

Session 4 – Worshipping a Big God in a Small Place

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Preacher: Bob Kauflin

- [0 : 00] Steve, thank you so much. Steve, thank you so much for helping us remember that while God is a very big God, he's a very small place.
- ! To different areas like preaching, suffering, watching your doctor, living within the circle. But music is like this different thing. There can be temptations that we might not experience in other areas.
- We just want our music to be better or bigger or something about the music. It just needs to be better.
- And I hope to encourage and equip you. And I recognize I have two strikes against me. One is that I've never lived in a small place. And two, I'm a professional musician.
- [1 : 20] So you guys say, yeah sure it's easy for you, like wherever you go, like you got musicians. Like that's not a problem. I understand that. But I am not planning on speaking to you on the basis of my experience.
- I am speaking to you on the basis of God's promises, which are richer, they're more faith-building, and they're more dependable than anything I can give you from my own experience.
- And we're going to be talking about three things that relate to seeing God's praises in a church that is in a small place. Our aims, our needs, and our response.
- And I have thought about you all. I have prayed for you all. I have looked forward to this day. So we might get to reflect on how God has made provision for every church in this area.
- Not expecting to answer all your questions. But I just want to make sure we're aiming at the right things. That are aware of the resources God has given us.
- [2 : 30] And help us take the next steps, whatever those might be. So first, our aims. We all have aims for our congregational singing. We have things that we think it should be like.
- Expectations. Unless you're in a church where you think this is just like heaven. And there's nothing that we can do different. I don't assume there's anyone here like that.
- But if there is one, just come up to me afterwards. And we'll talk. So we have aims. And whether we're conscious or not, we have them. But are the intentional aims?
- And most importantly, are they God's aims? Because we can be tempted in our churches to compare. A lot of these have already been spoken to and addressed.
- We see bigger churches. We see churches with more musicians. You know, you talk to a guy sometimes. And someone's in their church. Yeah, you know, it's a stroke.
- [3 : 28] It's got four electric players and three drummers. And like, they just don't want to play. And I say, what do you do like with your schedule? I said, Matt. Well, I just hope someone will be there first.

How many guitar players did you say yet? And it's just this unpleasant feeling. And the aim there is to be bigger and better.

We just want to be bigger and better. And then self-pity has been referenced. We can, you know, our goal is we just don't want to be embarrassed by our music.

And it's a low bar, but we don't think we'll ever beat it. And the aim there is to be noticed, appreciated. Just like, just like, we want somebody to say something good about it.

And then there's a temptation to be weary. Just a temptation to be weary. We've been doing this a long time. I've been after 20 years here or one week here. And it's just like, yeah, just nothing seems to change.

[4 : 33] And the aim there is to just find a way out. And I know those temptations exist. It's helpful to be reminded that the aims for music, and Steve referenced this, aims for music in churches in small places are the same aims as for churches in large places.

Because our aims, our goals, the purpose for music in the church comes from Scripture. So what I want to do just at the beginning here is reference a number of scriptures.

I put it in the outline. I wanted you to see them. I thought about just putting the references. No, let's just log down. Because one of the problems with the way we deal with music in the church is that we just take it out of Scripture.

We see a few things in the Bible. But then we just move into the music world. We move into the arts world. And I started a book last night. I'm not going to tell you the name of it.

But it's an artsy book. And for a reason, it might not. But it's a book that's being studied at seminaries. And a couple people recommended it to me.

[5 : 46] And I went through the whole introduction. And I'm just thinking, what world is he on? What planet is he on? Because there's nothing about, here's what God says about what we're to do.

It's more, the arts exist. And they're a way of relating to God. And we just need to find out how we can use arts in a way that's creative, but not beyond the balance of Scripture.

That's a really low bar. You know, I remember someone saying once, you know, saying that your songs don't have heresy in them is a really low bar.

Yes. Great. They don't have heresy. We can do better. So we can do better when we're talking about what we're aiming at. So here's some of the things that the Bible says about what happens when we get together.

Hebrews 10, 24 and 25. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. That's what's happening. We're stirring up one another to love and good works.

[6 : 48] Colossians 3, 16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. That's the gospel implanting itself by the Spirit's power in us so that we are moved by it and so that we make decisions based on it.

Teaching and admonish one another. Nothing is going on. Singing in all this. Singing songs and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. There is thankfulness going on when we're gathering.

So this, you're getting the impression this is like a whole body thing. This is my heart will. It's, it's everything's being affected.

Oh, so I'm going to fight. Just love this. Oh, give thanks to the Lord. That's what's happening. Call upon his name. Make known his deeds among the peoples.

Sing to him. Sing praise to him. Tell of all his wondrous works. This is what's happening when we're singing. Tell of all his wondrous works. Glory in his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.

- [7 : 55] Seek the Lord in his strength. Seek his presence continually. All that stuff's going on as I'm saying.
- In him, and stuff now that's going on, you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. God's working to make us into this living temple.
- First Peter two, as we come to him, a living stone rejected by men, but in the sight of God, chosen and precious. You yourselves are being built up.
- So that's that. Let's, you know, stir up one another's 11th of the works. We're being built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer. This is important.
- Part here is spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. How is what we do made acceptable? Well, it's through Jesus Christ. That's how.
- [8 : 52] You were chosen race. A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him. So that's another thing that's going on.
- Proclaiming his excellencies. Ephesians 5. We're addressing one another. We're making melody to the Lord with our hearts. First Corinthians 11 talks about sharing the Lord's supper.
- As you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. So we're looking forward to something. It's not just about what we're doing here. We're anticipating something happening.
- That's the Lord coming back. We're just singing about it. Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us. To redeem us from all all whispers.
- Those are just some of the things that are happening when we've gathered together to worship the Lord. And you notice that none of those say anything about vanes?
- [10 : 02] Or you know, lighting, or instrumentation, or choirs, or anything musical except singing.
- I think that's intentional. I think God intends to make us alert to what he cares most about. So all those taken together suggest a definition of congregational worship, which I'm going to give you three.
- Two for mine. One is from Devin, my son. What are we doing when we gather together? What's our aim? Here's one. Christian worship is the God-enabled response of his redeemed people to his self-revelation.
- That exalts God's glory in Christ in our minds, affections, and wills, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's just kind of try to boil all those scriptures down to something that's succinct.
- This is a little longer. Corporate worship is God's people gathering in God's presence to receive God's word, revel in the gospel of Christ, and respond in the power of God's spirit.
- [11 : 16] And we can do all of those while we're singing. Receive God's word, revel in the gospel, respond in the power of God's spirit, anticipating and testifying that the Savior who came to redeem a bride will come again to live with her forever.
- It's just amazing what's happening every time our church gathers. It's mind boggling. And here's Devin from his dissertation.
- Corporate worship is God's spirit-enabled and word-governed gift. Just love that. It's his gift. In our spirit, initiated by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, for his covenant people, to gratefully assemble in space and time, to do what?
- to witness to the worth and work of God in Christ by the Spirit through proclamation, prayer, singing, and the sacraments as they receive from Christ, act in him, and long for him to come together.

Now we can spend the entire time just unpacking those, but that's not for you. You can just reflect on those later. What I want to say is we're not aiming to be like the church down the street when it comes to music.

[12 : 44] We're not aiming to be like the conference we recently attended. We're not aiming to be like the churches we see on YouTube. We're not aiming to do any of that.

We're not aiming to be a production company. And small churches in small places, small churches in big churches, churches in big places. We can all struggle with this.

Production, production. And the technological tools we have available to us just make this so much easier and more complicated.

But the church was never meant to be a production company. Offering a weekly event defined and driven by lighting and video and staging.

It's the place where the treasure of the gospel of Jesus Christ shines forth clearly through George and Clay. That's what it is. That's why we're different. We are different.

[13 : 41] We're competing in the world. We've already lost. The world doesn't have any Christian parameters to limit what it's doing. We have limitations. We have parameters. We have goals that we're seeking to fulfill.

Through George and Clay. Where our confidence rests in a demonstration of the Spirit's power. Not our own power. We don't have to prove we're George and Clay.

We are. We don't have to pursue mediocrity. As has been said, we are George and Clay. Always and everywhere in the New Testament, the point, the purpose, and the power of the gathering church is witnessing, witnessing to, and experiencing God's presence among his people.

Manifested through his word, the gospel, the sacraments, and the spiritual gifts. One is hard-pressed to find a single verse in the New Testament that says that music is to be a draw for a church, that it is to be the most exciting part of the meaning, or a reason to meet with the church.

You still find that anywhere in the New Testament, but those can often be our temptations. So that's just an introduction.

[15 : 01] We want to make sure that in our aims for music, it's not all about music. It's about God's purposes. What is he intended to do with that? What is he intended to do with us as we gather?

Having said that, he does command us to sing. Over 50 times. Over 400 references to singing in the Bible. So, what do we do?

How do we do that? What do we need to do that well? That's the second point. Our needs. Here are some things we don't need to do music well in the church. We don't need a leader with a great voice.

That should be evident. In fact, I've been doing this for like 40 years. And I'm on apples. I just laugh because I got to take one story. I was in a group called Glad years ago.

And we were recording this song called Be Glad. Four parts. And I had one of the parts. And so, this is Studio of Memphis Art and Studios. I go in. I'm singing my part.

[16 : 03] Fabrice has heard this story like 10 times. And I say, what? So, I say three times at least. Okay, let's try it again. Let's do it again. I probably see it five times.

And then finally, mom, can you come to the control room for a minute? That's never a good sign when you're singing a solo. They say, can you come into the control room?

So, I go into the control room. They just say, it's not working. It ain't working. And so, then another guy in the band said, my part. I just have to laugh.

So, now my song, my voice is on albums. I just think that's got you. Anyway, you don't need a leader with a great voice. You don't need musicians who can play really well.

You don't need musicians who are really mature. Oh, I see. Or who just show up. Or just musicians. I mean, it depends on where you're at in your church.

[17 : 01] Sometimes I think, well, I just don't have to be musicians. Pastors regularly come to me with that. I have no musicians. You don't need musicians. Yeah, you don't need. You pray for them. We'll get to that.

But you don't need a certain kind of musician. You don't need a great choir director. You don't need a great sound system. And a great sound engineer to go with it.

I found that the cost of your sound system needs to be related to the experience of your sound engineer. Getting like a \$70,000 sound system may be going to help if you've got like a \$10 sound engineer.

You've got to get together. You don't need to sing the latest song to the top of the CCLI charts. Or the ones on the radio. You don't need more money from musicians.

Talked to a pastor once who, small church, 150 people, his budget for musicians for the year was \$100,000. I paid him every two weeks, \$2,000.

[18 : 04] I thought, I can help you. And you don't need to pay me that much for giving you this counselor. It is. Our needs are not defined by our culture.

And they often are. I've been doing this for 50 years now. So it's seen a lot of changes. A lot of what happens. A lot of the fads. A lot of the trends. A lot of what's going on.

We don't define our needs by tradition. That's our temptation. When we're in a small place, tradition can die hard.

Very hard. We don't define our needs by efficiency or pragmatism. And we certainly don't define our needs by preference. Preference, sorry.

Preference. They're not defined by the size of our town, whether it be big or small. What we need has to be defined biblically. So what does God say we need for worshiping him in song?

[19 : 06] It's primarily referring to him. For worshiping a big God in a small place, we need four things. This is not going to surprise you. But I don't think we believe it.

I so appreciate John Piper's book. So many John Piper's books. But one that we were years ago. Brothers, we are not professionals. One of the dangers of becoming a professional pastor is that we begin to think we know the stuff.

On me. We know. I know. Goodbye. Well, I'm just going to keep saying things you know so that we might know it better.

First thing we need is God's word. Steve said, do we believe God's word is sufficient? Am I fully confident in God's word? One of the areas that is most tested is in the area of music.

In the area of singing. So just a few scriptures. Don't read all of them. Referenced earlier. All scriptures breathed out by God.

[20 : 14] Profitable. It really is profitable for reproof and correction and training in righteousness. Teaching, reproof, correction, training, righteousness. First Thessalonians, Paul talks about the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

He commands Timothy in 2 Timothy 4, preach the word. That's what you're doing when you come together. Preach the word. However, Jesus says, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Man shall not live by music alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. However polished, sophisticated, or impressive our music is, apart from the word of God, it is not able to serve people the way God intended it to.

No matter how great it is. And, however faltering, out of tune, out of sync, or unimpressive our music is, it can still carry the word of God.

And be connected to the word of God. So that's the first thing we need, is God's word to be present, not only in our music, but in every aspect of our gathering.

[21 : 28] So why did I start with scriptures this morning? Well, because I don't just want us to sing. I want us to realize, to remember at that moment, that we're singing as responsible as God has already said.

We're not making this up. We're not initiating anything. It's responsible as God has already done. Second thing we need is God's gospel. Stephen tells us in his book, our worth comes not from the place we proclaim the gospel, but from the gospel we proclaim.

I love it. I would say, as well, our worth comes not from the music we use to proclaim the gospel, but from the gospel we proclaim.

Our effectiveness comes not from the music we use to proclaim the gospel, but from the gospel we proclaim. In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul talks about how he was wanting to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

When I am leading anyone in song, there is nothing better that I can give them than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 37] It's true it is. Nothing better. It is the power of God. It is the power of God.

It's not the power of God. And we need to know that. We need to believe that. Our appeal, 1 Thessalonians, our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive.

And that's what we're doing when we put music ahead of the gospel. We're attempting to deceive. We're attempting, hey, we can get you in with this. With this special group.

Or with this special arrangement. Or instrumentation. Or whatever style. No, that's an attempt to deceive. We want to get people in with what God says gets them in.

And it is the gospel. We've been trusted, Paul says. We've been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. So we speak and play and say, not to please man, but to please God and test our hearts.

[23 : 50] So God sees what's going on at our hearts. And then he talks in 1 Corinthians 15 how the gospel is the first report. So we know that.

But we need to bring a mic. So what do our people need every Sunday as we say? A clearer understanding of. A deeper hub for.

A greater desire to live in the good of what Jesus has gotten to them. That's the gospel. That's what they need. No music.

No song. No arrangement. Will ever, ever make what Jesus did through his life, death, and resurrection better. It can only make it clearer.

It can only make it clearer. And that's what music can do. It can make it clearer. No music will ever bring us more joy than knowing that our sins are forgiven.

[24 : 47] They've been paid for. We've been pledged. We're freed from sin's power. Music can provide a means for expressing that joy and stirring up that joy.

But it can't create that joy. I presume. That joy comes from the gospel itself. Songs move us emotionally and temporarily.

They can make us feel good. The gospel changes us spiritually and internally. It actually does good.

[illegible]

You know, just, we were happy. We were happy people. No one's really remembering why we were so happy, but it was happy. I've changed.

I'm not sure, like, the reason people are so moved is because of what Jesus has done. I think it might be because of just like the tarlet thing he just played, or, or, or the, you know, the tracks that have gone behind him, or, well, I'm just not sure.

[27:16] we know, brothers, love by God, who's chosen you because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction.

My speech, my message were not plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power. By the way, if you haven't read *The Cross of Christian Ministry* by D.A. Carson written years ago, it is. I would just, you just read.

When Paul says, I'm going to refuse all this. I'm not going to do what the great, the elephant orders of my day are doing. I'm going to preach to you the gospel. It's going to look weak. I'm going to do it in trembling, but I'm going to preach the gospel because I know that's where you will see a demonstration of the spirit of power.

He uses a lot of, you know, services, people, leaders. I just think, I don't know. I wouldn't do that. He uses them. He doesn't need them.

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And it's just helpful to hold that distinction in our minds. He can use planning and strategizing and production and skill and technology. And he does.

But in partial God's spirit, those things become a text to manufacture God's presence, which he wants to give us as a gift. So, fourth thing God needs for we need is God's people.

[29 : 42] And praise the Lord. We have them. I mean, unless it's just your family. You have people meeting. Sunday gathering is not a concert where gifted performers entertain a group of passive spectators.

We all know that. The church gathers to build one another up. We really are a congregation. Everybody up here is a part of the congregation. We're to stir one another for love and good works.

We're to be equipped for the various works of ministry God has assigned to us. So, Paul says in 3 Corinthians 14, so with yourselves as you are eager for manifestations of the spirit, strive to sell in building up the church.

That's what everybody who comes in this gallery is seeking to do. Let us consider how to stir up one another for love and good works. We saw that earlier. Rather speaking the truth in love, Ephesians 4, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, joined and held together by every joint, which it is equipped, so that each part is working properly.

So, there is this awareness that every member is valued, even the unrepresentable ones. Every member is meant to sing, although not necessarily with a microphone.

[30 : 57] Every member is meant to sing. As it is, God raised the members in the body, each one of them. As he chose, if all were a single member, where would the body be?

As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. So, it's God's people working together. It's not, and if our assessment of our gathering is how well everybody on the platform did, we're missing out on an integral aspect of what it is, we're doing when we get together.

It's not just us. How was the Sunday meeting? Well, how does the Sunday meeting go? Well, the music was great, the sermon was great. No, I said, how did the Sunday meeting go? Well, what do you mean?

Well, the preaching was great, and the music was great. What were the people doing? That's right. How were they responding? Were there signs of life?

Was there participation? Was there serving, you know, using the gifts of the Spirit, all the gifts of the Spirit? Was there interaction? Was the body being built up in love?

[32 : 05] Or did you think, how did you think that God only works from up here? And praise God for leadership gifts. But it's pretty clear, those aren't the only gifts that are happening on Sunday morning.

Right. So, we need God's people happily. What we need, this is a great news, what we need for God-enabled, Christ-exalting, Spirit-empowered, congregationally edifying singing are things that we already have.

I mean, if you're four pastors of Christian churches, we already have these things. Our needs line up exactly with what God has already given us.

And if you're a small church, you need to realize you already have what you need. If you're a big church, you need to be aware of what is truly needed.

And that's our temptation for a bigger church. It's like, well, yeah, God needs all this stuff we're doing. So, I am in a church where I've got, you know, three or four drummers and, you know, eight acoustic guitar players and say, oh, whatever.

[33 : 22] He, I've been in places where I don't have that. And it's just, okay, he doesn't need all that stuff. He, he, God doesn't, doesn't, doesn't need what we break.

He breaks them all. He works through us. Praise his name. All right. So, if we stopped here, you know, it could be, well, so we just accept where we are and just, that's it.

That's it. That's what you came to say. Just keep doing what you're doing and not expect any changes. No. We can be better. And, uh, I so appreciate what Harold Best wrote about the term excellence years ago in his book, Music, the Eyes of Faith.

We should pursue excellence in our Sunday gatherings, but it's really important how we define excellence. I have a couple quotes here. Excellence is a process, but the word process is becoming better than I once was.

I'm not to become better than someone else is or even like something else. Excelling is simply and radically the process of improving over yesterday or, in the Apostle Paul's words, press on.

[34 : 34] We're just going to press on to be the kind of church to have a Sunday gathering that glorifies God in the way he intends to be glorified with our music.

And then he says this, while we move from good to better to best, while we endeavor to become better than we were while we excel, Christ professed all our excelling and presents it to the Father.

This is grace. This is atonement. This is powerful. This is wonderfully comforting that this is the way it is. So our excelling doesn't make our congregational worship better in God's eyes.

It all has to be atonement. But it's pleasing to Him because of Christ. So, what can we do better? How can we become more excelling? I think I have nine things, but I'll try to go through work.

First, be aware and involved. I've talked to numerous pastors who, they don't know what their music is going to be or that they find out Sunday morning or they find out after Sunday morning.

[35 : 47] or they're, I think the pastor asked them one time, yeah, my music leader doesn't want to tell me the songs beforehand. Is that okay? I said, no, that's not okay. You're the senior pastor.

You're responsible. You guys want to hold you accountable for your church. So, leading congregational worship is a pastoral function before it's a musical one. Now, I know I'm a musician saying that, but I totally believe it.

I'd be happy to lead us. I should have done this. Maybe I'll do it. It is, what are we hearing? What are we learning? What is being fed into our souls? Not just what we're hearing musically.

We're seeking to shepherd people's souls. It's a pastoral function before it's a musical one. So, you want to provide leadership that directs your people to the purpose that you're singing.

So many times, pastors, you know, have something done and they'll just say something like, wasn't that great? Say, you know what you can do better. You can tell them why it was better.

[36 : 50] I've always appreciated CJ when he would, because I've been in the same church as him for 28 years now. So, we would prepare some musical number and maybe a choir or something and you'd get up and say, you know, choir, thank you so much.

I love the joy on your face when you sing that. What is more, I love that you're seeking to live in the good of that in your daily lives. It's like all of a sudden, like the reason for valuing something changes where it's clarified.

He never got up and said, that just sounded so great. Because we're not, we don't gather to celebrate sounds. I mean, we don't. I have so many stories I can tell you.

We don't gather to celebrate how good someone is. That's missing the whole point. So, provide leadership that directs your people to the purpose of your singing while your sermon preparation is your primary way to make sure that your people are being fed.

They are also being fed through their songs. And sadly, people remember the Worcester songs a lot more than they remember the Worcester sermons. That's just reality. And what an opportunity that is to teach stuff.

[38 : 02] So, be aware and involved. Two, model the engagement you want for your congregation. Be engaged. You know, a leader who's just kind of, you know, or if they have their notes or just distract them just kind of generally and I'm involved when singing is going on.

That's speaking volumes to the church. Yeah. Don't view music as utilitarian, as a warm-up to the sermon, as a means of drawing crowds, a platform displaying talent.

It's a meaning of, it's a means of pointing people to Christ and what he's done and who he is. Not us. Music does not point to us.

I thought this as I was leading earlier today. I just, I led for the Shepherd's Conference, right? 3,000 pastors in a room, you know, amazing. Leading here, I didn't do anything different for preparation for that place.

Well, I did practice at all. I went through this often. But that was it. In terms of leading, I'm doing the same thing here as I did there. This was different.

[39 : 11] A lot more people, okay, same word of God, same gospel, same spirit, God's people, we're in the room, we're going to have a good time. To the house.

It's just not, it's because I know, I know, this is not about me. It's about the glory of Jesus Christ. Right. And that's what we want our musicians to understand.

It's about the glory of Jesus Christ. 3, be intentional about your song diet. Choose the best songs that are easily singable. Be on the lookout for classics.

Classics like, yet not I, but the Christ in me. Before I was running God at all. I think, Christ, our open life, death is a classic. I think it will be sung for years. Sing songs with biblical truth that are both objective and subjective.

We need both. Psalms can take both. These are the truths about God's word, his worthiness, and his works. Then this is the way we respond to them. You know, I will sing, wait, how does it, how does Psalm 108 begin?

[40 : 18] I hate what stole you, Carly. I can't think of it right now. My Bible. What is it, Psalm 108? Oh. I just, I just blanked.

My heart's, my heart's dead, I will sing and make melody with all my meaning. Just the end of the beginning. My heart, my mind isn't steadfast, but my heart is. My heart is steadfast, oh God, I will sing and make melody with all my meaning.

And then he goes on in verse four that says, for your steadfast love is great heavens and your faithfulness to declines. That's why. That's why. He has three verses of, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this.

This is why. We need both. We want both. Aim to do a small number of really good songs. than a lot of songs with varying quality. We don't need to be singing the latest and the greatest.

We just don't. There are so many songs being produced today from the church. It is unbelievable. Which means we can be so picky.

[41 : 23] They do. We can be so choosy. And the number of songs being written today doesn't negate the thousands of songs that have been written before today.

there's still a lot of good ones there. It's not like they go out of style. No, there's still a lot of great ones there. So be intentional about your song, guy.

Yeah. Number four, encourage the sound of your congregation. So we've been trying to do that here. Let people sing a cappella. Just let them sing. Don't feel like we always gotta be, you know, accompanying everything.

All creatures of our God and King Think of your voice and bid us sing. Yeah, I don't need all that.

We could sing. Let's try. Let's just sing All creatures of our God and King. Three, four. All creatures of our God and King Lift up your voice and let us sing.

[42 : 29] You got it. Yeah. We don't need everything that's going on up here all the time. Let your people sing. Let them know that we want you to sing.

We expect you to sing. And if the Spirit of God lives inside of you, you have a reason to sing. If you're one of the crowds redeemed through Jesus Christ, you're gonna want to sing.

We just have to make them see, help them see why it is they need to sing. Number five, invest in your musicians through different beings, training, conferences. Send them to the Worship of God conference next year, July 27th, 31st.

Cool. We're doing a conference in California. If you want to send out to California, I'll do it on 1st and 4th. You're gathering the gospel. Have meals with them. That's just a little plug.

That always mocks me for mentioning other things. Um, send them notes, send them emails, just, just invest in musicians. Four decades, four decades, see you today, every Sunday, finishes the benediction, turns around, thanks all the musicians.

[43 : 35] Rennie? That leaves such an impact because he's saying, you know what? I just preached a 45-minute message. I poured my heart out. Do you know what? Just grateful for you guys.

Thank you for giving me. That's the way of investing in them. Number seven, view technology as a tool, not a tyrant. A servant, not a slave master. There are limits to what technology can do on a Sunday morning.

And, it just makes me sad sometimes to read, like, chats or, see YouTube, you know, worship leader people and, um, uh, you know, just conversations about the music on Sunday mornings and it's all geared around technology.

And the technology is not bad. You know, I like it when someone understands technology. It just shouldn't be the focus of the conversation. It shouldn't be the thing that excites us.

It shouldn't be the thing that gets us most pumped up with us in the morning. Got a new pedal board. I'm so happy to be here. Bro, calm down. I mean, I'm glad you got the pedal board.

[44 : 43] But, this stuff's out of whack here. Um, keep the main thing the main thing. Don't assume it because you can, you should. Especially in their projection in another area.

Goodness gracious. I could even have some time. 10,000 new moving graphics that you can use for behind your early areas. 10,000. And that's little. 10,000 new backgrounds to an edit.

We just got one. Works real well. It's black. It's easy. It's great. 7, pray for God's strength to be shown in your weakness. How am I doing that time?

I'm probably, well, I'm probably late. Pray for God's strength to be shown in your weakness. Our limitations are what God uses to reveal its unlimited grace of God. So I had this thought.

I thought, I thought of this little scene in Acts 16. A musical situation to be shown. after midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God.

[45 : 40] And the band was there, the drummer was set and grew, and the prisoners were listening to them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so the foundations of the prison were shaking.

What does God need to bring a powerful experience of his presence to your church? Well, apparently he doesn't need a band. Apparently he doesn't need lights.

I imagine it's pretty dark. You get my point. Benefits of a church in a small place, there's so many. You know the individual's comprise your church, and you look out and say, I know what you're rejoicing about, I know what you're weeping about.

There's that connection. You can cultivate a more biblical understanding of excellence. It's not dependent on the big stuff. It's depending on God revealing himself to people.

It can be easier to gather around the right things and easier for each member to play their part, because you need them to play their part. If you don't do it, no, let's do it. Number eight, pray for God's strength to be shown in your strength.

[46 : 54] That can be hard for some of us. We have plenty going on, maybe too much. What happens if the power goes out? That's been something the sweetest times, doesn't it?

The conference for the 25th year. It was in Channing Gym and power now, and a real electrical ball horn. That's just the sweetest time.

It's just the greatest thing. Great, let's just do it that way all the time. God bless the person. And number nine, pray for God to supply musicians. It's not wrong. It's not wrong to pray for musicians.

It's great to have three qualities, humble, faithful, and skilled musicians in that order. Humble, faithful, skilled.

Don't be quick to add musicians, and this is a temptation when we're a church in small place, add musicians that aren't humble. Oh, I played my church, when someone comes up to me and says, I've played for years in my church and I'm ready to serve here.

[47 : 59] I say, you know, let's just get to know you. You get to know us, we get to know you. Never regretted that. Had people leave the church, but never regretted that.

It's always easier to wait at someone than to have to take the off. Amen. All right, just make much of God's glory in Christ with the power of the spirit in our minds and hearts and wills.

We already have what we really do. God's word, the gospel, God's spirit, God's people. people. And without denying those dreams, we are most likely able to serve our congregation more effectively in this area by grounding them in the fact that we sing not for our glory, but to express and deepen our love.

That's what we're doing every time we sing. And what a privilege it is. Nothing, like I said, discourages the working at better music, but I think many times we over-reverse because we don't consider what the church really needs to sing well.

They don't need all the time our special intros and altrues, and they need to see Christ. So may we give that to them when we sing together. Father, we ask you to help us lead our church's perfecting as they sing to do it for your glory by the power of the Spirit because of Jesus Christ.

[49 : 28] But in the estate we pray. We'll wait. We'll have the most. I wonder, you know, you walk through those aims and needs, and as you look back, even the worst point of you to stay every two years.

What's your biggest regret? not trusting those things, not trusting the word God, not trusting the gospel. I thought that the music was somehow going to inspire people, yeah, that that's what I needed to get right to really move people.

And I am just so much more realized about it. I make mistakes all the time. I mean, enough that I'm trying to do.

Or all of the people know, although for reason, they know it's fine. Two, oh my God, it's probably like ten. But yeah, not having confidence is that as people see Christ, they're not going to be so concerned with what music we're doing.

They're just not. And I just found that to be true. And I was at a conference once where, as a retreat for about two or fifty, had the Presbyterians and I could see when we first got there, when I first got there, there was a hesitation.

[50 : 54] There was a, these weren't leaders, these were just members of churches, they were donors. And so, I don't know what they all were. But in that moment, I, I, I told myself, you're going to have to rely on what you've been telling people for like twenty years.

You're going to have to point them to Christ and not try to wow them with musical stuff. So that's what I did. I just, I talked about the songs, why we're singing, and there was a visible effect over the two days we were together.

By the end, the singing was one wholehearted, a guy thinking went like this, and there was engagement because when we were singing, they were thinking about who we're singing about.

So that, that's probably the big thing. And then I used to think a lot more about what people might be thinking about me. Fear of man, craving people's approval, who was, who was in the congregation, you know?

I mean, yeah, when I first started, I, I, there's a lot of conferences, there's John Piper, there's R.C. Sproul, there's, you know, see Claire Ferguson, there's, I mean, that's all these guys that think, oh my God, I just, it doesn't matter.

[52 : 10] Jesus is more, he's bigger than all. It's like, I just want to help them see who Jesus is. Because he's glorious. Yeah, I think that's one thing I appreciate about you, and I can really honestly grow, no pretension in the way you lead, or little pretension, less pretension over the years, and it serves people, and I also think when I lead a lot of worship teams, that category of fear is huge, and I think shepherding your worship leaders and helping them, you know, as Jesus said, the pew of the platform is further than you think, and so it's just suddenly all these temptations about Sunday that was their favorite hour of the week, and then suddenly they feel assaulted at moment, so helpful.

You know, I would just encourage you taking this and applying it, start the conversation, you know, I think, so I'm on both sides, I was a worship leader for a long time, now, I'm a pastor, and I remember the pastor saying, I hate that song, well I love that song, you know, they just have a tug of war or whatever, and so it can be like an oil and water relationship, and yet it's faster, you want to be engaged, and that's one thing that Bob has helped me so much with, is just engaged and thinking through these things, the whole day is supposed to be faster, but pick all the songs, now it tends to be something seeded over, you know, first half, second half, first half, so where's your leader, and I would say begin that relationship, and begin making your responsibility over seeing that, it's just hugely significant, and so.

I did not mention, like, the relationship between the music guy and the pastor, there's so much we can say about that, and I'm going to have to applaud, I think it's ever and I sometimes tell me, do a podcast with Southwest Doctrine, you've done like 110 episodes or something, and there's stuff on there about that, that I think you'll find helpful, could find helpful, as well as a bunch of other stuff, but I have had the joy of working with the pastor, who trained me in a lot of what I do.

You know, CJ's not a musical guy, he's, he, we've had this joke, I'll never let him in the choir, but the other day he walked, I saw him walking to our studio and I came by my office and said, what's going on?

We'll make sure nothing's being recorded here, but he taught me that when you lead music, you are pastoring people, you're shepherding their souls.

[55 : 10] He taught me that songs should make sense when they're sung next to each other, he taught me that sometimes it might be, if you're going to repeat something, have a reason for repeating it. He taught me that what we're singing is more important than what's the accompaniment out there.

So all these things have shaped the way I lead and now I get to serve with them and it's just pure joy. Just this Sunday, he said, after my message, I think this song would be good to sing.

And I emailed him back and said, that's great, we thought this, we thought that song, we thought would this song be better? He said, you do the one you think is best. And that's just a great relationship where I want to know what he thinks, but he's always pushing back on me and said, no, you do what you think is best.

And that's trust, that's a level of trust. So I seek to build trust through music people. Yeah.