

A LETTER TO WORSHIPPERS

By Teresa Seyfang

Dear Worshiper,

I am so glad that you are here with us at Grace Community Church. You don't have to be at church. You choose to be at church. It is your choice. My prayer is that you will be blessed because you came. And I thank God for making us family.

Please know that you have another choice. That choice is what or whom you worship. Worship is not an optional activity. Everyone is always worshipping something or someone. That's just the inescapable nature of the human heart. That's why I am calling you a worshipper and not an attender. As much as you may want to just attend a worship service, you are actually in some sort of act of worship every day of your life. My hope for you and for me is that we give all of our energy and attention to God every time we come to a service.

As you come to church, please don't focus on critiquing how we lead worship. You will always find flaws because we are flawed. Instead, please come expecting and seeing the presence of God. God is not flawed. He is perfect. When you seek God in a fresh way every week, He will show you something new every time. His presence is way better than our worship team can convey.

If I every encourage our church family to raise their hands, I am actually encouraging you to be biblical with your expression. It's a great thing to express our love for God and get excited. God has also asked us to sing, clap, shout, bow down and even dance. If we do those things at a concert or sporting event and not at church, maybe we should do some introspection regarding our worship.

I truly appreciate your song requests. Keep those coming. You have some good ideas, but not all of the good songs are on Christian radio or even on your radar. There is actually a whole bunch of incredible songs written for the church that just don't get the airplay or exposure. I try to have a pulse on that, and I strive to prayerfully consider all the options. We may not always be able to do your favorites, but don't let that hinder your worship. Please keep requesting your favorites, because that is a blessing to me and you give me good ideas.

Speaking of songs, some may want more old songs, but they probably won't be predominate. We have been singing more hymns for some time now, but maybe not enough for everyone's taste in music. Others might want more new songs, but just know it's not about staying up to date. Maybe you just want more of the same, but please realize that it's important to "sing a new song", at least according to Scripture. As long as we are all focused on God, the style of songs should play second fiddle at best. God is interested in our hearts before Him more than He is about our particular music styles.

These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

Matthew 15:8

May our songs and our worship NEVER be noise to God, or He will not listen to them. In Amos 5:23 God says that Israel's songs were unpleasant noise to Him, even though they were singing Psalms written by those under God's inspiration! It was noise because God saw what was in the people's hearts.

When it comes to worship, perspective is huge. Make sure you have the right perspective of your role. Look in the mirror and say this to yourself: "I am not a part of an audience." An audience is a gathering that needs to be entertained. The gathering of God's people should not be an audience that comes for a show. You are way more than an audience. You are part of a choir of children who call God their Father! We're united in lifting up anthems of praise to an audience of ONE – the One true and worthy God. When you keep that perspective, you will be free from the desire to be entertained. You will intentionally strive to join the praise to our Almighty Audience of One! I realize that sometimes the songs we sing may be hard to learn. We strive to choose songs that can be easily learned and sung, but, as I said earlier, we are flawed and may not always accomplish that. If we are singing a song that you cannot comfortably sing, please focus your heart and mind on the lyrics and lift your heart to God in praise. I promise you that we will never knowingly sing words that are not biblically based. You should always be able to agree with the words on the screen. They are in line with what the Bible teaches and the doctrine that Grace Church believes. If you catch an inconsistent lyric that we have overlooked, please let me know!

We are always grateful for feedback – positive or negative. We welcome your encouragement. We actually need it! We also need your constructive criticism, so we might understand how you think and how you are blessed – and yes – frustrated at times. As your worship leader, I have fallen short at times and will fail in the future, so I greatly appreciate your grace as you continue to come. And, please pray for me as I seek the Lord for what He wants for our worship services and special events.

Finally, please know that I love you. When we lead worship every week, we are also praying that you will be inspired to not see me or the other singers and players. My hope and prayer is that the songs will inspire you to look to God and to the Cross and experience the exaltation of Jesus Christ, and love Him more and more.

I long for us as a church to experience, in a new and fresh way, the power and presence of God. I don't know what that will look like, but I am trusting God to do what only He can do ... change and revive our hearts. I am praying for you and for me – that we might share our "Grace Story" with those God brings into our path. I do believe that if we embrace and truly live the teaching that we have heard here at Grace Community ... Sharing Christ ... exalting Christ ... enjoying Christ ... that is all the vision we need. God will do the rest. He will lead. He will empower. He will inspire. I am praying that He will do that in my heart and in yours.

I really want to see you be a part of what God is doing in our midst.

God loves you and so do I,
Sincerely,
Teresa