

NICK CRESPO | ANBERLIN | LENYA HEITZIG | A.W. TOZER | BRANDI HEFT

# Connection

the magazine

THE  
DEVIL'S  
MUSIC  
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WORSHIP  
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ROCK IS  
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what IS worship?

special issue

ISSUE 8 | JULY-SEPTEMBER 2010

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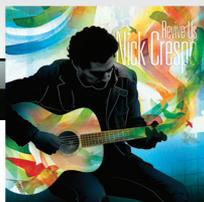
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# Skip's Note



Dear Friend,

Adoration.

Devotion.

Reverence.

No matter which definition you prefer, the truth behind the word “worship” does not change. For the Christian, worship is giving to God His due honor. And for the Christian, worship is the one great imperative: we are called, commanded, and encouraged to worship the Lord. Jesus Himself states we are to worship the Father in spirit and truth (see John 4:24).

We serve such an awesome and wonderful Lord. It is a good and natural thing to adore Him who created and cares for us. It should be our honor and adulation to worship. Worship is our very reason for being. But many “Christians” have relegated worship to the sidelines. Even worse, some bring the word “worship” to the debate table, arguing and fighting over how God’s people are to worship.

In our special summer worship issue, we’ll explore the heart of worship. As A.W. Tozer said, “Worship is the missing jewel of the evangelical church.” The popular worship song calls us to return to the heart of worship. Let’s worship together—because it truly is all about Him.

My lovely wife, Lenya, looks at Psalm 45 and the psalmist’s heart—overflowing with adoration for our King. Our guest article, “Rock is Worship”, contains interview shorts with seven different bands, including Anberlin. In “Hot Spots” we’ll explore whether or not contemporary Christian music is biblical. Our “From the Blog” article investigates another controversial question in the church: what is the proper place for musical instruments in worship? And one of our own Calvary pastors, Nick Crespo, responds and comments on his role as a worship leader.

As always, you’ll find great resources, articles, Bible studies, and relevant information to help you grow in your walk with Jesus Christ.

May God be with you as we return together to the heart of worship.

In His strong love,

Pastor Skip

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...Skip Heitzig



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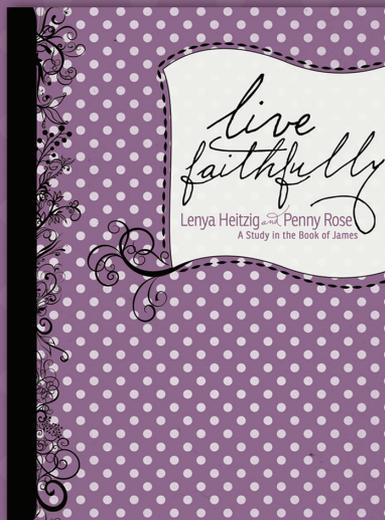
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# THE MISSIN JEWEL



# GL

I have worshiped in a variety of settings: from India to the Philippines to Africa to Asia to the great cathedrals of Europe. I have discovered that it matters much more that we worship than how we worship. In the evangelical world, there's a great deal of emphasis on evangelism and discipleship. Most Christian bookstores are stocked with information about how to disciple other people and help grow them up in the faith. There's focus on how to have a Christian marriage, a Christian budget, a Christian diet, etc. This is all good information. However, there seems to be precious little written about how to worship. We have become a generation of people who worship our work, work at our play, and play at our worship. And A.W. Tozer said, "Worship is the missing jewel of the evangelical church." What does the best book on worship, the Bible, say about all of this?

## A LIFESTYLE OF ADORATION

According to the Bible, worship is a response to God. First John 4:19 tells us, "We love Him because He first loved us." He acted first, by loving us, and we respond to His act—that's worship.

Worship is not just a response to God; it is the proper response to God. Paul tells us we ought to give our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord. He says this is "your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). Worship is the wisest response we can make.

Worship is also a response to God from the heart. Worship should come from the center of our being. Jesus told the woman at the well of Samaria, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (John 4:23)

We've seen that worship is the proper response to God that comes from the core of our being—our hearts. Worship is the proper response to God from our hearts where by we place God above everyone and everything else in

life. We declare that God is supremely worthy. Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38). If we’re to worship God we must place Him above hobbies, entertainment, education, boyfriends, girlfriends, husbands, wives, and children. Jesus said, “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me” (Matthew 10:37).

So worship isn’t just a frivolous act or a once-a-week activity under the guise of attending a “worship service”. It is not simply a feeling that we can conjure up. Worship is a lifestyle of adoration where we declare quite appropriately that God is above everything and everyone else in our lives.

When biblical worship is the appropriate response from the core of our being, we willingly and voluntarily place God above everything and everyone else in our personal lives. What is the reason that we render God our worship? Because of Who God is and because of who we are. This relationship demands our worship. It is steadfast; it’s fixed—it never changes.

Worship and praise are different. Praise is episodic. It is our response to an act or provision of God. God does something for us, so we render praise to Him. But that can change. Sometimes God blesses us; sometimes God withholds a blessing for a period of time. But worship should continue. Worship is not based on what God does; it is based on Who God is and who we are in response to Him.

**“WORSHIP IS NOT  
BASED ON WHAT GOD  
DOES; IT IS BASED  
ON WHO GOD IS AND  
WHO WE ARE IN  
RESPONSE TO HIM.”**

## OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

Psalm 95 describes four modes of worship. One mode is to worship with others. The psalmist said, “Oh come, let us sing to the Lord!” (Psalm 95:1) This is a call to public, corporate worship. Three times a year the Jews were commanded to leave their homes and make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the religious feasts. Thousands of people would leave their homes and villages en route to Jerusalem. As they traveled, they recited Scripture and sang songs in encouragement. This reaffirmed their personal faith in God. And therein lays the value of corporate worship: we get together with believers who love God and it encourages us. The presence of others inspires us to trust Him more.

We need other people. The Bible says that we should never forsake the assembly of ourselves together, as is the manner of some. When Jesus taught us to pray the “Our Father” He didn’t say, “In this manner, therefore, pray: My Father in Heaven” (see Matthew 6:9, emphasis added). Jesus came to take the words “I,” “me,” and “mine” out of our vocabulary and replace them with “we,” “our,” and “us”. He means to transform us into a great peer group called the body of Christ; then, we’ll worship with others.

## SING, SING, SING!

The psalmist encourages us not only to worship corporately, but also to worship with our lips: “Let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation” (Psalm 95:1). It isn’t possible to sing or shout without lips. God can read our thoughts, but we’re encouraged to sing and shout joyfully.

Aren’t you glad it doesn’t say, “Let us sing in perfect pitch to the Lord”? Instead, it says, “Make a joyful noise”. All of us can do that! The question is not whether we have a voice—it’s whether we have a song in our hearts. Some of you might think, *But I don’t feel like it.* Do

it anyway. You'll find that your spirit lifts when you act in obedience and sing to the Lord. Let us sing and shout joyfully!

The Detroit Free Press ran an article called "Remedy for a Prune Face", which read, in part: "Ladies, do you want to stay young? Then join a church choir. Women who sing stay younger looking. A singer's cheek muscles are so well developed by exercise that her face will not wrinkle as soon as the non-singers will." This is not the motivation for singing with our lips, but it is an illustration that God created us to sing in worship. As Solomon wrote, "A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance" (Proverbs 15:13).

## LIFT UP HOLY HANDS

We're also instructed to worship with our bodies. The psalmist implored, "Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker" (Psalm 95:6). The Bible talks about several ways to use our physical bodies to demonstrate that we love God. It's one thing to worship from the heart; it's another thing to express our love and adoration openly. But the Bible has a great deal to say about expressing our love with our whole bodies. For instance, Paul said it was appropriate to worship by "lifting up holy hands" (1 Timothy 2:8).

I've noticed that many churches allow for only one physical expression in worship: sitting still and looking in one direction. Some believe if you raise your hands, you're a little kooky. Or if you kneel down, you're somewhat formal. But when the Bible says we can kneel down, this is an act of adoration and submission. We can bow before the Lord; we can stand in His presence when it's appropriate; we can lift our hands—it's appropriate. We can and should worship God with our bodies.

**"IF AN OUTSIDER WERE TO READ THE BOOK OF YOUR LIFE, WOULD THEY BE READING A WORSHIP BOOK?"**

## THE GOSPEL OF YOU

Many verses in Psalm 95 speak about the nation of Israel, who did not obey the voice of God. Yes, they were going to the feast. Yes, they were singing with their lips and bowing down with their bodies. But they didn't live in obedience to God the rest of the time. Their outward expression of worship didn't change their inward lives. Someone once said, "It's not how high you jump, it's how straight you walk once you hit the ground."

It's the same for us. We can have a great time of worship at church, but how do we live the rest of the week with our spouse, our family, our colleagues, and our friends? When the world can look at us and see the change that has come over our lives, they'll say, "She's been connected to God. She's encountered the Living God—she's changed!" And then we'll know we have really learned to worship.

George Smith said, "There are five Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and fifth, the Christian. And most people will never read the first four." But we know they read us. If an outsider were to read the book of your life, would they be reading a worship book? When you respond to God by worshipping Him with songs of praise, with your body, your life and lips, you'll show the world that you worship Him "in spirit and truth" (John 4:24).



**Skip Heitzig** is the author of the book *Homeland Security*, and is the senior pastor of Calvary of Albuquerque.

# REALITY

- 64% of congregations that switched to contemporary worship in the last five years saw an increase in worship attendance of 2% or more
- 81% of women and 69% of men describe worship as very important
- Only 29% of church-going adults indicated that they view worship as something that is focused primarily on God
- 20% of churchgoers admitted that they had no idea what should be the most important outcome of worship
- While 68% of all church-going adults said they always “look forward to worshipping God,” millions of churchgoers struggle to clear their minds to focus on God in worship
- The most common elements sought by young people were “to worship or make a connection with God” (45% described this as very important)
- For the typical adult in America, the number of movies they watch during the year is greater than the number of worship services they attend!

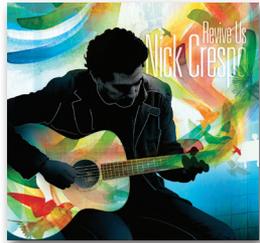
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## STAFF PICKS

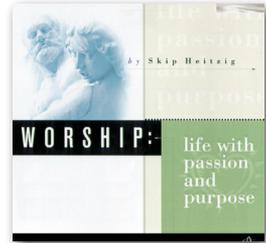
To help you learn biblical teachings about worship, The Connection staff chose some relevant teaching and audio for you to consider:



**SONGS FOR THE HEART**  
(CD TEACHING SERIES)  
SKIP HEITZIG



**REVIVE US**  
(MUSIC CD)  
NICK CRESPO



**WORSHIP: LIFE WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE**  
(CD TEACHING SERIES)  
SKIP HEITZIG

Sometimes we lack the WOW in our worship. Psalm 100 offers us a spiritual pick-me-up. It reveals that the more you know about God's nature, the more you'll express your love for Him. Information leads to adoration. When the psalmist reflected on the Lord as God, Creator, and Shepherd, it resulted in worship, gladness, and joyful songs. It's true; to know Him is to love Him.

Knowing that "the Lord is God" (Psalm 100:3) identifies him as the only true God. He exists before all, after all, and above all. He possesses power unlimited, knowledge unfathomable, and a presence unavoidable. He is indescribable, indispensable, and indisputable. God is big!

A little girl listened to her father read family devotions. She seemed awed by

her parents' talk of God's limitless power. "Daddy," she asked, "How big is God?" Her father answered, "Honey, he is always a lot bigger than what you need." Believing that God is bigger than your situation produces passion in your praise.

Knowing that "it is He who made us" (Psalm 100:3) reveals Him as Creator, the One who fashioned us into His very image (see Genesis 1:27). He displays His creativity through forming humans who are diverse yet distinct. But why did God create us? The psalmist says we were created to become His people—those of His highest priority. Your value lies not in who you are *but in whose you are*. Belonging to God adds awe to your adoration.

Knowing that "we are... the sheep of His pasture" (Psalm 100:3) can help us understand the tender care God shows His people.

Shepherds are responsible for every aspect of their flock's well-being and take these responsibilities very seriously. They make sure their sheep have protection, guidance, pasture, sustenance, and rest. Your Good Shepherd is

like that. He leads his sheep to "green pastures" (Psalm 23:2), "calls his own sheep by name" (John 10:3), and "lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Showing gratitude to your Shepherd can engender gladness in your heart.

Understanding that the Lord is bigger than any of your needs, that He is your Creator—you belong to Him—can't help but put the WOW back into your worship!

**"BELONGING TO GOD ADDS AWE TO YOUR ADORATION."**

**THE  
WOW  
IN WORSHIP**

Gleanings  
from **Lenya**





# When I Wait

Lenya Heitzig/Penny Rose

**When** Skip Heitzig asked me to marry him, he rambled through an awkward proposal to which I consented. As if in shock, Skip sprang from the couch stammering, “Wait a minute. Did I just ask you to marry me? And did you say yes?” He added, “I need a drink of water and then let’s talk.” Though I was thrilled, it wasn’t really an idyllic romantic atmosphere with love songs playing in the background.

Psalm 45 is a love song extolling the romance between a bride and groom on their wedding day. The author of Hebrews reveals that Psalm 45 is a Messianic psalm referring to Jesus. “Your throne, O God will last forever” (Hebrews 1:8). But who is Christ’s bride? Paul reveals, “I have betrothed you to one husband...that I may present you as a chaste virgin to *Christ*” (2 Corinthians 11:2 emphasis mine). If you are a Christian, you are Christ’s fiancée. Isn’t it thrilling to realize that there is a love song in the heart of the Redeemer?



# vest 1

## Lift up...

Lord Jesus, I fall to my knees and confess that You are Lord. Help me to submit to Your Lordship more each day. May Your name be exalted through my life. Amen.

## Look at...

Psalm 45 bears the inscription "upon lilies" which could refer to the instrument on which it was played, the tune to which it was set, or the nature of its content—lilies symbolized purity and beauty. This love song celebrates a royal wedding.

## Read Psalm 45:1-5

My heart is overflowing with a good theme;  
I recite my composition concerning the King;  
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.  
You are fairer than the sons of men;  
Grace is poured upon Your lips;  
Therefore God has blessed You forever.  
Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One,  
With Your glory and Your majesty.  
And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth,  
humility, and righteousness;  
And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things.  
Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies;  
The peoples fall under You.

- Describe the psalmist's mood & what action he took.

## Learn about...

### Flowing

“Overflowing” literally means to bubble up or boil over. Because the psalmist’s heart is filled with excitement and good news, words of praise for the King pour off his tongue. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34). His emotions were translated into words for all to sing.

- Describe the King. How do you know he was favored by God?

### Fairer

Fairer doesn’t mean there’s no one more handsome, but that no one is more handsome to the individual. In other words, there is no one else who compares. It also carries the idea of exclusivity. There must be no rival in your heart for Jesus—the fairest of all.

- What actions will the King take and why?

### Fortified

Suspending a sword on the thigh signified readiness for battle. This psalm is prophetic of Jesus’ Second Coming. He will return to the earth riding a white horse and victoriously establish His righteous kingdom. “Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.” (Rev. 19:15 NIV).

- Why do the people “fall under” or worship the King?

## Live out...

The psalmist’s heart overflowed with adoration for his King, the Mighty One. He responded by penning Psalm 45. As you think of your feelings for your King, journal a declaration of praise and adoration for the Mighty One, Jesus Christ.

## Learn about...

### Fierce

In addition to being the fairest of them all, our King is powerful. Mighty One is translated gibbor meaning powerful warrior or chief. Jesus is God the Son, “the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being [who sustains] all things by his powerful word” (Hebrews 1:3 NIV).

- Grace, which pours from the King’s lips, means kindness or undeserved favor. John

described Jesus as “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Recount the last time you personally experienced grace and how you will extend grace to someone else.

### Future

At the end of this age of grace, Jesus will judge sin with the same nail-scarred hands He voluntarily placed on Calvary’s cross. “In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword....‘I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades’” (Revelation 1:16, 18 NIV).

Although fair does mean lovely, beautiful, or beloved, it also describes an inner beauty of character. You might say that a fair person possesses a pleasing appearance especially because of a sweet, pure personality. The proverb, “Beauty is only skin deep” still resonates today. Doesn’t everybody know somebody who is beautiful to look at but ugly to behold?

Scripture reveals very little about the physical description of Jesus during His tenure here on earth. We don’t know whether he was tall or short. Was his hair blonde or brunette? Were his eyes blue or brown? In fact, Isaiah prophesied, “He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isaiah 53:2). We are, however, given multiple accounts of the exquisite beauty displayed through His character, conduct, and conversation. Let’s worship Him because He is the fairest One of all.

## Listen to...

*That which is striking and beautiful is not always good, but that which is good is always beautiful.*

— Ninon de L’Enclos

*\*Adapted from Live Radiantly: Praising God in All Things by Lenya Heitzig and Penny Rose*



**Lenya Heitzig & Penny Rose** are gifted writers and speakers. They have a passion for helping women deepen their understanding of the Bible and their relationship to Jesus Christ.

# the Gallery

When I survey the wondrous cross

When I survey the wondrous cross,  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
Save in the death of Christ my God!  
All the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o'er his body on the tree;  
Then I am dead to all the globe,  
And all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Isaac Watts

# W R O C K I S

by Brandi Sea Heft

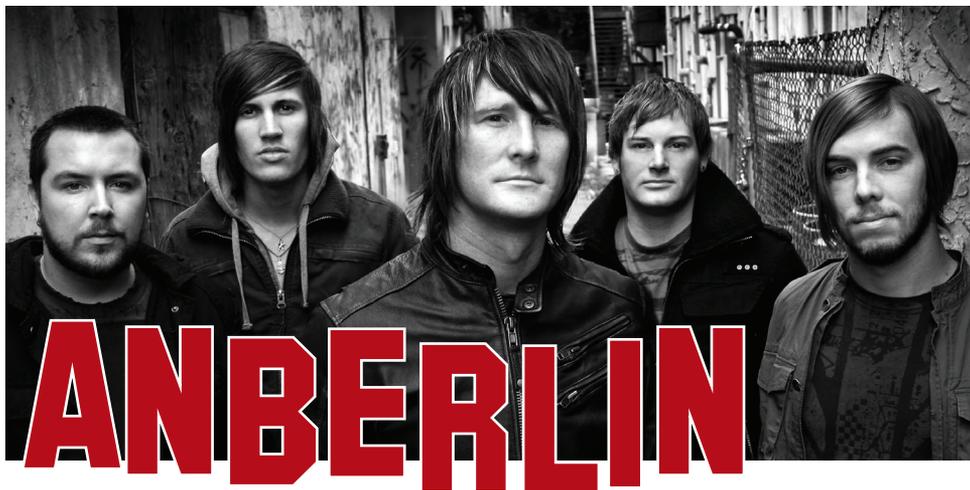


The average person is usually very passionate when they define their favorite genre of music, partially because they believe the genre helps to define their personality. So what happens when we enter the genre of “worship” music? How do we categorize a band as being a “worship” band? Is it their softly-played music, their quotes from a psalm, or their use of words like “holy” and “blessed”? Must it have slow melodies, acoustic guitars, and people with hands raised or eyes closed?

Here’s a thought: worship music can include a song entitled, “Better than Drugs”.

Let me explain.

Recently, I spoke with several bands never labeled within the “worship” genre—because they take a different approach to the meaning of worship music. I asked some truly talented members of some pretty cool bands to tell me about some of their songs—and to define what worship means to them.



Stephen Christian, from the alternative rock band Anberlin, spoke with me from a cafe in Nashville where he's writing songs for an upcoming album. He's not afraid to be honest. When I ask what worship means to him, he lays it out clearly:

"Worship is actually a much broader word than I think that we, as American Christians, have put into this box... praise is the upbeat songs and then you go into the worship mode of your service. It feels like people have narrowed it down to these tempos, but I think worship comes in so many ways.

"Worship is basically exposing your heart to God in such a way that you show God this great affection. And it doesn't have to be that you're a great singer. It's about the attitude of your heart—not just singing. I know people that don't know how to sing but they can paint, and that can be worship. Worship is taking whatever you're good at or whatever talents God has given you and turning it around and glorifying Him. That's worship." Stephen emphasized that worship is an attitude of the heart: "Worship isn't about just being in church and a slow song comes on and you begin to lift your hands like everyone

else and look up. That's not worship."

Stephen performs Anberlin songs across the entire world, on stage, and in front of thousands of people. So what does he think about different forms of worship?

**"Worship is taking whatever you're good at or whatever talents God has given you and turning it around and glorifying Him. That's worship."**

**-Stephen, Anberlin**

"When it comes to worship at churches, worship is more than just a stage show. In the strive to be the best at what we do and give God the most, there are blurred lines between giving God the best and putting on the best performance. There is a huge chasm because it's not about drawing attention to the people on the stage—it's about drawing attention to God. Worship leaders need to look at their hearts and the hearts of their bands. Are they up there for a performance? Or is it their intention to purely usher people into the throne room of God with praise and worship?"

Anberlin has released five albums and Stephen does the majority of the song-writing. I

asked him which Anberlin song he believes is the most worshipful. He spoke of their song "Fin" from *Cities*: "I remember everything about writing that song. I was in Richard's Coffee Shop in Winter Haven, Florida on a Thursday. When I finished penning the last words it was

like a weight was lifted off my shoulders and I felt the Holy Spirit with me. I felt like "Ok, Holy Spirit, we've worked this out. I've told You my grievances with human beings in the past that have given Christianity a bad name and I've told You

that regardless of what humans do, I'm still going to continue to look to Christ. It doesn't matter what pastors may fall. It doesn't matter if my friends stray away or my parents or if I feel condemnation from other people because of my faith or how I represent or don't represent it. I know that me and You are going to make it through. And it's me and You, God."

Most people might ask how the lyrics of "Fin" even apply to being like worship. But for Stephen, the writing and completion was a catharsis—just him and Jesus Christ. And if worship isn't when you can feel, "It's just You and me Jesus," then I'm not sure what it is.



## CHILDREN 18:3

Few people know the punk band Children18:3 (from Scripture's Matthew 18:3). They're a band of home schooled siblings from Morris, Minnesota. A first glance at their album cover may cause you to think they're some scary, angry metal band who couldn't possibly be friendly. Nothing could be further from the truth. I spoke with David, LeeMarie, and Seth as they offered some gems on the topic of worship and what it means to them.

According to Children 18:3, "Worship is a lifestyle." I almost ended the interview at that point, because any longer definition of worship is just expanding on the truth of that statement. *Worship is a lifestyle.* The band admitted they, "haven't really gone [the worship genre] route. But when you're writing or playing and you feel the presence of God, you don't even have to be writing a psalm." LeeMarie stated they ask the Holy Spirit to be with them and help their shows be worshipful. They trust that God will be with them: "The Lord is the Creator of all things and all kinds of music. Why can't we make Him smile and make Him glad with whatever style we happen to play?" Their new album will be released in June.



## FAMILY FORCE 5

In April, the "Rock and Worship Roadshow" was touring across the United States. On this tour were some conventional "worship" bands: Mercy Me, The David Crowder Band, Fee, and Remedy Drive. And then there was Family Force Five. Wait—Family Force Five? They're obviously rock, right? But Derek, their guitarist, disagrees. Family Force Five is a "crunk" rock band from Atlanta, Georgia.

Once we moved past the topics of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and our favorite after-concert restaurants, he gave some important points about what worship is and what it's been like to be the "rock" in the "Rock and Worship Roadshow". He said the best thing about the tour was getting to know so many amazing bands that feel the call to play (classically defined) worship music. He clarified the goal of Family Force Five: "When we first heard about it we were like, 'c'mon, man, rock and worship makes it sound like they're two different things. We're gonna try, by the end of this tour, to get the name changed

to "Rock is Worship." (Don't worry, I told him I would be stealing that for the title of this article.)

Although he thought it would be tough to say something so "huge and final" about his feelings on worship, he believes "essentially, it's connecting with the Lord in whatever form that is. I think we have a lot of boundaries, unfortunately. As people we tend to have a very small definition of how we can [worship]. I think worship is our way to connect with and resonate with and experience the fruits of the Spirit in the presence of God in whatever form that comes through."

**"As people we tend to have a very small definition of how we can [worship]"**

**- Derek(Chap-Stique), FF5**

One Family Force Five song that helps me,

personally, to worship the Lord is called “Face Down”. I asked Derek where the band was at spiritually when the song was written. He explained that it was a really trying time for the whole band. They all had been away from family touring over 300 days a year and were very confused. They wondered if the “band thing” was really what they needed to do. At a crossroads, they wrote “Face Down” as “kind of a prayer... we tried to figure out what we were doing with our

lives.” When you’re in a band so much emphasis is on you, your band, and your art rather than God—they felt as if they were falling apart. “We were trying to put our focus back in the right place.” They hope (even while touring with secular bands like Slayer this year) that others will be able to experience a connection with God through watching them and their lives both on and off stage. Is rock worship? Yes. Should worship be a lifestyle? Absolutely.



# RUN KID RUN

One of my all-time favorite worship songs is by the pop/rock band RunKidRun. The lyrics are often remarkable: *“I am too tired of running, will You still take me though I keep falling? To hear You say I have been waiting and to know Your love is never-ending... I long to see You again, Holy Spirit please come back in. I could never walk alone; all the time I never gave to You, You’re all I have, You’re all I know, and I am calling on You now.”* Amazing, right?

I spoke with Dave, the lead singer of RunKidRun, and asked him about a particular lyric from their first album: *“How many times will I deny You? Still Your love won’t let me go.”* What did it mean? “It was just written from the heart. Returning to the flesh and going toward our selfish ways instead of surrendering to

Him. It was definitely the Holy Spirit speaking through us and I was trying to speak from an honest place in my life. I know the Lord and I know that I love Him, but I need something real from the Living God that I know exists because I’ve felt it. I’ve felt Your presence so strong that I’ve just been brought to my knees and it brought me to tears and I just need to feel something, Lord, something.”

RunKidRun’s “The Modern March” is definitely a song created from a place of worship and surrender to the Lord. Like most, Dave thinks worship is a lifestyle—but he said he still struggles with what worship is. “Honestly I think worship

and I think oh, I love this song, it’s a great worship song. And God is worthy of our praise no matter what the song. It’s so easy as a congregation or as a follower of Christ to get moved by a song or a good melody and I think there’s emotion because God gives us emotion and so we react that way—

**“God is worthy of our praise no matter what the song, no matter what.”**

**– Dave, RunKidRun**

that’s our human form. God is worthy of our praise

through the storms and the joys and I know that. Worship to me is just trying to meditate on him and really enter into the Holy of Holies and really be in an intimate time with the Lord. Worship is such a passionate thing in my life.”



# SKILLET

Let's go back to the song "Better than Drugs". It's tough to organize a short conversation with someone as busy as John Cooper from Skillet. I had to use my time wisely, so I asked about his views on worship, specifically relating to that song. Could "Better than Drugs" be a worship song?

"It's funny that you say that because that song would not be the song people would particularly think you would ask about in that setting. The funny thing is, I've said to my wife [and fellow band-member Kory] I don't know how many times, the most worshipful moment on the entire *Comatose* CD is at the end of that particular song. I don't know why but that always makes me feel like worshiping and it's probably because of *why* I wrote the song."

**"Real worship is knowing God and valuing Him more than you value everything else. Not just that He's number one, but that He's everything."**

**- John Cooper, Skillet**

We talked about how worshiping the Lord can feel like a high—yet one so different. He said he's constantly looking around and asking people why they do drugs. Those people feel the need to escape mentally because this world is hard. Some lyrics: "*Feel You when I'm restless, feel You when I cannot cope, You're my addiction, my prescription, my antidote, You kill the poison, ease the suffering, calm the rage when I'm afraid, to feel again, how can I tell You just all that You are, what You do to me, You're better than*

drugs". Definitely not your typical worship lyrics.

John continued: "When I was growing up, I had a lot of nights when I thought, *I just need something to get me through, I'm really tired of this*—and that's when my relationship with the Lord really started. I began to know God as a best friend when I was in high school. My mom had passed away, my dad and I were fighting, and I just hated my family, hated my life. And

Jesus became a best friend to me. I was writing "Better than Drugs" about these temporary highs that people use, drugs or alcohol or pornography, whatever it may be, to take their mind off of the pain. That's the reason that God is better than drugs—because it's not temporary. Instead of being high, it's more like He helps you rise above, in a true way, the hate and the violence and the sadness of this world." John believes we should use our bodies as a living sacrifice to God and our spiritual lives as worship. He said, "Worship to me is not about singing songs, it's not about dancing, it's not about clapping—those are acts of worship. *Real worship is knowing God and valuing Him more than you value everything else. Not just that He's number one, but that He's everything. You look at your list of priorities in life: it's not number one, God, number two, wife, number three, kids. God is in everything that you do and that's what worship is all about.*"

Profound idea: God shouldn't just be in our list. *He should be our list.*



Originally hailing from Canada, Trevor McNeven is the lead singer/songwriter for the rock band Thousand Foot Krutch. He also sings and writes for a side band called FM Static. He is constantly appearing, writing, and co-producing songs with other artists like Demon Hunter, Hawk Nelson, Manafest, Toby Mac, and KJ-52. He is the genuine article—honest and humble.

Trevor said, “Worship is something that’s one of the most important things to me in my personal relationship with God.” And—to him as well—worship is a lifestyle. I asked him which song he wrote has made him draw closer to God. He replied, “‘This is a Call’ on the *Phenomenon* record was just one of those experiences. I still kind of get goose bumps when we play it because writing it was such a closeness kind of moment with God. In particular I remember I had an idea for a

song, I remember praying on the spot, *God, give me something that I can zero this in on, something that’s real. I don’t want to just make up a story.* And I

ended up meeting this girl at a grocery store that night and this girl was like, ‘Hey, Trevor’ and I didn’t even know who she was. She came up to me out of nowhere and just started pouring out her heart. She said she had heard one of our songs somewhere and she didn’t know what it was but she felt like God was touching her life. Anyway, that story turned into the song “This is a Call” that same night. God answered my prayer and gave me the story and the life to actually talk about and zero in on.”

**“I definitely want to encourage people to keep an open mind and realize that it’s about the heart and not the music.”**

**— Trevor, TFK**

He went on to talk about the song “Already Home” from their latest album *Welcome to the Masquerade*: “That song—same sort of thing. I was in the studio and had already written the new *Masquerade* record and thought it was done and then just got really inspired to write this other song. I was sitting there at the piano and it just kind of came completely inspired through prayer that day and turned into the song “Already Home.” I asked Trevor about the lyrics from that song, specifically the line “*I know I haven’t always been where You wanted me, standing here on top looking down before You.*” Trevor said he “felt like it was something that could be relatable. You know, you’re stepping in the wrong holes all the time. And looking at those situations, you feel like you’re looking up sometimes going, I’m so sorry that I’m back here again. So, yes, that line is kind of special to me. It’s just real life and honest.”

I respect Trevor and his lyrics: both are truly heartfelt. Does he have anything to say to up and coming worship leaders? He’s a firm believer that true worship is from the heart: “It’s not your stage presence and it’s not how you move on stage or how you mentally prepare. It is a genre of music, obviously in the Christian market, but I don’t even look at it as that.

Worship is from the heart and whether you’re getting up there like we do every night and playing hard rock, we’re worshiping in our own way and we’re worshiping with those kids who have their hands raised and are singing to God and letting their cries out in the way that they know. So whether it’s hard rock or hip-hop or worship or whatever, it really comes down to the heart. Just let God steer the ship 100%. When I’m at a church on the road or even at our own church at home, you can tell when someone is trying too

hard to kind of lead people into worship. I think it all comes back to that black and white of the heart. Just preparing your heart before you go out: "God, what do You want to do today? Take us with You." I think it really comes down to that. I think that realness and that openness comes out in the worship leader and the Holy Spirit draws people into that."

Trevor says he's really glad to be able to speak about a different side of the music he writes,

because as a rock band they don't get to talk about that very often. Because they play rock and hard rock, Thousand Foot Krutch is often looked at as, "That's cool for the kids." He laughed and said, "It's not like we're worshipping any different than Chris Tomlin. We both love the same God and are united even with each other when we see each other at shows. So I definitely want to encourage people to keep an open mind and realize that it's about the heart and not the music."

I also spoke with Matt and Jeff from the post-hardcore band Spoken about worship and music—not necessarily worship music. They defined worship music as anything that leads a person to focus on God. They believe it's the lyrical content that's important. "I don't think the music has much to do with it," Matt said. "I just think that the music is an even better tool to get different types of people. And I think any style of music can bring a person closer to God. So I think it's lyrical content and a person focusing on Jesus."

Both agreed that even stereotypical "worship" lyrics are sometimes not really about

**"[worship is] lyrical content and a person focusing on Jesus"**  
— Matt, Spoken

God—they're about us. "I wouldn't even really consider most of it "worship music" because it's all about "God, I need, God, touch me, God, do this for me," as opposed to just giving upward praise to God. Whenever that happens, the music that's in the genre of "worship" is so self-centered. Just because it's all about I need this from God as opposed to God, You're awesome and this is the reason. So it's all a matter of content that makes something worshipful."



Clearly, these guys are into making songs that have the right message. So which of their songs did they feel was the most worshipful?

Matt said their more recent songs, like "The Answer," are "straight up acknowledging God's glory, acknowledging our Creator. I think different people relate to different songs in different ways and that's great." Matt also said,

"We don't want to be a band that just writes about whatever we want to write about. It's kind of like, alright

God, let's do it. Let's write stuff that can relate to Christians, non-Christians, anybody who is in this life with us. And a lot of times those turn out to be songs about God." It is incredible to hear these guys talk and know that they aren't just writing to write. Regardless of the style of music, worshipful lyrics can turn our attention to our most amazing and worthy God.

Ultimately, God's presence, and the worship we give him,

is better than anything we can muster up on our own, drugs included. And if recognizing that God is worth giving our all to, then we are one step closer to living the life of worship that Jesus calls us to live.

So—what's the point? Worship is a lifestyle—it's about the heart and not the music. Hopefully, these diverse interviews with such different band members have opened your eyes and your heart to a new way of viewing worship. Maybe you can understand why a song like "Better Than Drugs" can qualify as a worship song. And that you can worship the Lord by lifting your hands or throwing up your "rawk fist".

**G**



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She loves her husband David, her daughter Jasmine, graphic design, and all kinds of music.



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His Channel Radio

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"Rumblings of War and  
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Learn what Jesus Christ  
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"Church: Who Needs It?"

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experience His presence.

Check [connectionradio.org](http://connectionradio.org) for a station near you that airs *The Connection*.

Pastor Skip,

I follow your studies on Wednesdays  
all the time from Virginia. I come to  
Calvary in person sometimes when I  
am on business travel (government).  
I enjoy it tremendously and pray that  
you will be there to teach us for a  
long, long time. I am a former Muslim  
who has stepped into the light by His  
grace. Thank you for your shepherding  
us, even those of us who are  
from your site.

Love in Christ,

Showkat



# UP Reach

## Taking You through the Bible in a Year

### JULY

- JULY 1** **Read: Psalm 126-129**  
**Reflect:** “Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy” (126:5)
- JULY 2** **Read: Psalm 130-134**  
**Reflect:** “For there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore” (133:3)
- JULY 3** **Read: Psalm 135-138**  
**Reflect:** “Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever” (136:1)
- JULY 4** **Read: Psalm 139-142**  
**Reflect:** “I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (139:14)
- JULY 5** **Read: Psalm 143-146**  
**Reflect:** “The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth” (145:18)
- JULY 6** **Read: Psalm 147-150**  
**Reflect:** “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord” (150:6)
- JULY 7** **Read: Proverbs 1-3**  
**Reflect:** “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (1:7)
- JULY 8** **Read: Proverbs 4-6**  
**Reflect:** “For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his paths” (5:21)
- JULY 9** **Read: Proverbs 7-9**  
**Reflect:** “Forsake foolishness and live, and go in the way of under standing” (9:6)
- JULY 10** **Read: Proverbs 10-12**  
**Reflect:** “Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins” (10:12)
- JULY 11** **Read: Proverbs 13-15**  
**Reflect:** “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (14:12)
- JULY 12** **Read: Proverbs 16-18**  
**Reflect:** “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord” (16:33)
- JULY 13** **Read: Proverbs 19-21**  
**Reflect:** “Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles” (21:23)
- JULY 14** **Read: Proverbs 22-24**  
**Reflect:** “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (22:6)

- JULY 15** **Read: Proverbs 25-27**  
**Reflect:** “Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips” (27:2)
- JULY 16** **Read: Proverbs 28-31**  
**Reflect:** “Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him” (30:5)
- JULY 17** **Read: Ecclesiastes 1-4**  
**Reflect:** “He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts” (3:11)
- JULY 18** **Read: Ecclesiastes 5-8**  
**Reflect:** “In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: Surely God has appointed the one as well as the other” (7:14)
- JULY 19** **Read: Ecclesiastes 9-12**  
**Reflect:** “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all” (12:13)
- JULY 20** **Read: Song of Solomon 1-4**  
**Reflect:** “Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases” (2:7)
- JULY 21** **Read: Song of Solomon 5-8**  
**Reflect:** “For love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave” (8:6)
- JULY 22** **Read: Isaiah 1-4**  
**Reflect:** “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow” (1:18) Idenness: Prepare the way of the Lord” (40:3)
- AUGUST 1** **Read: Isaiah 41-44**  
**Reflect:** “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine” (43:1)
- AUGUST 2** **Read: Isaiah 45-48**  
**Reflect:** “Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth!” (45:21)

- AUGUST 3** **Read: Isaiah 49-52**  
**Reflect:** “I, even I, am He who comforts you. Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die” (51:12)
- AUGUST 4** **Read: Isaiah 53-56**  
**Reflect:** “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth” (53:7)
- AUGUST 5** **Read: Isaiah 57-61**  
**Reflect:** “For the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended” (60:20)
- AUGUST 6** **Read: Isaiah 62-66**  
**Reflect:** “But now, O Lord, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You our potter; and all we are the work of Your hand” (64:8)
- AUGUST 7** **Read: Jeremiah 1-4**  
**Reflect:** “You shall call Me, “My Father,” and not turn away from Me” (3:19)
- AUGUST 8** **Read: Jeremiah 5-8**  
**Reflect:** “Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it” (6:16)
- AUGUST 9** **Read: Jeremiah 9-12**  
**Reflect:** “But the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King” (10:10)
- AUGUST 10** **Read: Jeremiah 13-16**  
**Reflect:** “‘For I am with you to save you and deliver you,’ says the Lord” (15:20)

# AUG.



- AUGUST 11** **Read: Jeremiah 17-20**  
**Reflect:** “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (17:9)
- AUGUST 12** **Read: Jeremiah 21-24**  
**Reflect:** “Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (23:6)
- AUGUST 13** **Read: Jeremiah 25-28**  
**Reflect:** “Now therefore, amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God” (26:13)
- AUGUST 14** **Read: Jeremiah 29-32**  
**Reflect:** “Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You” (32:17)
- AUGUST 15** **Read: Jeremiah 33-36**  
**Reflect:** “In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth” (33:15)
- AUGUST 16** **Read: Jeremiah 37-40**  
**Reflect:** “‘But I will deliver you in that day,’ says the Lord, ‘and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid’” (39:17)

- AUGUST 17** **Read: Jeremiah 41-44**  
**Reflect:** “That the Lord your God may show us the way in which we should walk and the thing we should do” (42:3)
- AUGUST 18** **Read: Jeremiah 45-48**  
**Reflect:** “‘Do not fear, O Jacob My servant,’ says the Lord, ‘For I am with you’” (46:28)
- AUGUST 19** **Read: Jeremiah 49-52**  
**Reflect:** “He has established the world by His wisdom, and stretched out the heaven by His understanding” (51:15)
- AUGUST 20** **Read: Lamentations 1-5**  
**Reflect:** “You, O Lord, remain forever; Your throne from generation to generation” (5:19)
- AUGUST 21** **Read: Ezekiel 1-4**  
**Reflect:** “Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears” (3:10)
- AUGUST 22** **Read: Ezekiel 5-8**  
**Reflect:** “No one will strengthen himself who lives in iniquity” (7:13)
- AUGUST 23** **Read: Ezekiel 9-12**  
**Reflect:** “Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them” (11:19)
- AUGUST 24** **Read: Ezekiel 13-16**  
**Reflect:** “Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations” (14:6)
- AUGUST 25** **Read: Ezekiel 17-20**  
**Reflect:** “Hear now, O house of Israel, is it not My way which is fair, and your ways which are not fair?” (18:25)

**AUGUST 26** **Read:** Ezekiel 21-24  
**Reflect:** "Then you shall know that I am the Lord God" (23:49)

**AUGUST 27** **Read:** Ezekiel 25-28  
**Reflect:** "You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor" (28:17)

**AUGUST 28** **Read:** Ezekiel 29-32  
**Reflect:** "Even the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of clouds, the time of the Gentiles" (30:3)

**AUGUST 29** **Read:** Ezekiel 33-36  
**Reflect:** "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God" (34:31)

**AUGUST 30** **Read:** Ezekiel 37-41  
**Reflect:** "'Surely it is coming, and it shall be done,' says the Lord God. 'This is the day of which I have spoken.'" (39:8)

**AUGUST 31** **Read:** Ezekiel 42-48  
**Reflect:** "And the name of the city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE" (48:34)

**SEPTEMBER 1** **Read:** Daniel 1-5  
**Reflect:** "There is no other God who can deliver like this" (3:29)

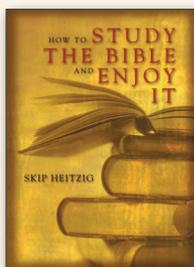
**SEPTEMBER 2** **Read:** Daniel 6-12  
**Reflect:** "So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no in jury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God" (6:23)

**SEPTEMBER 3** **Read:** Hosea 1-6  
**Reflect:** "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (6:6)

**SEPTEMBER 4** **Read:** Hosea 7-14  
**Reflect:** "Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap in mercy" (10:12)

**SEPTEMBER 5** **Read:** Joel  
**Reflect:** "And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (2:32)

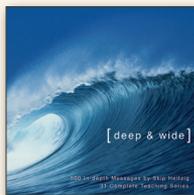
## STUDY TOOLS



### How to Study the Bible and Enjoy It

*This book contains helpful information to instruct believers on how to have ongoing meaningful times of Bible study.*

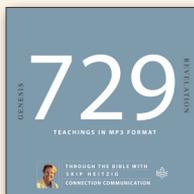
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**Jeremiah 17-Joel** (29)

# SEPT.



**SEPTEMBER 6** **Read: Amos 1-4**  
**Reflect:** "A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy?" (3:8)

**SEPTEMBER 7** **Read: Amos 5-9**  
**Reflect:** "Seek good and not evil, that you may live; so the Lord God of hosts will be with you" (5:14)

**SEPTEMBER 8** **Read: Obadiah**  
**Reflect:** "As you have done, it shall be done to you" (v. 15)

**SEPTEMBER 9** **Read: Jonah**  
**Reflect:** "I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, and He answered me" (2:2)

**SEPTEMBER 10** **Read: Micah**  
**Reflect:** "And what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (6:8)

**SEPTEMBER 11** **Read: Nahum**  
**Reflect:** "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knows those who trust in Him" (1:7)

**SEPTEMBER 12** **Read: Habakkuk**  
**Reflect:** "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (3:18)

**SEPTEMBER 13** **Read: Zephaniah**  
**Reflect:** "The great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hastens quickly" (1:14)

**SEPTEMBER 14** **Read: Haggai**  
**Reflect:** "And in this place I will give peace," says the Lord of hosts" (2:9)

**SEPTEMBER 15** **Read: Zechariah 1-7**  
**Reflect:** "For he who touches you touches the apple of His eye" (2:8)

**SEPTEMBER 16** **Read: Zechariah 8-14**  
**Reflect:** "They will call on My name, and I will answer them" (13:9)

**SEPTEMBER 17** **Read: Malachi**  
**Reflect:** "For I am the Lord, I do not change" (3:6)

**SEPTEMBER 18** **Read: Matthew 1-4**  
**Reflect:** "Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve'" (4:10)

**SEPTEMBER 19** **Read: Matthew 5-8**  
**Reflect:** "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:10)

**SEPTEMBER 20** **Read: Matthew 9-12**  
**Reflect:** "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (10:16)

**SEPTEMBER 21** **Read: Matthew 13-16**  
**Reflect:** "But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid'" (14:27)

**SEPTEMBER 22** **Read: Matthew 17-20**  
**Reflect:** "But Jesus looked at them and said to them, 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible'" (19:26)

**SEPTEMBER 23** **Read: Matthew 21-24**  
**Reflect:** "And He said to them, 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's'" (22:21)

**SEPTEMBER 24** **Read: Matthew 25-28**  
**Reflect:** "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (28:20)

**SEPTEMBER 25** **Read: Mark 1-3**  
**Reflect:** "Then Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (1:17)

**SEPTEMBER 26** **Read: Mark 4-6**  
**Reflect:** "And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!'" (4:41)

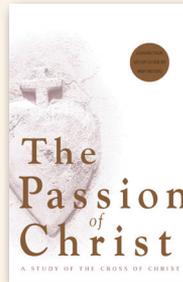
**SEPTEMBER 27** **Read: Mark 7-9**  
**Reflect:** "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (8:34)

**SEPTEMBER 28** **Read: Mark 10-12**  
**Reflect:** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (10:45)

**SEPTEMBER 29** **Read: Mark 13-14**  
**Reflect:** "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is" (13:33)

**SEPTEMBER 30** **Read: Mark 15-16**  
**Reflect:** "So when the centurion, who stood opposite Him, saw that He cried out like this and breathed His last, he said, 'Truly this Man was the Son of God!'" (15:39)

## STUDY GUIDES



### The Passion of Christ

*This study is an in-depth look at the final week of Jesus' earthly ministry. From His arrival in Jerusalem to His death and resurrection, Skip examines Jesus' motivation. As a Man and a Member of the Godhead, Jesus' ultimate desire was to do His Father's will.*

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# Off the Cuff

Skip Heitzig recently spoke with worship leader Nick Crespo.

## We don't want to impose songs just

**Skip:** Nick, you have the privilege to lead thousands of people a week in worship—the singing of songs. As a worship leader, what are you hoping to accomplish in the hearts and lives of those who have gathered to worship?

**Nick:** First and foremost, it's very clear in Scripture that we are called to sing out—that we're called to respond through song. My first responsibility is to lead them in responding to and obeying God's Word. We're to respond to God in celebration, adoration, and praise Him for who He is and what He has done. Throughout Scripture we see that we're to proclaim His worth, to ascribe greatness to the Lord, to bless the Lord, to exalt Him, to get them to respond to the Lord. To somehow capture what the heart of God's people is in response to Him through melody, through lyrics, and through musical arrangement. And I need to lead them in listening. *Lord, what do You want to speak to us?* Maybe it's beyond the songs that have been chosen this week. I allow the opportunity for the Lord to just move—the Spirit to have His way. Another important part of my role is to

prepare us for heaven and teach us how to worship. How are we to worship? Why do we lift our hands? Why do we clap our hands? Why do we sing? Why are we called to bow? How is it that we're to worship God?

**Skip:** What do you look for in a good worship song or hymn? What are those attributes that help draw out the four characteristics you've pointed out?

**Nick:** First and foremost, the songs have to be Scriptural. I think every song that we sing has to be based and founded in God's Word. My favorite songs include Scriptures or actually sing Scripture, sing the Psalms. Our songs should be predominately about God. There was a movement years ago where many songs being sung in churches were all about 'me' and 'I'. We ought to be focused on God. Singing about Him: His characteristics, His qualities. Secondly, it has to be musical. When I approach a song, I'm not just looking for just great words but all of the components together: the melody, the musical style. Does it all lend toward the message of what we're singing? I think

it would be strange to have a song that proclaims the strength and power and might of God set to a slow, swing beat. I like all of the components to fit together. At the same time it should be accessible to the people melodically—they can follow, they can jump on. It's a corporate time of worship. For me, worship becomes transforming when they can take it home and there's that hook or that melody line that they remember from church. For instance, "Blessed Be Your Name". They take it home and when they're actually facing something in their life, they remember that hook: "Blessed be Your glorious name". That's where what we're doing in our services is really driven home: when our congregation is actually able to use Scriptural truths in their day-to-day lives. Finally, I want the songs to be relevant to the people that God has called me to serve. We don't want to impose songs just because they're in the top twenty. They need to be songs that the people connect with—they need to be accessible. What's relevant: What is God doing in our church? What is God doing in this group of people? What is God speaking to His people through our pas-



## t because they're in the top twenty.

tor? What are we learning about God? Then I'll partner that with songs dealing with these same issues. If you can put melody to our theology, we're doing really well as a church.

**Skip:** As you prepare to lead the congregation in worship, what's going on behind the scenes? What goes into the preparation for a service?

**Nick:** There's a spiritual role and then there's a practical role. Spiritually, I really believe that God is orchestrating things. I've experienced that week after week and year after year. God just brings it all together. I really sense that when we gather God wants to move, to work, and to speak. I really feel that the Holy Spirit's orchestrating a lot of it. And the practical side is also watching what God is doing in our church. What is the spiritual climate? What is the collective movement that the Lord is doing? I try to follow that in preparation for the upcoming week. I also like to be listening. I'll sit with the songs that I'm feeling led to play for that service and I'll ask, *Lord, what is it that You want to*

*speak? What is it that You want to do?* And there's scheduling bands, posting songs, coordinating with our video team, etcetera. Then there's the rehearsing. We spend about two hours a week in preparation for the weekend services on a separate evening. But the most important is prayer. Being sensitive to what the Lord wants to do. You know, there's times just days before I'll switch the whole set—it doesn't happen often. But when it does, I think you have to be in prayer: *Lord, what do You want to do?*

**Skip:** As a young worship leader, you've seen the movement of worship through the past twenty or so years. Where do you see worship music heading?

**Nick:** I really appreciate the modern revival of hymns. But I'd say ultimately what I love—especially in my generation—is this modern explosion of worship music. I really appreciate the popularity. We're seeing bands that are worship bands; we're seeing worship CDs coming out left and right. I've really appreciated the creativity that is being put into

worship music. I'm hearing so many unique expressions and fresh sounds. I love where we're going with the implementation of electronic music. In fact, we use tracks and clip tracks and we're able to implement sounds that were never really possible before in a worship setting. We're using instruments that you can't even find—you'd have to spend time just to find these instruments. And now, we have access. There's so much more creativity in the musical part and that's what I think is important. The lyrics can't change—we can't replace great melodies and cool music and forsake the Scriptural content of what we're trying to accomplish. We don't want to get too complicated.



Nick Crespo is the leader of worship at Calvary of Albuquerque.

From the **bl****og**

with Pastor Skip Heitzig



*scripture encounter*

## Question:

I attend a church that doesn't believe in using any instruments at all during the worship service. But when I read the Bible, I find there are many places that mention musical instruments used for worship—such as Psalm 150.

My question is whether our church is disobeying God for not using instruments in our worship.

## Answer:

Thank you for the question. You're definitely doing the right thing in finding out what the Bible has to say about an issue, and not relying fully on a tradition or a particular church's teaching.

Essentially, the answer to your question has two parts. First, what is true worship? Second, does the use—or non-use of instruments—diminish or enhance the worship experience offered to the Lord?

To answer the first part, let's look to Jesus Christ.

Jesus is quite clear regarding New Testament worship. In the Gospel of John, Jesus spoke to a woman who was tripped up on the whole theme of worship—much like us sometimes. When she asked Jesus where to worship, Jesus gave a very simple and direct answer: "The hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father... But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:21, 23-24).

Here we find Jesus using two words in relation to worship: spirit and truth. This is exactly how we are to worship.

Now let's move to the second aspect of your question: the use of instruments. If you are worshipping God—as Jesus states—you don't need instruments to do so. But the Bible encourages us to use instruments. And as believers

trying to be faithful to biblical principles, I think the use of instruments in worship is very biblical.

You mentioned Psalm 150 and this is a great place to start. In this psalm we find almost every class of instrument mentioned: stringed, percussive, woodwind, and brass. And we find all of these instruments being used to worship God throughout the Bible—from the flutes mentioned in Genesis to the trumpets in the book of Revelation.

But let's not stop at Psalm 150. There are literally dozens of references throughout the entire Bible that describe the use of instruments. Here are just a few:

"Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances" (Exodus 15:20).

"Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the Lord on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals" (2 Samuel 6:5).

"Sing to the Lord with the harp, with the harp and the sound of a psalm, with trumpets and the sound of a horn; shout joyfully before the Lord, the King" (Psalm 98:5-6).

I would suggest that Scripture encourages us to use instruments to worship God. I believe that instruments enhance and not diminish the worship of God. Instruments allow us to artfully proclaim His greatness. Instruments afford us the opportunity to use our God-given talents to exalt Him. And the ability to play an instrument is often a gift from God—always to be used for His glory.

Although I don't think your church is disobeying God for not using instruments, I don't feel excluding them is an accurate or complete biblical approach towards honoring God through music.



IN 1972, CHRISTIAN SONGWRITER LARRY NORMAN RELEASED HIS ALBUM ENTITLED "ONLY VISITING THIS PLANET". LARRY WAS A TRUE MUSICAL PIONEER, THE "FATHER" OF CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC. ON THE ALBUM—TRACK 4, SIDE Z—HE ASKED: "WHY SHOULD THE DEVIL HAVE ALL THE GOOD MUSIC?"

His point? Christian music had been boring and stale but rock music was exciting and fresh. Why couldn't Christian music be electrifying and original as well? He criticized music he deemed bad and unoriginal—versus the newer waves of rock, blues, and folk.

But the debate between "Christian" and "contemporary" and "secular" and "traditional" music was nothing new. Five hundred years earlier, Martin Luther also recognized the chasm dividing the music. Here are a few of Luther's own thoughts:

*"I have no pleasure in any man who despises music. It is no invention of ours: it is a gift of God. I place it next to theology. Satan hates music: he knows how it drives the evil spirit out of us."*

*"Music is a discipline, and a mistress of order and good manners. She makes the people milder and gentler, more moral and more reasonable."*

*"Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world."*

*"Music is the art of the prophets and the gift of God."*

*"The devil does not stay where music is."*

The debate hasn't died out—it's still driving and dividing. There are many well thinking Christians on both sides of this issue. Some claim rock music is of the devil. Others say the "old, traditional hymns" are outdated and irrelevant today. Still others split the difference and attempt to take those ancient songs and contemporize them with fresh life.

Who's right?

Here's a thought. What if we don't view music as "Christian" versus "secular" or "old" versus "new"? What if we look at music from the vantage point of being neutral, with the possibility of being—musically—good or bad? The truth is there's good secular music out there—and there's bad Christian music. And vice versa.

In Philippians Paul wrote, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Notice the things we should be thinking about: all the positive and redemptive elements in any given situation. So does the music we listen to fall within these categories? Is it pure? Is it lovely? Is it good?

We'll find that some "Christian" music isn't good at all—maybe it's performed poorly—while a secular performance may highlight God's creation or pure love. In this case, which is the best to listen to?

Let Scripture lead the debate. Let the Bible inspire and motivate Christian artists to strive to be in the image of God: a creator of that which is good.



P O T S

# THE DEVIL'S MUSIC

By Skip Heitzig

# a call to TRUE

Oh, brother or sister, God calls us to worship, but in many instances we are in entertainment, just running a poor second to the theaters.

That is where we are, even in the evangelical churches, and I don't mind telling you that most of the people we say we are trying to reach will never come to a church to see a lot of amateur actors putting on a home-talent show.

I tell you, outside of politics there is not another field of activity that has more words and fewer deeds, more wind and less rain.

What are we going to do about this awesome, beautiful worship that God calls for? I would rather worship God than do any other thing I know of in all this wide world.

I would not even attempt to tell you how many hymn books are piled up in my study. I cannot

sing a lick, but that is nobody's business. God thinks I am an opera star!

We will be making a mistake if we just stand back and say, "But if we give ourselves to worship, no one will do anything."

On the contrary, if we give ourselves to God's call to worship, everyone will do more than he or she is doing now. Only, what he or she does will have significance and meaning to it. It will have the quality of eternity in it—it will be gold, silver and precious stones, not wood, hay and stubble.

I wish that we might get back to worship again. Then when people come into the church they will instantly sense that they have come among holy people, God's people. They can testify, "Of a truth God is in this place."<sup>1</sup>

D

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from *Whatever Happened to Worship? A Call to True Worship*.

**A.W. Tozer (1897–1963)** was an American Christian pastor, author, and spiritual mentor. He received two honorary doctorate degrees.



*The Dead Pastors' Society is a class Skip Heitzig teaches at the School of Ministry in which he introduces students to the preachers of yesteryear.*

# worship



"A man can no more diminish God's glory by refusing to worship Him than a lunatic can put out the sun by scribbling the word 'darkness' on the walls of his cell."

— C.S. Lewis

"Man, so long as he remains free, has no more constant and agonizing anxiety than find as quickly as possible someone to worship."

— Fyodor Dostoevsky

"The highest form of worship is the worship of unselfish Christian service. The greatest form of praise is the sound of consecrated feet seeking out the lost and helpless."

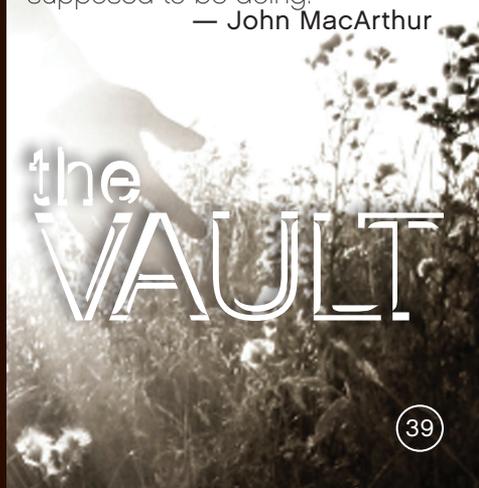
— Billy Graham

"God is to be praised with the voice, and the heart should go therewith in holy exultation."

— Charles H. Spurgeon

"So-called worship seems little more than some liturgy (high or low) equated with stained-glass windows, organ music, or emotion-filled songs and prayers. If the bulletin didn't say 'Worship Service,' maybe we wouldn't know what we were supposed to be doing."

— John MacArthur



the  
VAULT

# TAKE & READ

Pastor Skip's forthcoming book is entitled, *Homeland Security? Protecting Your Faith, Family, & Future*. Pastor Skip focuses on what God's word says about how we can best protect three very important areas of our lives.

**UNTIL** a few years ago, no one in the United States was talking about a war on terror and the word al Qaida wasn't in our vocabulary. A day in September 2001 changed everything and a new enemy surfaced. Now it's common to consider that some people in the world don't like us and even want to destroy us.

The focus of this book is Homeland Security, but not in the way that you might think. While our country is in danger of terrorist attacks, and we will touch on that in these pages, we have a greater enemy than terrorism. Yes, our homeland is under attack. But I'm talking about our homes, our family, our children and our churches. And the common key for each of these elements is the matter of the soul: because our souls are also under attack. In Ephesians, the Apostle Paul gave us the battle briefing and wrote, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world" (Ephesians 6:12 niv).

According to Paul, our real enemies are a host of demonic beings—including the devil himself. When the average person hears any mention of demons or the devil, their response is much like Woodrow Wilson's aunt, "Oh don't be silly. That's not real." People downplay the spiritual aspect as though it's not the real problem.

Until the attacks on the World Trade Center, the United States didn't have a Department of Homeland Security. Today, there are 200,000 employees in that federal government department. Their charge is to assess and respond to

terrorist threats to the public. They've created a color-coded system with different levels of threats ranging from green to red. Red is the most severe while green is the most mild. Our current threat rating in America is at the elevated yellow level which means a significant terrorist threat. Whether you fly domestic or international, the level rises to the orange level because flying is a more severe threat with a higher risk of terrorism.

What methods do you use to get discernment and direction with conviction? In these aimless times, how do you think clearly and live with faith and peace in the midst of turmoil? I created a starting process of three positive commands to use in threatening times. First, realize. Second, recognize. Finally, respond. As believers, we want to realize our position and then recognize the perils which are around us. Armed with this knowledge, we do something about it; we respond to the prospect or the opportunity.

Back in the 1950s, Tommy Bolt was a professional golfer with a name that resonated in the golf community. While in Los Angeles for a match, everybody in golf knew that Tommy Bolt's caddy was a chatterbox who talked throughout the whole game. Before Tommy teed off, he turned to his caddy and said, "Okay, in this game you don't say a word unless I ask you. Then you say either yes or no. Got it?"

"Yes." So Tommy swung, took his tee shot, and then he walked out to the fairway to find the ball. He located the ball under a tree and a bit off the fair-

HOMELAND SECURITY?

PROTECTING YOUR  
FAITH, FAMILY, & FUTURE

SKIP HEITZIG

B

way. To make the tough shot, he had to shoot underneath the tree, over a lake and onto the green. He looked at the shot and then turned to his caddy and asked, "Five iron, don't you think?"

The caddy stood there and said, "No."

Tommy Bolt said, "What do you mean, not a five iron? Watch this." He grabbed a five iron and made the perfect shot which went under the tree, over the lake and on to the green landing about two feet from the cup. As he handed the club to his caddy and said, "What do you think of that? You can talk now."

The caddy said, "Mr. Bolt, you just hit the wrong ball."

Can you imagine? He made a perfect shot with the other guy's golf ball!

Today is the time for God's people to get into the right game. Many of us are just swinging at stuff. Learn what to aim at, jump into the game and evaluate your life. Some of you are very good at what you do, both professionally and in the community. I'm glad for that excellence. But in the pages of this book, I'm asking you to evaluate your actions in light of this question: Am I making an eternal impact? &

**SKIP HEITZIG** is the author of over twenty books and can be heard nationally on *The Connection* radio broadcast.

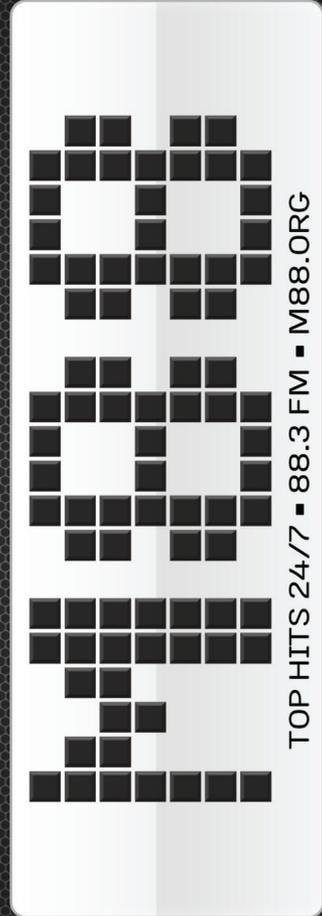
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**If** you have **not** already accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Savior— do it now. Please don't wait. With a sincere and repentant heart, pray:

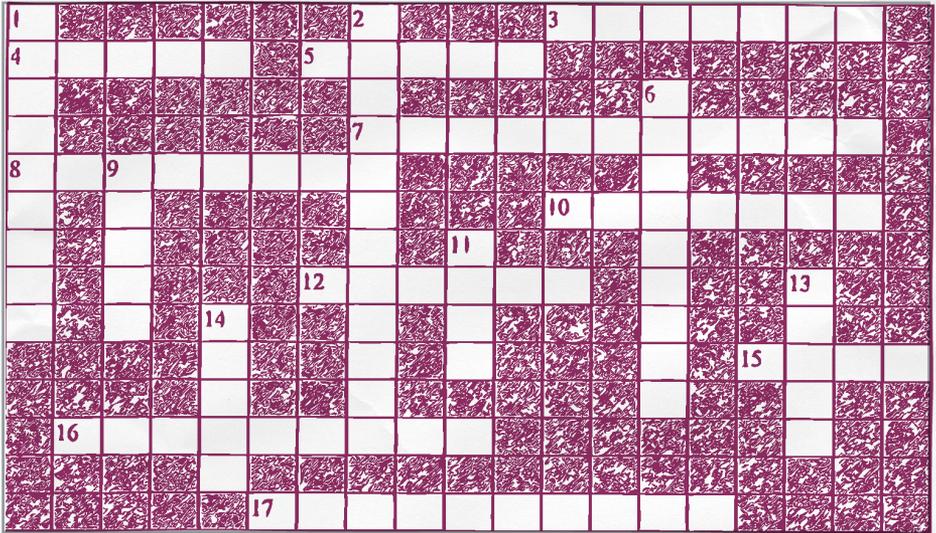
***"Father, I know I am a sinner. I repent of my sin, and turn away from it. I turn to Jesus. I believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again, saving all who believe in Him. Fill me with Your Spirit and come into my life. Transform me. Make me into a new creation. I pray this in Jesus' name, Amen."***

If you prayed this prayer, please contact  
Calvary of Albuquerque  
**505.344.0880**

**There are people waiting  
to hear from you!**



# Search the WORD



## ACROSS

3. "Sometimes we lack the "wow" in our \_\_\_\_\_" — Lenya Heitzig
4. "Let us \_\_\_\_ His name together" (Psalm 34:3)
5. "True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and \_\_\_\_" (John 4:23)
7. In Psalm 150, many \_\_\_\_\_ are used to worship God.
8. "And all the women went out after her with \_\_\_\_\_" (Exodus 15:20)
10. "Real worship is \_\_\_\_\_ God" —Skiillet
12. "We can and should \_\_\_\_\_ God with music" —TFK
15. "Blessed Be Your \_\_\_\_\_"
16. "Worship is a \_\_\_\_\_ of adoration" —Skip Heitzig
17. "Worship is \_\_\_\_\_ Him" —Anberlin

## DOWN

1. "That which is good is always \_\_\_\_" —Ninon de L'Enclos
2. "If there is anything \_\_\_\_--meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8)
6. 81% of women describe worship as very \_\_\_\_\_
9. "\_\_\_\_\_ is the art of the prophets and the gift of God" —Martin Luther
11. "Let us \_\_\_\_ to the Lord!" (Psalm 95:1)
13. "It's about the \_\_\_\_\_ and not the \_\_\_\_\_"
14. "Worship is the missing \_\_\_\_\_ of the evangelical church" —A.W. Tozer

# NEXT ISSUE

+ Topic:

## EVIL

+ Guest Spot:

JOSH  
MCDOWELL

+ Off the Cuff

Chip Lusko

+ Dead Pastor's  
Society

JOHN WESLEY

+ More



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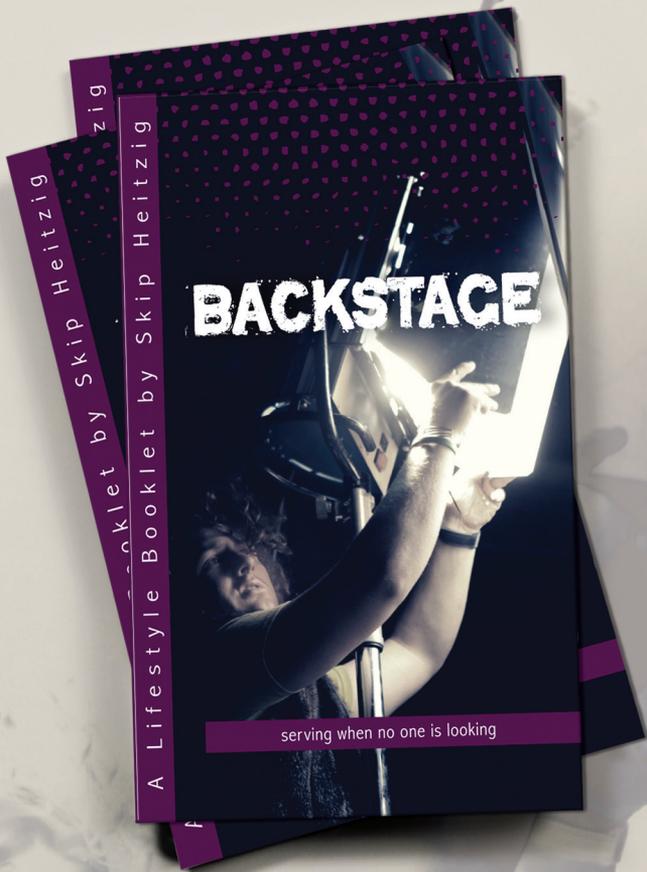
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# WHAT IS SERVING?

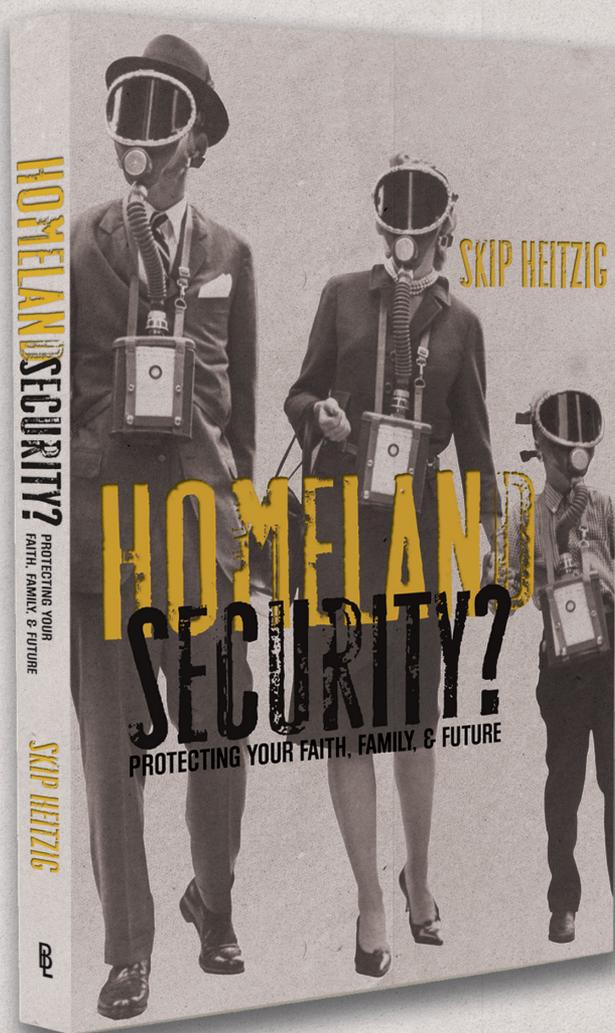
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In this booklet, Pastor Skip looks at Paul's letter to the Philippians. Here, Epaphroditus is given more space than any other single individual—including Timothy. That's because he was a great example of a true servant.

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# AVAILABLE SUMMER 2010

## FROM SKIP HEITZIG



Join pastor Skip Heitzig as he examines the basic components of today's society and looks at the threats that believers face.

This book focuses on what God's Word says about each of these areas and how we can best follow God's original plan for our faith, our families, and our future.

# BE PREPARED.

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