


WORSHIP IN A CELL GROUP

*“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.”
Westminster Shorter Catechism*

KEY

 Experience yourself

✓ Important note

 Illustration

A. Worshipping God

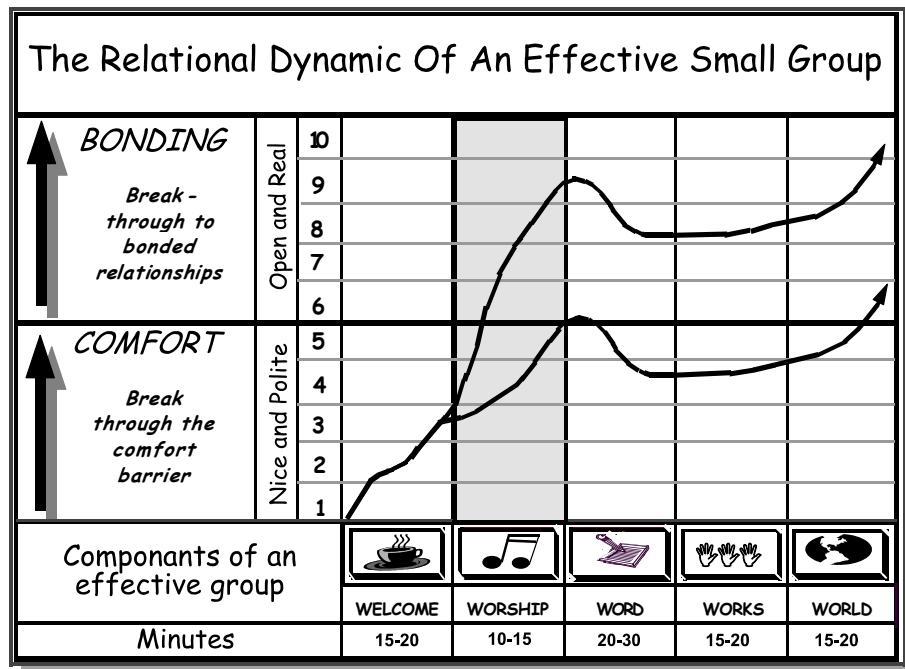
People open their hearts to express love to God (*worship*) more easily after an effective welcome time. The application of God's Word is significantly more successful after an effective worship time.

While the preceding statements are true, worship is never just a preliminary. Worship is a main event.

Biblical expressions of worship may seem undignified to some people, but God is honored by our obedience.

No matter what Church background we have, we would all agree that God should be worshipped however he chooses.

*“David...danced before the Lord with all his might...”
2 Samuel 6:13-14*



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B. Defining Praise and Worship¹

Praise

- Expressing thanks to God.
- Dynamic, vocal, and even very loud.
- Celebration of what God has done.
- Energetic singing, shouting, proclaiming, dancing and playing of musical instruments.
- Joyful celebration

Worship

- Giving honor

¹ Adapted from The Shepherd's Handbook, ©1993 by Faith Community Baptist Church Singapore

- To magnify God with our whole being.
- A heart expression of love to God.
- Giving to God our total self.
Adoration

C. Different Ways We Can Praise and Worship¹

- **A Laughing Mouth**

Psalm 126:2. "Our mouths were filled with laughter..."

- **A Singing Mouth**

Psalm 89:1 "I will sing of the Lord's great love forever..."

- **Kneeling Down**

Nehemiah 8:2. "Come let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before the Lord..."

- **Bowing the Head**

Nehemiah 8:2 "...Then they bowed down and worshipped the Lord..."

- **Clapping Hands**

Psalm 47:1 "Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy".

- **Shouting**

Psalm 95:1 "...let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation..."

- **Lifting Hands**

Psalm 134:2 "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary and praise the Lord."

- **Face to the Ground**

Rev 11:16-17 "And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshipped God"

¹ Adapted from The Shepherds Training Manual, ©1993 by Faith Community Baptist Church, Singapore.

- **The Dancing Body**

Psalm 149:3 "Let them praise His name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp."

D. Options for Cell Group Worship



We have discovered that few people play a musical instrument today.

This a real challenge for worship leading in the next generation of cell groups if we are reliant on instrument led worship.

What are the options?

- Train up musicians
- Sing without music
- Use backing music
- Use creative (*non-sung*) worship.

Train up musicians.

This option tends to take a while to bear fruit and most of us need worship leaders now. Some Churches encourage group members to take guitar lessons at a local community college. This trains musicians and creates an opportunity to build relationships with the unchurched.

Sing without music.

This is good option only if you can sing in tune.

I once visited a group where not one group member could sing in tune. Yet this group sang with gusto and...faith!

In my minds eye I could imagine God, with fingers in his ears, leaning forward to marvel at such a gift of worship.

Psalm 100 (KJV) 'Make a joyful noise' was definitely the verse I was thinking of that night.



3. Use music CD's.

This is today's hi tech variation of the 'sing along' approach.

This is my preferred option.

It is a worship format easily reproduced by an apprentice leader. The big advantage of CD's over audio cassettes is the remote control.

With the CD player you can pre-program tracks, fade the music or play a song again at the touch of a button. *(You really feel like a conductor)*

There are lots of quality worship CD's available. My favorite CD's are from the *Hillsongs* range of music. The *Simply Worship* series is excellent

(Hillsongs music is available from your local Christian book shop or by)

The best way to use backing music is to keep the volume up. People feel much more confident to sing out loud.

4. Use creative (non-singing) worship.



In 1996 while serving as the Pastor of Small Groups for a church of 1,500, I experimented with non singing worship. The Group Leaders under my care were very patient with my six month experiment.

I had never heard of this kind of worship before.

We discovered creative ways of helping the human heart to express love to God, without decreasing the 'worship atmosphere' of our groups.

As Christians we can become too familiar with 'worship'. Sometimes our mouths may be 'worshipping' God but our heart is not engaged.

Creative Worship Suggestions

(There are thousands of possibilities)

- Have everyone in the group write a letter telling God how much they love him. Go around the circle letting each person read out what they have written.
- Read out loud a passage of scripture that expresses worship to God. Each member takes the words as their own expression of love and praise
- Go around the circle of the group, each person telling one thing that they appreciate most about God.

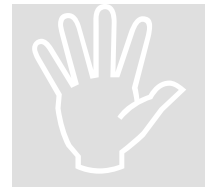
- One youth cell group recently had group members lay on the floor. The lights were dimmed while a particular song was being played. The atmosphere was set for a heart searching and thought provoking time with God.

Whatever you do, it must be reproducible.

If your apprentice can't do it, or can't be trained to do it in six months...don't do it!

EXPERIENCE FOR YOURSELF

Write a paragraph telling God how much you love Him. Include one thing about God that is really special to you.



E. Leading Others into Worship¹

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.” John 4:23.

1/ Be a Worshipper.

Spend time just telling Jesus how much you love him. The truth is you cannot lead people where you do not go yourself.

2/ Keep your heart soft towards God.

A hardened heart kills our ability to lead people in worship. Do not let unconfessed sin or unforgiveness harden your heart.

3/ Pray.

Wisdom and sensitivity comes from the Holy Spirit. Ask God for His theme for your group worship.

(Share with the group leader the theme you feel God is laying on your heart. Be open for adjustments the leader may have.)

4/ Prepare.

Sing through the songs you have prepared. If you can't worship with them, then no-one else will. If you use a musician, practice the songs together. Select songs to suit the theme of the night.

5/ Plan.

Let God lay on your heart scriptures or words of encouragement. Pay attention to the mood you hope to achieve. Plan the pause period. Is there an appropriate Scripture to share?

Its good manners to have the words to songs you will be singing. Some people may not know the words so be prepared for them.

¹ Adapted from The Shepherds Training Manual, ©1993 by Faith Community Baptist Church, Singapore.

If words to the songs you plan to sing aren't available...you were not expecting visitors!

F. DURING WORSHIP

Lead.

Even if you are unsure or nervous, do not tell people. Focus on God and allow Him to lead you in His confidence.

Be Positive

Always be positive and expectant, because no matter what things might go wrong...God knows about it and still wants to visit your group and pour out His love.



One of the worst things a song leader can do is to begin with a negative Focus. I have heard song leaders say

“Well I know there are not many of us here tonight, but let’s worship the Lord anyway”. Ouch! People start to wonder where others are, rather than worship.

Another negative start is to say something like... “Our regular guitarist is away so we will just have to do the best we can with Jenny playing instead.”

The message is...I am not expecting a good time of worship.



Be Sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

As much as you have made a plan, allow the Holy Spirit to lead you to repeat a song, release verbal praise or sing a new song.

Always expect God to be present.

Things to Avoid in Worship Leading

- **Avoid going around to pick songs**

Leaders *MUST* select songs before the group gathering.

- **Don't talk too much**

Avoid long introductions and unnecessary explanations between songs.

REMEMBER

God will bless whatever option you choose if....
you pray, prepare and practice diligently
... with a desire to lead people into His presence.