

## **Session 11**

# **Building a Worshiping Church**

### **This session covers:**

- Practical advice to pastors, worship leaders, and others in leadership roles who want to build a worshiping church
- Principles that will help leaders transition their churches into the worship movement
- Five keys that will help leaders develop a worshiping church

### **Keys That Will Help You Build a Worshiping Church**

#### **1. This session is specifically designed for leaders.**

- Pastors, worship leaders, those involved in leading a worship ministry, and others in leadership roles will benefit from the principles discussed in this session.
- You can build a worshiping church if you implement these principles with perseverance.
- Building a worshiping church is not easy, but it is well worth the effort.

#### **2. Five keys to building a worshiping church.**

- Cultivate a desire to worship in your own heart.
- Cultivate a desire to lead your church into deeper expressions of worship.
- Structure your service for worship.
- Teach on topics that inspire worship.
- Develop your worship team.

## **Key # 1: Cultivate a Desire For Worship In Your Own Heart.**

### **1. Pastors and worship leaders must have a desire to worship in their own hearts.**

- David said, "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Ps 37:4). When our desires originate from delighting in God, He gives us what we want.
- As a leader who desires to build a worshiping church, you must first desire to worship God *yourself*. People in the church follow their leader.
- If we want our people to be dedicated worshipers, we must first be a dedicated worshiper.
- If we do not worship in our alone times with the Lord or if we do not worship during church, our churches will not develop into worshiping churches.

### **2. Pastors and leaders must incorporate personal and private worship into their lifestyle.**

- Worshiping churches stem from pastors and worship leaders who make *personal worship* a part of their *lifestyle*.
- Many times worship leaders are selected just because they have a nice voice or can play an instrument. Even though these are necessary qualities, worship leaders must first be private worshipers.
- The people we lead become like us, and they follow us where we go. If we are worshipers regardless of whether we are with other people or alone, the people we lead will be worshipers.

### **3. Pastors and leaders must set the example when their church gathers to worship.**

- In many places, pastors do not worship with the rest of the church.
- Many act as though worship is for everyone but them. They often sit while everyone else is standing. They look over their notes for the message or speak to an elder while everyone else is singing.
- Far worse, many pastors do not even enter the room until the worship is almost finished.
- Frequently, pastors go through an entire service without even attempting to worship.
- There are major problems with this type of attitude. When pastors act like this, they imply that worship is not important or that they are beyond the need for worship. Their actions declare that worship is a low priority in their church.
- Since *God often gives direction during worship*, pastors with this type of attitude cannot even discern what God wants to do in the service.
- If we want to build a worshiping church, we need to ask God to transform us into a worshiper.

## **Key # 2: Cultivate a Desire to Lead Your Church Into Worship.**

### **1. Pastors need a desire for their congregation to be worshipers.**

- From the foundation of personal worship comes a natural longing to lead a church of passionate worshipers.
- A worshiping church will not be built out of a casual wish, but rather a deep yearning for every member of your church to develop into a true worshiper.

### **2. Building a worshiping church requires a long-term commitment to change.**

- Transitioning a body of people into real worshipers takes much time and much energy on the part of the pastor.
- Pastors must cast the vision for worship, teach about worship, encourage worship, and develop a worship team.
- People do not develop into worshipers over night. Both their attitudes about worship and their desire to worship change slowly.
- Transforming people into worshipers is not a simple task; it requires extensive commitment and dedication.

### **3. A church will embrace whatever the pastor emphasizes.**

- Building a worshiping church is hard work. Therefore, pastors must make worship a high and an ongoing priority.
- If we merely teach about worship for a short period of time, but do not implement worship, we will not build worshiping churches. For example, if all you do as a pastor is to teach a twelve week sermon series on the issues of this class, you will most likely accomplish very little.
- You must implement the principles of this class into your worship ministry. For example, if you want the prophetic song to be a part of your regular ministry, teach your congregation to hear God's voice; then give time and opportunity for the prophetic song.
- Every step of the journey will require great energy and attention. There will be problems to solve and issues to resolve.

## **Key # 3: Structure Your Service for Worship.**

### **1. The goal of every pastor and worship leader should be to create a river of life in their services.**

- Ezekiel 47 speaks of a day when water will trickle from the temple until it grows into a powerful river—producing life wherever it flows. Ezekiel states that “every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live” (Ezek. 47:9).
- There is life in the river of God.
- This same passage also states that “the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt” (Ezek. 47:11).

- As leaders, we must allow God's river to flow, and lead people into this river because this is where God will touch them. If we leave them in the swamp, they will dry up and wither away.
- As New Testament believers, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that from our "innermost being will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38).
- When we come together as God's temple to worship, the river will flow (1 Peter 2:5; Eph. 2:21-22).
- As we praise God with voices of thanksgiving, we build an invisible throne that God's presence rests upon (Ps. 22:3).
- As we continue to praise Him, a spiritual river begins to trickle from the throne. As our praise shifts into worship, this river grows increasingly deeper until we must swim to stay afloat. Everywhere this river flows brings life, fruit, and healing.
- As pastors and worship leaders, our first task is to ensure that God is enthroned with praises. Then our responsibility is to discern where God's river is flowing and direct the service into the river. We must carefully avoid the swamps of man-made traditions and dead religion because this will only produce death.
- Once believers drink from the river of life, they will desire to get into the river at every meeting.

## **2. As leaders, we need to structure our services so that the river can flow freely.**

- We must make it easy for everyone to enter into God's presence.
- As God pours out the new wine of anointed worship into the earth, only those with the proper wineskins will be able to contain it. Though the wine is available to all, old wineskins will burst and the new wine of worship will be lost (Luke 5:36-39).
- Therefore, we must develop new wineskins that can hold the new wine of the modern-day worship movement.
- For many, our old wineskin services—interspersed with rituals, traditions, and announcements—can not contain the new wine of deep and prolonged worship.
- We need new wineskin services that are flexible to the free flowing river of life.
- This means that many pastors will have to restructure their entire worship service. As leaders who want to build worshiping churches, we must analyze our meetings and ruthlessly eliminate unnecessary traditions, rituals, and programs.

## **3. Learn how to worship continuously.**

- Nothing drains the anointing from a service quicker than programmed interruptions. A preprogrammed service that flows from one song to an announcement to a prayer back to another song will rarely bring in the presence of God.
- Continuous singing helps worshipers focus their attention on the Lord—not on the programmed activity of the moment.

- Frequently, the Lord will interrupt the flow of the service by directing prayer, ministry, declaration, or some other Holy Spirit led activity; however, as leaders we should not plan interruptions in our worship times. Interruptions stop the flow of the river.
- When an interruption stops the river's flow, it can be difficult to get the river flowing again. Though it can be done, it usually does not reach the same level of anointing as before.
- To build a new wineskin for worship, we need to worship continuously and remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction.

#### **4. Allow God to direct your steps.**

- The Bible says, "The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Prov. 16:9).
- What a wonderful principle to live by—especially when we are responsible for leading a group in worship.
- We should always prepare and plan. We select the songs for the day. We practice the songs before the service. We prepare our sermons. We pray for God's direction and blessing. As we plan and prepare, however, we must remain flexible so that God can direct our steps.
- As the service begins, we surrender our plans to the Holy Spirit.
- As you begin to worship, listen for God's voice. Once He speaks, we follow His direction.
- Continue this simple pattern throughout your worship time. Listen and obey.
- As leaders, do not allow programmed interruptions in your worship. God has a much more exciting program planned than you do. If we let Him direct our plans and make room for His presence, He will show up in wonderful and exciting ways.
- By doing this, you will often leave a service in awe of God's presence. You will feel this way because you made your plans, but allowed God to direct your steps. And He did wonderful things in your midst.

#### **5. The pastor is the worship leader.**

- In many churches, there seems to be a longstanding tradition where the pastor is uninvolved during worship.
- Perhaps pastors have been taught that it looks more spiritual to look over sermon notes. Or maybe coming in late makes them appear as if they don't need a touch from God. Whatever the reason, this must change if you desire to build a worshiping church.
- *Pastors: You are the worship leader of your church.* Most likely, you will delegate the lead singing to someone else. Nevertheless, you are responsible to direct the flow of worship while the singing takes place.
- If you accept this responsibility, God will direct you in the flow of the service for that day. He will give you prophecies, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, prayer, and proclamations during the worship. He will show you what He wants to accomplish during worship. This task should not be delegated to someone else.
- Divine order in worship is essential.

- It is good to give a considerable amount of freedom to your worship leader, the singers, and the musicians. They select which songs to sing for the service. They lead worship as they think appropriate. As they sense the Holy Spirit's leading, they also move into spontaneous worship, prophetic songs, prayer, or prophesying on their instruments.
- As you sense God's voice, you may ask them to sing a particular song or to change the order of the songs. But give your worship team a significant amount of freedom to hear from God and follow His direction. At the same time, both you and the worship team should understand that you are the worship leader.
- As pastor, you should start the service. You should be in the room from the beginning of the service. You should be the person listening carefully for the Lord's voice so that you know what He wants to accomplish. When you hear His voice, direct the worship team accordingly. If you hear nothing, say nothing. Normally, God will speak to you, and you should guide the service according to the Spirit's leading.
- If you sense that the worship team should continue on a song longer than planned, indicate this quietly to the worship leader. If God places a prophetic burden upon you, then prophesy. If others have a prophetic word, let them share it with you privately, evaluate it, and then determine if and when it should be delivered.
- As the pastor leading worship in this way, have three goals. First, try to maintain order without quenching the Spirit. Second, give everyone the liberty to express their own worship to God in a way that is not disruptive to others. Third, fulfill your God-given responsibility to oversee the service.
- Pastors, you must be engaged, listen for God, and direct your worship services as the Spirit leads. God will show you way into the river of life, but it is your responsibility to direct your congregation into the river.

## **Key # 4: Teach About Worship.**

### **1. What you teach on affects your church's worship.**

- For example, if you want your church to flow in the prophetic song, then you need to teach on learning to hear God's voice. How else will your worship team recognize that God is speaking to them prophetically?
- If you want your church to walk in apostolic authority—declaring and proclaiming breakthrough over cities and nations—you need to teach them that they are nation-shakers and history-makers.
- Teaching shapes the identity of your church, which in turn has a significant affect on your worship.
- Teaching does not refer to merely exposing people to an issue. We can teach on a topic for a few weeks and think that everyone fully understands the subject. Then we quickly move on to another topic. Normally, this type of approach does not have a long-term impact. Instead, we need to make disciples that incorporate our teachings into their lifestyle. For example, if we teach on hearing God's voice, we should help people understand how to hear from God and equip them to hear from God for themselves.

- There is a big difference between teaching and equipping, though both are necessary. Teaching expounds upon revelation, but equipping releases impartation. Teaching helps people understand what they can do; equipping empowers them to do it. You can teach on learning to hear God's voice in a few months. But for people to accurately hear from God on a regular basis, you must persist in training and equipping them. This might take several months or even several years. Equipping others to hear from God requires time and patience on your part.

## **2. Teach on how to hear God's voice.**

- Knowing God's voice helps pastors and the worship team discern where the river is flowing in a service.
- It activates and empowers the prophetic song.
- It leads pastors to know when to proclaim, declare, or perform any action that God might desire for that day.
- Hearing God is essential for a church that desires to go deep in worship

## **3. Teach on people's identity in Christ.**

- Believers need to understand who they are in Christ.
- When people know that God loves, accepts, and desires them because of the blood of Jesus, they usually respond by worshiping God with gratitude and affection.
- As people understand that God has redeemed them from the curse of the Law and has blessed them beyond imagination, they will worship Him.
- On the other hand, if people feel unworthy and unlovely to God, they are less enthusiastic to come into God's presence. Therefore, teach them who they are in Christ.

## **4. Teach about the Bride of Christ.**

- When believers understand that they are the Bride of Christ it deepens their worship.
- Many have been taught that the Church as the Bride of Christ was merely a concept that illustrated a believer's relationship to God.
- The Church as the Bride of Christ is much more than a concept. As God continues to unveil the mystery of the Bride, believers everywhere are beginning to realize that they are betrothed as a Bride to the King of the ages, the Lord Jesus Christ. One day, Jesus will have a worthy Bride who partners with Him throughout eternity.
- Understanding this concept unlocks a multitude of emotions and affections within us that empower worship.
- Experiencing God's passionate love for us awakens burning love in our hearts for Him.
- Knowing God's desire for intimacy with us creates a yearning in our hearts to be close to Him.
- Feeling beautiful in the sight of the Lord puts a longing within us to be in His presence. As affections and emotions are awakened by teaching about the Bride of Christ, our churches will become lovesick for Jesus.

**5. Teach people about their destiny.**

- Many Christians believe they are worthless failures filled with sin and useless in God's kingdom. Nothing could be further from the truth.
- While we are all sinners, God does not view us as sinners; He sees us as saints. God has called us into partnership with Him to shake the nations of the earth.
- We are all people of destiny. Each of us has a powerful life purpose, unique spiritual gifts, and an anointing to advance the Kingdom of God. When people understand these truths, they typically worship God with gratitude and love. Teaching people that they are nation-shaking, history-making people of destiny creates mighty worshipers.

**6. Teach on developing a heart of worship.**

- Teaching on issues such as having a heart after God's heart; surrender; and God's worth, holiness, beauty, and majesty stimulates worship.
- Many pastors beat their people down. They use guilt, shame, condemnation, and the fear of judgment to stimulate worship.
- People will respond to this type of teaching, but only temporarily and externally. People who know they are loved, beautiful, highly esteemed, and blessed will worship from the heart.

**Key # 5: Develop Your Worship Team.****1. Building a solid worship team takes hard work and perseverance.**

- Some pastors search everywhere to find seasoned musicians and singers to lead worship at their church. Many have discovered the hard way that this approach often creates far more problems than it solves.
- Rather than looking for experienced worship leaders, look for people with potential. People with limited experience tend to be more teachable, loyal, and submitted to the local vision of the church. *Develop people who don't think they can do it into people who can.*
- The people you train and release are far more likely to remain loyal to you and to your vision.

**2. Select faithful men and women.**

- The Bible says, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).
- This Scripture presents an excellent way to select leaders for ministry positions.
- One of the first qualifications you should look for is faithfulness. While this principle applies to every area of ministry, it is essential to developing a quality worship team.
- Most pastors look for gifting as the number one criteria in selecting a worship team. Pastors look for people who are anointed and skilled in leading worship. They look for musical talent, a beautiful voice, and prior experience.



- This approach often fails. Many gifted and experienced leaders have their own agenda. Often, they are independent and rebellious. Most do not desire to move in the direction that God is leading you.
- Look *first* for faithful men and women. Make sure that each worship team member is loyal to you. Recruit people who understand your church's God-given vision and are dedicated to seeing it come to pass.
- You need people who support you and respond to what you ask them to do. You want people who will openly express their opinion about any issue facing the church, the worship team, or you. But once you have resolved the issue, they don't bring it up again.
- Many have a bad habit of rushing new attendees onto the team. As soon someone discovers that a new attendee can sing or play, we quickly ask them to join the worship team. We fail to evaluate the true motives of their heart and their submission to our vision. This rush to build your worship team creates problems. Ultimately, those who you thought would be such a great addition to your team becomes a thorn in your flesh.
- At times, new attendees may have opposing theological views, want to change the direction of the church, or disagree with ministry philosophies. These people become a source of disunity in your church—significantly impacting the anointing on your worship.
- Select people for the worship team who have been committed members of your church over a period of months. Select those who are faithful in attendance, generous in giving, supportive, and in agreement with your Church's vision.

### **3. Select people with proven character.**

- The New Testament repeatedly teaches on the importance of character—especially in the lives of leaders. When Paul instructed Timothy about deacons, he said that deacons are to be “beyond reproach” and that they should be “tested” (1 Tim. 3:10).
- In choosing worship team members, we should only select people who have proven character. We understand that no one is perfect, but godly character is important for leaders. The worship team is no exception.
- Prior to being selected, worship team members should demonstrate maturity and faithfulness. When you test potential members in this way, your worship team will not just be singing songs—they will lead people into God's presence.
- Some leaders believe that getting people involved in the worship ministry makes them feel accepted, and therefore, helps them overcome certain struggles. Although this may be an excellent idea for certain ministries, it normally does not work for the worship ministry. By selecting people who have proven character that is beyond reproach, you will develop a worship team that will lead you deep into God's presence.

### **4. Establish a good work ethic on your worship team.**

- Every pastor could share a multitude of stories about their experience with the worship team. Leaders not showing up for a service or forgetting practice. Not wanting to work to perfect their gifts or to discipline themselves to practice. Every pastor could come up with many examples.

- A strong work ethic is critical to developing an effective worship team.
- To be effective, worship team members must be prompt for services, dependable, and committed to practice. Without these traits, your worship team will not develop as it should.
- Encourage your worship team to prepare, plan, and develop their skills. As your worship team pursues excellence in this way, great benefits will ensue.
- Each pastor and worship leader should have basic expectations for your team. Expect them to meet together weekly for practice. Expect organized practices that enable the team to be productive. Expect them to learn new songs on a regular basis. Expect them to be on time and ready to begin services. Expect them to select songs for each service. Finally, expect them to develop their skills within their personal limitations of time and talent.
- Some people believe that preparation interferes with the work of the Holy Spirit. They believe that the less we prepare, the more we will trust in the Holy Spirit's power. Though over programming a service can hinder the anointing, preparation does the opposite—it enhances the anointing.
- As you establish a good work ethic for your worship team and at the same time create a supportive and joyful atmosphere among the team, then you will see the anointing increase and your worship go deeper.

**5. Nurture unity among the worship team and between the pastor and the worship team.**

- The Bible says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, coming down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, coming down upon the edge of his robes" (Ps. 133:1-2).
- In this Psalm, King David reveals the connection between unity and the anointing. When there is unity, the anointing will flow in a service.
- We have all attended a worship service that was affected by disunity. Perhaps people were offended, upset with the pastor, or the worship team was frustrated with one another. When there is disunity like this, the flow of the anointing is hindered.
- One of the greatest hindrances to the anointing is disunity which involves the worship team. When worship team members are in disunity among themselves or with the pastor, God is limited in what He can do in a service.
- Therefore, as pastors and worship leaders, nurturing unity among the worship team is one of your most important tasks.
- Pastor, pray for the worship team regularly. Pray for unity and for resolution of specific issues. Encourage the team in their efforts. Complement the team for their positive accomplishments. Deal with issues quickly before they get out of hand. Pursue unity. For out of unity, the anointing will flow.

## Review Questions

### True or False

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. This session offers five things that a member of a church can tell their pastor to do to build a worshiping church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. This session is addressed to pastors, worship leaders, and other leaders to help them build their church as a worshiping church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. It is true that it is relatively easy to build a worshiping church even if the senior pastor does not have much of a heart to worship personally.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Pastors and leaders must set the example when their church gathers to worship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. To build a worshiping church, pastors must structure their services for worship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The pastor is important but is not the worship leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Musical skills are much more important than unity on the worship team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. What the pastor teaches his people affects their worship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Anointing upon worship team members is more important than character.

### Fill in the blanks

- 10. The goal of every pastor and worship leader should be to create a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in their services.
- 11. During times of worship, it is good not to allow preplanned \_\_\_\_\_ in the flow of the service.
- 12. It is important to learn how to worship \_\_\_\_\_ to create anointing in your services.
- 13. Building a worshiping church requires a long-term commitment to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 14. What a pastor \_\_\_\_\_ affects the church's worship.

*Match the following statements with the appropriate one of the five keys for building a worshiping church.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Establish a good work ethic on your worship team.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. A church will embrace whatever the pastor emphasizes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Learn how to worship continuously.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. The pastor is the worship leader.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Pastors must set the example when their church gathers to worship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Nurture unity among the worship team and between the pastor and the worship team.

- a. Cultivate a desire to worship in our own heart.
- b. Cultivate a desire to lead your church into deeper expressions of worship.
- c. Structure your service for worship.
- d. Teach on topics that inspire worship.
- e. Develop your worship team.