



Establishing Effective Worship Teams:

Part 2 How to Develop Worship Teams

Working with Jesus

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The iFollow Discipleship Series



About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

Credits

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand why teams are important in church ministry
2. See the key issues for how to develop worship teams in a congregation

Content Outline

- A. The Importance of Teamwork
- B. How to Develop Worship Teams in the Church

Background Material for the Presenter

As much as we admire solo achievement, writes John Maxwell in his book *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*, the truth is that no lone individual has done anything of value. “The belief that one person can do something great is a myth. There are no real Rambo’s who can take on a hostile army by themselves. Even the Lone Ranger wasn’t really a loner. Everywhere he went he rode with Tonto!” (p. 2)

You have probably seen the acronym for TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More. Contrary to many people’s opinions, it is true. One is too small a number to not only achieve greatness but also to accomplish a purpose effectively. U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson once said, “There can be no problems we cannot solve together, and very few that we can solve by ourselves.”

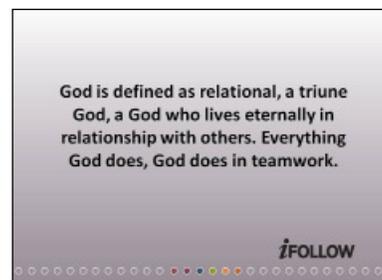
This is why the New Testament develops a theology of the church using the human body as a metaphor. Each part belongs to a system of parts that must work together to accomplish its mission and sustain life. No one is more important than another. Each has its unique and special place in the “body.” Effective ministry takes place when the whole “body” is functioning together inter-dependently. God is best honored and the people most blessed.



C. Gene Wilkes, in his book *Jesus on Leadership*, observed that the power of teams not only is evident in today's modern business world, but it also has a deep history that was evident even in biblical times. Look at the example of Jesus and His approach to His eternally significant mission. He called 12 disciples to be his leadership team, and He often accomplished tasks by dividing up the team into smaller teams. Wilkes reminds us of why building church life around teams is so important: (1) Teams involve more people, thus providing more resources, ideas, and energy than would an individual. (2) Teams maximize a leader's potential and minimize her weaknesses. Strengths and weaknesses are more exposed in a system that focuses on individual leaders. (3) Teams provide multiple perspectives on how to meet a need or reach a goal, thus providing several alternatives for each situation. Individual insight is seldom as broad and deep as a group's when it takes on a problem. (4) Teams share the credit for victories and the blame for losses. This fosters genuine humility and authentic community. In an individualistic system, people take credit and blame alone. This fosters pride or a sense of failure. (5) Teams keep leaders accountable to the goal. Individuals working by themselves can change the goal to meet their individual whims without any accountability. (6) Teams can simply do more than an individual can do in the same assignment.

For these reasons, one of the greatest geniuses of the modern world, Albert Einstein, once commented, "Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received."

When it comes to planning and doing worship in the church, using teams becomes even more significant. It is not just the above reasons why team work is more effective as a practical matter. There are also theological reasons why teams are more appropriate than individual activity. Corporate worship is about facilitating an environment and atmosphere conducive to the worship of the God of heaven and earth. Worship is about acknowledging, paying tribute to, showing value to this God. And from the very beginning of scripture, the nature of God is defined as relational, a triune God, a God who lives eternally in relationship with others. Everything God does, God does in teamwork.



So why would congregational worship, designed to give praise and acknowledge the values of this God, be planned and led by one person working alone? Would not this be out of alignment with the very nature of the God being worshipped?

What's more, if it took the Trinity to plan and produce the rich, diverse, and complex creation in the beginning, so that everything would have its place and be structured to exist in harmony and complete interdependence with everything else. How could we think it to be possible for one person to plan and produce a meaningful worship experience involving the diverse, complex, and unique gathering of individuals that God calls together for

congregational life?

How to Develop Worship Teams in the Church

So let's outline a detailed, step-by-step process for developing worship teams in the church. Here are several steps to consider:

1. Identify the Need: Ministry is another world for service and service is always done in response to visible and identifiable need. This could be people to serve, or a problem to solve. The need for a worship team should be clearly felt and articulated. Ministries should not start just because other churches have one. Neither should they continue just because they have always existed. Clearly identify the need for a worship team.



Here are some questions to ask yourself and others in your congregation to help you assess whether there is a need for a worship team in your church: (1) Do our worship services involve a variety of people? (2) Is there a system in place to assess the relevancy and excellence of our worship services on a regular basis? (3) Have we created ways to nurture, affirm, and develop the budding gifts of our members in our services? (4) Is the planning and leadership of worship in our church done by a few people who may also be burdened with other responsibilities? (5) Is the involvement in planning worship seen to be more of a "task" than a "calling" for some? (6) If we were to raise the excellence of our services a couple of notches, for the glory of God, what plan is in place to do this? (7) Have we thought of the various groups our services may be totally ignoring? Children? Young adults? People from the local community?

Unless there is a felt need to have a worship team, you will meet nothing but resistance. Ponder the importance of seeing how others need to sense a need before change will take place. What may be obvious to you may need clearer articulation to others who are not as passionate about having a worship team. Don't be surprised if people say things like, "Our worship services are fine just the way they are."

Develop a list of your own questions that help raise important issues and highlight areas of need. Don't focus too much on what's "wrong." People tend to become defensive when the familiar is attacked. Include questions that raise the sights of others about "What could be." Then formulate statements that capture the essence of what you hear and are learning. Write them down. Pray over them. If God is planting a vision in your mind, give it time to grow.

2. Gather the People: When a need for a worship team has been identified, the next step is to form a group of people



who are interested, appropriately gifted, and exhibit a genuine passion to see that need met. They meet for prayer and discussion. Through wisdom and time these people formulate a clear vision for the ministry.

Passion is the God-given desire to make a difference in the church somewhere. For you or others, it may be to dramatically improve the level of excellence in worship planning and implementation. As you prayerfully think about the need for a worship team, begin to make a list of people you believe are also passionate about this ministry.

If you have any familiarity with spiritual gifts, you may be inclined to think of worship team leaders who have gifts of music, creative communication, leadership, speaking, etc. These are certainly helpful gifts to keep in mind. But don't limit your scope of who may be involved in a worship team. Some teams are very small and consist primarily of three or four individuals who lead a time of singing during worship. But other teams utilize multimedia, creative drama, and other elements. That may mean there are people gifted in technology, administration, and hospitality who could be a part of a worship team.

God can use a variety of people to accomplish His purposes for your church. You may not think of the gift of mercy as being directly connected with a worship team, or gifts of intercessory prayer, but there will certainly be moments when these gifts need to be exercised on behalf of the entire congregation during worship. Some churches even have a group of members with gifts of prayer spend the entire worship service hour in prayer in another room in the church, praying on behalf of the worship team leaders, the pastor, the church members, and guests.

Start making a list of possible members who are interested in being a part of a worship team. Talk with these people. Don't ask them to make any initial commitments. Let the list grow as you continue to pray and ask God to lead the process of beginning a worship team. You might ask your pastor for suggestions. Assure him or her that you are exploring the idea of a new ministry and want to work in harmony with the church leaders.

3. Call A Meeting: At some point, call a meeting to discuss your heart's desire for a worship team. You might meet for a Sabbath potluck in someone's home. Invite the pastor. Have someone take notes on your meeting. A sample agenda for your first meeting might include the following: (1) Prayer and praise time; (2) Short introduction to the purpose of the meeting; (3) Invite everyone to respond to four questions: One thing I really appreciate about our worship services is ... Something I wish we could improve in our worship services is ... I believe a worship team could strengthen our services by ... One concern I have about developing a worship team is ... (4) Closing comments and discussion about another meeting; (5) Prayer time.



In a second meeting, the group could focus on a vision statement for a worship team ministry. This statement would succinctly describe the preferable future of worship that it

sees happening in your church. It “pictures” what could be. That’s why it’s called a vision statement. This statement can become a guiding compass to help keep your future ministry team on track. It should contain at least two elements: How will this ministry glorify God? How will this ministry build up the church? (See Handout 1.)

Create your vision statement to be in harmony with your church mission statement, if your church has one. The more you wrestle with and personalize a vision statement for your team, the more it will truly be a guiding compass. If it is not owned, it will not be used and ownership usually comes from helping to construct the statement.

4. Prepare the Plan: After reaching a consensus on the need and developing a vision to meet that need, it is time to develop a ministry plan for your worship team. Continue to meet together until the strategy and details of a ministry plan is worked through. After a plan is developed it needs to be approved.



Once a clear vision has been articulated, specific plans should to fall into place. Further meetings will focus on preparing action plans that can be submitted to the church board for approval. These can be grouped into three areas: (1) **Goals:** What we need to accomplish. (2) **Strategies:** How will we get there? What is our plan? (3) **Measurable steps or specific tasks:** Who will do each task? How much will it cost? How long will it take?

Where will it be done?

Goals are measurable, specific things to be achieved. For example, the goals of a worship team might include conducting monthly assessments, planning two large music events around holidays, and including a certain number of songs each week that appeal to certain groups in the church.

Strategies focus on the basic elements of how you will do your ministry. If a worship team is going to positively impact worship services, for example, they will probably want to have regular planning meetings and rehearsals. They may also want to conduct debrief after each service, provide training, and develop a system for caring for the members of the team.



Tasks are the specific “to do” lists that implement strategies and accomplish goals. The four elements of a clear task include who will do it, how much will it cost, how long will it take (or when should it be done), and where will it be done. For example, Julie may be asked to put together a sample worship input sheet to be handed out to seven people once a month on Sabbath asking for their response to the service. She may be given a budget to make some phone calls, photocopies, or money to buy a resource. She may also be asked to have something ready in one month. Of course

she can work on it at home, but may be given permission to use the computer and printer at the church office if needed. Handout 2 provides a tool to write goals, strategies and tasks for your worship team.

One last part of developing your plan is creating a proposal to present to the church board. Much of the work that you have done above relates directly to this proposal. There are many different ways to create proposals. Handout 3 provides a sample to consider as you develop one for your church board.

5. Affirm the Leader: Before you put the plan into motion, the leader needs to be affirmed. Even though the need, the people, and the program may be in place, without the right leader, a worship team should not be started. Affirmed leadership will take appropriate responsibility for the ministry. Without the right leader, problems may be quickly given to others who may not have the passion or gifts to resolve them.



Sometimes the leader is identified before the proposal is presented to the church board and the suggested leader's name is a part of that proposal. Without a designated leader, the ministry is doomed. A leader provides guidance, has a clear picture of the direction of the ministry and coordinates problem-solving for the team.

Should the leader be an equipper or a doer? At times we confuse the role of a good leader as someone who "does everything." That is not what a worship team leader is all about. Ephesians 4 speaks of "equipping" gifts to help the members "do ministry." A good leader is an equipper, helping the rest of the team serve effectively. It is true that some leaders will play a primary role on Sabbath morning, perhaps leading music. But in a best case scenario, a good leader reserves energy and time to build up the team. What happens when we place "doers" in the place of equippers? Such leaders will often do everything themselves. They will not build a team and attract new members. They often become overwhelmed and do a mediocre job of serving. The ministry will lack vision and be stifled. And, in the end, these people may quit. Strong "task" people are often put in roles of leadership. Try seeking a leader who is someone who thinks more in terms of "we" than "me", who is in touch with the need to train, delegate, share, and work alongside others.



Even if such a leader cannot be found, cast the vision for that role. No one will perfectly fill it. By describing it from the outset in these terms, the worship team will more likely flourish because it is based on God's principles for how team leaders are to function. Handout 4 provides an overview of the key characteristics or qualifications needed in an

effective worship team leader.

Handouts in this Package

1. Sample Vision Statements
2. Worship Team Planning Worksheet
3. A Sample Proposal
4. Worship Leader Qualifications



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Additional Resources

Beach, Nancy, et al. (2004). *Creating Moments of Transformation and Wonder*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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

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Schmemmann, Alexander (1997). *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press.

White, Ellen G. (1890). *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.

White, Ellen G. (1898). *The Desire of Ages*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.

White, Ellen G. (1917). *Prophets and Kings*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press.

DVD and Video

Center for Creative Ministry (1998). *Establishing Effective Worship Teams*. Lincoln, NE: Center for Creative Ministry. (A two-hour DVD seminar designed to provide basic orientation for local church worship leaders.)

Duerksen, Dick and Gladden, Ron (1996). *Permission to Worship, Permission to Change*. Lincoln NE: AdventSource. (Five sessions designed to lead a worship committee into a consideration of Bible principles of worship, the Adventist heritage and practical decisions.)

Website

International Adventist Musicians' Association provides a web site with a number of resources related to worship and publishes the journal Notes. The web site can be accessed at: www.iamaonline.com/

WorshipTogether.com is a web site produced by a Christian business that sells sheet music in several formats (including printable and those used in computer programs that generate music), music DVDs, etc., for contemporary worship. It also has instructional videos that can be viewed online, Bible studies, articles and news about events where training is provided for worship leaders. It is essentially an online music store with all kinds of worship resources. It can be accessed at: www.worshiptogether.com

Magazine

Worship Leader Magazine is a professional journal for worship leaders from an Evangelical perspective founded in 1990 by Dr. Charles Fromm. It is published six times a year both on paper and electronically. The web site also provides a regular schedule of Webinars to provide in-service training for worship leaders. More information is available at: www.worshipleader.com

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Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever visited or attended a church where there is a visible team leading out in worship or praise?
2. What would be some of the differences between a worship service that is planned by a team and one that is put together by one person working alone?
3. Who in your congregation do you think might be interested in being a part of a worship team?
4. Does this congregation have a worship team or teams? If so, what specific role they play in the planning and implementation of worship each Sabbath?
5. **If this congregation does not have a worship team or teams:** Is this local church ready to start worship teams?
6. **If this church is not ready to start worship teams:** What are the barriers that need to be overcome?
7. **If this church is ready to start worship teams:** What are the next steps to be taken?



Group Activity

Purpose: To understand what makes for good teamwork and explore the foundations for effective worship teams in your local church.

Preparation: Make sure the participants have copies of handouts 1, 2 and 3. Have a flipchart or chalk board or white board available.

Assignments: Each assignment below can be done by the whole group working together if the total group is 12 people or fewer. If there are 13 or more participants, then breakout groups of four to six individuals each should be formed.

1. Have you ever been a part of a team that you really enjoyed and felt good about? What was it about that team that made you feel good about it?

2. Write a sample vision statement for your church's worship team if your church were to utilize one.

3. What would some sample strategies, goals, and measurable steps be for developing an effective worship team in your church?

Time: If you form breakout groups to do this exercise, allow about three minutes to form groups at the beginning. Devote 10 to 20 minutes for discussion of Question 1 above, and 20 to 30 minutes each for Questions 2 and 3 above.

Handout 1

Sample Vision Statements

Here are some sample vision statements that you can work with, modify, and personalize to your unique setting:

The Worship Team at [your church] is committed to planning and leading Sabbath worship services that honor God, encourage participation, and reach a variety of people in our congregation and community with the healing message of God's grace.

Worship Team. A ministry of the [your church] dedicated to provide excellence in preparing and leading worship services that creates an atmosphere where all may encounter the living God.

Drama Team. Is committed to presenting real-life, contemporary drama sketches designed to create a high degree of audience identification, engaging a variety of people's senses and raising awareness of the pastor's topic.

Praise Team. As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we are called and committed to worshipping our Creator and Redeemer (Revelation 12) in spirit and truth (John 4). Therefore, we seek to provide worship services that encourage giving our best to God, services that are uplifting to every person, free of unnecessary distractions, filled with touching a variety of senses, sprinkled at times with surprise ... that in everything we do we may encounter our loving God.

Write your vision statement here:

Our Ministry Name: _____

Our Vision Statement:

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Handout 2

Worship Team Planning Worksheet

Strategies:

Goals:

Tasks:

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Handout 3

A Sample Proposal

Our Vision: The Worship Team at [your church] is committed to planning and leading Sabbath worship services that honor God, encourage participation, and reach a variety of people in our congregation and community with the healing message of God's grace.

Benefits of a Worship Team: (1) Increase participation; (2) Share the burden of planning; (3) Open new avenues for experiencing and knowing God; (4) Model the priesthood of all believers.

How the Worship Team will Function: (1) Under the authority of the church board; (2) In harmony with the mission of the church; (3) Utilizing assessments to receive regular input; (4) In cooperation with the pastor's sermon schedule; (5) Meeting weekly [or monthly] for worship, planning, and rehearsals.

The Worship Team is Not: (1) Simply a program, but a value that all God's people are called to worship; (2) A closed group of professionals who encourage an elitism in the music realm; (3) Seeking to push only one form of worship or music; (4) A group of performers, but rather a team of dedicated servants focused on God.

How the Worship Team Would Work in Our Church:

1. The Worship Team would meet on a [weekly/monthly] basis [when, where] to plan and rehearse for worship services.
2. The Worship Team would meet with the pastor [pastoral staff/pastor for worship] on a [monthly] basis for input and guidance on focusing on the theme for each week.
3. The Worship Team would function for six months giving monthly reports to the church and at the end of six months determine whether the ministry is fulfilling the vision and mission of the church.
4. The Worship Team would primarily focus on coordinating all music for the services, including specials, hymns, choruses; arrange for all platform participants; follow the general guideline for the order of service; and always notifying the pastor of new elements used out of the ordinary.
5. The Worship Team Leader would be a member in regular standing with our congregation whose name will be approved by the church in business session. Other regular team members will be confirmed by the board. Guest participants will be run past the board only if the pastor deems necessary.

Worship Team Budget: (1) Multimedia supplies such as software, laptop computer, transparencies; (2) Music books, sheet music; (3) Drama materials; (4) Attendance at special workshops.

When the Worship Team Will Begin: The Worship Team will begin meeting in (x) weeks to plan for the first service in [four] weeks.

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Handout 4

Worship Leader Qualifications

What are some of the qualifications of a worship leader? Do not let the following overwhelm you or anyone thinking of taking the helm! This list is a worksheet that needs to be customized to your unique setting:

1. A personal and deep commitment to Jesus Christ
2. Possesses spiritual gifts of [leadership, creative communication, administration, discernment]
3. Mastery of a musical instrument, or voice
4. General knowledge of sound, multi-media, and lighting systems
5. A visionary leader; someone who can see the big picture, why worship teams are important for the church and for honoring God, and who can mobilize people to take steps to fulfilling that vision
6. Able to nurture team members in their walk with Christ
7. Cooperates with church leadership

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