



## Worship! What's It all About? "Toward a deeper understanding"

By Chris R. Hansen

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."

Colossians 3:16 (New International Version)

As churches continue to debate worship and music style, let us not forget that musical style is just a tool; A box or wrapping paper that is used simply to house the true element of our gift and that is our adoration and worship of Christ and Him crucified.

John 12:32 states that, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself"

We must never forget that it is solely about Christ's work on the cross that will change lives and "draw all men to Himself." With this in mind the issue of style can then be held in perspective with and the bulk of our attention given to the proclamation of Christ.

Most churches strive to express their devotion and adoration of Christ through varying styles of music and artistic expression. Most have sought to communicate Christ and prove that style is simply a packaging tool. Some use music as a way

of story telling through the choirs, ensembles and solos and some use music as an avenue for their congregation to express its sense of awe, wonder and love for a loving God. Styles can intentionally be altered and changed so that "style" is not the focus but rather God. The use of hymns and choruses can also be varied as each has its place among a diverse congregation. We must all strive to glean from the ever changing culture to allow for the best environment for believers as well as unbelieving visitors to have a connection to the church. We must constantly work at "being all things to all men".

The music of the church should always involved a mix of celebration, beauty, storytelling, emotional expression and more; all to be used as a vehicle for those who enter the churches doors to catch a glimpse of the Glory of God and for those who don't know Christ, to give them a sense of beauty and wonder that there is something more to life.

We can use everything from hand bells, to organ, to youth bands to choirs to intimate worship (and the list goes on) all to help draw our attention to the beauty that is Christ. A Churches strength can be in it's diversity.. "Be all things to all men." .. and learn to want what oth-

ers want... putting yourself as least to others.

Interesting enough some of the same arguments for a more traditional service environment and a more contemporary or reflective environment are the same. Yet at opposite ends of the spectrum. It all comes down to a personal selfish preference. And personal preferences that are loaded with emotion!

I often encourage people who want a more traditional based service to go home and enter their prayer closet with traditional music playing. I also encourage those who want a more intimate reflective service environment to go home and enter their prayer closet with the music that helps them focus on God.

For one to expect that churches should be anything but diverse is focused on self. No one style or mode will communicate or encourage all of our attendees, Christ will do that. And when we worship, ...and that is live to please Christ, then we have truly worshipped. No more, No less.

