

# Effective Song Leading

Studies for Individuals and Congregations



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Thomas J. Sater

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*Dedicated to our three sons,  
Adam, Joshua, and David,  
who have filled our lives with  
indescribable joy, and whom  
we greatly admire*

*Hallelujah! My soul, praise the LORD.  
I will praise the LORD all my life;  
I will sing to my God as long as I live.*

*Psalm 146:1-2*

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## How This Book Came To Be

From my earliest childhood recollections, music in one form or another has been a part of my life. From learning the apostles' names in Bible class, to playing in school orchestras and marching bands, performing with friends and family at Florida College and FC summer camps, helping my sons produce and mix their own original digital tunes, and singing praises throughout my life to the great God who gave us such an amazing gift, music has always been an integral part of my personal fabric.

I began leading singing as a young teenage Christian in the 1970s. At that time, the group we worshipped with had only two adult song leaders. Neither man really had much musical ability, but I certainly give them credit for putting forth the effort. And, to my knowledge, none of the rest of the congregation had much in the way of formal or informal musical training, especially among the men.

My song-leading "career" began, therefore, in trial-and-error fashion, with no one in the local congregation to provide guidance and instruction, and with only the music education and experiences I'd received as a student to draw from. Between being used quite often at our home congregation, and stepping in to help at small country congregations whenever my dad would preach for them, I quickly gained a lot of on-the-job experience. But, lacking anyone to provide some formalized training in conducting congregational singing, it took me quite a while to feel that I had progressed to the point where I considered myself a *song leader*.

In early 2001, the church in Kenosha, Wisconsin, with which my family and I worshipped, set out to conduct a series of "how-to" classes for the men who had an interest in becoming more involved and effective in public worship activities. Topics for this series ranged from leading a public prayer to preaching, and everything in between. I volunteered to write the material for – and teach the men's studies on – song leading. My goal was to leverage more than 25 years of song-leading experience to provide class participants what I lacked in my youth: teaching materials, practical activities, constructive suggestions, and interactive in-person training toward becoming an effective song leader.

Those original materials and training sessions were quite well-received. Not only is the Kenosha church reaping the benefits to this day, but God is also receiving the benefits that more skilled song leaders can accomplish. The basic outlines and illustrations used in those initial training sessions were revised and refreshed in 2010 and again in 2015, and the updated versions were made available to a few nearby churches on a limited

basis. Like Kenosha, these churches reported positive results in helping their men develop congregational song-leading skills.

This book was created for the same reason I developed the original material back in 2001: There is a scarcity of instructional material to help men who aspire to develop into song leaders. Whether this book is used on an individual basis, or in a group setting, it is my sincere hope that it helps to fill that void for you.

The materials contained in this book have been significantly expanded from previous “lesson sheet” versions, incorporating additional material from sermons and Bible class materials I developed for the study of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and the importance of singing in our worship to God and for our own spiritual health. It also includes new illustrations, reference materials, training exercises, and other improvements suggested by various past users, to whom I am extremely grateful.

Tom Sater  
March 2018

# Lesson 1

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## The Importance of Singing in the Lives of God's People

### WHY?

In pondering the activities we engage in when we worship God, have you ever asked yourself *why we sing*?

Perhaps not, but maybe you've asked yourself one or more of these questions: *Why do we sing so much? Do we really have to sing? Is singing all that important? Does God really care about our singing?*

Or, you've possibly had some of these thoughts: *I don't really feel like singing. I'd rather sit and listen. It's only singing. I don't get much out of it. Singing isn't my "thing." I'm not a good singer...they're better off without me.*

Truth be known, each of us has probably entertained at least some of these thoughts and questions at some time in our lives. But if we really understood just how critically important singing is to the spiritual health of God's people, such thoughts and questions would be quickly purged from our minds.

From the earliest pages of Scripture through the awe-inspiring imagery of the book of Revelation, the people of God have used the medium of singing to express joy, praise, love, sorrow, adoration, thanksgiving, admonition, and instruction. Bible passages too numerous to mention here center around the topic of singing. The book of Psalms is an entire collection of inspired spiritually-focused lyrics designed to be sung. Solomon himself penned an entire book that is a song – the Song of Solomon. In short, the Bible has a lot to say on the subject of singing.

### OLD TESTAMENT SINGING

In the Old Testament, God's people employed singing as part of the way they worshipped their Creator and Deliverer. Consider the events immediately following the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the waters of the Red Sea:

*When Israel saw the great power that the Lord used against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and believed in Him and in His servant Moses. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. They said: I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted...The Lord is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will praise Him, my father's God, and I will exalt Him...*

*Exodus 14:31-15:1*

The Psalmist, too, encouraged singing as a way for God's people to declare His wonders and express their praise:

*Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord, shout triumphantly to the rock of our salvation! Let us enter His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout triumphantly to Him in song.*

*Psalm 95:1-2*

*Sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to Yahweh, praise His name; proclaim His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonderful works among all peoples.*

*Psalm 96:1-3*

## **NEW TESTAMENT SINGING**

### ***THE BIBLICAL PRECEPT***

For Christians, the biblical precept concerning singing is rooted in the Old Testament, not only in passages like those we have already examined, but particularly in the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah 11 and 12. In these chapters, Isaiah speaks of the coming Christ and the songs of joy and praise that will be offered up in those days by His people. Singing as part of worship in the Messianic age was foretold by one of God's great prophets.

In the New Testament, this precept was also established through the inspired commands found in Paul's letters to the Christians in Ephesus and Colossae:

*...be filled by the Spirit: speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music from your heart to the Lord...*

*Ephesians 5:18b-19*

*Let the message about the Messiah dwell richly among you, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, and singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to the Lord.*

*Colossians 3:16*

Both prophet and apostle make it clear that we are to sing in worship to God. It is a special activity that He desires that we do, and we will shortly see why.

### **THE BIBLICAL PRACTICE**

When we examine the practice of singing as revealed in the New Testament, we see glimpses of singing during Jesus' lifetime, then after the church was established, and finally after Christ's second-coming. All of these give us insight into the important part singing plays in the lives – temporal and eternal – of God's people.

Matthew 26 records Jesus with his disciples at the time He is instituting what is commonly called the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-30). After eating the supper with His disciples and explaining to them its significance, our Lord uses the occasion to engage them in the singing of psalms (v. 30) before they departed for the Mount of Olives.

In addition to Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, several other New Testament passages help us to understand the practice of singing by first-century Christians. Among such passages are:

- Acts 16:25 – While Paul and Silas were in prison, they were *"...praying and singing hymns to God..."*;
- Romans 15:9 – Paul quoted from 2 Samuel 22:50 when he described the glorification of God by the Christians in Rome: *"...I will praise You among the Gentiles, and I will sing psalms to Your name..."*; and
- James 5:13 – In the context of encouraging prayer by those who suffered and calling for the elders by those who were sick, James also said, *"Is anyone cheerful? He should sing praises..."*.

One of the many glorious scenes depicted in the book of Revelation is the worship of the four living creatures and 24 elders in chapter 5. Verses 9-10 reveal the "new song" that they sang to the Lamb of God. Later, in chapter 14, the Lamb is in the presence of

144,000 who “...had His name and His Father’s name written on their foreheads...” (v. 1); they too sang a “new song” (v. 3) in the presence of the throne. But perhaps the most sublime scene is that which is found in chapter 15, where all the innumerable host of the redeemed are standing on the glassy sea and singing the song of God’s servant Moses and the song of the Lamb:

*Great and awe-inspiring are Your works, Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the Nations. Lord, who will not fear and glorify Your name? Because You alone are holy, for all the nations will come and worship before You because Your righteous acts have been revealed...*

*Revelation 15:3b-4*

Considering that Jesus Himself, His apostles and other disciples, and the entire population of heaven deem it proper to worship God through singing, how can we possibly refuse to do the same?

### **THE BIBLICAL PURPOSES**

We do not sing just because the Bible says so. Singing has purpose to the Christian, because singing serves several vital purposes.

The first purpose is to glorify and praise God. This is seen in the meaning of the word “hymn,” which is simply defined as a religious song, typically of praise to God. In addition to Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, Acts 16:25 and Hebrews 2:12 mention the singing of hymns, directing praise and adoration to God.

The second purpose is to teach and admonish one another. Colossians 3 uses both of these words in the context of singing congregationally. The songs we sing should serve to educate one another on spiritual matters, and may also be used to warn, advise, and even reprimand one another when and where it is necessary. Note, too, that as we do this, we are publicly declaring our faith before others.

The third purpose is to enrich oneself with the Word of God. Not only is the teaching and admonition directed to one another, it is also directed to oneself. Every time we speak to one another in song, we should also be speaking to ourselves.

Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs reaches *upward* to God, *outward* to others around us, and *inward* to ourselves.

## **THE “MAGIC” OF SINGING**

There is no doubt that God’s people should be singing people. Not only should we sing in obedience to His wishes, but our singing is a vehicle through which God can be glorified, others can be edified, and we can be spiritually enriched.

But...why *singing*???

God does not answer this question for us, so we may never know for certain. However, from my perspective, and for want of a better word, there is something “magical” in singing. Here are three “magical” qualities that singing possesses.

### ***THE MESSAGE STAYS WITH US***

Words set to music have an uncanny way of sticking in our minds. If your background is like mine, you no doubt learned the names of the 12 apostles by singing the “Apostles’ Song” in your youth. You also very likely learned the books of the New Testament by singing them. If you were asked to recite Matthew 6:33, 7:7, and 4:4 from memory, you might be challenged to do it. But if you started to hear the tune to *Seek Ye First*, which is simply these three passages set to music, it is quite likely the words would come flooding back to you as easily as the music itself.

How many times have we been on the way to work or school, or busy around the house, or simply relaxing on our favorite couch, and a hymn comes to mind? Because the memory of the tune is powerful enough to resurrect the memory of the words too, we can re-live the message of that hymn over and over again, any time, anywhere, and benefit from it every time.

### ***MEMORY AND EMOTION TRIGGERS***

Music can be a very powerful memory trigger. There are both spiritual and secular songs I know that, when I hear them, I remember the first time I ever heard them...where I was, what I was doing, who I was with. Sometimes, I remember a significant event associated with a song...a wedding, a funeral, a performance, a movie, a date. When I hear such songs, I am instantly transported to another place and another time.

Often, with that memory comes a recollection of the emotions I felt at the time. I may recall exhilaration, grief, nervousness, happiness. Frequently, the recollection of these emotions from the past evokes an emotional response in the present that is as intense as the original. When I was 14, we sang *Be With Me, Lord* at the funeral of an elderly man whom I dearly loved, and I remember sobbing heavily the entire time it was sung.

My emotional memory tied to that event makes it nearly impossible for me to sing that song even today, more than 40 years after the fact.

Sometimes, it is the message itself that brings an emotional response. I often find it difficult to sing all the way through most songs dealing with the Lord's death without getting a lump in my throat. I can't help but respond emotionally as I am reminded of the Savior's agony and sorrows that were a direct result of my own sin.

As we sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, we should recognize that the memories and emotions that these songs may evoke are a part of what makes singing so powerful.

### ***ORDERLY CONCURRENT SPEAKING***

Stand in the midst of an auditorium full of people before the start of a worship service, and you will likely witness dozens of conversations going on all at once. Although there is a lot of concurrent speaking taking place, it is anything but orderly. And if you asked someone in one corner of the auditorium what was being said in the opposite corner, I highly doubt that they would be able to tell you.

In our worship, however, we are required to leave disorder behind and conduct ourselves in an orderly fashion. Paul addressed this very issue in 1 Corinthians 14:26-40, because the church in Corinth had fallen into disarray in its worship activity and was failing to behave in a way that promoted edification. At the end of the passage, Paul tells the brethren in Corinth, *"But everything must be done decently and in order"* (v. 40).

At the same time, however, Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 instruct us to be speaking to one another, to be teaching one another, and to be admonishing one another. How can we do this without it becoming mass chaos and confusion with very little edification?

Singing is the answer. Singing makes it possible for a plurality of people to speak to, to teach, and to admonish one another in a way that is both decent and orderly. When we sing, we are voicing a message at the same time everyone else is. Yet, because what we say is coordinated into a common message by the lyrics, and the utterance of those lyrics is synchronized together by the music, the outcome is not one of confusion and chaos, but of unity and edification. We all are participants in communicating the same message to one another, at the same time, in a united and orderly fashion.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Singing is an amazing and powerful tool. God has given it to us as a way through which we can glorify Him, share and embrace His Word, outwardly declare our faith, and be connected on an emotional level. It is a part of who we are as Christians, both in this life and in the life to come.

Now it is time to ask another question: *How do we make our singing as effective as possible?*

The next lessons are designed to help address that question.



# Lesson 2

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## Toward More Effective Congregational Singing

### THE BENEFITS OF SINGING

As we have studied so far, God's people have always sung as part of their worship. And, as we look into our own anticipated future, singing will be a part of the glorified saints' eternal activity around the throne of the Almighty.

Singing brings immense spiritual benefits. Through it we verbally and outwardly exalt and praise God, share His Will with others, engrain the Word in our own minds for easy remembrance, and comply with His commands. Recall these words toward the close of the book of Revelation:

*Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

*Revelation 22:14 (KJV)*

"...Right to the tree of life...enter in through the gates of the city..." Immense spiritual benefits indeed!

Since so much is at stake, what can we do to make our singing as effective as possible, so that we can maximize these benefits?

### LEADERSHIP

A company. A ship's crew. A movie cast. A sports team. A church. All of these groups function *best* when they have proper leaders. Leaders set the course, define goals and expectations, coordinate activities, orchestrate resources, correct misguided behavior, and assure that the collective functions in a unified way that is focused on achieving its objectives. These groups *can* function without leaders, or without good leaders, but the results are never nearly as good as properly-led groups, and often end in disaster.

Any collective activity needs good leadership in order to live up to its potential. Congregational singing is no different. Without good song leadership, a congregation may be left to fend for itself to start and stay together, determine when to speed up or slow down, figure out what key to sing in, etc. Good and effective song leadership, however, eliminates these and other problems, raises the congregation up to a better level of achievement, and helps it to maximize the benefits of singing.

As we will discuss in detail starting in Lesson 3, there is a great deal that we can do to become more effective song leaders. For the balance of this lesson, we will consider the topic of the collective and its role in effective congregational singing. [Author's note: The material contained in the balance of this lesson makes for an excellent full-congregation study. I highly recommend it be used accordingly.]

## **THE COLLECTIVE**

A congregation is a collective. It has the best chance of realizing its potential when everyone is engaged and contributing to the best of his or her abilities. This is true in working and studying together, spreading the Word in the community, and caring for one another's physical and spiritual well-being. Using the analogy of a body, Paul spoke of this concept in his letter to the church at Ephesus:

*From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.*

*Ephesians 4:16*

This concept also extends to our singing, and there are several things that we can do to make our congregational singing more effective.

## **INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION**

We often think of groups as single, homogeneous entities. In fact, groups are made up of individuals. They may have the same purpose, goals, and interests, but they are still comprised of individuals. The most effective groups contain individuals who work together for the common good, with each individual member fully contributing his or her part. Ineffective or unwilling participants only serve to weaken and reduce the effectiveness of the collective's activity.

Paul's letters to the Christians at Ephesus and Colossae were addressed to "...the saints..." (Ephesians 1:1, Colossians 1:2). Thus, the direction he gave to "...one

*another...*” in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 was not providing instruction to *some* of the saints, or even *most* of the saints, but to the saints...*all* of the saints.

Note also that, in both texts, Paul’s direction is at the individual level: one another. Each individual member of a congregation, therefore, has a responsibility to participate in the collective activity of singing. Properly done, we each participate on several levels.

First, we participate vocally. Singing is an activity done with our mouth and our voice. Our singing should communicate spiritual thoughts, concepts, and ideas. The Psalmist wrote:

*Save me from the guilt of bloodshed, God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing of Your righteousness. Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.*

*Psalm 51:14-15*

Second, we participate intellectually. Singing is also an activity done with our minds. Therefore, we need to have our focus on the song’s message, understand and contemplate its meaning, and be edified by the message we are singing forth. In addition, what we sing must also be understandable by those around us so they, too, can be edified. In the same chapter where Paul instructed the Corinthians in proper and orderly worship activities, he emphasized the importance of understanding the message when he said:

*What then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with my understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with my understanding. Otherwise, if you praise with the spirit, how will the uninformed person say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying?*

*1 Corinthians 14:15-16*

Third, we participate spiritually. All of our worship must be done “...*in spirit and truth...*” (John 4:24). In addition to singing with understanding, we must also “...*sing with the spirit...*” (1 Corinthians 14:15). The songs that we sing are psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs...all of which center on spiritual matters. Our conduct should not be one of simply going through the motions, but rather to be actively engaged in rendering worship to our Maker.

Finally, we participate emotionally. As we sing together, we share the feelings of joy, celebration, grief, and triumph expressed in the lyrics. Sometimes, we are even moved when we observe the emotional response of those around us to what is being sung.

## ***FOLLOWSHIP***

Although a good leader is a critical element of effective collective activities, a leader without followers is nothing. Generals without armies to fall in rank behind them are powerless. A crew who commits mutiny undermines the intentions of the ship's captain. A church unwilling to follow Christ is doomed to failure and destruction.

A willingness to accept direction and guidance from leaders is called *followship*. For a song leader to be effective in his leadership, the congregation must cooperate by rendering the proper followship. Leadership coupled with followship is imperative to maintaining decent, orderly worship.

There will be times when this is difficult to do. We may feel that the song leader is dragging the songs, or has not selected songs we prefer to sing, or we may have some other "reason" for not wanting to follow. Still, it is the collective's place to follow his lead, and we should do so to the best of our abilities.

## ***SINGING'S BIBLICAL PURPOSES***

As we discussed in Lesson 1, the purposes of singing in our worship are:

1. To glorify and praise God;
2. To teach and admonish one another; and
3. To enrich ourselves with God's Word.

Keeping these purposes ever before us will help us maintain the proper frame of mind as we sing, and our commitment and devotion to God should make us want to sing.

## ***PUBLIC DECLARATIONS***

When we attend a wedding, it is not uncommon to hear the officiant observe that the bride and groom have made their vows "before God and in the presence of these witnesses." Those of us who have been to such weddings have indeed heard the happy couple commit themselves to one another "for better or for worse," "forsaking all others," and "until death do us part." Sometimes, unfortunately, some of those who were eyewitness have had to remind that same happy couple of the commitments they made: "I heard you say...you promised him/her...I was there when you gave your word."

When we sing congregationally, we are in the presence of our spiritual brothers and sisters as we publicly and vocally declare our devotion to God. They are eyewitnesses to our declarations, just as we are to theirs. Realizing the significance of the declarations of faith, devotion, and love that we make publicly should help us to worship soberly and

reverently, knowing that there are eyewitnesses watching and listening to us when we sing proclamations such as:

*I am Thine, O Lord!*

*I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord!*

*I Want to Be a Worker!*

*Mold Me and Make Me After Thy Will!*

*Jesus is All the World to Me!*

## **A WORD ON "SONG SERVICES"**

It is a common practice for congregations to devote some of their assemblies (usually a Sunday evening or midweek service) wholly to singing. Sadly, these services are often poorly attended, and it seems that there are misconceptions about the purpose of such services.

### ***WHAT A SONG SERVICE ISN'T***

First, a song service isn't simply a break from preaching. I know of no congregation who schedules a song service because the preacher needs a break from preaching, or the congregation needs a break from listening to him. It is not a "filler" service designed to provide relief from other forms of worship.

Second, a song service isn't an occasion of lesser importance. Simply because there may not be preaching, giving, and partaking of the Lord's supper, does not relegate a song service to some kind of second-class status. If this is our mindset, then we desperately need to re-study Lesson 1.

Third, a song service isn't merely a time to practice singing. It is true that some services may be devoted to learning new songs, and part of that process may entail singing one verse over and over, having everyone sing only the soprano line, or working through difficult parts of the music. However, we should recognize that we are still worshipping God.

Fourth, a song service isn't an hour for song leaders to be winging it. At least, it shouldn't be. We would never accept preachers or teachers who approached their responsibilities in this way.

Finally, a song service isn't an opportunity to visit somewhere else or to simply stay at home. Some people do this regularly. When they make this their practice, they are

publicly rejecting the activities that the local congregation has planned for itself as a collective, and have substituted their own desire to do something else. The collective is deprived of the contributions these individuals could make, and vice versa. Those who choose to absent themselves from song services should consider that singing praises around God's throne is an activity that His saints will be doing throughout all eternity.

### ***WHAT A SONG SERVICE SHOULD BE***

First and foremost, a song service should be an occasion to worship God with our spiritual family. This cannot be overemphasized. Those who are absent miss out on an excellent and beneficial opportunity to worship God and reap its benefits.

Second, because it is an occasion to worship, a song service should be considered as important as any other service. The activities of worship we engage in have no "degrees" of importance. Singing is not of lesser importance than giving, or preaching, or any other act of worship. God desires them all, and our devotion to Him should make us want to fulfill His desires.

Third, a song service should be an occasion where everyone is actively involved. Just like any other worship service, everyone should be in attendance, and participating to the best of their abilities.

Fourth, a song service should be a planned and decently-executed activity. Song leaders should come prepared to lead material they have already pre-selected. Leaders teaching new songs should know them well enough to teach to others. If possible, appoint a man to be in charge of arranging the activities for the service ahead of time (lining up song leaders, scripture-readers, someone to extend the invitation, etc.), and suggest he arrange sufficient material for the entire time allotted for the worship service.

Finally, a song service should be an occasion when new material can be learned. When we learn new songs that were previously unfamiliar or were not part of a congregation's "portfolio" of songs, we enrich both our singing vocabulary and our spiritual lives. We learn new ways to express spiritual thoughts and ideas, we absorb the messages these songs convey, and we share them with one another.





# Lesson 3

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## Song Leadership – First Things First

### A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

In Lesson 1, we studied the importance of singing in the lives of the people of God. We noticed that it is part of God's framework for our worship, and that it brings great blessings to those who engage in it.

In Lesson 2, we spent the majority of time exploring the role of the collective in effective congregational singing. We also introduced the topic of leadership, and highlighted how critical it is to the success of any collective activity.

Beginning in this lesson, we enter into a series of studies focused on developing and providing song leadership – the kind of leadership necessary to help a congregation live up to its full potential in this vital aspect of worship.

Music has a notation system and a language all its own, so a discussion of basic musical principles will be necessary. However, I am not attempting to provide comprehensive musical instruction, nor will there be an extensive, in-depth study of music, as both are far beyond the scope of my abilities and what is necessary to become an effective song leader.

For the song-leading novice, and for those with little or no musical background, studying and practicing in a small group of men is the perfect place to “break the ice” and gain the basic skills necessary to become a competent and effective song leader. There is nothing to fear...even experienced song leaders began somewhere and somehow.

You are encouraged to stretch your wings for the work of God. Only by pushing yourself and reaching out beyond your current abilities can you expect to grow. Give learning to lead singing everything you've got: Like any other endeavor, you will only get out of it what you put into it.

## **MORE ON NEW TESTAMENT MUSIC**

In Lesson 1, we discussed the biblical precept, practice, and purposes that are associated with singing in the New Testament. We noted the fact that singing was commanded (Ephesians 5:18-20, Colossians 3:16), we saw illustrations of the practice of first-century Christians (Acts 16:25, 1 Corinthians 14:15), we observed the upward / outward / inward nature of our singing, and that our public singing declares our faith and devotion in the presence of others. But before moving forward into a study of musical basics, there is more to be said on the topic of scriptural singing.

### ***WHAT KIND OF SONGS TO SING***

Although we did not dwell on it in earlier lessons, the Scriptures are both clear and specific as to the kind of songs that are permissible as part of our worship. Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 both tell us what they are: psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. These kinds of songs are defined as follows:

Psalm – A pious song; a song of praise

Hymn – A sacred song; a song of praise to God

Spiritual Song – A song with a spiritual focus and subject matter

It is obvious from these definitions that the songs that we sing in worship are to be comprised of concepts and principles that are holy and in harmony with His Will, and they must reflect the piety and respect due to Almighty God. Only songs that qualify to be genuine psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs are capable of providing the praise, teaching, and admonition that New Testament singing is designed to accomplish.

### ***SINGING WITH INSTRUMENTS***

It is becoming increasingly common to find mechanical instruments of music being used in worship activities by groups of what may have once been considered the Lord's people. These groups try to reason their way into embracing mechanical instruments from various points of argument.

Despite their arguments, however, there is no evidence that first-century Christians accompanied their singing with musical instruments. Instead, history tells us that instrumental music was introduced in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This took place about 900 years after the church was established and all the inspired Scriptures were written.

God never intended for Christians to play musical instruments in worship, and no New Testament passage authorizes it. Instead, the Christian's "instrument" for use when singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is the "heart" (Ephesians 5:19).

## **AUTHORITY FOR A SONG LEADER**

As in all things, we want to make sure that the things we practice are scriptural, and that they are done in a scriptural way. Such guiding principles prevent us from making changes (additions, subtractions, substitutions) to the authorized patterns we find in the New Testament. So, we need to ask ourselves this question: Do we have authority for a song leader?

As we noted in Lesson 1, Paul told the church in Corinth that “...*everything must be done decently and in order*” (1 Corinthians 14:40). Singing, of course, falls under the broad term “everything,” and is therefore subject to this admonition. It is true that we don’t read about song leaders in the New Testament, but we must carry out our singing in a decent and orderly way. And so, we have general authority employ whatever means we have available to accomplish that goal, as long as we stay within the confines of what is scripturally authorized. These lawful means are commonly called expedients, as they expedite, or assist, the achievement of something else.

Musical instruments may be said to help singing be done in a decent and orderly way, but it can’t be said that they are in compliance with the New Testament passages that govern scriptural music. The only musical activity to be used in worship is singing, as has been previously discussed. So, because it is not first lawful, the playing of musical instruments in worship is not an expedient to decent and orderly singing.

Song leading, on the other hand, is different. From a musical perspective, a song leader adds nothing more than his own voice to the music activity in which the entire church is engaged, whereas the same cannot be said of the use of musical instruments. A song leader may also announce a song number, set the beginning pitch, indicate which verses are to be sung, and conduct the congregation with his hand, but none of these things alters the fact that singing – and only singing – is taking place. Song leading is a lawful means to an authorized end – an expedient to assist in decent, orderly singing.

In addition to this line of thinking, some students of the Bible see an implicit example of song leadership in 1 Corinthians 14:16, which reads in part, “*Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, another language, or an interpretation...*”. The thought of some Bible students is that the one who brings a psalm would need to teach it or lead the congregation in it. Whether this is the correct understanding of what this passage is teaching is uncertain, but if it is, it serves as additional authority for a song leader.



# Lesson 4

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## Song Leadership – Music Fundamentals

### IT STARTS WITH BUILDING BLOCKS

Letters, punctuation marks, the parts of speech, grammatical syntax, capitalization, italicization, bolding, underlining, and vocal tone, inflection, and volume are all building blocks of written and spoken language. Some are easy to understand while others may be more challenging to comprehend, much less master. Properly used, these building blocks help us to communicate clearly with one another, sharing thoughts, intentions, ideas, and emotions.

Music, like written and spoken language, is comprised of building blocks – basic elements that combine together to produce music. Music has its simple elements that are easy to grasp, as well as its more complex elements that may never be fully understood. Music is a great communicator of feelings and emotions. What would movies like *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, or just about any other film be without its musical soundtrack? They'd be extremely bland and nearly devoid of the emotional element that is a key part of the immersive quality of cinema.

In this lesson, we will learn about the basic building blocks of music, the fundamental elements that will help us understand music in general, and that will make sense out of what is being expressed on a printed page of music. Once equipped with a basic understanding of music's building blocks and how they work together, we can then begin to confidently lead congregations in the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with all the vigor, expression, feeling, and emotion their authors intended.

Much of this lesson's discussion on fundamental elements will make reference to hymns containing examples of these elements; the title of each song will be shown in *italics*. As you work through this lesson, it will be helpful for you to have your hymnal open beside you so that you may turn to each hymn as it is referenced. Appendix A, which begins on page 51, contains a cross reference of all hymns used as illustrations in this lesson book, showing the hymn number as it is found in each of six popular hymnals: Hymns for Worship (Revised); Sacred Selections; Songs of Faith and Praise; Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; Praise for the Lord; and Songs of the Church.

## THE TONE AND ITS PROPERTIES

A *tone* is the most basic building block of music. Think of a tone as simply a musical sound.

Any tone may have different properties, variations that can alter a tone's sound. A tone's properties are additional building blocks that combine together to begin to create music. The different properties of a tone can be characterized as follows:

Pitch – The lowness or highness of a tone

Length – The longness or shortness of a tone

Power – The loudness or softness of a tone

Quality – The character of a tone

For the sake of simplicity, and to facilitate our study going forward, I like to think of these four properties of music as comprising three general “foundations,” as follows:

Melodics – The pitch of tones

Rhythmics – The length of tones

Dynamics – The power and quality of tones

In addition to these is the foundational concept of tempo, or the speed at which a piece of music transpires.

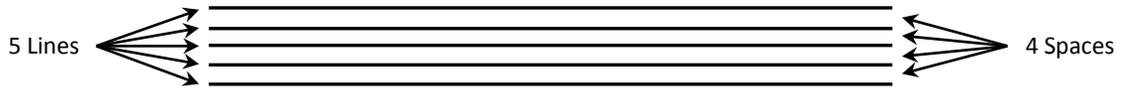
## MELODICS FUNDAMENTALS

Melodics – the changes in pitch from one tone to another – is what makes a song recognizable. A particular pattern of upward and downward pitch changes can be easily recognizable as a particular song, even if each tone is of the incorrect length (tone length will be discussed under Rhythmics Fundamentals later in this lesson).

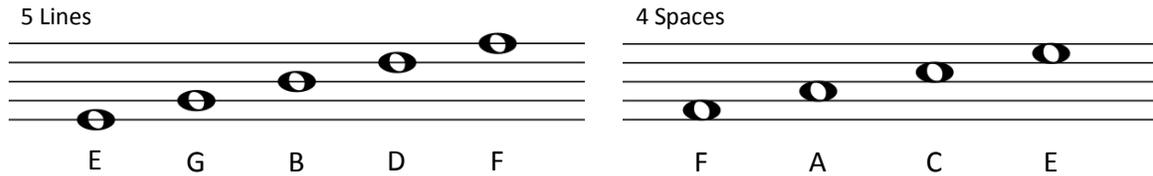
This can be easily illustrated by the song *Happy Birthday To You*. Just about anyone familiar with this song can instantly recognize it solely based on the pattern of upward and downward pitch changes, *even if the words are missing and the rhythmics are all wrong*.

### **MELODICS IN WRITTEN MUSIC**

Music uses a five-line / four-space horizontal “grid,” called a **staff**, as the structure on which music is written. A staff looks like this:



A tone's pitch is represented by a line or a space on the staff, while each line or space is represented by a letter ranging from A to G.



Lines can be remembered by the phrase **Every Good Boy Does Fine**. Spaces can be remembered by the word **FACE**.

Much like an alphabet uses different letters to represent different sounds, musical tones are expressed as symbols appearing within the staff (usually ovals, but often "shape-note" style in hymn books). These symbols are located either on the lines or in spaces between the lines.



When tones are expressed by symbols on a staff, they are called **notes**. Notes higher in the staff are higher in pitch, while notes lower in the staff are lower in pitch.

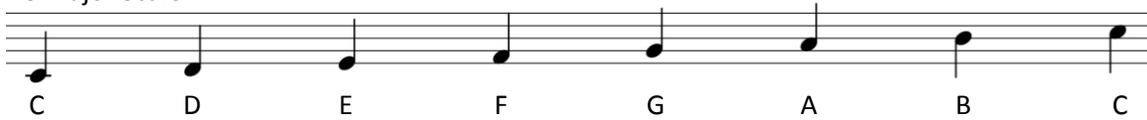
Continuing the alphabet analogy, in the same way a series of letters spells a word, and a series of words makes a sentence, a series of notes can be combined to create a **melody**. Sometimes, the melody of a song is also called the **tune** of the song.

### **THE MUSICAL SCALE**

A **scale** is a linear series of notes (usually eight) that comprises an **octave**. The notes of a scale can be described in two ways, *absolute* and *relative*.

Absolute (or pitch) names: In the staff shown in the middle of this page, the notes in the scale are referred to by their absolute, or pitch, names. A scale *may* begin on *any* specific absolute note. At the top of the next page is a comparison of a C Major scale and an F Major scale using absolute pitch names.

### C Major Scale



### F Major Scale



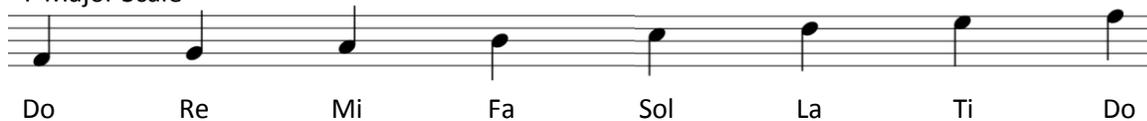
In each case, the notes in the scale are described by their pitch names. G in the C Major scale (the fifth note) is shown on the second line of the staff. G in the F Major scale is also shown on the second line of the staff, even though it is the second note of the F Major scale. The point is that, in each case, *absolute* names describe each note corresponding to its position in the *staff*.

Relative (or Do-Mi-Sol) names: We use relative naming when we indicate things as “first,” “second,” “third,” etc. A scale using relative naming uses this approach to describe notes using the following eight names: “Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do.” Because these names correspond to each note’s place within the scale, the first note is always called “Do,” the second note “Re,” etc. Below is a comparison of a C Major scale and an F Major scale using relative pitch names.

### C Major Scale



### F Major Scale



Although the absolute name of the first note of the C Major scale is C and the absolute name of the first note in the F Major scale is F, the *relative* name of the first note of each scale is “Do.” In each case, *relative* names describe each note corresponding to its position in the *scale*.

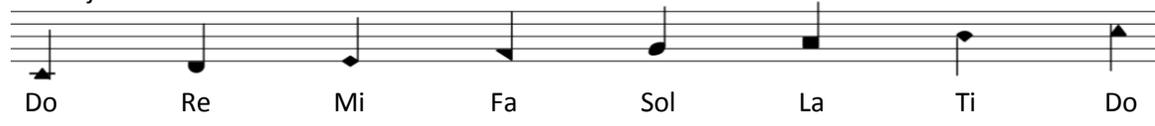
## SHAPE NOTES

Music is typically written using an oval to indicate whether a note lies on a line or a space within the staff. In 1801, however, a musical notation style called **shape notes**

was introduced to assist in congregational and other types of collective singing. This approach replaced the oval shape with a variety of other shapes, each corresponding to a relative (or *Do-Mi-Sol*) note name. The introduction of shape notes significantly improved the ability to sight read music and learn unfamiliar songs.

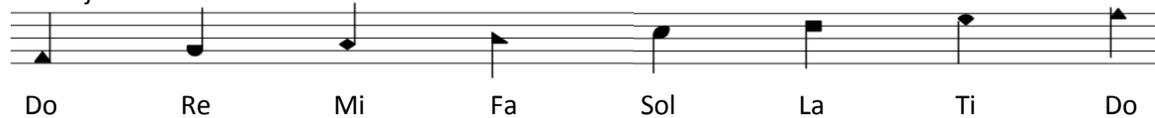
Below is a comparison of a C Major scale and an F Major scale, each written using shape notes.

C Major Scale



Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do

F Major Scale



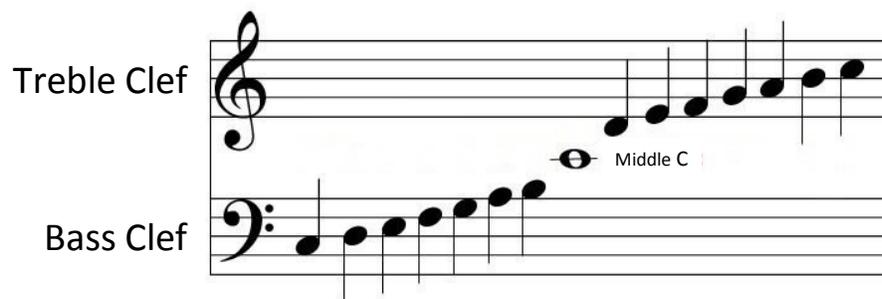
Do Re Mi Fa Sol La Ti Do

Shape notes have the advantage of presenting a note on its proper line or space within the *staff*, while at the same time visually conveying its place within the *scale*.

### **OTHER PITCH-RELATED ELEMENTS FOUND ON A STAFF**

In addition to the notes themselves, a number of other pitch-related elements of information may be found in a staff. These include the clef, chromatic notations and accidentals, and the key.

Clef: A clef is a musical notation that serves as a reference point for the naming of other notes in a staff. A **treble clef** looks similar to a cursive S, while a **bass clef** looks similar to a question mark followed by a colon. Music written on the treble staff is typically for soprano and alto singers, while music written on the bass staff is typically for tenor and bass singers.



Treble Clef

Bass Clef

Middle C

Chromatic Notations and Accidentals: Chromatic notations and accidentals indicate a change from or to the normal tone of a particular note, and include those listed below. The chorus of *Sing On, Ye Joyful Pilgrims* features all of these notations.

Flat – Indicates a lowering (by ½ step) of the normal tone of a note. The symbol for a flat looks like a lowercase “b”: ♭.

Sharp – Indicates a raising (by ½ step) of the normal tone of a note. The symbol for a sharp looks like a “pound/hashtag sign”: ♯.

Natural – Indicates a *temporary return* from a flat or sharp to the normal tone of the note. The symbol for a natural looks like a box with wings: ♮.

When flats or sharps appear just to the right of the treble and bass clefs, they comprise the chromatic notation or **key signature** of the song, and define the song’s **key** (discussed below). When flats or sharps appear elsewhere in the song, they are called **accidentals**. They indicate a *temporary* lowering or raising of the tone from however the key signature defines it.

Key: A **key** is a combination or family of related tones. The name of the key indicates the specific absolute-name note on which the related scale begins. The key *always defines what note is “Do.”* For example, the key of C Major begins and ends with the note C (and C is “Do” for the key of C), while the key of B♭ Major begins and ends with the note B♭ (and B♭ is “Do” for the key of B♭).

The key is specified by a **key signature**, which appears on each line of music, just to the right of the clef. Common key signatures are shown below.

The image displays two rows of musical notation, each consisting of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first row shows key signatures for major keys: C Major (no sharps or flats), G Major (one sharp: F#), D Major (two sharps: F#, C#), A Major (three sharps: F#, C#, G#), E Major (four sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#), B Major (five sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#, A#), F# Major (six sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#), and C# Major (seven sharps: F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#, B#). The second row shows key signatures for minor keys: F Major (one flat: Bb), Bb Major (two flats: Bb, Eb), Eb Major (three flats: Bb, Eb, Ab), Ab Major (four flats: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db), Db Major (five flats: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb), Gb Major (six flats: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Cb), and Cb Major (seven flats: Bb, Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Cb, Fb).

## RHYTHMICS FUNDAMENTALS

When combined with note pitch, rhythmic (changes in note length) adds even greater definition to a song. When the upward and downward patterns of pitch changes are given longer and shorter durations, a song begins to emerge.

### ***THE BEAT AND THE MEASURE***

The basic elements of rhythmic are the **beat** and the **measure**. Both are critical to the synchronized and coordinated quality of music.

Beat: The beat is simply the regular, steady pace of the song. It can be compared to the ticking of the second hand of a clock, where time marches on in a constant and unwavering fashion. In a song, the beat is also constant and unwavering (although there are exceptions, which will be covered later). But unlike time, however, a song may have a *fast* beat, a *slow* beat, or something *in between*, when compared to other songs.

Measure: A measure is a grouping of a specific number of beats, as defined by the song itself through its **time signature** (discussed below). Using the time analogy again, a collection of 60 seconds is called “1 minute.” We can count whole minutes, and even divide minutes up into smaller units, such as half-minutes, quarter-minutes, tenths of minutes, seconds, etc. We could even divide up a minute into unequal parts: one half-minute and two quarter-minutes, for example. But no matter how we divide it, every minute is exactly the same length (60 seconds) and all of the smaller units must total back up to the full minute.

In a song, a measure is similar to a minute on the clock. Each measure is the same length, and can be divided into smaller units (whole, half, quarter, eighth, etc.). But, no matter how it is divided up, all of the smaller units must add back up to the whole.

The time space contained in a song’s measure can be filled with either sound or silence. When sound fills the space, this sound is called a **note**. When silence fills the space, this silence is called a **rest**. Notes and rests both consume time as a song progresses. The only difference is whether you hear it or not.

### ***MUSICAL MATH – SLICING THE PIE***

The metric system is built on “base 10” math, where various units of measure are governed by multiples of 10. For instance, 10 centimeters equals 1 decimeter, 10 decimeters equals 1 meter, 10 meters equals 1 dekameter, and so on. Each unit of measure is  $1/10^{\text{th}}$  of the next highest unit of measure. For instance, 1 decimeter is  $1/10^{\text{th}}$  of a whole meter.

Other “bases” also exist. Some ancient civilizations used a “base 60” system, which lent extreme precision to the calculations they made regarding the movement of the earth and other celestial bodies. Portions of the way we typically think of time can be considered a “base 60” system: 60 seconds equal 1 minute, and 60 minutes equal 1 hour. So it is correct to say that 1 second is  $1/60^{\text{th}}$  of a whole minute.

Likewise, music is a system built on various “bases” of math, with “base 4” being the most common. That is, the “whole” is generally thought of as divisible into four equal parts, with each part being  $1/4^{\text{th}}$ , or one quarter, of the whole. Thus, the concept of the quarter is a fundamental aspect of musical math, as will be discussed in the next section.

### ***RHYTHMICS IN WRITTEN MUSIC***

Just as notes, clefs, and chromatic notations are placed on the staff, so too are the notations that indicate the various elements of rhythmics. These elements include the bar line, notes and rests, and timing.

Bar Line: A measure is divided from other measures by a vertical **bar line**. A bar line is the musical equivalent of the 12:00 position on a clock in the sense that counting toward the “whole” starts over.



The time that passes between each pair of bar lines is exactly the same, just like the amount of time it takes the second hand to sweep from the 12:00 position back to the 12:00 position is the same for each minute.

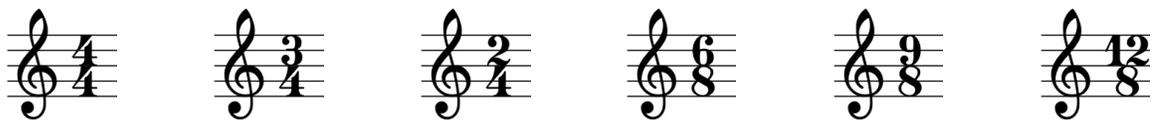
Notes and Rests: As introduced above, the concept of the quarter is a fundamental aspect of musical math. Notes and rests are given names that correspond to the fraction of a “whole” that they represent. This naming convention is based on a standard measure being defined as four beats per measure – or, in other words, one quarter of a measure per beat. Thus, for example, a quarter note gets one beat, a half rest gets two beats, etc. The chart at the top of the next page illustrates various note and rest lengths.

Whole Note / Rest = 4 Beats			= 1/1	
Half Note / Rest = 2 Beats			= 1/2	} = 1/2 + 1/4
Quarter Note / Rest = 1 Beat			= 1/4	
Eighth Note / Rest = 1/2 Beat			= 1/8	} = 1/4 + 1/8
Sixteenth Note / Rest = 1/4 Beat			= 1/16	} = 1/8 + 1/16

In musical math, the different lengths of notes and/or rests can be combined to add up to a whole. Below are some examples of note and rest combinations that all add up to a whole.

Fraction of a Whole: 1/4 1/4 1/4 1/4 1	1/2 1/8 1/8 1/4 1	1/16 1/16 1/16 1/16 1/4 1/4 1/8 1/8 1
Number of Beats: 1 1 1 1 4	2 1/2 1/2 1 4	1/4 1/4 1/4 1/4 1 1 1/2 1/2 4

**Timing:** Musical timing is what creates the rhythmic “feel” or “cadence” of a song. Musical timing is defined by a song’s **time signature**. While it is true that a whole minute on a clock is *always 60 seconds*, music is different. A measure’s length can *vary* from song to song, although it is generally (but not always) constant *within* a song. Some of the more common time signatures are shown below; song-specific illustrations will be provided in Lesson 5.



A time signature is made up of two numbers, which together resemble a fraction. Each number in the time signature communicates something about the timing of the song.

The Upper Number – This number indicates the number of beats in a measure. That is, it defines the length of the measure in terms of beats.

The Lower Number – This number indicates the type of note that receives one beat.

For instance, the first time signature, 4/4, indicates that there will be four beats per measure (the upper number), and that a quarter note (a 1/4<sup>th</sup> note) gets one beat (the lower number). By comparison, the second time signature, 3/4, indicates that there will be only three beats per measure (the upper number), and a quarter note gets one beat (the lower number).

### THE COMPLETE MEASURE

When considered together, the two numbers in a time signature describe what a “whole” – a complete measure – is. A 4/4 time signature describes a “whole” as being four quarter notes. A 3/4 time signature describes a “whole” as being three quarter notes. This approach is true for *any* time signature: A 9/8 time signature’s “whole” is equal to nine eighth notes, a 2/2 time signature’s “whole” is equal to two half notes, and so on.

Although the time signature defines what a complete measure is, and specifies what kind of note gets one beat, notes with different lengths can be combined within a measure, *as long as they all add up to the total number of beats per measure, as defined by the time signature.*

As described above, a song with a 4/4 time signature defines a measure as encompassing four beats. There may be any number of individual notes in a given measure, but their values (in terms of beats) must all add up to only four beats. Likewise, a song with a 3/4 time signature defines a measure as encompassing only three beats, and the notes’ beat values must all add up to only three beats. Each is illustrated below.

$$2 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} + 1 = 4$$

$$2 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 3$$

### DYNAMICS FUNDAMENTALS

Dynamics (changes in loudness and softness, or volume) adds yet another dimension to a song and what it expresses. While pitch and rhythm define the most recognizable aspects of a song, dynamics adds further color to a song’s message, feeling, and mood. For instance, songs of cheer or jubilation may be sung more loudly, reflecting the joyous or celebratory aspect of the lyrics. Songs of lament, on the other hand, may be sung in a

soft and subdued way, reflecting the soberness and solemnity expressed in the lyrics. Sometimes, a song includes both: In *Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah!*, the phrase "...and His glory is exalted..." is sung at three levels of loudness, building up to a final, shouting proclamation.

### **DYNAMICS NOTATION**

Dynamics notation, primarily based on Italian terminology, is straightforward and simple to learn. The choruses of the songs *Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah!* and *Master, The Tempest Is Raging* illustrate many of the following notations.

**ff** – “Fortissimo,” or very loudly.

**f** – “Forte,” or loudly.

**mf** – “Mezzo-forte,” or moderately loudly.

**m** – “Mezzo,” or moderately.

**mp** – “Mezzo-piano,” or moderately quietly.

**p** – “Piano,” or quietly.

**pp** – “Pianissimo,” or very quietly.

**cresc.** – “Crescendo,” or gradually louder and louder.

**dim.** – “Diminuendo,” or gradually softer and softer.

**>** – Accent mark, placed above a note, indicates that the specific note should be sung with a hard or loud emphasis. The accent mark can be seen in the chorus of *One Day*.

### **TEMPO FUNDAMENTALS**

Tempo deals with the fastness or slowness, or speed, of all or a portion of a song. Like dynamics, tempo can add yet another layer of expression to a song. Marching, fighting, and victory songs may be sung more briskly, consistent with the high-energy nature of the message. Lord’s supper songs and songs of sorrow may be sung more slowly, in keeping with the mood of the lyrics.

Sometimes, songs may be sung partly slowly and partly quickly to provide effect or emphasis. For example, *Christ Arose* has a slowly-sung verse followed by a briskly-sung chorus, with each tempo reflective of the mood and message of the different parts of the song. In contrast, *Our God, He Is Alive* is sung with a constant tempo throughout the song, except at the very end, where it slows for effect and emphasis.

## TEMPO NOTATION

Tempo notation is generally not given, insofar as a specifically-recommended speed for a song to be led. Usually, the word “slowly” or “quickly” will appear, such as in *Christ Arose*. However, certain tempo notations are worth noting.

**Rit.** – “Ritardando,” meaning gradually slower and slower. The last measure of *Our God, He Is Alive* features a ritardando.

**Rall.** – “Rallentando,” similar to ritardando, also meaning gradually slower and slower. The last two measures of the songs *In The Hour of Trial* and *The Lord Is In His Holy Temple* feature a rallentando.

 – “Fermata,” also called a “hold,” placed above a note, indicates that a note should be held for longer than its written value, during which time all tempo stops. The hold ends and the tempo begins again at the discretion of the song leader. The fermata is very common in hymnals, and many songs illustrate it, including *Our God, He Is Alive* (last note of the chorus).

## OTHER MUSICAL TERMS AND SYMBOLS

There are five other musical terms and symbols that deal with the path or flow of a song that are worth noting.

**Fine** – Pronounced “fee-nay,” it indicates an end of the song when one of the following symbols causes a “detour” during the normal flow of a song.

 – The sengo, also known as a “repeat sign,” indicates a place in the music (other than the beginning) that is returned to at a later point in the song.

**Dal Sengo** – Usually shown simply by *D.S.*, it is Italian for “From the Sign,” and indicates a return to the *sengo*, and continuing from there to the *fine*, as explained above. *This World Is Not My Home* illustrates *dal sengo*, *sengo*, and *fine* together.

**Da Capo** – Usually shown simply by *D.C.*, it is Italian for “From the Head,” and indicates a return to the *beginning of the song*, and continuing from there to the *fine*. *Tell Me The Story of Jesus* and *Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me* illustrate both *da capo* and *fine*.

**:** - This symbol, which looks like a colon, indicates that a line is repeated immediately. Often, the second singing of the repeated line ends differently than the original singing, with the first and second ending clearly indicated. *On Zion’s Glorious Summit* illustrates this.





# Lesson 5

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## Song Leadership – Effective Song Leading

### **BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION**

Up to this point, we have been preparing and laying the foundation for the ultimate objective of this book: to help you become an effective (or more effective) song leader. We have explored the importance of singing in the lives of God's people, studied the many benefits of effective congregational singing and the need for cooperative fellowship by the collective, examined the kinds of music scripturally approved for worship, and provided a very basic education on the fundamentals of music.

Now it is time to build on that foundation. This lesson first focuses on some considerations the song leader should ponder, then on the act of song leading itself.

### **THE SONG LEADER**

There are several matters that a prospective song leader should consider before taking up the business of leading others in the worship activity of singing.

#### ***SERIOUS BUSINESS***

Every song leader or prospective song leader should realize that leading singing is *serious business*. This is not said to frighten individuals away, but to emphasize its importance in coordinating and directing a congregation-wide worship activity. The sole purpose of the song leader is to help the congregation worship God in a way that builds up the body and reverences God appropriately, and the congregation puts its trust in the song leader to do exactly that.

When you come to understand that the song leader helps facilitate the spiritual activities of others, this should give you pause. Song leading deserves the same sober-mindedness and attention to doing what is right as teaching, preaching, leading prayers, or officiating at the Lord's supper table. Keeping this thought on the forefront of your mind should help prevent you from taking this responsibility lightly.

## **CLEAR AND VISIBLE LEADERSHIP**

In order to be an effective song leader, you will need to provide *clear and visible leadership*. This has significant implications.

First, this means you should be both *in charge* and *in control* of the singing activities. In its role as the follower, the congregation looks to the song leader to select scriptural and appropriate singing materials, set the pitch, determine the speed, indicate when to change speed and volume, indicate how long a fermata is held, decide whether a verse should be skipped, etc.

Second, this means you should use *every physical resource at your disposal* to be as effective as possible in providing clear and visible leadership. It is critical for the song leader to be *seen and heard*...before, during, and after the song. Ask yourself: “If I can’t be seen and I can’t be heard, what is the congregation going to follow? How will it know what I want to do?”

Most church buildings contain two pieces of equipment that can help significantly in being both seen and heard. They are nearly always used by the preacher, because the congregation wants to both see him as he preaches and hear his sermon. They are: a podium and a microphone. Yet all too often, song leaders shy away from both, and literally disappear into the crowd. In doing so, they fail miserably at providing the clear and visible leadership they should provide and the congregation deserves.

## **THE ACTIVITY OF SONG LEADING**

As should be clear by now, effective song leading involves a number of skills and abilities. At this point in your song-leading development, however, perhaps you are only at the point where you can start songs. If song-starting is what you are currently capable of, then do that much. Time, study, practice, and experience will help develop your weaker skills, and can transform you into a capable and able song *leader*.

Two of these skills remain to be studied: finding the right pitch for a song, and conducting with the hand. Becoming adept at both skills can significantly enhance your ability and effectiveness as a song leader.

## **FINDING THE RIGHT PITCH**

Finding the right pitch for a song – and then starting it on that pitch – is important! When properly pitched, nearly all of the songs we sing are written so they may be sung

within a comfortable range of notes. The lowest of the bass notes is not too low for most people who sing bass, and the highest of the soprano notes is not too high for most people who sing soprano.

However, pitching a song incorrectly, either too high or too low, causes the entire song to be “off.” Songs pitched too high or too low will make it hard to reach all of the song’s notes. It can often result in a complete distraction from the real purpose of the song itself: praising God, and teaching and admonishing one another. Those who try to sing through off-pitched songs – especially songs that are pitched too high – have to strain to hit notes that should be easily within their reach. Their thought is on mustering the wherewithal to hit some virtually-impossible note, rather than on the words, the message, and the reciprocal teaching of scriptural singing.

Unless you possess perfect pitch (and some very gifted people actually do), the use of a pitching device (pitch pipe, electronic pitch device, phone app, harmonica, tuning fork) as a *tool* or *aid* for determining the starting pitch of a song is highly recommended. Doing so provides several distinct advantages:

1. It eliminates the anxiety of finding the right pitch on your own;
2. It eliminates “restarts” because the pitch was too high or too low;
3. It helps engage the audience to prepare them to worship;
4. It allows the congregation to begin together; and
5. It adds confidence to your leading.

Below are illustrations of two popular pitching devices.

Kratt  
Master-Key  
Pitch Pipe



This side of the pitch pipe shows each note by name, as well as “half-step” notes in between



This side of the pitch pipe shows each note by name AND on the staff; it is easy to match to the printed page

---

Farley’s  
Pocket Tones™  
Pitch Instrument



This pitching instrument shows each note by name, as well as “half-step” notes in between

There are two primary methods for finding the right pitch for a song, depending on how musically-inclined or trained you are. The illustrations found on a basic pitch pipe (and most pitch apps for smartphones and tablets) make it possible for nearly anyone to properly pitch a song.

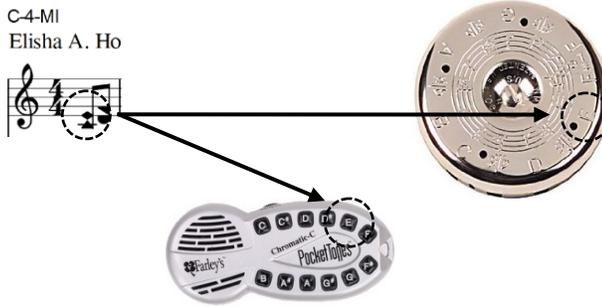
**THE STARTING-NOTE METHOD**

The starting-note method is easier for those who may not be musically-inclined or trained. No special in-depth knowledge of harmony, chords, keys, etc., is needed. Stated simply, this method consists of *using the pitching device to play the first note of the song, then beginning the song on the same note.*

**Example 1: *There Is A Fountain* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]** This song begins on the note of C below the staff. The song leader matches the beginning note of the song with the illustration of the same note on the pitching device. The song leader plays the note, listens to the sound of the pitch, hums that pitch to himself (and perhaps the next few notes of the song), then begins the song on that pitch.



**Example 2: *To Christ Be True* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]** Although this song is in the same key as Example 1, it does not start on the same note. Rather, it begins on the note of E toward the bottom of the staff. Even though the starting note is different, the song leader follows the same process as in Example 1, but uses the pitching device's illustration of an E to select and play the proper beginning note.



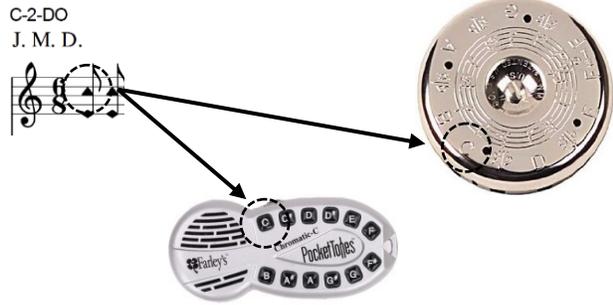
**Example 3: *Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]** Again, while this song is in the same key as the previous two examples, it begins on the note of G just below the middle of the staff. Again, the method of selecting the starting note does not change, although the song leader



would use the pitching device's illustration of a G to select and play the proper beginning note.

**Example 4: *Wonderful Story of Love* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]**

Once again, the key of this song is the same as the other three examples. This song starts on a C, like in Example 1, but instead of the C below the staff, it starts on the C in the upper portion of the staff. Regardless, the pitching process does not change...only the note selected changes (Note that some pitching devices contain an upper and lower C, while other pitching devices contain only a lower C).



**THE KEY NOTE (DO-MI-SOL / TRIAD) METHOD**

This method is considerably more difficult, and is recommended only for those who have been musically trained, or who have a natural musical talent, or have the ability to learn this method. In order to use the key note method, it is beneficial to have a solid knowledge of harmony, chords, and keys, and to be fluent in “Do-Mi-Sol” nomenclature (discussed in Lesson 4).

This method uses the special relationship between the first, third, and fifth notes of a scale (“Do,” “Mi,” and “Sol”), which work together to form a **3-note chord (or triad)**, in order to pitch a song. While this approach is admittedly more complex and requires more musical skill, it also provides tangible benefits to others in the congregation who are also musically-skilled. Fortunately, the informational notations found in *Hymns for Worship* and other hymn books make using this method easier than one might at first imagine. In fact, you may find that you prefer this method over the starting note method, once you become accustomed to using it. Whether or not you choose to use this method, it is still worth knowing that it exists and is used by some song leaders.

The same four songs used to illustrate the starting note method will again be used to illustrate the key note method.

**Example 1: *There Is A Fountain* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]**

This song begins on the note of C below the staff. However, under this method the song's starting note letter does not matter. Instead, the song's key and where the



The notation C-4-DO indicates that the song is sung in the key of C, and that the song begins on “DO” of the scale.

starting note falls in the “Do-Mi-Sol” scale do matter. Under this method, the song leader matches up the key’s letter name with the same letter name as shown on the pitching device. The song leader plays the note, listens to the sound of the pitch, and hums that pitch to himself. This note represents “Do.” From here, the song leader audibly hums the appropriate notes (lower “Do,” “Mi,” “Sol,” or upper “Do”), then begins the song. *In this specific example*, the song is in the key of C (which means that C is “Do” for this key), the pitched note is C, *and* the song begins with “Do.” So, the song begins with the same note played on the pitching instrument.

**Example 2: *To Christ Be True* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]**

Although this song is in the same key as Example 1, it does not start on the same note. Rather, it begins on the note of E toward the bottom of the staff. *In this specific example*, the song is in the key of C (which means that C is “Do” for this key), and the pitched note is C, *but the song does not begin with “Do.”* Instead, it begins with “Mi,” the second note in the triad. Therefore, the song leader hums the note played (“Do”), then hums up to the song’s starting note (“Mi”). Once the starting note is determined, the song is begun.

C-4-MI  
Elisha A. Ho



The notation C-4-MI indicates that the song is sung in the key of C, and that the song begins on “MI” of the scale.

**Example 3: *Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]**

Again, while this song is in the same key as the previous two examples, it begins on the note of G just below the middle of the staff. *In this specific example*, the song is in the key of C (which means that C is “Do” for this key), and the pitched note is C, *but the song does not begin with “Do”...nor does it begin with “Mi.”* Instead, it begins with “Sol,” the third note in the triad. Therefore, the song leader hums the note played (“Do”), then hums up to the next note in the triad (“Mi”), then hums up again to the third note in the triad (“Sol”). Once the starting note is determined, the song is begun.

C-4-SOL  
Wm. R. New



The notation C-4-SOL indicates that the song is sung in the key of C, and that the song begins on “SOL” of the scale.

**Example 4: *Wonderful Story of Love* [Key of C; no flats or sharps]**

Once again, the key of this song is the same as the other three examples. This song starts on a C, like in Example 1, but instead of the C below the staff, it starts on the C in the upper portion of the

C-2-DO  
J. M. D.



The notation C-2-DO indicates that the song is sung in the key of C, and that the song begins on “DO” of the scale.

staff. The song leader can either play the lower C on the pitching instrument and determine upper C via the “Do/Mi/Sol” approach, or he can simply play the high C (if one is present). It is entirely at the song leader’s discretion.

It is worth noticing what the song leader has just done, and the benefit that it brings. In humming “Do,” “Mi,” “Sol,” he has just hummed the three notes that comprise the major chord (triad) of the song’s key. Most songs begin with some combination of “Do”/“Mi”/“Sol,” so the song leader has not only provided the starting note for those who sing the melody of the song, *but he has also provided the starting notes for those who sing the harmony parts of the song.* Now, everyone can come in together at the beginning of the song, rather than having the harmony singers waiting a few notes to “hear” their part and then joining in.

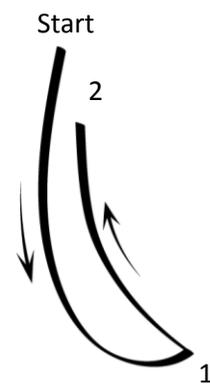
## CONDUCTING WITH THE HAND

Other than using a pitching instrument to properly pitch a song, and singing loudly enough to be heard by the congregation, conducting with the hand – when properly done – is probably the most effective tool a song leader can use in keeping the congregation singing together. The purpose of hand-conducting is to provide visual signals that coincide with the vocal activity of actually singing the song: speed, change in speed, dynamic changes or emphasis, etc.

There are three basic patterns of hand-conducting: **duple** (or double) pattern, **triple** pattern, and **quadruple** pattern. Each one has its own separate application, depending on the time signature of the song (recall that the time signature defines the song’s rhythmic “feel” or “cadence”).

### DUPLE PATTERN

The duple pattern is used for songs that have only *two* emphasis points per measure. It involves a downward wave of the hand on the first beat of the measure, followed by an upward wave of the hand on the second beat. See the pattern depicted at right. Common time signature examples that use the duple pattern are shown below.



#### 2/2 – How Firm A Foundation

Beat:            1   2        1   2        1   2        1   2        1   2        1   2        1   2

How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His ex - cel-lent

*2/4 – Count Your Blessings*

Beat: 1 2 1 2 1 2 1+2 1 2 1 2 1 2

When up - on life's bil-lows you are tem - pest tossed, When you are dis - cour-aged, think - ing all is

*6/8 – Take Time to be Holy*

Beat: 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 + 2 1 2 1 2

Take time to be ho - ly, Speak oft with thy Lord; A - bid in Him al - ways,

**TRIPLE PATTERN**

The triple pattern is used for songs that have *three* emphasis points per measure. It involves a downward wave of the hand on the first beat of the measure, a sideways wave of the hand on the second beat, and an upward wave of the hand on the third beat. See the pattern depicted at right. Common time signature examples that use the triple pattern are shown below.



*3/2 – I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord*

Beat: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1+2 3 1 2 3

I'm not a-shamed to own my Lord, Nor to de-fend His cause; Main - tain the hon - ors

*3/4 – Is It For Me, Dear Savior*

Beat: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Is it for me, dear Sav - ior, Thy glo - ry and Thy rest. For me, so weak and sin - ful? O

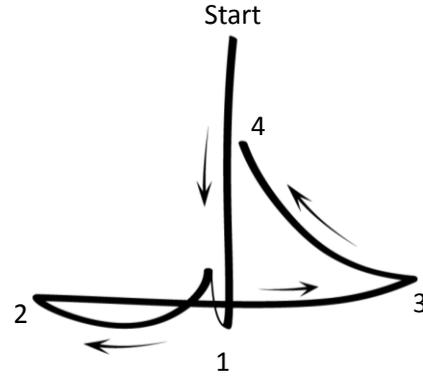
*9/8 – Heavenly Sunlight*

Beat: 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3 1 2 3

Walk-ing in sun - light, all of my jour - ney; O-ver the moun - tains thru the deep vale; Je-sus has

## QUADRUPLE PATTERN

The quadruple pattern is used for songs that have *four* emphasis points per measure. It involves a downward wave of the hand on the first beat of the measure, a sideways wave of the hand on the second beat, an opposite-direction sideways wave of the hand on the third beat, and an upward wave of the hand on the fourth beat. See the pattern depicted at right. Common time signature examples that use the quadruple pattern are shown below.



### 4/2 – *Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken*

Beat: 1+2            3    4            1    2    3    4            1    2    3    4            1    2    3+4

Glo - rious things of thee are spo - ken, Zi - on, cit - y of our God!

### 4/4 – *Fairest Lord Jesus*

Beat: 1+2    3    4            1    2    3+4    1+2    3    4            1    2    3+4    1+2    3    4            1+2    3    4            1+2    3+4

Fair - est Lord Je - sus! Ru - ler of all na - ture! O Thou of God and man the

### 12/8 – *Walking Alone At Eve*

Beat: 1            2            3    4            1            2            3    4            1            2            3    4

Walk - ing a - lone at eve and view - ing the skies a - far. Bid - ding the dark - ness come to

## NO PATTERN

While these three different patterns exist for different time signatures and musical cadences, *this does not mean that you must use them*. Many individuals simply take a “downstroke only” approach to song leading. Similar to the duple pattern, the leader simply uses the hand to visually indicate the song’s beat. While this may be considered less technically correct, it can be a *completely effective means* of directing singing and keeping the congregation together. It is also an excellent way to begin the process of using the hand during song leading, as no thought about a specific pattern needs to be made. Many song leaders, beginners and veterans alike, use this method. And, unlike the duple, triple, and quadruple patterns, the “downstroke only” approach can be used with any time signature.



# Lesson 6

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## Song Leadership – Practical Suggestions

### COMPLETING THE CONSTRUCTION

This lesson contains a compilation of practical suggestions gathered from many song leaders and other church members. While some are specific to song leading, others have broader application to any man who is participating in the worship service in a public way (serving at the Lord's table, teaching, preaching, leading prayer, etc.).

These are not requirements, but simply a set of ideas and suggestions that can help you put the finishing touches on your song-leading development. They are divided into four categories: personal skill development, preparation at home, preparation at the church building, and song leading execution.

### PERSONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT

You can learn much about your own skill development from the way professional sports teams approach their own performance. The quarterback invests hours of practice with the fundamentals of throwing, hand-offs, reading the defense, fakes, etc., to improve his skills. Teams study game footage to spot performance issues, then work on improving sub-par performance. And sometimes, a team member simply doesn't have a specific skill, recognizes it, and allows himself to be used in a different capacity.

This same kind of approach can be used to help you develop your own song-leading skill, as you will see in the following suggestions.

1. Practice, practice, and practice...especially if you are new. Practice songs at home. Practice using a pitching instrument to pitch songs, and practice humming the note to match. If you desire to use the "Do/Mi/Sol" pitching method, practice identifying the different notes of the triad, and selecting the right one (see also Appendix B).
2. Practice leading in front of a mirror, especially if you are attempting to develop a new skill, such as hand conducting. It will help you see yourself as others do.

3. Video-record yourself practicing, then *watch and listen* to yourself to determine if you are singing in tune, conducting and keeping the beat correctly, etc. Watching yourself on video can be a difficult thing to sit through, but it can be one of the most effective self-evaluation tools available.
4. Practice leading singing with your family. This gives you experience in developing your skill, and sets a good example to the other family members.
5. Recognize that hand-conducting is not for everyone. Try as you might, you may not be effective at hand conducting – even with the downstroke-only approach – and that is nothing to be ashamed of! It is *better* to *lead* with just your voice, than to *mis-lead* with a hand that does not coincide with the vocal activity of actually singing the song. If this is you, be honest enough with yourself to make the necessary change.
6. Also recognize that song leading is not for everyone. 1 Corinthians 12:14-31 should impress on us that not everyone has the same capabilities, but this does not lessen each person’s importance in the kingdom. We each have a part to play, a part that leverages our strengths for the good of all. If you come to the realization that leading singing is not for you, whether by your own recognition or through the loving input of another, be willing to accept it and do not be discouraged. This simply means that your capabilities lie elsewhere. Allow yourself to be used in other ways, to the glory of God.

## PREPARATION AT HOME

On occasion, you may be called upon at the last minute to step in and lead singing because someone is sick, or running late, or some other issue has arisen. Typically, though, you know ahead of time – sometimes weeks ahead of time – when you will lead singing, so there is generally ample time to select songs and make other preparations for the service you will lead.

The following suggestions can help you to always be ready, no matter what the circumstances.

1. Make sure the songs you select are scriptural. After all, you are the leader of the communication that will take place between *every member of the congregation* as the songs are sung. Just because a song appears in a “trusted” hymnal – even one published by brethren – does not guarantee its scriptural quality. If necessary, skip songs or omit verses that don’t pass muster or that you are uncomfortable singing. Be sensitive of leading songs that may present a conscience issue to some in the congregation. If in doubt, consult with the elders or others whom you trust to assist you in evaluating a song.

2. Select songs at home before each worship assembly. Many individuals like to select theme-related songs or confer ahead of time with the one doing the preaching, extending the invitation, or arranging the song service, in order to select songs benefitting the subject matter or to provide emphasis on the sermon or theme.
3. Be aware of the songs sung during recent services, and especially during gospel meetings where individual services occur in rapid succession. Although nothing is wrong with selecting a song that was sung during a recent service, the wide variety of available songs should make this an avoidable circumstance.
4. Consider setting a positive tone for the worship service by selecting an uplifting song of praise as the first song, such as *Heavenly Sunlight*, and leading it briskly and energetically.
5. Select songs with a variety of keys, time signatures, and tempos.
6. Select a song that is appropriate for the time of day. Singing *Now The Day Is Over* or *O, Why Not Tonight?* would be misplaced if sung during the Sunday morning service.
7. If you feel the need, practice the songs you have selected, so you are comfortable leading them during the service. This is especially true of newly-learned songs or songs that you intend to teach to others.
8. Keep a list of familiar songs with you in your song book, on a small sheet of paper or on a Post-It Note. This will provide for easy reference, should you be called upon to be a short-notice substitute, or if you decide to make a last-minute change.
9. Dress for every service in a way that shows reverence for God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and in a way that shows respect for your fellow Christians. Attire that is sloppy or that distracts worshippers can undermine the purpose of the service, even if you think it should not.
10. Leave home in plenty of time to arrive at the church building 10 to 15 minutes before the start of the worship service. This will give you adequate time to perform various preparations at the building (discussed below). Moreover, the man responsible for assignment scheduling won't have to worry about whether a last-minute replacement is needed for you. If you are running late, give him the courtesy of a call or text.

## PREPARATION AT THE CHURCH BUILDING

Although you have made preparations at home for an upcoming service, there are still arrangements that can be made at the church building that can help facilitate a smooth and orderly service. Consider the following suggestions.

1. Post song numbers on the song board, so everyone can see the selections that will be sung.
2. If the group you worship with uses a projector system to display songs on a screen, coordinate with the one preparing the projection materials. If possible, coordinate with him from home as soon as you have selected your songs.
3. Sit toward the front of the building, or on the front row, during the service for which you are the song leader. This creates less commotion and demonstrates an intent to be a key participant in directing worship activities.

## SONG LEADING EXECUTION

Now that all of the pre-service preparations have been made, the time has come to engage in the singing portion of the worship service. The following suggestions will help you communicate well with the congregation, eliminate ambiguity or confusion, and provide the leadership the congregation expects of you.

1. Take the podium and stand in front of a microphone. The congregation deserves to *see and hear* you.
2. Announce your songs loudly and distinctly. Sometimes, doing so in two different ways can help avoid confusion if two numbers sound similar. For instance, “Number Four Sixteen” and “Number Four Sixty” can be confused if not clearly spoken. Saying “Number Four Sixteen...Number Four One Six” is more distinct and eliminates possible confusion.
3. Announce the name of the song after announcing the number. This can be especially helpful for those who are visually-impaired or those who may have trouble turning to the hymn number before the hymn is begun. It also helps everyone to be aware of the message of the song, which can help them better prepare to worship.
4. If your intent is to sing only a subset of the entire song, announce which verses will be sung or which verses will be omitted, prior to beginning the song.
5. Use your hand to indicate the next verse number, even if your intent is to sing every verse, and even if the church you worship with uses a projection system for displaying hymns. Begin signaling before the end of the “current” verse, and

continue to signal into the “next” verse. If all of the verses begin with the same phrase, continue signaling until the song progresses past that phrase.

6. Unless you are certain of the pitch, use a pitching instrument. Select the key in which the song is written, or in the key one half-step lower in order to avoid straining voices and distracting from the purpose of the worship activity.
7. Strongly set the tempo and pitch of the song from the very beginning. This communicates to the congregation your expectations of how you wish the song to be sung.
8. Keep up the tempo...*you* are the director! Don’t let the congregation drag the song if at all possible. However, if the song gets too slow, you may have to relent for the sake of keeping everyone together. If so, address the matter at another time.
9. When conducting with the hand, use a large enough pattern so all can see.
10. Don’t do a lot of talking, but vary what is said when asking the congregation to stand for prayer or a song, or when announcing the purpose for the song (such as preparing our minds for partaking of the Lord’s supper).
11. Ask the congregation to stand for the song before the sermon, and sing a lively song. This provides some logistical benefits. It gives everyone an opportunity to stretch their legs a bit before remaining seated throughout the sermon; a lively song can raise the mood; and the preacher can take the podium and arrange his materials while the congregation is sitting back down, putting away their hymn books, and getting out their bibles.
12. Announce the invitation song before the sermon, and unless you feel *strongly compelled* to do so, do not change it once it has been announced.
13. Be ready to lead the invitation song immediately when the sermon or invitation is over...even begin singing from your seat and continue as you walk to the front and take your place. A good invitation song adds to the effectiveness of the sermon or invitation, or emphasizes the theme of the song service; it is advised to avoid difficult or unfamiliar songs, or songs that are complex.
14. Sometimes, a musical correction may need to be announced and effort made to gain the congregation’s cooperation (such as dragging songs). *Carefully* consider the timing of such corrections before making them! (Handling such a matter just before partaking of the Lord’s supper would be a terrible choice, but I have seen it done!). If possible, address such issues during a singing/song-learning service, where such instruction and correction is part of the intent of the service.



# Appendix A

## Hymn Cross-Reference

HYMN TITLE	PAGE	ILLUSTRATION USAGE	HYMNS FOR WORSHIP (REVISED)	SACRED SELECTIONS	SONGS OF FAITH AND PRAISE
Sing On, Ye Joyful Pilgrims	26	Chromatic Notations and Accidentals	389	12	677
Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah!	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	2	77	3
Master, The Tempest is Raging	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	689	532	189
One Day	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	160	306	353
Christ Arose (Low In the Grave He Lay)	32	Tempo Changes (Slowly and Quickly)	174	155	344
Our God, He Is Alive	32	Tempo Changes (Ritardando at Chorus End)	9	668	23
In The Hour of Trial	32	Tempo Changes (Rallentando at Chorus End)	83	538	
The Lord is In His Holy Temple	32	Tempo Changes (Rallentando at Chorus End)	55		108
Our God, He Is Alive	32	Tempo Changes (Fermata)	9	668	23
This World Is Not My Home	32	Fine, Sengo, and Dal Sengo (D.S.) Flow	230	361	957
Tell Me The Story of Jesus	32	Fine and Da Capo (D.C.) Flow	156	278	
Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me	32	Fine and Da Capo (D.C.) Flow		184	603
On Zion's Glorious Summit	32	Repeat (:) Flow	48	664	227
There Is a Fountain	38	Key of C; Starting Note of C (Middle C)	314	160	374
To Christ Be True	38	Key of C; Starting Note of E	415	332	736
Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)	38	Key of C; Starting Note of G	426	574	381



Hymn does not feature the illustration described, or does not exist in hymnal listed

HYMN TITLE	PAGE	ILLUSTRATION USAGE	HYMNS FOR WORSHIP (REVISED)	SACRED SELECTIONS	SONGS OF FAITH AND PRAISE
Wonderful Story of Love	39	Key of C; Starting Note of C (Treble Staff C)	180	276	286
There Is a Fountain	39	Key of C; Starting Note of Do (Middle C)	314	160	374
To Christ Be True	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Mi	415	332	736
Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Sol	426	574	381
Wonderful Story of Love	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Do (Treble Staff C)	180	276	286
How Firm A Foundation	41	2/2 Time Signature	296	214	457
Count Your Blessings	41	2/4 Time Signature	392	68	742
Take Time to be Holy	41	6/8 Time Signature	118	55	731
I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord	42	3/2 Time Signature	273	521	609
Is It for Me Dear Savior	42	3/4 Time Signature	28	366	483
Heavenly Sunlight	42	9/8 Time Signature	19	577	611
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	43	4/2 Time Signature	143		
Fairest Lord Jesus	43	4/4 Time Signature	41	514	288
Walking Alone at Eve	43	12/8 Time Signature	210	450	874



Hymn does not feature the illustration described, or does not exist in hymnal listed

HYMN TITLE	PAGE	ILLUSTRATION USAGE	PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS	PRAISE FOR THE LORD	SONGS OF THE CHURCH
Sing On, Ye Joyful Pilgrims	26	Chromatic Notations and Accidentals	747	581	464
Hallelujah! Praise Jehovah!	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	9	200	148
Master, The Tempest is Raging	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	404	425	346
One Day	31	Dynamics Changes and Notation	192	516	423
Christ Arose (Low In the Grave He Lay)	32	Tempo Changes (Slowly and Quickly)	248	408	337
Our God, He Is Alive	32	Tempo Changes (Ritardando at Chorus End)	85	523	728-b
In The Hour of Trial	32	Tempo Changes (Rallentando at Chorus End)		328	
The Lord is In His Holy Temple	32	Tempo Changes (Rallentando at Chorus End)	152	685	532
Our God, He Is Alive	32	Tempo Changes (Fermata)	85	523	728-b
This World Is Not My Home	32	Fine, Sengo, and Dal Sengo (D.S.) Flow	715	684	545
Tell Me The Story of Jesus	32	Fine and Da Capo (D.C.) Flow	191	622	
Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me	32	Fine and Da Capo (D.C.) Flow		360	290
On Zion's Glorious Summit	32	Repeat (:) Flow	722	515	414
There Is a Fountain	38	Key of C; Starting Note of C (Middle C)	286	662	557
To Christ Be True	38	Key of C; Starting Note of E	528	707	589
Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)	38	Key of C; Starting Note of G	296	53	662
Wonderful Story of Love	39	Key of C; Starting Note of C (Treble Staff C)	848	781	655
There Is a Fountain	39	Key of C; Starting Note of Do (Middle C)	286	662	557
To Christ Be True	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Mi	528	707	589
Years I Spent in Vanity (At Calvary)	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Sol	296	53	662
Wonderful Story of Love	40	Key of C; Starting Note of Do (Treble Staff C)	848	781	655



Hymn does not feature the illustration described, or does not exist in hymnal listed

HYMN TITLE	PAGE	ILLUSTRATION USAGE	PSALMS, HYMNS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS	PRAISE FOR THE LORD	SONGS OF THE CHURCH
How Firm A Foundation	41	2/2 Time Signature	400	248	178
Count Your Blessings	41	2/4 Time Signature	384	188	643
Take Time to be Holy	41	6/8 Time Signature	598	619	343
I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord	42	3/2 Time Signature	530	298	256
Is It for Me Dear Savior	42	3/4 Time Signature	92	336	192
Heavenly Sunlight	42	9/8 Time Signature	663	708	168
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	43	4/2 Time Signature	125		165
Fairest Lord Jesus	43	4/4 Time Signature	116	137	102
Walking Alone at Eve	43	12/8 Time Signature	457	716	603



Hymn does not feature the illustration described, or does not exist in hymnal listed

# Appendix B

## Key / Do-Mi-Sol Reference

▲ = "Do"    ▼ = "Mi"    ● = "Sol"

C Major                      G Major                      D Major

C    E    G                      G    B    D                      D    F#    A

A Major                      E Major                      B Major

A    C#    E                      E    G#    B                      B    D#    F#

F# Major                      C# Major                      F Major

F#    A#    C#                      C#    E#    G#                      F    A    C

Bb Major                      Eb Major                      Ab Major

Bb    D    F                      Eb    G    Bb                      Ab    C    Eb

Db Major                      Gb Major                      Cb Major

Db    F    Ab                      Gb    Bb    Db                      Cb    Eb    Gb





**Exercise 2**

The voice of tl

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 3**

Tar-ry with me,

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 4**

Sav-ior, breathe

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 5**

O sa-cred head, r

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 6**

When I sur - vey

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 7**

Wound - ed for

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 8**

Beau-ti-ful

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 9**

Take time to be

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 10**

Have Thine own

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 11**

Earth holds no tre

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 12**

Look-ing to T

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 13**

What e'er you do i

Key: \_\_\_\_\_

Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_

Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 14**

O-pen our eyes,

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 15**

The Church-'s or

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 16**

When my love to

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise 17**

Seek - ing the los

Key: \_\_\_\_\_  
Absolute Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relative Starting Note Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beats per Measure: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hand-Conducting Pattern: \_\_\_\_\_

***Pitching and Hand-Conducting Exercise Answers***

	Key	Absolute Starting Note Name	Relative Starting Note Name	Beats per Measure	Kind of Note Receiving 1 Beat	Hand-Conducting Pattern
Exercise 1	F	A	Mi	3	Half	Triple
Exercise 2	E	B	Sol	4	Quarter	Quadruple
Exercise 3	E Flat	E Flat	Do	9	Eighth	Triple
Exercise 4	B Flat	F	Sol	2	Quarter	Duple
Exercise 5	C	E	Mi	4	Half	Quadruple
Exercise 6	F	F	Do	2	Half	Duple
Exercise 7	D	A	Sol	3	Quarter	Triple
Exercise 8	D Flat	D Flat	Do	12	Eighth	Quadruple
Exercise 9	F	A	Mi	6	Eighth	Duple
Exercise 10	E Flat	G	Mi	9	Quarter	Triple
Exercise 11	A Flat	C	Mi	6	Quarter	Duple
Exercise 12	A	E	Sol	12	Eighth	Quadruple
Exercise 13	G	G	Do	6	Eighth	Duple
Exercise 14	E Flat	G	Mi	3	Quarter	Triple
Exercise 15	B Flat	F	Sol	4	Quarter	Quadruple
Exercise 16	C	E	Mi	3	Half	Triple
Exercise 17	B Flat	F	Sol	9	Eighth	Triple

# Appendix D

## Song Leader Resources

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### PITCHING INSTRUMENTS

Available at music stores everywhere, as well as various online outlets, the following two pitching devices are popular with many song leaders.

- Kratt Master-Key Chromatic Pitch Instrument – Constructed to last a lifetime, the two most popular models are the C to C scale (MK2) and F to F scale (MK1). The cost is approximately US\$ 22.00.
- Farley’s Pocket Tones™ Chromatic Pitch Instrument – This electronic pitch instrument is about the size of a key fob, and is available in C scale (PT15) and F scale (PT16). It includes an on/off switch, a volume control, and batteries. The cost is approximately US\$ 15.00.

### HYMN BOOKS

The six hymn books referenced in this book are available through a variety of outlets, including online retailers, religious bookstores, and the book publisher in some cases. Prices range from US\$ 10.00 for hardbound editions to US\$ 35.00 for leatherbound and flexbound editions. Some are also available in spiral-bound and large-print formats.

- Hymns for Worship (Revised) – CEI Bookstore, 220 S. Marion St., Athens, AL 35611
- Sacred Selections – Sacred Selections, North Shores Road, Kendallville, IN 46755
- Songs of Faith and Praise – Howard Publishing Co., Inc., 3117 North 7th Street, West Monroe, LA 71291
- Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs – Sumphonia Productions LLC, 2200 Shady Lane Church Road, Munfordville, KY 42765
- Praise for the Lord – Praise Press, P.O.Box 40304, Nashville, TN 37204
- Songs of the Church – Howard Publishing Co., Inc., 3117 North 7th Street, West Monroe, LA 71291













