

# A FUNDAMENTAL GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE WORSHIP

## #2 The Necessary Commitment

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Charles Spurgeon, the great prince of preachers, once said, “*He who loves Jesus consecrates to him all that he has, and feels it a delight that he may lay anything at the feet of him who laid down his life for us.*”<sup>1</sup> In addressing the fundamental aspects of effective worship, we must discuss commitment to the demands of this activity.

First, worship is the necessary work of the people (latreuo—Romans 12:1). By work we mean the expenditure of spiritual energy in **response** to the greatness and goodness of God. Initially, it is directed toward God for simply being who he is. Second, it is directed toward God for the purity, integrity, and love he displays among his people and desires in return. Third, it is not a periodic activity. It is a prevailing commitment that incorporates all of one’s life in spiritual growth, progressive intimacy, and the radiation of our faith in public as well as private places.

Although defined as work for those who love God and are called according to this purpose, it is, as Spurgeon said, **delightful** work when we acknowledge the sovereignty of God, the sacrifice of Christ, and the present work of the Holy Spirit in the world today. The outward expression of this spiritual energy then, is manifested in moral uprightness and exemplary ethical behavior as Christians struggle with overcoming sin as a daily matter of faith. That is the work of the people.

As a matter of leading others, there is a doubling-down mandate on worship leaders when it comes to **commitment** to their ministry. Jesus said, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master” (Matthew 10:24). A good point inside that statement reveals the nature of those who are called to lead others into the presence of God. More specifically, whether it be a single person or a team, the pursuit of excellence is not optional but necessary. This is a ministry that, because of its emotional and prideful proclivities, requires humility, prayer, dedication to timeliness, devotion to preparation, sensitivity to the Spirit, and faithfulness in attention to detail (1 Chronicles 15:22). None of this can be accomplished without an adequate response to the demands on time and effort by the people involved.

Over the years, I have learned that leading worship requires 6-8 hours a week of commitment for an average worship service. It begins with meeting with the preaching pastor to get a feel for the spiritual direction of his message, assembling an order of worship, rehearsing, practicing through musical rough spots, a final dress rehearsal with sound and other additions, and then the final event.

A fundamental guide to effective worship then, involves a good connection with the preaching pastor and a solid commitment of time and energy from those involved in leading the service.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Spurgeon At His Best*, compiled by Tom Carter, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 82.