the churches were not proficient at

writing job descriptions. In some cases, key components of the role were not identified (like spiritual formation or pastoring) yet seemed expected. Smaller and mid-sized churches had the most difficulty writing a good job description. Some churches included pre- requisite qualifications for the job but some did not. This probably related to the timing of the writing of the job description. If it was written during the process of hiring a new worship pastor, qualifications were included.

The job descriptions were received from churches in the four western Canadian provinces and Ontario as follows: 12 from BC, 3 from Alberta, 4 from Saskatchewan, 2 from Manitoba and 7 from Ontario. Denominations represented were: Christian and Missionary Alliance (5), Baptist (7), Free Methodist (1), Mennonite Brethren (7), Christian Reformed (1), Lutheran (1) and non-denominational (6). Five of the positions were part time – usually shared positions like Youth and Worship – and 24 were full time.

Twelve of the job descriptions identified education qualifications for the position. This was very diverse and reflects the lack of both understanding regarding effective ministry preparation as well as the lack of good education programs available for this kind of pastor. All 12 of the churches stated that an undergraduate degree was required but the field of study was generally less than precise. Two required a music degree but the remaining 10 only identified a BA as pre-requisite. One of the job descriptions specified a graduate degree in theology accompanied by an undergraduate degree in music. Five job descriptions indicated that the worship pastor must have "some" training in music and Bible. One said that the successful candidate must be "an accomplished musician".

Ten churches did not identify any required training on their job description. This does not necessarily mean that training is unimportant. It is simply not written in the job description.

This represents another example of lack of consistency in job descriptions between churches. Often, when churches were questioned regarding educational expectations, it was acknowledged that they should have been included in the job description.

Qualifications for worship ministry were distilled into areas of spiritual formation, leadership and artistic ability. Solid spiritual formation (personal walk with God) is generally assumed but not always indicated in the job description. Only fifteen job descriptions identified spiritual formation as a pre-requisite. Other areas indicated were: Pastoral ability, administrative ability, general leadership, team building, change management, musical ability, style diversity, drama leadership, and understanding of worship arts technology. These are summarized in Figure #5.

Figure #5
Job descriptions indicating importance in the following – number of churches responding positively:

Pastoral ability	23
Administrative ability	24
General leadership	28
Team building (especially worship teams)	29
Musical ability (playing/leading)	27
Style diversity	7
Drama leadership	19
Worship arts technology	17
Change management	1

Universal expectations for worship pastors seem to be consistently indicated in the first five qualities of pastor, administrator, leader, team builder and musician. It is significant that, when questioned, the few who did not indicate these five things on the job description admitted that it was an oversight. The one variable is related to musical skill. Some churches want a pastor who can work with musicians but does not necessarily need to be an accomplished musician him/herself. Others, especially very large churches, expect the qualification of a gifted and trained musician. The other four qualifications are universally expected.

Auxiliary expectations included the understanding of technology and the ability to give leadership to drama groups. Only seven job descriptions identified style diversity as important. However, there seems to be a growing interest in historical kinds of worship practices, which could result in a need for historical style diversity and awareness. This is seen in an interest in historical liturgy, especially among the young. Interestingly, only one church identified change management as important. This reflects a significant development over the past decade. As recently as five years ago, change was one of the main topics of discussion as many churches were in the middle of significant transition regarding worship style and language. Apparently this change has been successfully navigated by and large, and churches that hire worship pastors are moving into a more stable time.

General Observations of Studies

A few general observations regarding these studies will be made here. More substantial observations and conclusions will be made in chapter four.

It is clear that very large churches tend to have more specific expectations including extensive music training. Very large churches expect an extremely high level of musicianship. Some of these churches seem to have an "artist-in-residence" mentality. Others have a worship pastor who functions in a largely pastoral role in addition to a music minister who has a superior level of expertise and gifting in the arts. The kind of person who has the gifting to qualify for this latter position is very rare. In the Briercrest college and seminary context, there may currently be one out of 100 worship arts students who could potentially achieve this level of skill. Medium to large sized churches (in the 300-500 range) expect to hire worship pastors who often have broader responsibilities and primarily give pastoral and team leadership.

There is wide diversity among Canadian evangelical churches but some key similarities include:

- The use of contemporary language and music – indicated by universal use of contemporary instruments

- The skills of pastoring, leading, administrating and team building are essential

- Diversity and authenticity are highly valued among the young

- Churches remain in somewhat of a state of transition regarding corporate worship practice.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

This project began with the statement: "In Canada, as in virtually all western countries, the idea of worship is convoluted by lack of knowledge as well as radically influenced by consumer oriented culture." The conventional and field research has confirmed that there is significant discrepancy between a biblical, historical understanding of the idea of worship and the understanding in many contemporary contexts. The initial conclusion regarding this discrepancy is that an effective program of study is necessary to help worship pastors develop a biblical, theological and historical framework from which to effectively lead in a contemporary worship context.

Awareness of the key components of a biblical theology of worship will help the worship pastor think and act theologically when choosing worship material and leading the congregation in God honoring worship. Awareness of the various pendulum swings in worship history will help worship pastors avoid the potential pitfalls of the pendulum swings in contemporary evangelicalism. Historical understanding will also help the worship pastor introduce meaningful worship practice from the Old and New Testament as well as the twenty intervening centuries of Christian worship.

A biblical theology of worship is characterized by an understanding of biblical ideas of worship and biblical words used for worship. These inform the "content" of worship, which is the Gospel. Church history and tradition inform both content and structure of corporate worship. This is seen in various creeds and prayers and in worship structure such as the four-fold model.

Worship structure and style are also influenced by denominational and local church tradition. In corporate worship, structure and style are of secondary importance to content.

Biblical worship is Trinitarian. It involves worship of our Triune God in spirit and truth. It celebrates the relationship between the Godhead as well as in the body of Christ.

Biblical worship involves an act that is directed toward God or directed toward serving others in their worship of God. It is not passive but active. In biblical worship, God is the audience and receiver of worship, while people are the performers and givers of worship.

Biblical worship requires revelation and response. God reveals himself to people through his word and through the Holy Spirit. People then respond to God in appropriate actions of worship. Without revelation, worship is incomplete and unbiblical. Without response, worship is also incomplete.

Biblical worship is reflected in all the activities of life. Although special actions are reserved for worship of God, all of life is impacted by these actions. In this sense, all can be done to the glory of God. However, all activities of life are not necessarily worship.

A theology of worship involves holding various truths in tension. Often, when only one "pole" of the truth is emphasized, there is theological error. For example, God's immanence and transcendence must not be balanced (some of each) but must be held fully in tension. Both are completely true at the same time. In addition, worship practice must focus on God but must also acknowledge the presence of people and the importance of edification and evangelism. Both are important. Christian worship must be characterized by form as well as freedom. Newness and tradition are both necessary for the contextualization of the truth of the gospel. Presentation (revelation) and participation (response) must also be held in some degree of tension. One without the other is inadequate.

Evangelicalism in Canada is rooted in the Reformation and print orientation. This has resulted in the centrality of the Bible. Evangelicalism is also a child of enlightenment and modern thinking. As a result, there is a tendency to elevate reason and the scientific method higher than is biblically appropriate. Evangelicalism has also tended to reject historical ritual in favor of spontaneity. This has resulted in a hunger among contemporary people, especially the young, for a more historically rooted faith and practice.

Canadian evangelicalism was highly influenced by the fundamentalism of the early 1900s, the charismatic movement of the mid 1900s, and the seeker service movement of the later 1900s. Moreover, there is an emerging influence of liturgical renewal in the early 21st century. Prominent in many of these influences is the dominance of consumerism in North American culture. Many of the trends in contemporary evangelicalism find their impetus in attempts to appeal to the preferences of contemporary Christians. Canadian evangelicals have been quick to embrace new technologies for ministry. Again, this reflects a commitment to enlightenment pragmatism and modern thinking.

As culture has shifted away from modern thinking, many of the values of the enlightenment, science and reason have been questioned. The evangelical church, however, has largely remained committed to the older, modern ways of thinking. It has been very difficult for evangelicals to adapt to the postmodern. This is partly because of the incompatibility of postmodern relativism and the absolutes of biblical Christianity. However, it also reflects the inability to ask hard questions about the epistemological foundationalism that is largely cultural. One positive result of this is the fact that evangelicals have tended to be effective at reaching the remnant of modernity in society who are looking for absolutes and attracted to strong doctrinal

standards. A negative is that this effectiveness is almost certain to be short-lived as culture continues to transition away from modern thinking.

Postmodern people tend to think beyond the boundaries of reason and the scientific method. One area that is significant for the postmodern is the area of the arts. Postmodern people communicate in ways that are more artistic than scientific. Use of image, symbol and other non-print means of communication is important in postmodernity. Postmodern people are very communally oriented and holistic. Evangelicals must adapt in order to effectively reach the postmodern seeker.

Worship pastors in Canadian evangelical churches must provide leadership that includes an awareness of enlightenment and modern roots as well as an ability to adapt ministry to reach postmodern people. Use of the arts, symbol and ritual will be crucial in this task.

There are several key ideas that arise from the field studies in this project. The first is that there is tremendous diversity in both preference and practice among evangelical churches. However, there are also some key consistencies that are emerging. The first is the trend toward hiring a worship pastor. It seems this is a common practice for medium and larger churches. Key to the role of worship pastor is some kind of contemporary, popular musical expertise and leadership. The most common source for musical worship material is Vineyard and other charismatic publishers.

Among the young, there are many types of worship language that are deemed good, however, authenticity surfaces as an overarching value. In other words, the young are not as concerned about style as about being "real." Yet virtually all Canadian evangelical churches who hire worship pastors are using contemporary worship language. This is evidenced by the fact that almost all of these churches are using contemporary instrumentation (drums, guitars,

bass, piano, etc) and choosing contemporary music publishers for material (Mercy, Integrity, Hillsongs, Maranatha, etc.).

It seems that worship in most Canadian evangelical churches is described as "celebrative" but, increasingly, the use of more "contemplative" and historical worship practice is emerging. Again, the key for effectiveness for worship and outreach among the young is the value of authenticity. On a very healthy note, the great majority of younger people feel positive about their churches. Preaching remains central in most evangelical churches. However, this strength must be balanced with a biblical understanding of worship that includes revelation *and* response. Increasingly, the place of congregational response is receiving high priority. Worship pastors must have knowledge and skill in leading God's people in response to revelation as this biblical value becomes more and more prevalent.

Canadian evangelical churches are looking for worship pastors who have gifting, passion and skill to be the following: pastor, administrator, leader, team builder and musician. Of these, most churches prioritize musical skill as third, however, the larger the church, the more importance is placed on artistic gifting and training.

Preliminary Conclusions

Effective worship pastoral ministry in Canadian evangelical churches requires strong personal spiritual formation. In addition, interdisciplinary study is needed in four areas: pastoral ministry, Bible and theology, history, and the arts. Gifting, competence and skill is expected in five areas: leadership, team building, music and the arts, communication technology and administration. This provides the framework for a profile of a worship pastor in a Canadian evangelical context.

Six senior pastors in Canadian evangelical churches were invited to respond to these preliminary conclusions.[233] Their responses are important in that they are the ones who, by and large, will hire a worship pastor. They also often have a broader picture of the church than those who give specific leadership in worship ministry. The six contexts are summarized in Figure #6.

Figure #6

Church	City	Denomination	Size	FT Staff	PT Staff	WP*	Pastor
Willow Park Church	Kelowna, BC	MB	1,350	10	8	1+1	Mark Burch
First Alliance	Calgary, AB	C&MA	2,100	13	6	3+3	Terry Young
The Meeting Place	Winnipeg, MB	MB	1,500	12	10	1+1	Tim Plett
Surrey Alliance	Surrey, BC	C&MA	340	4	4	1+0	Ric Strangway
Chilliwack Baptist	Chilliwack, BC	Baptist	+300	2	2	1+0	David Lee
Willingdon Community	Burnaby, BC	MB	+3,500	33	6	2+2	Carlin Weinhauer

*WP = Worship Pastor – full time + part time

By and large, the six pastors expressed agreement with the preliminary conclusions. They all gave priority to spiritual formation, pastoral training and theological astuteness. Their agreement with the need for historical training was somewhat contingent on their context. This reflects some of the reticence to engage with historical practices of Christian worship that continues to be common among evangelicals. Most, however, agree that the future of evangelical worship will include the rediscovery of historical worship practice and ritual.

In the area of competency, leadership was the number one choice for most of the pastors. However, they were quick to say that the other areas were extremely important and that it was difficult to prioritize. One exception was David Lee who "reluctantly" placed musical competence at the top of the list. This is interesting in light of the fact that usually, the larger the church, the higher musical skill is rated. Lee's church is small in comparison to the other five.

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[233] See questionnaire and responses of these six pastors in **Appendix B**.

Often, in very large churches, there is a music specialization that resembles an "artist in residence" mentality. In these cases, the expectation of musical gifting is extremely high.

Spiritual formation was identified as a very high priority but it was difficult to decide whether this was an issue of competence, training or simple lifestyle that was unrelated to graduate education. It is probably some of each. Mark Burch suggested that administration and knowledge of technology could be delegated. This reflects a large church context where expertise is available among the congregation and other staff. Smaller churches (Lee and Strangway) placed a higher value on administration and technological knowledge.

Ric Strangway emphasized the importance of "anointing/spiritual empowerment and maturity." He felt this was essential for effective ministry. David Lee agreed and identified the importance of being a "developer of people." Carlin Weinhauer suggested that humility could be added to the list. Finally, David Lee suggested that the worship pastor must have the ability to "interact with philosophical/theological perspectives." It seems that this would affirm the Briercrest desired outcome of cultural astuteness.

The questions about interdisciplinary study received a general sense of agreement from the six pastors responding to the survey. Mark Burch added emphasis on calling to pastor/shepherd, not just leading music. For Burch, the key question was, " ...does the emerging leader have a good grasp - not just of music and the arts...but a shepherd's heart for people coupled with the leadership gifts to move the ministry ahead." Tim Plett agreed and identified the problem of a "competent grad …[who] can't engage as a worshiper." Plett looks for "competencies of the soul." He reaffirmed the importance of discipleship: "We assume that musical, historic and theological competence are of vital importance, as are administrative ability and pastoral care. However, the core of our program is the growth of disciples who are gifted in

the leading of worship…" Carlin Weinhauer agreed with the priority of mentoring. Terry Young suggested that cultural astuteness is essential: "Many of the train wrecks in the worship/music environment can be partially traced to a lack of ability to discern and navigate through cultural issues – the worship pastor as anthropologist." Ric Strangway reemphasized spiritual formation: "… my sense is that those who have a larger public role need to ensure that they aren't leading on the basis of their knowledge and skill (that's too easy once you have a certain proficiency in both), but on the basis of their heart/spirit." David Lee suggested that intergenerational ministry is crucial: "Churches that determine that intergenerational ministry is preferable are consciously choosing the hard road. They must be ready for tensions produced by constant evaluation, criticism and compromise." Lee points out that there are many long lasting rewards that come with this priority.

Essentially, there is significant agreement with the preliminary conclusions of this study. While some pastors prioritize them in different ways, there is a strong consensus that worship pastors in a Canadian evangelical context must be competent in leadership, team building, music and the arts, communication technology and administration. They must be academically prepared in the disciplines of pastoral ministry, Bible and theology, history, and the arts. Essential to effective worship ministry is spiritual formation that is both taught and exhibited in lifestyle.

CHAPTER 5

THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH APPLIED TO A WORSHIP DEGREE PROGRAM

What Should This Degree Program Look Like?

D. A. Carson critiques the fact that "many 'contemporary worship leaders' have training in music but none in Bible, theology, history or the like." [234] This study affirms that worship pastors certainly need a broader kind of preparation than simply music. Worship pastors often have no criteria for choosing music for worship other than the musical. This is an especially important critique in today's environment where the worship pastor is usually responsible for selecting congregational music from a wide diversity of sources. In the past, evangelical church musicians were not expected to have the theological expertise to make choices from such a broad diversity of sources. Rather, denominational theologians edited the church hymnal from time to time and the musicians chose material from the hymnal. The fact that this is no longer the case means that worship pastors must have the theological discernment and training to choose material that is doctrinally consistent with denominational and biblical perspectives.

Contemporary worship is heavily influenced by the Contemporary Christian Music industry (CCM). Moreover, the academic world currently seems to have minimal influence. In fact, an academic program in music often provides inadequate training for ministry. This is partly because the musical language of most academic music programs is not contemporary vernacular and partly because the important areas of theology, Bible, and worship history are not included. Contemporary worship leaders must understand the CCM world so they can

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[234] Carson, *Worship By The Book,* 47.

thoughtfully interact with its influence in the church. Many of the influential and well-known

contemporary worship leaders have a background in CCM.[235]

The CCM influence is not all positive, however. In most cases, the industry is driven

more by CD sales and corporate success than by theological thoughtfulness. One common result

is questionable theological content in worship songs. Because of this, it is essential that effective

worship pastors have training in Bible and theology. In fact, academic institutions like Briercrest

must learn to partner with the CCM industry in order that biblical and theological priorities

become as valuable as CD sales. Unfortunately, there has been some alienation between the

academic and the CCM worlds. This comes from the perceived arrogance of each world as the

other is written off as trivial, irrelevant and/or out of touch.

This chapter will identify a strategy for the academic institution (Briercrest) to prepare

people for effective worship ministry. The preliminary name for this degree program is "Master

of Arts in Christian Ministry – Worship Ministry Track." It will include a solid foundation in

Bible and theology, spiritual formation, worship history, leadership and administration, team

building, and the application of musical training to worship ministry in a Canadian evangelical

context. This chapter will focus on the course offerings at Briercrest that are unique to the

worship ministry track. The balance of the program can be found in **Appendix C**.

The Centrality of Spiritual Formation

Key to effective preparation for ministry is the centrality of spiritual formation. There

was strong consensus among pastors about this need. Worship pastors must have an exemplary

walk with God before they can lead others in the worship of God. A course in spiritual

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[235] Martin Smith, Matt Redman and Michael W. Smith are examples of this kind of leader and have significant influence among Canadian evangelicals.

formation is required for all students at Briercrest Seminary.[236] It is central to effective ministry. In addition, all students in the Christian Ministry degree programs are required to take the course "Philosophy and Foundation for Ministry."[237] This course helps students develop or refine their personal understanding and approach to ministry.

<div align="center">The Four Areas of Interdisciplinary Study</div>

Four areas of interdisciplinary study have emerged from this project. They are related to the biblical, historical and cultural framework for worship ministry in Canada as well as the various field studies of this project. These four areas of discipline are: pastoral ministry, Bible and theology, history, and the arts.

Pastoral ministry is often the first component of a worship pastor's job description. In many cases, this includes the responsibility to care generally for members of the congregation but, often, it is to give specific pastoral care to the community of artists in the church. In many cases, this is very intimidating for the worship pastor, who finds his or her primary area of skill and passion in the arts. It is essential, however, that worship pastors have strong gifting, passion and skill in the area of pastoral ministry. Because of this, the worship degree program at Briercrest will give priority to pastoral ministry. This will be reflected in general course design but will also be reflected in a specific course called "Pastoring Artists."[238] The course will focus on the uniqueness of giving spiritual direction to those who have artistic temperaments, passions and gifting. It will help worship pastors to see themselves as pastors first and artists second. It will also help them to evaluate their own gifting in pastoral ministry. Other courses will

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[236] See course summary in **Appendix C**.
[237] See course summary in **Appendix C**.
[238] See course summary in **Appendix C**.

incorporate pastoral ministry as well. "Contemporary Worship Leadership"[239] will give significant attention to the pastoral role of congregational and small group worship leadership. It will also address the importance of pastoral leadership in worship team members and their families.

Most worship pastor job descriptions do not include an expectation of theological training. However, based on this study, it is clear that there is significant theological confusion regarding biblical ideas of worship and worship ministry. Because of this, it is important that theology be a central component of a worship degree program. The senior pastors consulted for this study affirmed this necessity. In addition, the confusion regarding what worship actually is and the proclivity to equate it with music requires that the worship pastor have a solid grounding in theology in general and, especially, a biblical theology of worship. The ability to think theologically about worship material is essential in a climate where worship pastors are expected to choose from widely available sources for music and other kinds of worship content. The sources available are remarkable. Often, the criteria employed for choosing worship material are very weak. In many cases, it is simply based on current popularity. One result of this non-theological approach to worship content is the potential intrusion of content that is doctrinally questionable or simply incompatible with church belief. To prepare worship pastors in the area of theological thinking, Briercrest will offer a course called "Theology and Practice of Christian Worship."[240] This course will help students develop a biblical theology of worship and interact with a number of key contemporary thinkers in this area. Central to desired outcomes at Briercrest is that students become increasingly theologically astute. Because of this, theological content is essential to virtually all the courses students take.

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[239] See course outline, notes, classroom PowerPoint, and student evaluations in **Appendix D**.
[240] See course outline, notes, classroom PowerPoint, and student evaluations in **Appendix D**.

Students will be required to complete an additional four to six courses in the areas of Bible and theology. Recommended courses include: BT603 Hermeneutics, BT615 Wisdom Literature, BT651 Central Doctrines of Christian Theology, and BT713 Nehemiah: Leadership Development and Themes.[241] An additional course is recommended as an elective: CM701 Pastoral Theology.

The general movement away from modern approaches to life and truth is happening for a large number of Canadians. It is assumed that this trend will continue. Because of this, worship pastors must be prepared to interact with postmodern issues as they relate to Christian ministry. Implications are significant for evangelicals because evangelicalism has never existed outside of an enlightenment paradigm and modernist thinking. An important central course in the Briercrest worship degree will be "Issues In Postmodern Worship Ministry."[242] This course will address issues in postmodern worship ministry in a general way. Included will be the pedagogical importance of participatory music in the church in a context of a general lack of epistemological foundation in culture as a whole.

Accompanying the cultural shift toward postmodernity has been a renewed interest in historical forms and rituals of worship. Because of this, it is essential that worship pastors have a good understanding of worship history. This will enable these leaders to choose appropriate material for corporate worship that leads people to spirit and truth as well as supports biblical doctrine. The initial course at Briercrest that will deal with worship history is "Theology and Practice of Christian Worship." A significant portion of this course will address the various practices of worship through the Hebrew tradition and the Christian church. However, it is the intent of this project that there will be two courses offered in the future. The "Theology and

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[241] See course summaries in **Appendix C**.
[242] See course summary in **Appendix C**.

Practice of Christian Worship" will be refined to focus more narrowly on the development of a

biblical theology of worship in light of contemporary practice. A new course will be offered

called "Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship." This new course will give significant attention

to the worship practices of the church including pre-Constantinian corporate worship, the

development of liturgy, the church year, the impact of the printing press, the reformation, and the

influence of enlightenment and modern thinking on evangelical Christian worship.

An emerging trend in postmodern spirituality is the importance of the use of symbol,

image and ritual. This reflects a shift from a primarily cerebral and print based faith to a more

holistic and visual religious practice. This has been accelerated in contemporary evangelical

churches by the historical absence of ritual and symbol as well as the advent of projection

technology like PowerPoint, which has allowed for extensive use of image. Unfortunately, there

is often neither a theological or historical approach to the introduction of ritual, symbol and

image. A required component of the Briercrest worship degree will be a course called "Sign,

Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Worship."[243] This course will deal with pre-modern

approaches to image, symbol and ritual. It will also address the problem of a non-theological

approach to contemporary use of image, symbol and ritual.[244] Discussion with many church

leaders reflects that there seems to be little concern for the theological impact of symbols and

images. Rather, simple attractiveness and personal taste are the only criteria for choosing images

to use. The "Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act" course will develop a theological approach to the

selection and use of images and symbols for worship. In addition, the course will introduce a

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[243] See course outline, notes, classroom PowerPoint, and student evaluations in **Appendix D**.

[244] An example of this would be the proliferation of historical symbols in ways that seem to have little impact or meaning. Specifically, this is seen, for example, when celebrities wear religious jewelry like crosses as part of their "stage" attire, yet seem to have little consideration for the potential impact of Christ's work on the cross in relation to their lives.

sacramental understanding of ritual that will contribute to a better kind of connection with postmodern people.

Students will be encouraged to consider additional electives in contemporary ministry. These include: CM602 Trends and Issues in Contemporary Ministry; and CM610 Outreach Ministries of a Vital Church. Both of these courses will address issues related to ministry in a postmodern Canadian context.

The final area of discipline identified as important for worship ministry is in the area of music and the arts. One recognized difficulty regarding the attempt to prepare worship pastors at the graduate level is the overwhelming expectation that churches have of these ministers, and the problem of trying to include too much in a two-year program. As a result, the worship degree at Briercrest will assume previous training and/or experience in music. For example, an appropriate undergraduate degree for this M.A. would be a music degree. Therefore, the M.A. program will not have a technical music emphasis. It will be assumed that students coming into the program will have this expertise. In cases where students do not have music training, they will be encouraged to upgrade their music education at Briercrest Bible College, where such courses are offered.

The application of music to contemporary worship will be addressed primarily through two courses: "Contemporary Worship Leadership" and "Music and The Arts in Worship."[245] "Contemporary Worship Leadership" will give some attention to issues of the application of more classical music training to a contemporary context and language. "Music and The Arts in Worship" will address the place of historical and vernacular music in evangelical ministry. This will be applied to the potential incorporation of all the arts in a corporate worship context. Neither of these courses will be overtly technical. They will focus on providing students with a

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[245] See course summaries in **Appendix C**.

strong philosophical base for effective use of music and the arts in contemporary evangelical ministry.

The Five Areas of Competence

Gifting, competence and skill is expected in five areas: leadership, team building, music and the arts, communication technology and administration. To some degree, there is overlap between these five areas and the four disciplines discussed above. However, the important distinction is that these are areas where worship pastors must have some level of gifting or natural talent. Discipline issues relate to calling and study. Competence issues relate to talent and training.

Essential to preparing potential worship pastors is the presence of gifting and talent in the areas of leadership, administration and music. In addition, the worship pastor must be a natural team player and have an aptitude for working with communication technology. The worship degree program at Briercrest will address these needs based on individual student competence and experience. Part of the application process for study at Briercrest will include evaluation of the student's gifting and affirmed competence in these five areas. To succeed in the area of worship ministry, students must bring a level of gifting to their seminary experience. This will be part of the criteria for acceptance into the worship degree program.

Leadership and team building will be addressed in the "Contemporary Worship Leadership" course. Students will participate in a practicum during this course in which they will work in teams to prepare and lead a worship service. As part of this experience, there will be a debriefing process around issues of the dynamics of the team, effective leadership and the worship service itself. The seminary chapel context will provide opportunity for practical

worship leadership. In addition, many students will have opportunity to participate in regular weekly chapel services at varying levels of leadership. This "laboratory" environment will provide an excellent context for evaluation, critique and the sharpening of worship leadership skills. Students will also be encouraged to take electives in the areas of leadership and team building. Courses recommended include: CM715 Developing Lay Leadership; LE744 Creative Leadership and Team Building; LE611 Problem Solving Processes; LE615 Time, Life and Project Management; and LE714 Change, Power and Conflict Management.[246]

As discussed earlier, technical focus on competence in the areas of music and the arts will not be a component of the worship degree program at Briercrest. It will be expected that students will come into the program with this kind of preparation. However, for those who are lacking in these areas, there are some college courses recommended. In some cases, these courses can be done for seminary credit. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis with the agreement of the instructor. Some suggested courses include: Song Writing and Jazz based Musicianship (introductory and advanced).

There is general consensus that worship pastors should have competence in communication technology. This expectation often surfaces on job descriptions and is affirmed by senior pastors. However, many worship students have only anecdotal expertise and virtually no training in this area. One overview course, "Church and Communication Technology," will be offered as part of the Briercrest worship degree program.[247] This course will provide general, introductory instruction in the technology related areas of graphic design, sound reinforcement, stage lighting, PowerPoint and non-linear video editing. Project work for the course will include instruction manuals for various pieces of communication technology as well as a philosophy of

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[246] See course summaries in **Appendix C**.
[247] See course summary in **Appendix C**.

technology research paper. Students will also have the opportunity to take specialized courses in

digital recording and non-linear video editing.[248]

The final area of competence expected in a worship pastor is in the area of

administration. A study of worship pastor job descriptions indicates that administration is a

significant and key component of the role. One course will be offered at Briercrest specifically

related to worship ministry administration: "Worship Arts Administration."[249] This course will

address issues of administration as they relate specifically to the role of the worship pastor.

Students will also have the opportunity to choose other elective courses in administration that the

seminary has to offer.

Balancing the Desires of the Music Student With those of the Senior Pastor and Church

One final issue has surfaced through this study. There is some discrepancy between the

education desires of worship pastors and senior church leaders. Because of the priority placed on

music in Canadian evangelical churches, many of the worship pastors have a strong proclivity

toward music as well as gifting and training in this area. This seems to be an appropriate

component to preparation for worship ministry but is clearly not enough. Yet, when some

worship pastors consider graduate education, often their first desire is to develop their musical

skill. This is natural, in that it is a primary area of gifting and passion for them. However, we

have seen that music preparation alone is inadequate preparation for worship ministry. The

resulting dilemma is: how can a seminary attract worship pastors to a much-needed educational

program that does not focus on music? This will require careful interaction with potential

worship ministry students to convey the importance of interdisciplinary study for effective

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[248] See course summaries in **Appendix C**.
[249] See course summary in **Appendix C**.

ministry. Increasingly, there are worship pastors who realize that simple music preparation is woefully inadequate for church ministry. An important conclusion and desire of this study is that worship pastors will not only see the value of the interdisciplinary approach to worship ministry, but will embrace it as essential to their own effectiveness. Appropriate promotional communication is extremely important in this regard. Potential worship ministry students must, in some cases, be carefully introduced to the idea that worship study is an interdisciplinary study. When this is done effectively, worship pastors generally have an overwhelmingly positive response to this approach.

<center>Feedback From Readers</center>

Four people were asked to read this thesis. They included two seminary worship students: Donna Thiessen (B.Mus.), Joel French (B.Mus.); the Dean of Briercrest Seminary, Dwayne Uglem (Ed.D); and a Briercrest faculty member, David Shepherd (Ph.D.). These people gave a variety of interesting and helpful comments, both relating to the project itself and the possible implications for a seminary worship degree. They are summarized below.

Generally, the response from these four readers was quite positive. Uglem and Shepherd agreed that the project could serve as a good model for program introduction and development for Briercrest seminary. Thiessen and French also affirmed the conclusions of the project. This is significant in light of the fact that they are worship students who could be impacted by the results of the study. In fact, French is a student in all three courses in **Appendix D** and Thiessen in two of them.

Uglem observed that there was a strong case made that the artistic component of worship training includes a primary emphasis in a contemporary musical genre. He observed that this comes primarily from field research and the observation that all Canadian evangelical churches

who hired worship pastors function in this genre. Shepherd agreed but suggested that the conclusions may have come partly from personal experience and observation. However, he concurred that exposure to a number of musical genres was important for worship pastors. In fact, Shepherd suggested that exposure to historic worship styles such as Gregorian Chant would be helpful. French suggested that it was new, original worship music that was needed in the church. He felt that worship ministers needed training in songwriting. French also felt, based on the job description analysis, that drama should have a high degree of emphasis in worship ministry preparation. He suggested that it could be an added component of the Contemporary Worship Leadership course.

Uglem suggested that some of the conclusions flow more from the literature review than the field research. An example of this would be the conclusion that theological astuteness is important for worship ministry. The senior pastors surveyed agreed with this conclusion but it was not clearly identified in any of the field research. It came from a comparison between the general contemporary understanding of worship and the biblical understanding identified in the literature. Thiessen affirmed the value of study of the biblical and historical roots of worship and the influences of contemporary culture. Uglem suggested that a New Testament course be included in the list of recommended courses in the program outline.

Shepherd responded to the idea of evangelical foundationalism, specifically related to the Bible as follows: "Yet, if this is truly the case, it's surely hermeneutically naive isn't it?… The text may be an absolute in some sense—a more or less fixed text—but what we 'build' on it (and 'building' begins when reading begins) is far less stable than the textual foundation." This helpful comment reflects the continuing challenge of postmodern ministry and identifies some of the naiveté of modern evangelical assumptions.

Shepherd also found the Rainer study interesting. However, his concern was with those who may have *left* the churches studied by Rainer and, therefore, not been represented in the study. Of course we have no way of knowing why they chose not to remain in those churches but it is possible that the very things that caused some to stay (authorative preaching and strong doctrine) was what caused others to leave.

French commented: "I am inclined to believe that Rainer's findings are more useful because he studied factors that led a person to choose a church, while Emberley studied what would make involvement in church more desirable." He felt that the criteria Emberley relied on were more superficial while Rainer's was more substantive. French believes that the basic hunger for meaning among Canadians can only be met by strong doctrinal content, but this content needed to be communicated in culturally accessible ways. On the other hand, Shepherd concludes: "In the end perhaps Rainer merely shows that modernist seekers join churches which do things in modernist ways." This may be a continuing trend as the shift to postmodernity continues. The stronger postmodernism takes hold of society, the stronger the attraction of absolutes and authoritative doctrine will be for those who gravitate to modern ways of thinking.

Shepherd also observed that the distinction between conservative evangelical churches and the Vineyard movement might be a small one. He felt that to an outsider, we were all perceived as basically conservative evangelical. Thiessen felt a resonance with David Lee regarding the need for intergenerational ministry in contemporary churches. She felt this was crucial for all church leadership, not just worship ministers. Thiessen affirmed the pastoral components of the degree design in light of intergenerational ministry. Related to this, she suggested a strong emphasis on dealing with conflict in ministry.

There was a strong consensus among the readers regarding the importance of spiritual formation. French suggested that this could receive more emphasis in the worship degree program design. He also suggested that this should be addressed in the application process.

Another component that of the proposed worship degree program that was strongly affirmed was leadership training. In light of this, French suggested that the Contemporary Worship Leadership course should be a core course. This is reflected in **Appendix C**. He also suggested a stronger recommendation that students consider additional leadership courses.

Both Uglem and Thiessen suggested that more attention be given to diversity of size of church. This is helpful in that Briercrest students can expect to enter ministry in a variety of sizes of churches. Thiessen also affirmed the flexibility of the modular format at Briercrest. This allows for schedule and content accommodation that is helpful for contemporary ministry.

<center>Conclusion</center>

The profile of a worship pastor in Canadian evangelical churches is somewhat diverse. Role emphases range from musical leadership to pastoral ministry to the artistic community within the church. However, a study of the biblical theology of worship confirms that correct practice requires the two components of revelation from God and appropriate response from humans. This confirms the existence of a discrepancy between much of what is currently assumed to be worship in evangelicalism (corporate songs) and a biblical idea of worship. Because of this, the profile of a worship pastor must include a strong grounding in theology and worship history. This is especially significant in light of the cultural shift from modernity to postmodernity and the wide acceptance of subjectivity and individual choice regarding truth.

Field research indicates that Canadian evangelical churches that hire worship pastors highly value contemporary art, and especially, a contemporary musical genre. Because of this, worship pastors must have the ability to interact with contemporary artistic mediums. This also requires the ability to work with and give leadership to teams in a variety of ministry contexts.

The conclusion of this project is that appropriate preparation for worship ministry in a Canadian evangelical context includes study of the disciplines of pastoral ministry, theology, history and the arts – especially contemporary music and drama. In addition, gifting, skill or talent is required in the five areas of leadership, team building, music, administration, and communication technology. Central to this kind of ministry is strong personal spiritual formation. Worship pastors are expected to demonstrate spiritual maturity and model an exemplary life of commitment to Christ.

The degree program outlined in appendices C and D of this project is designed to prepare a student to effectively fulfill the role of worship pastor in an Canadian evangelical church context. This program is presented at the graduate level and assumes undergraduate training in the arts. Upon completion of the degree, students will be prepared to give worship leadership in the church that is biblical, historically grounded and relevant to contemporary culture.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
Survey instruments – church survey, student survey, job description spreadsheet

APPENDIX B
Senior pastor questionnaire and responses

APPENDIX C
M.A. in Christian Ministry – Worship Ministry Track" degree program design including course descriptions for all courses

APPENDIX D – on attached CD ROM
Three detailed course plans including syllabi, course notes, PowerPoint, dates taught and student evaluations
1. Contemporary Worship Leadership CM713
2. Theology and Practice of Christian Worship CM714
3. Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Ministry CM819

APPENDIX E – on attached CD ROM
General bibliography for the M.A. in Christian Ministry – Worship Ministry Track

Appendix A – Survey Instruments

<u>**Church Survey**</u>

1. What is the size of your church?
   Size:

2. How many people are full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff (which positions)?
   FT:
   Working as:
   PT:
   Working as:
   VOL:
   Working as:

3. What kind of musical style(s) do you use (traditional, contemporary, blended, other)?
   Style(s):

4. What instruments do you use?
   Instruments:

5. Where do you get the main bulk of the music you use?
   Company/Label:

Student Church Profile Today's date_____ Students name_____

Home church name_____

No. of F/T Pastoral staff _____ No. of P/T Pastoral staff _____ Worship Pastor? _____

City_____ Province/State _____

   (If you know) Address _____ Code _____

Church Denomination _____ Average attendance _____

# of weekly services _____ Write how many services occur in each time below.

   Sun AM_____ Sun PM_____ Sat PM_____ Other_____

Approximate building/sanctuary capacity _____ Growing? Yes ☐ No ☐

Worship Instruments used (please check all that apply)
   Piano ☐ Keyboard ☐ Drums ☐ Acc Guitar ☐ Bass Guitar ☐
   Organ ☐ Elect Guitar ☐ Brass ☐ Orchestra ☐ Percussion ☐

   Other _____

Kinds of worship leadership (please check all that apply)
   Worship Teams ☐ Vocal Soloists ☐ Choir ☐ Other _____

Kinds of print (please check all that apply)
   Hymnbooks ☐ Overhead Projector ☐ PowerPoint ☐ Other _____

Which would you say that corporate worship services are focused on most?
   Preaching ☐ Participatory Music ☐ Presentation music ☐ Liturgy ☐
   Drama ☐ Free Charismatic Worship ☐ Other _____

How would you describe the worship style of your church? (check all that apply)
Conservative ☐ Traditional ☐ Liturgical ☐ Celebrative ☐ Louder ☐
   Youthful contemplative ☐ Adult contemplative ☐ Quieter ☐ Authentic ☐
   Other _____

What kind of worship service style would you prefer? (check all that apply)
   Conservative ☐ Traditional ☐ Liturgical ☐ Celebrative ☐ Louder ☐
   Youthful contemplative ☐ Adult contemplative ☐ Quieter ☐ Authentic ☐
   Other _____

What kind of worship service style do you think reaches non-churched people?
   Conservative ☐ Traditional ☐ Liturgical ☐ Celebrative ☐ Louder ☐
   Youthful contemplative ☐ Adult contemplative ☐ Quieter ☐ Authentic ☐
   Other _____

Do you feel positive about your church? Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not sure ☐

Other comments about the worship of your church:

_____

_____

CHURCH	POSITION	FT/PT	City	PROV	E-MAIL/FAX
Grand Prairie CMA	Director of Worship and Music Ministries	FT	Grand Prairie	AB	
Mill Woods MB	Worship Pastor	PT	Edmonton	AB	Fax# (403) 450-0843
Trinity Evangelical Luthern	Parish Worker	PT	Ponoka	AB	chaspark@ccinet.ab.ca
Hillcrest Church	Worship Pastor	FT	Medicine Hat	AB	
Alberni Valley Christian Reformed	Music/Youth Leader	PT	Port Alberni	BC	FAX # (205) 724-4211
Central Baptist Church	Minister of Music	FT	Victoria	BC	
Creston Baptist	Associate Pastor: Youth and Worship	FT	Creston	BC	FAX # (250) 428-4892
Hartland Baptist	Minister of Music and Worship	FT	Prince George	BC	
Maple Ridge Baptist	Associate Pastor: Worship and The Arts	FT	Maple Ridge	BC	604-467-6558
Maple Ridge CMA	Worship and Special Events Pastor	FT	Maple Ridge	BC	
Northview Community Church MB	Pastor of Music and Worship	FT	Abotsford	BC	
Northview Community Church MB	Associate Pastor of Music and Worship	FT	Abotsford	BC	
South Abotsford MB	Pastor of Worship Arts	FT	Abotsford	BC	sambc@uniserve.com
Summerland CMA	Pastor for Worship and Youth	FT	Summerland	BC	
Surrey CMA	Worship Pastor	FT	Surrey	BC	
Willow Park MB	Associate Pastor: Worship Ministries	FT	Kelowna	BC	
Willingdon MB Church	Worship Leader?? (has an assistant)	FT	Burnaby	BC	
Portage Ave. MB	Director of Music and Worship	FT	Winnipeg	MB	cpratte_pamb@mb.sympatico.ca
McIvor MB Church	Worship Pastor	FT	Winnipeg	MB	treimer@mcivorchurch.com
Emmanuel Baptist	Associate Pastor/Music&Creative Arts	FT	Chatham	ON	Fax # (519) 351-5737
First CMA Scarborough	Minister of Music and Worship	FT	Scarborough	ON	Edwards@FirstAllianceChurch.org
Grandview Baptist	Worship Director	PT	Kitchener	ON	
North Park Community	Pastor of Worship	FT	London	ON	
Park Bible Church	Minister of Worship and Music	FT	Burlington	ON	
Parkdale Baptist	Pastor of Worship and Care	FT	Bellville	ON	
Sequoia Community Church	Worship Pastor	FT	Ottawa	ON	
House of ROC	Associate Pastor	3/4	Moose Jaw	SK	houseofROC@sk.sympatico.ca
Parliament Community MB	Associate Pastor/Pastor Couple	FT	Regina	SK	
West Portal Church	Minister of Worship	FT	Sasktoon	SK	
Cornerstone Church	Associate Pastor of Music and the Arts	FT	Sasktoon	SK	
Camano Chapel	Associate Pastor: Worship and Music	FT	?		
Tomball Bible Church	Associate Pastor: Music and Worship	FT	?		

PHONE	SIZE #	MINIMUM EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE	PASTOR	SPIR FORM	ADMIN	LEADER	TEAM	CHANGE
	400		X		X	X	X	X
			X		x	X	X	
(403) 783-4141		College training in Bible	X			X	X	
(250)724-1434	200+		X			X	X	
250-385-7786	800	B MUS			X	X	X	
(250) 428-7547	200		X		X	X	X	
		Should have training	X	X	X	X	X	
604-467-9613	500	Formal Musical/bib Training	X	X	X	X	X	
	300	BA	X		X	X	X	
	2000	BA minimum	X	X		X	X	
		BA minimum			X	X	X	
604-853-2663		Undergraduate degree/mus	X	X	X	X	X	
	250	BA or equivalent	X	X	X	X	X	
	300	BA or equivalent (3 yrs exp)	X	X	X	X	X	
	1500	Post secondary ed/music	X	X	X	X	X	
		Not stated			X	X	X	
		Not stated	X	X	X	X	X	
	350	Not stated	X		X		X	
(519) 351-2112		BA/MM/theology/W exp			x	X	X	
416-494-3269	750	BA minimum	X	X	X	X	X	
	450	Training would be an asset		X	X	X	X	
	900	accomplished musician	X			X	X	
		Not stated	X	X	X	X	X	
		BA	X	X	X	X	X	
	400	College or Seminary	X	X	X	X	X	
	120	BA or equivalent	X	X	X	X	X	
(306) 584-0679	270	Not stated	X			X	X	
		Not stated			X	X	X	
		Formal Musical/bib Training	X	X	X	X	X	
		Not stated	X	X	X	X	X	
		MA of M.Div., music training	X	X	X	X	X	

MUSIC	ARTS PLAYER	STYLES	DRAMA	TECHNOLOGY	Other/comments
X			X	X	older - emphasis on change
	X				
X					
X					
X		X	X	X	
X	X				
X	X			X	Select music that is doctrinally sound
X	X	X	X		
X	X		X	X	
X	X				Larger church - more specified role - no drama
X			X	X	Second role for Northview
X		X	X	X	Comprehensive bibilcal understanding of worship
X		X	X	X	
X		X	X	X	
X	X		X	X	
X				X	Large church - more specialized, not pastoral?
X	X		X	X	
			X	X	
X	X		X		
X		X	X	X	
X		X			
X	X		X		
X			X		
X	X		X	X	
X			X		Wants to start a worship arts school
X	X		X	X	
X				X	30% of a full time role
X	X		X	X	Lorn identified this as a pastoral position
X			X	X	
X	X	X	X	X	

Appendix B – Responses from Senior Pastors

Worship Ministry Questionnaire Responses Summary

Initial Questionnaire

Dear Pastor

We are in the process of developing a graduate degree in worship at Briercrest Biblical Seminary. We value your perspectives on this subject **as a senior pastor**. We would appreciate your input regarding some of the preliminary research conclusions regarding effective preparation for ministry in this area. We would be grateful if you would respond to them. Feel free to insert your comments any where on this questionnaire. It would be helpful if you would use a different colour of type for your comments. If you choose to print and complete this questionnaire by hand, please mail it to:

Briercrest Biblical Seminary
Attn. Dale Dirksen
510 College Drive,
Caronport, SK S0H 0S0

Thank you,

Dale B. H. Dirksen
Associate Professor of Worship and Church Ministry
Briercrest Biblical Seminary

Worship Ministry Questionnaire
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance?_____
How many full time staff in your church?_____
How many part time staff?_____
How many worship staff? Full time___ Part time___

Prologue
The following questions focus on key competencies and fields of study necessary for good worship ministry preparation. However, we want to acknowledge that central to this kind of ministry is a deep love for God and the Bible. It is assumed that spiritual formation is of a high priority in this and all other kinds of ministry training.

PART A
In a study of 30 worship/music ministry job descriptions in Canadian evangelical contexts, we have found that churches are consistently expecting competence in five areas. These five almost always show up in a job description. They are:

1. **Team leadership:** Worship/music ministers are always expected to lead teams of many sizes.

2. **Team player:** There seems to be some nervousness among senior pastors about the introversion common to those with an artistic temperament. Musicians are sometimes perceived as prone to being moody and "lone rangers." However, worship pastors are expected to have the ability to work in and contribute to a team.

3. **Artistic competence:** Worship/music ministers are expected to have a high degree of competence in their artistic field (I.e. music). This may relate to vocal/instrumental competence in worship leading or to working with groups like choirs and worship bands.

4. **Knowledge of communication technology:** Worship pastors are expected to have a good general understanding of technology as it relates to worship (sound, lights, video, etc.). In almost every case, the worship/music pastor oversees this area.

5. **Administrative skill:** The role of a worship/music pastor is often highly administrative. There is a significant expectation of competence in this area.

Please prioritize and comment on the above five. Also, please add any other key competencies you feel are important.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Other

Other

PART B
We have seen that worship study is evolving into a clearly interdisciplinary pattern. There are four key areas that seem to be emerging. Effective worship ministry preparation should focus on all of these. The four areas of discipline are:

1. Theological thinking: **This is important because the worship/music pastor usually chooses the majority of the music used in corporate worship. It is extremely important that the music carry a strong theological and doctrinal message. Theological training from a worship perspective is crucial for this.**

2. Pastoral ministry: **Because virtually all ministry profiles identify pastoral ministry as a primary component of the work, it is essential that worship/pastors have training in this area.**
3. Historical understanding:. **Increasingly, churches are embracing a broad historical understanding of worship. This often includes the introduction of ancient practices of worship into a contemporary context. A good example of this is the increasingly common observance of Advent and Lent in evangelical churches. Worship/music pastors must have a solid grasp of the worship practices of the church over the past twenty centuries. This will allow for effective, careful introduction of historical worship today.**
4. Musical gifting/training: **The current expectation in evangelical churches is that music is a key vehicle for corporate worship. Worship/music pastors must have good training in this area *and* must be capable of training others. Moreover, almost all churches in Canada who hire a music/worship pastor are using contemporary musical language or at least a stylistically blended approach. This means that training in multiple musical styles, including the contemporary, is also important.**

Please comment on this interdisciplinary approach to worship ministry. Have we missed something essential? How can schools like Briercrest Biblical Seminary effectively prepare men and women for the important role of worship pastor?

Responses:

Willow Park MB – Kelowna, BC – Mark Burch
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **1350**
How many full time staff in your church? **10 pastors 4 support staff**
How many part time staff? **8**
How many worship staff? Full time **1** Part time **1**

Prioritized competence:
1. Team Player - As senior pastor - if the worship pastor & I are not on the same page - it spells disaster. There must be a willingness to function as part of the team - to "read" the congregation as to the various needs of the community - and be willing to sacrifice personal tastes and/or agendas for the greater good of the church family.

2. Team Leadership - Eph 4 places responsibility on the role of pastor/teacher to be an equipper of people for ministry. We do not hire a worship pastor to do and be all....but to raise up and equip our many talented artists.

3. Artistic competence - yes it's a must! You can't develop in others what you yourself have no clue how to do! The level does not need to be perfection - but it needs to be well-done - often focusing on doing less "better" than trying to do all and be all.

4. Administrative Skill - somewhat important - or the ability to be a good delegator to volunteers or support staff

5. Communication tech - same as #4 - needs knowledge - but doesn't have to be the final desk on these matters.....raise up competent volunteers who can be trained - who are wired for the job....

Interdisciplinary study
I don't think I can improve on what you've written above....if the worship pastor was well grounded in these 4 areas - it would go a LONG way toward creating theologically sound and culturally relevant worship experiences. Perhaps one of the strongest words I would have to aspiring worship pastors is the question of whether they are really called to PASTOR - or do they just like leading music.....this role of being shepherd of the flock as a whole with their up-front exposure - and of their teams specifically as they work from week to week is an absolute key.....does the emerging leader have a good grasp - not just of music and the arts....but a shepherd's heart for people coupled with the leadership gifts to move the ministry ahead. Hope this helps....

First Alliance – Calgary, AB – Terry Young
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **2100-2200**
How many full time staff in your church? **13**
How many part time staff? **6 Ministry Associates / 6 Ministry Assistants**
How many worship staff? Full time **3** Part time **3**

Prioritized competence:
I am answering this with a large church context in view

1.   In position one I would place a deepening walk with God / a heart for God / a heart of a worshipper.   May sound like a motherhood but without this the rest of the skills and abilities will ring hollow.

2.   Relational skills – team leadership and team player as complimentary skills. The ability to work with a diverse group of people is a prerequisite in the large church context

3.   Musical / artistic competence

4.   Knowledge of communication technology

5.   Administrative skills / may be offset by team skills – ability to work with   and through others with such skills.

Other   Organizational change literacy / competence

Interdisciplinary study
         What is missing, and may be assumed in your approach is spiritual formation of the worship leader – how to nurture a healthy and sustainable ministry presence that is rooted in a vital walk with God
Theological thinking is the number one discipline area followed by historical, and I would add "cultural" understanding. (Many of the train wrecks in the worship/music environment can be partially traced to a lack of ability to discern and navigate through cultural issues – the worship pastor as anthropologist). The pastoral ministry side is crucial related to spiritual development, pastoral care, and a general understanding of pastoral theology. The musical gifting and training is a non-negotiable.

The Meeting Place – Winnipeg, MB – Tim Plett
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **1500**
How many full time staff in your church? **12**
How many part time staff?__Harder to measure; lots of unconventional positions in this category. In simple terms, we have about 10 part time. There are also another five in "other" position configurations.
How many worship staff? Full time **1**   Part time **1**

Prioritized competence:

Switch 4 (technology) and 5 (administration) around and you have a good enough take on how we might view these items. Bottom line is that this person is not primarily a worship leader but a lead worshipper, and their heart and passion for worship is critical. In our setting we have both a Producer and a Technical Director to deal with "the machines". As we press more aggressively into more varied and diverse "gathered forms" of church, this all changes around in priority. But that's another story…

Interdisciplinary study
Good disciplines, important disciplines…would just want to wave the flag over your opening paragraph about assuming that spiritual formation is the center. As outlined, where does that take place? Is it "along the way", or is it (in fact and program) at the center? Is Spiritual Formation a "discipline" as well? Should it be treated as such in the academic program?
All this is an attempt to poke at the problem of getting a competent graduate who really doesn't have a clue how to engage as a worshipper, how to let their heart go in the presence of God and the community of faith, how or when to say "damn the program, full speed ahead (or full stop, as the case may be).
Guess I'm looking for training that speaks directly to "competencies of the soul". What happens to our understanding of preparing Worship Leaders if we change the lead paragraph of the survey so it essentially says "We assume that musical, historic and theological competence are of vital importance, as are admin. ability and pastoral care. However, the core of our program is the growth of disciples who are gifted in the leading of worship…" or something like that. What might the impact on required courses, type of required APPL. Studies, etc, be? I leave that to you to consider, my brilliant friend! You are probably a million miles down this road already, but if my opinion is of any assistance, use it as you wish.

Surrey Alliance – Surrey, BC – Ric Strangway
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **340**
How many full time staff in your church? **4**
How many part time staff? **4**
How many worship staff? Full time **1** Part time **0**

Prioritized competence:

1. Leadership – I am writing with a bias. If I was in a maintenance oriented church then I wouldn't put this so high. But I really believe that fundamental to all pastoral roles is the task of leadership. Within leadership are a collection of ideas and skills (one of which is being a "team player"). It is at the heart of Eph. 4:12.

Saying that I see leadership is fundamental because the Worship Pastor needs to be able to see himself as a leader on several different levels. One, with a graduate degree he comes into a staff situation and for all sakes and purposes he is the "expert." We are beyond the age where the Lead pastor can know everything there is to know. And so with a spirit of collaboration and learning the Worship Pastor leads the staff in many ways. Second, the Worship Pastor leads the congregation (I won't elaborate on this as this is obvious). Third, he leads those involved in his team. This is critical for me – if the church is growing he needs to realize that there will be significant changes in leading from 300 to 600, or 500 to 1000, etc.

2. Artistic Competence – I believe for churches our size (300-400) the expectation is that worship and music is going to go to another level when we hire. Competencies and abilities are expected where there was no expectation before. In addition, with the changing shape of culture and thus, the church, there are a lot of things that the church needs to catch up in so that it can relate to the culture.

3. Knowledge of Communication Technology

4. Team Player – I have a hard time putting this one so low. There is a part of me that would love to put this at #1 or #2. But in comparison to the above three I think this would have to go here.

5. Administration – Important – absolutely. But not as critical as the other four.

Other – Anointing / Spiritual Empowerment & Maturity – I am not sure how to put this. But beyond all the above is that spiritual dynamic that rests on some more than others. By the very way I express that I realize I suggest a certain kind of thinking on the role of the Holy Spirit. But part of me wonders is it really possible for a Worship Leader to consistently lead a congregation to a place where he/she has never been? By that reasoning I know that that might disqualify all of us from Christian ministry. I think I would still put this as a critical element.

Interdisciplinary study
Again, I think you have done some excellent work here. Those four disciplines and their relationship to developing men and women for this role is important. Could there also be a place where spiritual formation and takes a heightened place in the curriculum. No doubt all ministers need to reveal spiritual behavior that is consistent with the depth of their heart. But my sense is that those who have a larger public role need to ensure that they aren't leading on the basis of their knowledge and skill (that's too easy once you have a certain proficiency in both), but on the basis of their heart/spirit.

Take my thoughts as you see validity. I would benefit from hearing other wiser individuals like yourself who have thought through some of these issues thoroughly.

Thanks for giving me a chance to respond. All in all, our experience with the "product" that BBC puts out is excellent.

Chilliwack Baptist – Chilliwack, BC – David Lee
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **300+**
How many full time staff in your church? **2**
How many part time staff? **2**
How many worship staff? Full time **1** (youth/worship designation)
Prioritized competence:

1. **Artistic competence:** I somewhat reluctantly assign this first place. First place because this skill would be basic to the role (like teaching/preaching skill is basic to the role of a preaching pastor), but reluctantly because without #2-4 musical skill amounts to nothing!

2. **Team player:** this is a primary priority for all staff including worship staff.

3. **Team leadership** *and development***:** pastoral ministry, in its various forms, is all about leading and developing/equipping others.

4. **Administrative skill:** this would include self-management as well as the management of people and programs.

5. **Knowledge of communication technology:** this is a non-negotiable, but it can be learned through on-the-job training.   I would make this an essential part of a professional development plan for a staff member who leads worship.

Other **Capacity to provide pastoral care:** pastors are, by definition, shepherds who must be concerned about ministry to people. The scope of this care will vary according to the size of the church, etc, but this should be a requirement of all designated pastors. This would include the ability to work with and care for others who are disagreeable and who criticize.

Other **Philosophical/theological perspectives:** A worship pastor must be able engage in a ministry rooted in sound theological and philosophical perspectives, and be able to communicate these perspectives with such clarity that others are able to understand and embrace biblically informed values.

Interdisciplinary study
Go for it, Dale! I would also include the need to understand intergenerational ministry (an issue that touches on sociology, theology, leadership, conflict management and pastoral care). For some, in essentially mono-generational settings, this will not be an issue, but I suspect that most Canadian churches want a "blend" between the old and the new because they highly value the mixing of the generations. This laudable (and, in my opinion, biblical) value creates an enormous, almost insurmountable, challenge. Churches that determine that intergenerational

ministry is preferable are consciously choosing the hard road. They must be ready for tensions produced by constant evaluation, criticism and compromise. They must be renewed by the vision of the blessings that will come when a church welcomes and loves everyone.

I'm concerned that we really haven't taught intergenerational ministry if all we've done is to *inform* students about the differences between the generations, or if we leave them with the expectation that *their preferences* in music should be the style of choice in their ministry setting. Students must seriously wrestle with these kinds of questions: "How can we keep seniors in the church (and I don't just mean the cool ones!) while at the same time getting beyond "Just a closer walk with thee" on the piano and organ?" "What are the needs of seniors and how can we be responsive to those needs?" This is not simple and requires extensive conversation and soul-searching leading to sensitivity among those who are led into this important sphere of ministry.

Willingdon MB – Burnaby, BC – Carlin Weinhauer
General Church Information:
What is your current average weekly corporate worship attendance? **3500**
How many full time staff in your church?**18 pastors, 15 support people**
How many part time staff? **6 or 8**
How many worship staff? Full time **2** Part time **2**

Prioritized competence:

I think they all are important and see them as building blocks whatever way you stack them. If one is seriously missing the worship pastor will not do well.

1. Team leadership is a must. We have found it works best if the Worship Pastor is responsible directly to the Senior Pastor and Elders not to a Worship Committee.

2. Team Player: I have sometimes compared a worship pastor with a Siamese cat. Their eyes are a bit crossed and they have a kink in their tail. But they are also beautiful and you never confuse them with a dog. In today's musical climate they have to have some alligator skin and the ability to stay the course agreed upon by the senior leadership.

3. Artistic Competence: Obviously important especially in urban centers. Expectations are high that we minister musically with a high commitment to excellence. Not only commitment but ability to make it happen.

4. Knowledge of communication technology: This is true and probably right. The worship pastor must be able to not only make a joyful noise up front but assure the sound continues to be joyful through out the congregation.

5. Administrative skill: Agreed. Administration is what frees up a worship pastor to do what God has called him to do.

Other

I think the most important issue is gifting and genuine humility. Our Worship Pastor has only a grade 12 education but I would put him into virtually any large church environment in Canada where he would be given freedom to lead people toward God in worship and he would succeed. Take us to Jesus and we will follow.

Interdisciplinary study
You have identified a number of good areas of worship preparation. Gifting in my mind is the essential element. Mentoring is the other crucial task. It is probably more difficult in worship matters than in many other areas of ministry, however, a rising worship leader must work with and listen to someone who is proving to be leading people toward Jesus in their worship leadership. Trust this is helpful. Blessings!

Appendix C – M.A. Program Design and Course Descriptions

Master of Arts In Christian Ministry – Worship

Initial program design

This program is designed to prepare leaders for a professional role in worship ministry.   This focus of this degree is to prepare someone with a music degree and/or musical gifting and experience that wants to pursue church ministry. Some college music courses are available for seminary credit for those who feel a need to supplement the music component of their study.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS
12/18* credits   **Bible/Theology/History**
    Recommended courses:
    BT603   Hermeneutics
    BT615   Wisdom Literature
    BT651   Central Doctrines of Christian Theology
    BT713   Nehemiah: Leadership Development and Themes

24-30 credits   **Major Studies**
    (18) Foundational Studies:
    CM600   Spiritual Formation for Ministry
    CM601   Philosophy and Foundation for Ministry
    CM714   Theology and Practice of Christian Worship
    CM000   Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship
    CM000   Issues In Postmodern Worship Ministry
    CM819   Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Ministry

    (6-12) Professional Electives:
    Worship Courses (a minimum of 2 professional electives must be chosen from the following courses)
        CM713   Contemporary Worship Leadership
        CM000   Church and Communication Technology
        CM000   Music and the Arts in Worship
        CM000   Worship Arts Administration
        CM000   Pastoring Artists
    Courses available through the college for seminary credit – these are full semester courses
        CM000   Song Writing
        CM000   Digital Recording (introductory and advanced)
        CM000   Non-linear Video Editing (introductory and advanced)
        CM000   Jazz based Musicianship (introductory and advanced)
        Other courses considered upon request

3-21 credits   **Open Electives**
    Additional recommended Electives (students are not limited to these courses)

CM602	Trends and Issues in Contemporary Ministry
CM701	Pastoral Theology
CM610	Outreach Ministries of a Vital Church
CM715	Developing Lay Leadership
LE744	Creative Leadership and Team Building
LE611	Problem Solving Processes
LE615	Time, Life and Project Management
LE714	Change, Power and Conflict Management
LE712	Leadership and Team Building

3 credits   **Ministry Related Research Project** (students may choose to write a thesis – 6 credits – in consultation and agreement with the program coordinator)

3 credits   **Experiential Integration**

60 credits

*Bible College/University Graduate requirements - Briercrest policy

Course Descriptions

Bible Theology Courses
BT603   Hermeneutics
A theological study of biblical interpretation which surveys ways the Bible has been handled in the past and present. The student will wrestle with significant issues of biblical interpretation within the context of commitment to scriptural authority and the needs of today. Throughout the course the student will be challenged to develop understanding, discernment and skills that will make impact on his/her life and on the lives of those to whom he/she will minister.

BT615   Wisdom Literature
Biblical wisdom literature will be studied in light of its theological and historical background. Focusing upon Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job, this course will highlight the use of this material for preaching and teaching.

BT651   Central Doctrines of Christian Theology
The Apostle Paul urges us to teach sound doctrine (Tit. 2:1). For those without theological training, this introductory course will survey the central doctrines of the Christian faith, and help the student develop a basic understanding of the method and content of systematic theology in the classical evangelical tradition.

BT713   Nehemiah: Leadership Development and Themes
A biblical perspective on the development of a Christian leader dealing with the crucial issues and concerns related to accomplishing purposes and goals in ministry.

Major Studies
CM600 Spiritual Formation for Ministry
This course will explore the central place of growing intimacy with Christ as the basis for effective life and ministry. Designed to be experienced early in the programs of all students preparing for vocational ministry, it will provide a pathway toward spiritual refreshment, deeper commitment and disciplined living. The week will be a blend of classroom and practical experiences in the spiritual disciplines culminating in a 24-hour personal spiritual retreat.

CM714 Theology and Practice of Christian Worship
Students in this course will develop a biblically based understanding of the theology and practice of Christian worship. Old testament models of worship will be discussed in some detail. New Testament teaching and example will also be addressed. A brief survey of worship over the past twenty centuries will help the student develop a critical understanding of the practice of worship in the postmodern church. An introduction to the historic structure of the church year will also be a part of this course.

CM601 Philosophy and Foundation for Ministry/Mission
This course will assist the student to respond to a rapidly changing culture, and often confounding church scene, according to sound scriptural principles of ministry. Attention will be given to the biblical foundations of ministry, the development of mission, vision and cultural

responsiveness, the identification of calling and the formation of core values. The student will be guided through the process of developing a well-articulated philosophy of ministry.

CM000 Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship
Understanding the history of worship as it relates to the church from immediately post New Testament to the twentieth century is essential for contemporary worship ministry. This course will seek to develop an understanding of historical worship practices. Included will be a general discussion around the arts and how they related to and influenced worship over the past twenty centuries. Components of the course will include: the development of liturgy, the church year, reformation influence on worship, the printing press, the enlightenment and modernity, and some implications for worship in post-modernity.

CM000 Issues in Postmodern Worship Ministry
Sweeping changes are radically affecting worship in the postmodern church. This course will identify important issues for postmodern worship ministry and project potential changes that may occur over the next few decades. Students will evaluate these trends and issues and develop specific application for their ministry context.

CM819 Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Ministry
Contemporary ideas of sign and symbol include: the religious and mystical, the corporate and commercial, individual and group (fashion), the national and patriotic.   However, many deep symbols have become trivialized in postmodern culture largely because of an enigmatic understanding of reality. This has made deep historical symbols almost entirely relative. They often have meaning *only* in light of the individual. Therefore, the meaning of a symbol becomes what ever you want it to be (i.e. Rock Stars wear crosses at award ceremonies). During this course, we will investigate the use of sign, symbol and sacred act in biblical material, church history and contemporary practice with the objective of reclaiming their profound meaning.

CM713 Contemporary Worship Leadership
This course will function largely as a practicum, oriented around a few contemporary worship models. Students will experience practical opportunities to lead in the classroom and chapel context. Significant emphasis will be placed on understanding worship leadership as a pastoral task. An additional component of this course will be to develop a philosophical understanding of the role of music and the arts in worship. This will include consideration of the use of drama, dance, visual art and symbol. Some implications regarding church architecture and building design will be considered.

CM000 Church and Communication Technology
Virtually every church uses technology to enhance its ministry. Some do it well; some do not. The Technology for Ministry course will provide crucial information on how to use technology effectively, especially in the areas of: Sound reinforcement, lighting, powerpoint, graphic design, web design and video production. Ethical and philosophical issues related to the influence of technology in North American society will also be discussed. Upon completion of this course, students will have general knowledge of key areas of ministry technology as well as a sense of its appropriate use in today's church.

CM000 Music and the Arts in Worship
Music and the arts have always been central to worship expression. This continues to be true in the evangelical church today, however, in many cases there seems to be an unhealthy and unbiblical equation of music and worship. This is often to the exclusion of other historical and biblical worship expression. During this course, students will seek to develop a philosophy of music and the arts, especially as they relate to corporate worship. Included will be discussion around the use of art music versus popular music, forms of visual art and an introduction to the ideas of the use of images in worship.

CM000 Worship Arts Administration
This course will include a focused study on the structure of components of worship today from an administrative perspective. Components include: worship teams, choirs, orchestras, and technical systems. Understanding copyright law and the relationship between CCLI and the local church will be a key component of this course. A general introduction to media, production, and graphic arts and publishing will be included. Software for administrative systems will be considered.

CM000 Pastoring Artists
In almost all worship ministry contexts today, the role of pastor is central. Worship leaders are expected to be, first and foremost, pastors, often specifically related to the artistic communities they work with in the church. However, many worship pastors feel inadequate from both a gifting and training perspective in this area. This course will focus on the unique pastoral needs of the worship community as well as the development of pastoral ministry tools. Students will develop pastoral methods that are unique to worship ministry.

Electives
CM602 Trends and Issues in Contemporary Ministry
Ministry in the twenty first century faces trends and issues that are unique compared to any other time in history. The content of this course will include an analysis of major current trends and application for ministry in today's church. Specific issues related to the emergence of a postmodern culture will be discussed and critiqued with the goal of effective ministry for today and well into the future.

CM701 Pastoral Theology
This course will explore the many dimensions of pastoral ministry from a biblical standpoint with the goal of equipping the student to function effectively as a pastoral leader within the contemporary culture. This course will cove issues such as planning, scheduling, dealing with the expectations of others, administering the sacraments, performing weddings and funerals, functioning effectively with church staff (paid and volunteer), handling conflict and criticism, avoiding burnout, and other day to day aspects of the ministry.

CM610 Outreach Ministries of a Vital Church
A study of the current thinking and practices of outreach and evangelism in the vital local church, especially in the Canadian context. Current trends and strategies will be examined as a

basis for students' developing their personal witness strategies, plans and commitments for evangelism in the local church.

CM715   Developing Lay Leadership
This course maps out biblical and practical approaches to developing lay leadership in the congregational setting. The focus will be on the means of fostering the kind of atmosphere which produces leaders, the process by which those with leadership potential are identified and developed, and methods of training those entering or fulfilling leadership roles.

LE744   Creative Leadership and Team Building
An experiential introduction to the roles and tasks of leadership. Emphasis will be placed on practicing the skills and attitudes necessary for effective leadership.

LE611   Problem Solving Processes
The course is designed to help students understand the perspectives, procedures, and processes helpful in institutional and personal problem solving. Emphasis will be given to problem identification, problem explanation, generation of alternatives for solutions, selection of solutions and consolidation of a possible solution.

LE615   Time, Life and Project Management
A study of principles of time management and various techniques, devices, tools, etc. which can be used to make time work for you rather than enslave you. Also includes a study of hindrances to time management. The student will be guided through activities to help him/her develop a personalized system of time management.

LE714   Change, Power and Conflict Management
A study of the processes effecting organizational change and of skills needed for one to serve as a change agent in a Christian organization. Also, a study of conflict and the means available to resolve and/or manage conflict.

Ministry Related Research Project

RD809   Ministry Related Research Project
An advanced study of an issue or topic that is significant in light of the student's anticipated ministry/vocation and his/her major of study. This project must be developed in consultation with the program coordinator.

Experiential Integration
CM000 Worship Arts Practicum
Functioning as part of the BBS community or an approved ministry context to develop personal worship ministry skills. This practicum should include aspects of planning, leading, administration and teaching as they relate to worship ministry. *A faculty assistantship may qualify*. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the program coordinator.

RD613 Faculty Assistantship (*may qualify as a Worship Arts Practicum – program coordinator approval required*)
The student will work closely together with a faculty member, assisting with doing research, marking of assignments, teaching etc. for approximately 6-10 hours per week for the duration of two semesters. A 50% tuition reduction applies. Both student and faculty may initiate the assistantship.

Scheduling of Worship Courses

Offered every year:
CM714   Theology and Practice of Christian Worship
CM000   Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship
CM000   Issues In Postmodern Worship Ministry
CM819   Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Ministry

Offered on alternate years:
CM713   Contemporary Worship Leadership
CM000   Church and Communication Technology
CM000   Music and the Arts in Worship
CM000   Worship Arts Administration
CM000   Pastoring Artists

Suggested Sequence of Courses
First Year:
CM714   Theology and Practice of Christian Worship
CM000   Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship
CM000   Music and the Arts in Worship
CM000   Worship Arts Administration

Second Year:
CM000   Issues In Postmodern Worship Ministry
CM819   Sign, Symbol and Sacred Act in Christian Ministry
CM713   Contemporary Worship Leadership
CM000   Church and Communication Technology
CM000   Pastoring Artists

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