

**RESOURCE MINISTRIES**  
**PRAISE AND WORSHIP SEMINAR**  
**Session 4 - PRACTICAL INSIGHTS**  
**By Jim Stephens**

1. Praise and Worship is a key to entering into and experiencing the Presence of God, both individually and corporately. When we Praise and Worship God with our whole hearts we are entering the gates of His holy temple and coming into the inner courts of His presence. According to Psalm 22:3, our praises create a dwelling place for the Lord in our midst.

*Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. (Psalms 100:4 NIV)*

*But thou [art] holy, [O thou] that inhabitest the praises of Israel. (Psalms 22:3 AV)*

2. It is important that we distinguish between true Praise and Worship (which focusses on the Lord and is intended for His enjoyment) and Inspirational singing (which focusses on us and is intended to bless or entertain us). To understand this, we need to consider the difference between the soul (self-conscious) and spirit (God-conscious). We must distinguish between sentimentality and spirituality.

*And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, (Luke 1:46-47 NIV)*

3. Prayer, Praise, and Worship are all related in our communication and communion with God. There is a flow that generally progresses from thanksgiving through praise into worship. This is not to be taken as an inflexible rule but as a normal guideline. We must be sensitive to scriptural principles in worship and also sensitive to the flow.. the leading of the Holy Spirit.
4. Unity is a vital aspect of Praise and Worship. Psalm 133 speaks of the blessing and anointing that is released through unity. II Chronicles 5:13 tells us of the Glory of God that was released in Solomon's temple when there was complete unity of Praise and Worship. The account of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) took place in an atmosphere of unity and accord.
5. It is important when the Glory and Presence of God begins to be manifested in times of worship (when we experience the anointing), that we learn to "hold steady" under the anointing. Each person must discipline himself or herself not to respond to the Presence of God in such a way as to distract attention from the Lord or to disrupt the flow. "Holding steady under the anointing" is a quality that

is learned through discipline and maturity. Many times a greater experience of God's presence or a deeper manifestation of the Holy Spirit and His gifts is missed because people haven't learned to "hold steady". Remember that in the account of Jesus' Baptism, the Holy Spirit is pictured as a gentle dove which rested upon the Lamb of God.

6. The atmosphere created by Praise and Worship often encourages and releases manifestations of the Gifts of the Spirit such as Prophecy, or Tongues, or some other spiritual manifestation. When these manifestations occur, we need to be sure that they are done "decently and in order". The leadership of the meeting or group should maintain control of the service while the Gifts are manifested. The Worship Leader may want to turn over the microphone to the pastor or an elder at this point. If there are many visitors present, it can be especially helpful to give some explanation of what is happening, and lead the congregation in an appropriate response to what has been said.
7. In Praise and Worship, the musicians and the instruments should support and enhance the vocal expression of worship and should not dominate. Beware of musicians who want to show off or take over and control the worship musically. Strong, clear leadership of Praise and Worship is very important. Musicians must be willing to flow with and respond to that leadership.
8. There is room for a cultural and perhaps even a generational expression of Praise and Worship. There is not necessarily one proper style or form or method of praising and worshipping God. Each culture has its musical distinctives and each generation has its musical expressions. Perhaps the "right" style of worship music and praise song is the style that most accurately expresses the heart of the worshippers. The Bible speaks of worshipping in Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs. We should look for trends and flows in worship music and style, but beware of fads. Remember that Praise and Worship is intended to bless the Lord and bring Glory to His name, not to entertain us.
9. Concerning styles of music: The music that is used for outreach and evangelism and music that is used to inspire and entertain believers is not necessarily the same as the music that enhances and expresses Praise and Worship to God. We need to develop a sensitivity to what is being expressed and accomplished through a particular musical style and expression.
10. There is a growing understanding of a role for Praise and Worship in Spiritual Warfare. Some Old Testament examples of this are the conquest of Jericho (Joshua 6:1-16) and Jehoshaphat's victory over the Moabites and Ammonites (II Chronicles 20:1-30).