

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

**THE ROLE OF LEADING WORSHIP IN THE AFRICAN CHURCH**

A THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
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DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Despite the surge in worship leadership, some African evangelical churches have historically placed little emphasis on the role of leading worship. A review of worship on worship leadership in the African evangelical church reveals little information specifically useful for the training and mentoring of African congregational worship leaders. Therefore, this project researched and presents a primary argument for the practical training of worship leaders in the African evangelical congregation and brings attention to the lack of emphasis on worship leadership. Moreover, the thesis investigates the proposition not only for the role of worship leading in the African church to target this need, but also provides the rationale for proper church leadership and congregational training on the implication of having a professionally and theologically trained worship leader to facilitate worship leading in the local church. Furthermore, this study will encourage African church ministries to embrace and incorporate a biblical method of worship leading.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

“The study of biblical theology is like a quest to become someone who can pull down strongholds with weapons mighty to God. For the quest to succeed we must learn to destroy arguments and lofty opinions raised against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:3-5).”<sup>1</sup> “God gave every community unique gifts of artistic communication to tell the Truth and bring healing and hope and joy in response to these problems. Many of these gifts, however, lie dormant, misused, or dying.”<sup>2</sup> African worship leaders have unique gifts of artistic communication, to tell the truth, which can impact their communities and affects the spiritual formation of the people. There is a need for adequate training to harness these gifts for spiritual formation and growth in the local churches. This research seeks to lay the groundwork that biblically trained worship pastors can disciple and train up the congregation so that their worship experiences are deeper and more meaningful.

### **General Statement**

To digress a little, the root of learning for Africans has always been oral. Culturally, the average African learns by word of mouth. Over the years, things have improved. In the African churches, there are many professionals, and these professionals receive earnings in their field and are, in turn, blessings to the local church assemblies where they fellowship. On the contrary, there are very few professional musicians and trained lay worship leaders in the local churches. There is no question that the lead or senior pastor should be the leader of worship in the general concept of worship leading in the church. All the same, there is a need for the senior pastor to harness the creativity of a second-tier group of leaders who can communicate and empower the congregation using their artistic language but wrapping it with the sound teaching of God’s word.

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<sup>1</sup> James Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible’s Story, Symbolism, and Patterns*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 16.

The observation is the second tiers of leaders cannot do these tasks without proper empowerment in the theology of worship and how it applies to worship leading in the African context.

Growing up in the African community, this author witnessed how many African churches lack budget and space for a fulltime minister of music or worship pastor. Serving as a fulltime minister of music for over fifteen years, this author has observed the lack of importance placed on worship leadership in the African evangelical church. The few worship leaders serving full-time positions are typically involved in too many responsibilities outside their areas of study, and as a result, are unable to function in the role of worship leading, which involves worship not only leading but also worship discipleship and mentoring.

The other side of the narrative is the notion that professional musicians should play for free, and this is common in the African churches as well. As a result, many musicians leave the church to play in the clubhouses and find a way to earn a living because the church leadership is insensitive to the roles of worship leaders and the role of worship leading in the church. In reality, this has affected the spiritual formation and led to the worship decline in many African churches. To anyone reading this research, this is the reality in too many African churches. The narrative above signifies the root and the cause of the loss of theological distinctiveness in worship leading. The solution to this challenge calls for spiritual and financial support of pastors for worship discipleship and missions.

Therefore, this research explores the notion that the role of worship leading is vital for spiritual formation and local church growth; and that adequate training can guide the worship leaders, resident pastors, and pastoral staff into the role of worship leading and all its implication to church growth while avoiding syncretism.

## **Background of the Problem**

Considering the worship leading practices of many African evangelical churches in diasporas, the loss of adequate and intentional training on the biblical role of worship leading is unbelievable. Specifically, there are two aspects considered in this particular research. First, some African churches lack worship leaders established with professional leadership, and the majority of those professionally trained lack theological development. Also, many African church leaders do not give priorities to intentional training and discipline of worship leading. Second, in response to the problems mentioned above, many worship leaders and volunteers are not adequately equipped for worship leading roles, including music, worship, worship leadership, and functional aspect of the requirements for effectiveness in leadership in worship. It can be presumed that these could be enhanced and developed by utilizing daily discipleship and mentoring.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The loss of theological distinctiveness increased over the past 20 years as worship leaders serving in local churches as ministers of music or worship pastors or worship leaders ignore the need for formal theological education.<sup>2</sup> Inadequate professional and theological training for some African worship leaders may be a primary driver for the loss of theological integrity within our churches. The development of a theology of worship or theology of life became a self-guided experiment, and seminary and college degrees are no longer needed. As a result of no formal worship-leader studies, worship leaders are left to package their customized worship practice from a variety of sources. Consequently, this has led to a hybrid perspective of free worship

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<sup>2</sup> Frank Page and Lavon Gray, *Hungry for Worship: Challenges and Solutions for Today's Church* (Birmingham: New Hope, 2014).

practices and free theological assumptions on the biblical role of worship leading.<sup>3</sup> In turn, this has a serious implication on the emerging African generations.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Guided by the biblical principles of worship leading, as expressed by Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21, and some literature reviews, the purpose of this study focuses on the worship leading and discipleship in the African local church. Leadership should focus on biblical doctrines on worship leading and the implication of the role of the worship leaders on the spiritual formation of the congregation. Worship leaders and worship pastors must be very diligent in protecting congregations from wrong doctrines.<sup>4</sup>

This research seeks to explore the need for creating awareness in educating the African musicians and music leaders on the need to pursue professional and theological education and develop curricula for worship leading while serving in local African evangelical churches. On the other side of the coin, the research investigates the need for church leaders to empower lay worship leaders and embrace a biblical and theological model for Christian musicians who are called to worship leading in their local churches.

### **Research Questions**

RQ1: In what ways does the worship leader impact growth in the African church community?

RQ2: What role do church leaders play in the training of the lay worship leader's theological training?

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<sup>3</sup> Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 141.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

RQ3: In what ways does professional and theological training of the worship leader impact the spiritual formation and the growth of the church congregation?

### **Significance of the Study**

Mindful that the senior pastor of a local congregation is the lead worship leader, the research questions are essential for church leaders and worship pastors to consider when making decisions regarding the implementation of adequate training for the worship leaders in their local African churches. The implementation of the worship training has implications for spiritual formation,<sup>5</sup> worship discipleship and church growth,<sup>6</sup> mission,<sup>7</sup> and the new generation of African worshippers.<sup>8</sup>

Critically considering these questions, it is crucial to argue that there are three challenges: First, many African musicians called into the worship ministry do not have theological training and a biblical basis for the role of worship leading in the church. Second, many African church leaders do not have an adequate understanding of the roles of worship leaders and the theological basis for their work in the sanctuary. Third, many African churches lack the strategic vision related to restructuring the worship leading liturgy to reach the current and emerging generation for Christ. Each of these three complications impacts not only the worship leader and the local church, but also the worship leading experience of the congregation, and as a result, this serves

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<sup>5</sup> Kevin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001), 8.

<sup>6</sup> Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2013), XV.

<sup>7</sup> T. W. Hunt, *Music in Missions*. (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), 33.

<sup>8</sup> James R. Kabrill, Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, and Brian Schrag. *Worship and the Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. Kabrill, 2012, 169.

as a prompt for adequate research on the role of worship leading in the African church or Christian community.

### **Working Hypothesis**

H1: The worship leader impacts growth in the African church community in terms of spiritual formation, worship discipleship, and mission.<sup>9</sup>

H2: The church leader's role in the training of lay worship leader's theological training consists of mentorship, financial support for training, and accommodation and provision for mission travel.<sup>10</sup>

H3: Professional and theological training of the worship leader impacts the spiritual formation and the growth of the church congregation in terms of music, worship, and leadership.<sup>11</sup>

### **Core Concepts**

The centrality of this research takes into account the historical background of African worship leadership, contemplates problems within these practices, and deliberates on the adequate training needed to a successful plan and implement a successful Holy Spirit led congregational worship experience.

This research explores the impact of the equipped worship leader in the development of spiritual formation in the church, the benefits of worship leadership in African missional

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<sup>9</sup> Oswald J. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Mission Frontiers, “*Ethnodoxology: Worship and Mission for the Global Church.*” Sept/Oct 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Greg Ogden, and Meyer Daniel, *Leadership Essentials: Shaping Vision, Multiplying Influence, Defining Character.* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007).

development, and the effects of developmental worship leadership in the lives of future generations. At the center of these benefits is professional and theological education. This research study reveals the need to create awareness on the implication for professionally and theologically trained worship leaders, and the need to incorporate theologically sound worship leading in the African church.

There is a common philosophy in the African church, which feeds the perspective of using laity who are not well trained to lead worship. The justification for this viewpoint derives from a philosophical mindset suggesting that church musicians should not be compensated for their leadership. Typically, this perspective is in response to budgetary restraints and finds limited funding for the music ministry. This research study further seeks to explore or investigate a ground for adequate training on the role of worship leading and its impacts on church growth in the African local churches. The training is not limited to worship leaders and pastors; it extends to church volunteers in the worship ministry.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study have implications for:

#### **Spiritual Formation**

“We may rest fully assured of this—a man’s influence in the world can be gauged not by his eloquence, or his zeal, or his orthodoxy, or his energy, but by his prayers. Yes, and we will go further and maintain that no man can live aright who does not pray aright.”<sup>12</sup> The spiritual formation in this context connects with the spiritual renewal of the worship leader and the impact

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<sup>12</sup> Anonymous, *The Kneeling Christian* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 2013), 23.

on the congregation, and consistent discipleship in others.<sup>13</sup> Spiritual formation, as well as the growth of those leading worship, has a direct influence on the worship life and spiritual vitality of local congregations. As a result, developing an intimate relationship with God is the focus of this study.

### **Worship Discipleship**

“The old saying is really true: people go along with leaders they get along with [sic].”<sup>14</sup> Worship discipleship is about mentoring others for active ministry. Leadership is the art of multiplying influence, and by this standard, Jesus must be considered the master artist.<sup>15</sup> Paul said, “Nothing gives me greater joy than hearing that my children are living in the truth.”<sup>16</sup> So it follows then that by raising disciples, one can create spiritual giants around the lead worship pastor such that at some point, in the future, the one nurturing may become the "dumbest" person in the room.

### **Church Growth**

The term balanced worship mission in this context means developing an intentional relational communicative approach between, and across the board of all ministries. Besides, a characteristic shared goal is developed, bridging the gap in communication of intentional missional events. The worship ministry can bridge the gap between generations and create a

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<sup>13</sup> Oswald J. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 91.

<sup>14</sup> John C. Maxwell, *How Successful People Lead: Taking Your Influence to the Next Level*. Nashville: Center Street, 2013), 48.

<sup>15</sup> Greg Ogden and Meyer Daniel, *Leadership Essentials: Shaping Vision, Multiplying Influence, Defining Character*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 21.

<sup>16</sup> 3 John 4 (CJB).

bridge of hope for discipleship. We need all the generations to engage in the worship service actively.<sup>17</sup>

### **Worship Mission**

Worship missions that result in evangelism mean all about worship outreach and its implication on church growth. Worship leaders can work through developing worship kits for various departments and offer worship discipleship classes, which in turn, impacts the new generation of African worshipers in the African local churches.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **African Community**

This research is limited to the West Africa community, which comprises of the 16 countries of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Moreover, this research is further delimited and explores the worship leading challenge majorly among the Nigerians in Diaspora.

#### **African Church Diaspora**

The African Christian movement around the world, in this context, is in the western world, particularly the United States of America.

#### **Ethno-Doxology**

Ethno-doxology is the interdisciplinary study of how Christians in every culture engage with God and the world through their artistic expressions.<sup>18</sup> It is the theological and

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<sup>17</sup> Zach Zettler, *Balanced Worship: Balance with Ministries to Family* (WRSP, Liberty University Online), accessed December 9, 2015, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

anthropological study, and practical application, of how every cultural group might use its unique and diverse artistic expressions appropriately to worship the God of the Bible.<sup>19</sup> Also, it is "the theological and practical study of how and why people of diverse cultures praise and glorify the true and living God as revealed in the Bible."<sup>20</sup> Ethno-doxology is a theological and anthropological framework guiding all cultures to worship God using their unique artistic expressions.<sup>21</sup>

### **Contextualization**

Adapting an extreme cultural form or idea into a society or culture. Often used in terms of the adoption of Christianity.<sup>22</sup>

### **Syncretism**

In the context of this study, it is when a gospel message is mixed with other concepts that are preexisting in the African culture.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Theology of Worship**

According to David Peterson, the biblical concept of worship from Genesis to Revelation is all about the role of worship leading. At the heart of fruitful worship, leadership is the preparation and presentation of worship by a worship leader.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The board of the ICE Network, May 2019, accessed August, 2020, <https://www.worldofworship.org/what-is-ethnodoxology/>

<sup>19</sup> Gerardo Marti, *Worship across the Racial Divide: Religious Music and the Multiracial Congregation*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 13.

<sup>20</sup> Brian Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together: A Manual to Help Communities Reach their Kingdom Goals*. (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 270.

## **Foundation of Christian Worship**

The foundation of Christian worship constitutes the understanding of the role of Old and New Testament worship in the lives of believers today. The structure and implications of Hebrew worship as applied to twenty-first-century evangelical ministry, and the story of worship from Genesis through Revelation. Worship is what we were made for; brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship; obedience is the very nucleus of worship; real worship demonstrate personal integrity; true worship embraces love for the people of God—demonstrated through service; our multifaceted God loves multifaceted worship; genuine worship transcends time and culture.<sup>25</sup>

## **The Pastoral Role**

A pastoral role implies discipleship in a one-on-one, life-on-life, face-to-face ministry. This role cannot be fulfilled effectively via Facebook or even in online education. The pastoral role connects with the various and many roles of the worship leader in the Evangelical community. There are many broad areas of pastoral ministry that fall under a worship pastor's responsibility beyond executing and facilitating worship in the church service. The worship leader who is serving in a pastoral role becomes the driving force behind any thriving church. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, hospital and bereavement care, evangelism outreach, spiritual development, discipleship training, team building, pastoral counseling, spiritual and personal disciplines, and time management. "To be an effective worship leader in this new day means becoming "complete." It means more than having a prestigious music

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<sup>24</sup> David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 17.

<sup>25</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Called to Worship: From the Dawn of Creation to the Final Amen*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009, 333-37.

degree, more than playing incredible guitar riffs, more than being "The Voice." It is to be theologically awake and responsible; to be daily maturing in faith and practice, to be conversant with diverse, artistic expressions, and to be able to lead others into passionate, Christ-honoring expressions of their gifts."<sup>26</sup>

### **Salary**

A fixed compensation usually paid in the form of currency paid as a base for the year in consideration of a service provided by the employee.<sup>27</sup>

### **Compensation**

“Money paid for work or a service.”<sup>28</sup>

Typically, total compensation is considered salary, benefits, and reimbursements. The salary is the base amount paid for services rendered. Benefits are above base salary in terms of possible insurance protection such as health insurance, dental coverage, book allowance, housing allowance, mileage allowance, continuing education costs, and then reimbursement can be for other expenses such as out-of-pocket paid expenses above and beyond salary and benefits.

### **Fulltime Worship Ministry**

“Responsibility is obedience by another name.”<sup>29</sup> In this study, full-time references a worship pastor, worship leader, or minister of music in a Christian organization. Typically, this position works alongside the senior/lead pastor in teaching, presiding over funerals, making

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<sup>26</sup> Kevin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Dictionary.com, accessed September 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Dictionary.com, accessed September, 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Os. Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life*. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 80, 87.

hospital and home visits, and working in harmony with additional ministry areas to foster spiritual growth and general well-being of congregants.

### **Part-time Worship Ministry**

Part-time worship pastor or minister of music is someone who works in Christian organization on fewer hours per week than a full-time position. They may work in rotational shifts with the full-time pastor while having another paying job outside the organization.

### **‘A Tent Worker’**

A ‘tent worker’ typically works a part-time or full-time job to cover expenses and at spare time, seeks to minister on behalf of Christ and the Church.<sup>30</sup>

### **Methodology for the Study**

The method of study imbibed in this research is the Qualitative historical research design. It includes the biblical research and interpretation, historical research, and literature reviews on worship, the theology of worship and discipleship, philosophy and methodology of worship, the foundation of Christian worship, *ethno*-doxology, balanced worship and worship missions, church growth, the pastoral role and the spiritual formation of the worship leader.

In keeping with Creswell, the qualitative historical research design is appropriate because: first, the study necessitated addressing emerging questions through scholar resources, while also making interpretations of the meaning of the resources. Second, qualitative research involves intentionally selecting and examining documents to understand the research problem

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<sup>30</sup> Acts 18:2-3.

and research questions. Third, qualitative historical research is useful for examining historical data through a theoretical lens to formulate interpretations that will lead to a call for change.<sup>31</sup>

### **Research Plan**

This study focuses on a small yet vital aspect of worship studies. A rationale is provided for the development of an informed method on the perspective and practices of leading worship, remuneration for worship leaders in the African community, the application of the roles of the worship leader, and effective practices for worship leading. Relevant information is gathered from works of literature related to the subject, and conclusions are developed from pertinent synopsis acquired from sources.

### **Assumptions**

In connection with the distinguishing characteristics of African music and culture, three foundational and theological studies are at the center of this research. First, a biblical perspective of worship leading is considered. Second, the theology of worship and discipleship is researched. Third, the additional published literature is contemplated on theology, philosophy, and methodology of worship, foundations of Christian worship, *ethno*-doxology, the pastoral role discipleship, spiritual formation, balanced worship, worship missions, and church growth. Biblical and theological emphases, related to the life and ministry of the worship leader, develop the outcome and views of this research. A few specific problems, issues, or incidents reported in worship curriculum and text about African contextualization in worship and worship studies is the focal point for this study.

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<sup>31</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 4, 185, 199.

## **Limitations**

This research —the Role of Leading Worship in the African Church—focuses on a small but vital part of worship studies. It provides the rationale for an informed method on the perspective and practices of leading worship in the African community and the challenges. Applications from this study will catalyze development and serve the needs of three specific groups. First, full-time or part-time worship leaders and music directors who facilitate weekly worship services in any local African assembly. Second, lay worship leaders and volunteer music directors/team members who direct worship in local assemblies. Third, church leaders who do not have professional and theological training in worship studies. This research provides clear basic biblical and theological understanding for the role of worship leading, and its implication in the African church.

This study does not include the statistical data for the decline in the role of worship leading in the African community in diaspora. It does not cover the supposition that the leaders in the African church are totally against biblical and theological worship training. Also, it does not incorporate the historical background of the African church and worship movement, the modern worship movement among the African youth and the worship war, the issue of acculturation or amalgamation of western culture, and how it changes the worship culture of Africans and its impact on the global world.

## **Summary**

This research study reveals the need to create awareness of the implications for professionally and theologically trained worship leaders, and the need to incorporate theologically sound worship leading in the African church.

First, this study will investigate a possible antidote to the lingering inquiry on how African worship leaders can pursue full time learning in worship studies and seek full time or part-time position in the African church. Worship leaders can work a part-time job to supplement their role in the church where they are not receiving adequate funding.

Second, a worship leader should be able to engage people by declaring the truth of the gospel through various roles and responsibilities. Correctly, in the church, the worship pastor should fulfill the role of worshiper, disciple, theologian, professional, artist, musician, servant leader, pastor, team member, administrator, producer, teacher, counselor, and family member. With that said, this research study further seeks to explore or investigate a ground for adequate training on the role of worship leading and its impact on church growth in the African local churches. The training is not limited to worship leaders and pastors; it extends to church volunteers in the worship ministry.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

Literature mirrors the society such that it reflects the various aspects of human life (social, political, economic, religion, culture, and history) in literary form. Literature also exposes and gives more insight to many cultural systems in societies around the world than any other form of writing because the experiences of life, which constitute culture, are distinctively presented in literary works.<sup>32</sup>

Works of literature reveal the historical root of what feeds the philosophy of average Africans. African literature derives its material from oral tradition. The written pieces of literature, in turn, feed the emerging African generations with chronicles of historical events that have been recorded and transmitted by eyewitnesses and the inheritors of their legacies. *Ikiddeh* refers to oral tradition as “the body of a people’s spoken culture that includes folktales, fables, myths, legends, incantations, libations, and riddles... a social product which has its roots in a defined cultural context”<sup>33</sup> Oral and written works of literature are the expressions of African tradition and culture.

### Historical Background

Culture is a way of life, just as worship is a way of life. Culture divides people's languages and families; worship should unite and connect them.

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<sup>32</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka” (PhD diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), 2, accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

<sup>33</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, “Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre,” University of Northampton, Northampton, UK, April 15, 2015, accessed September 10, 2019, [https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066\\_55686.htm](https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066_55686.htm).

## Cultural Tenets

The Cultural Policy for Nigeria defines culture as: "The totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempt to meet the challenges of their environment, which gives its order and meaning, their social, politics, economics, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization, and thus distinguishing a people from their neighbors."<sup>34</sup> Worship to Africans should have proper meaning in social life. The biblical worship experience should reflect in social, political-economical, aesthetic, and religious norms modes of the organization, thereby bringing purity and meaning to how Africans should live in their community in response to Romans 12:1-2, explicitly biblical worship as a lifestyle unity.

Many cultural tenets inform the African community, which in turn impacts the way they do worship.

To consider worship from an African perspective is to consider HIV/ AIDS and the foreseeable extinction of many communities; it is to consider illiteracy and the lack of access to empowering resources; it is to consider environmental degradation and the calling to be stewards of creation; it is also to consider genocide and the role of the church in perpetuating divisive ideologies, not to mention death, life and the holistic acceptance of the sacredness of all creation. Moreover, to consider worship from an African perspective is to consider the human body in all of its abilities\disabilities—senses and movements—in actions not limited to the mind's capacity to reason.<sup>35</sup>

This is holistic worship in the social perspective, which finds meaning in biblical worship functions. For Africans or any people of culture like Nigerians, culture reflects in all material and behavioral issues of life. The worship leader must use the absolute truth to address the issue of

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<sup>34</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, "Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre." University of Northampton, Northampton, UK.

<sup>35</sup> Itonde A. Kakoma, ed. 2005, "Worship in the African Contexts of Holism and Crisis and Crisis." Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches, 10.

culture in African worship. This principle applies across different ethnic groups in Nigeria and the African continent.

Worship without adequate attention to what drives the mind informed perspective or implicit consciousness of the African people may suffer or meet unresolved challenges, just as it was recorded in history.

Culture comprises material, institutional, philosophical, and creative aspects. The material aspect has to do with artifacts in its broadest form (namely, tools, clothing, food, medicine, utensils, and housing). The institutional deals with the political, economic, social and legal structures erected to help achieve material and spiritual objectives; while the philosophical is concerned with a people's literature (oral or written) as well as their visual and performing arts which are normally molded by, as well as help to mold other aspects of culture.<sup>36</sup>

In the African context, worship leading could not make an impact without critical consideration on the impact of cultural norms or tenets that guide the community drawn from their historical root. The worship leader can harness these tools to influence worship missional experience in the African community.

### **Historical Root: Music and Movement**

Cultural heritage is behavioral patterns; it is a lifestyle, which informs social structures. In some cases, they form norms that are passed on from one generation to another. For healthy worship leading among Africans, the biblical perspective of worship leading should inform their cultures and nurture the growth of the emerging generation.

As earlier said, worship leading from an African perspective is more than singing and dancing. As useful as *music and movement* are to African worship leading, more important are the subjective or implicit principles that inform these two elements. With these worship elements

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<sup>36</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, "Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre." University of Northampton, Northampton, UK.

(music and movement), worship leading touches the core of African heritage or root. African cultures shape their religion, and in turn, religion shapes their lives. What is passed on shapes the lives of the emerging generations, and these affect the way they live and express their worship. For active worship leading among Africans, the biblical perspective of worship and how it can function in a cultural context of music and movement should be given maximum priority.

### **Influence of Three Languages**

The focus here is on Nigeria. Nigeria is in West Africa, along the eastern coast of the Gulf of Guinea, and just north of the equator. On the west bordered by Benin, on the north by Niger and Chad, and on the east by Cameroon, Nigeria covers an area of 356,669 square miles (923,768 square kilometers), or about twice the size of California. The three most significant and dominant ethnic groups are the Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo (pronounced *ee-bo*). Other smaller groups include the Fulani, Ijaw, Kanuri, Ibibio, Tiv, and Edo.

Nigeria's racial breakdown included, the Hausa-Fulani making up twenty-nine percent of the population, followed by the Yoruba with Twenty-one percent, the Igbo with eighteen percent, the Ijaw with ten percent, the Kanuri with four percent, the Ibibio with three and a half percent, and the Tiv with two and a half percent. Major urban centers include Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano, and Port Harcourt.<sup>37</sup> Abuja is the nation's capital city. In the face of diversity in culture and dialects, religion is one thing that connects the ethnic groups.<sup>38</sup>

The ethnical breakdown reveals the strong influence of three languages (Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo) on the Nigerian populace. While there are other tribes and languages, these three

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<sup>37</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.nigerianamericanfoundation.com/about-nigeria.html>.

<sup>38</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.nigerianamericanfoundation.com/about-nigeria.html>.

significant languages dominate the worship culture of Nigerians. Nigeria's population is exceptionally diverse—more than two hundred fifty ethnic groups are identified. Ten ethnic groups account for eighty percent of Nigeria's population. English is the official language; however, Yoruba, Ibo, and Hausa represent the principal languages.<sup>39</sup> Diversity in culture is reflective in the diversity of languages and the worship expression hinged on these three significant languages with English as the language that connects all cultures among educated Nigerians. Another concept that influences religion or worship in the Nigerian community is the concept of religion.

### **Predominant Religion in Nigeria**

#### Islam in the North

Before colonization, the first recorded empire in present-day Nigeria was centered in the north at Kanem-Borno, near Lake Chad. This empire came to power during the eighth century C.E. By the thirteenth century, many Hausa states began to emerge in the region as well. Trans-Saharan trade with North Africans and Arabs began to transform these northern societies significantly. Increased contact with the Islamic world led to the conversion of the Kanem-Borno Empire to Islam in the eleventh century, and this led to a ripple effect of conversions throughout the north. Islam brought with it changes in law, education, and politics. The trans-Saharan trade also brought revolutions in wealth and class structure. In 1804 the Fulani launched a jihad, or Muslim holy war, against the Hausa states in an attempt to cleanse them of these non-Muslim behaviors and to reintroduce proper Islamic ways. By 1807 the last Hausa state had fallen. The

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<sup>39</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019.

Fulani victors founded the Sokoto Caliphate, which grew to become the largest state in West Africa until its conquest by the British in 1903.<sup>40</sup>

### Christians in the South

In the south, the Oyo Empire grew to become the most potent Yoruba society during the sixteenth century. Along the coast, the Edo people established the Benin Empire (not to be confused with the present-day country of Benin to the west), which reached its height of power in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>41</sup> The predominant religion in the south is Christianity.

Like many other African countries, the distribution of religion can be broken down into three major areas: Christians, Muslims, and animists. In Nigeria, forty-seven percent of the population practice Islam, while about thirty-six percent practice Christianity, and seventeen percent practice traditional African religion.<sup>42</sup>

### Nigerians in Diaspora

There are several conceptual difficulties in defining the African diaspora; indeed defining the term “diaspora” itself is difficult, for it simultaneously refers to a process, a condition, a space, and a discourse: the continuous processes by which a diaspora is made, unmade and remade, the changing conditions in which it lives and expresses itself, the places where it is molded and imagined, and the contentious ways in which it is studied and discussed.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.nigerianamericanfoundation.com/about-nigeria.html>.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Kwasi Sarkodie-Mensah, Nigerian Americans, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Nigerian-Americans.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Douglas S. Massey, Margarita Mooney, Kimberly C. Torres, and Camille Z. Charles, “Black Immigrants and Black Natives Attending Selective Colleges and Universities in the United States,” *American Journal of Education*, 113, (February): 243–271, 2007), accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/510167>.

Involved in this process is migration and how the exposures to cultures outside African culture influence or modify the way Africans live and worship.

### **The Process of Migration**

Many Nigerians wanted to have an education and return to their countries to use their American education to bring change to their people. On the other hand, in the 1980s, when Nigeria's economy began to decline at a tragic rate, many Nigerians remained in the United States and obtained citizenship. After becoming citizens, many Nigerian Americans brought their relatives into the United States. According to the 1990 census figures, there were approximately 91,688 people of Nigerian ancestry living in the United States. The most substantial concentrations of Nigerian Americans are found in Texas, California, New York, Maryland, Illinois, New Jersey, and Georgia.<sup>44</sup>

Ezekiel Umo Ette argues that Nigerian migration to the United States began in the 1920s, as with Ethiopians, beginning with a handful that came to attend American universities and eventually returned home. In subsequent decades, Nigerians became more exposed to the United States, and most students came to acquire an education and eventually returned home. This pattern changed during the Nigerian civil war (1967 to 1970). Many Nigerians in the United States chose not to return to their country. They and others who left the country formed the first wave of Nigerian immigrants.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Douglas S. Massey, Margarita Mooney, Kimberly C. Torres, and Camille Z. Charles, "Black Immigrants and Black Natives Attending Selective Colleges and Universities in the United States."

<sup>45</sup> Ezekiel Umo Ette, *Nigerian Immigrants in the United States*, Lexington, New York, 2012, accessed August 15, 2019, [https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/select-diaspora-populations-united-states?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkcmYstiH5AIVLiCtBh0eEAXPEAAAYASAAEgKr9vD\\_BwE](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/select-diaspora-populations-united-states?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIkcmYstiH5AIVLiCtBh0eEAXPEAAAYASAAEgKr9vD_BwE).

During the oil boom years of the 1970s, the Nigerian government sponsored thousands of students for undergraduate and advanced studies in the United States. Other students came with the financial support of their family or community, all indicative of the economic prosperity of the country and the high premium placed on education during this period.<sup>46</sup> These migration experiences and exposure constitute the emerging of the next wave of immigrants and the emerging of a new generation of Africans who are cultured with a hybrid of African and western culture.

These scholastic facts suggest that Nigerians in the diaspora are well informed and educated. They blend the elements of culture with education, and these two inform the way they live and worship. To any worship leader reading this research, consideration should be given to the cultural flow between Africa and its Diaspora and the role that theological training plays in leading informed African communities who blend the cultural perspectives with a biblical perspective of worship.

### **The Implication of Cultural Flow between Africa and its Diaspora**

In the broad term, this research, the word diaspora means more than dispersion; it involves all resources that makeup Africans both inside and outside their homeland. “A diaspora is constructed as much in the fluid and messy contexts of social existence, differentiation and struggle, as in the discourses of the intellectuals and political elites. Its development involves the mobilization and appropriation of what Jacqueline Brown calls “diasporic resources” – cultural

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<sup>46</sup> Douglas S. Massey, Margarita Mooney, Kimberly C. Torres, and Camille Z. Charles, “Black Immigrants and Black Natives Attending Selective Colleges and Universities in the United States,” *American Journal of Education*, 113, (February): 243–271, 2007), accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/510167>.

productions, people, and places, and their associated iconography, images, ideas, and ideologies.”<sup>47</sup>

These “diasporic” resources, to some more significant extent, inform the worship leading among Africans and, in this context, Nigerians in and outside the country. There is a translation of the cultural resources from the historic Africans to contemporary Africans or the second-generation Africans that are foreign-born. The historic Africans are first generations who seek to pass on their heritage to the second generation or the contemporary Africans, to keep the African heritage even in the face of the western exposure. The method of cultural transfer is first oral through music, dance, and literature reading.

One of the many heritages is the rich musical heritage, which translates to popular music that many western musicians and people enjoy today. To ignore these popular music elements as a vehicle for worship leading in the African local church is to ignore the core drive that connects the inherent nature of African worshipers, in this context, Nigerian worshipers. There are stories behind African songs, and with the songs, African heritages, which are orally transmitted, are passed on from one generation to another. In this argument, worship leading could tap into these means of communication to teach biblical worship leading among Africans.

The circulation of many forms of popular music from rhumba and jazz to reggae and rap is a fascinating story that has been told by many, as is that of the connections between the literary movements of Africa and the diaspora, most significantly the Harlem Renaissance and the Negritude movement in the 1920s and 1930s, as well as the religious linkages from the role of diaspora missionaries and models in the spread of Christianity and the growth of Christian independency (also called independent churches) to Africa’s contribution to the development of diaspora religions.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, “The African Academic Diaspora in the United States and Africa: The Challenges of Productive Engagement,” accessed August 15, 2019, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.542.7448&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Douglas S. Massey, Margarita Mooney, Kimberly C. Torres, and Camille Z. Charles, “Black Immigrants and Black Natives Attending Selective Colleges and Universities in the

Research suggests that through music and movement, Africans in diaspora inform not only their contemporary generations but also westerners about the role that culture plays in the life and worship of Africans. More study on music and dance as a means of communication is encouraged.

### **Communication: Language**

English is the official language in Nigeria, but it is estimated that there are between 250 and 400 distinct dialects. There are three major ethnic languages in Nigeria: Yoruba, Ibo, and Hausa. Over fifteen million people, primarily in Southwestern Nigeria, speak Yoruba. Belonging to the Kwa group of languages, Yoruba is a tonal tongue. Depending on the tone used, the same combination of sounds may convey different meanings. Over fifteen million people in Nigeria also speak Ibo. Formerly considered as a Kwa language, recent research has placed Ibo in the Benue-Congo family of languages. Hausa is spoken in the Northern part of Nigeria and is considered to be the most widely spoken language in Africa. It is a member of the Chad group of languages frequently assigned to the Hamitic sub-family of the Hamito-Semitic family of languages.<sup>49</sup> The dominant indigenous language of the south is Yoruba (Southwest) and Igbo (Southeast).<sup>50</sup>

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United States,” *American Journal of Education*, 113, (February): 243–271, 2007), accessed August 16, 2019, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/510167>.

<sup>49</sup> Kwasi Sarkodie-Mensah, *Nigerian Americans*, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Nigerian-Americans.html>.

<sup>50</sup> *Nigerian American Foundation*, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.nigerianamericanfoundation.com/about-nigeria.html>.

The combination of music, dance, and language is the primary communicative way worship leaders can use to impact worship leading among Nigerians. In today's worship leading in Nigerian churches, worshipers sing in the three major languages, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo, and the varied movements associated with each tribe accompany these songs and the worship experience. To the contemporary Africans in the western world, English woven into African songs and dance are common. Significant consideration could be given to the way Africans respond to worship through music, dance, and language. Pastors can support the use of indigenous language for worship and use of the indigenous Bible in missions.

### **Communication: Religion Perspective**

Hastings has defined worship as comprising all modes of giving expression to the various feelings toward the divine power, feelings of awe, reverence, obligation, deprecation, gratitude, hope, and others.<sup>51</sup> Traditionally, Nigerians believe in two levels/types of divinities: The Supreme Being and the subordinate deities. The Supreme Being can be likened to God and the subordinate deities to the saints and others through whose intercession people can communicate with the Supreme Being. The Ibos, for instance, refer to the Supreme Being in compelling terms, such as *Chukwu* — the Great Providence, and *Chineke* —Creator and Providence.

The traditional religion of the *Yorubas* focuses on different gods, representing aspects of one almighty, all-encompassing God, *Olodumare (Almighty)*, *Oluwa (Lord)*, *Olorun* —the owner of heaven and earth, who is too sacred to be directly approached or worshipped, and this has an enormous implication in worship leading. Nigerians in their local dialects worship (praise chants) God by calling his names, which reflect his attributes. The majority of Nigerian Americans from the Ibo tribe are Catholics. While many Nigerians worship with the American

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<sup>51</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019.

community in places of worship, members of the Nigerian American community have their groups in which they can worship together. For example, in Boston, the Igbo community has formed a group that worships in the Catholic tradition, using the native language in both prayers and songs. They inculcate traditional practices such as dancing and drumming into their worship.<sup>52</sup>

A critical development in religion in Nigeria was the establishment of *Aladura* or spiritual churches. *Aladura* is a Yoruba word meaning "one who prays." The *Aladura* movement started among the Yoruba people in Nigeria during the first decades of the twentieth century and spread throughout Africa. Among the many practices of this movement, all participants put on white robes while they worship. They may worship in a church building, along the beach, on top of hills, or by the mouth of rivers praying, confessing their sins, healing, singing, and clapping. The *Aladura* movement can be likened to the charismatic movement in the United States. In many cities in the United States, Nigerian Americans have established their *Aladura* churches where they gather to worship.<sup>53</sup> The implication of these religions is cross-mixed or hybrid of different ways of worship. One of the institutions that breed hybrid of worship is marriage. When a Christian male who is a catholic marries a Muslim female, the result could be a hybrid of two religions or a combination of the tenets of two religions.

### **The worship Implication of the Combination of the Tenets of Two Religions**

The complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society. "Culture is the

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<sup>52</sup> Kwasi Sarkodie-Mensah, Nigerian Americans, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.everyculture.com/multi/Le-Pa/Nigerian-Americans.html>.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts.”<sup>54</sup> This study will add a useful literary contribution to the existing body of knowledge in contextual addressing the intersection of Nigerian culture and the biblical perspective of worship using worship studies’ materials that inform contextual worship. Culture is to be a term that has various meanings to different people.

Every community or social organization has a unique language informed by its culture, and this, in turn, informs its religion. While Islam and Christianity are the dominant religions in Nigeria, neither is entirely free of influence from indigenous religions. Most people who consider themselves good Muslims or good Christians often also follow local religious practices. The mixing of traditional ways with Christianity has led to the development of the Aladura Church. Aladura priests follow fundamental Christian doctrine but also use prophecy, healing, and charms to ward off witchcraft. Many Nigerians follow the teachings of purely indigenous religions. Most of these religions share the idea that one supreme god created the earth and its people but has left people to decide their paths in life. Followers of the traditional Yoruba religion believe that hundreds of spirits or minor gods have taken the place of the supreme god in influencing the daily lives of individuals.<sup>55</sup>

The implication of the blend of the two religion impact the expressions of health care issues, sorcery, magic charms, and witchcraft, prayers and libations, birth and naming, initiation

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<sup>54</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka” (Ph.D. diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), 2, accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

<sup>55</sup> Nigerian American Foundation, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.nigerianamericanfoundation.com/about-nigeria.html>.

rites, marriage customs, burial ceremonies, and to avoid conflict, many families combine the tenets of the two religions. For instance, after performing the full traditional marriage rites, the church wedding will follow. The same goes for burial and other social ceremonies. In traditional society, when something goes wrong in the welfare of the individual or his family, he immediately wondered who had caused it to happen. In most cases, the individual would suspect that someone had used evil magic, sorcery, or witchcraft against him or his household, animals, or fields.<sup>56</sup> These arguments reflect two worldviews worship practice, which is still common not only among traditional Africans but also among Christians who still share the worldview of indigenous Africans. Some African parents share at home this worship perceptiveness. Consequently, it impacts the way they train the second generation.

The worship perspectives of the foreign-born generation are influenced thoughts rooted in African histories. To ignore these realities in worship leading among Africans is to ignore the root that feeds the perspective of average first-generation Africans. Syncretism is still prevalent among Christian worshipers who share the blend of the two religions. However, the worship leader needs to know the truth and reveal the difference between a religion and Christianity as a faith movement through Christ.

### **The Implication of Syncretism**

Exposure to western education turns the tide of superstition. Nigerians have a variety of traditions and lore dating back to antiquity. For example, peeking (looking) at the eggs on which a hen is sitting was believed to make blind; singing while bathing could result in a parent's death.

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<sup>56</sup> Okeke, Christopher N. Ibenwa, and Gloria Tochukwu Okeke, "Conflicts Between African Traditional Religion and Christianity in Eastern Nigeria: The Igbo Example," June 3, 2017: 1–10, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2158244017709322>.

A pregnant woman who ate pork could have a baby with a mouth like that of a pig. Among the Yoruba, it was believed that there were spirits hidden in rivers and hills in various cities. In almost all Nigerian societies, there is a strong belief that most disease and death are caused supernaturally by witchcraft, curses, or charms and that witches are usually older adults. For a long time, the Ibos believed that twins were an abomination and killed them at birth. Among some of the Hausa people, it was believed that marrying a Yoruba woman could result in mystical dangers such as severe sickness or even death. In many Nigerian cultures, elders are supposed to be served first during a meal but leave food in the bowl for the children to eat as leftovers. The proverb, "the elder who consumes all his food will wash his dishes," attests to this belief. As the immigrants became acculturated into American society, these beliefs and superstitions were forgotten.<sup>57</sup>

In worship, the implication is that many Africans pray with vigor, screaming and shouting to cast out demons and break generational curses. Sometimes they sing loud with vigorous movements to shake off the Devil, and this should not be surprising to those seeking to lead worship in missions among Africans, specifically among Nigerians.

### **The Implication of Rituals and Holy Places**

Many traditional people in Africa believe in cleansing. Cleansing, in this context, means appeasing the gods for peace through traditional rituals, which may include an invocation by singing, dancing, and traditional prayers.

Because many of the indigenous religions are based on various spirits or minor gods, each with influence over a specific area of nature, many of the traditional rituals are based on paying homage to these gods and spirits. Likewise, the area of control for a

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<sup>57</sup> Okeke, Christopher N. Ibenwa, and Gloria Tochukwu Okeke, "Conflicts Between African Traditional Religion and Christianity in Eastern Nigeria: The Igbo Example."

spirit also marks the places that are holy to that spirit. For example, a tribe's water spirit may have a specific pond or river designated as its holy place. The Kalabari, Okrika, and Ikwerre tribes of the Niger Delta region all have festivals in honor of water spirits sacred to their peoples. The Yoruba hold a twenty-day Shango festival each year to honor their god of thunder. Many Igbo consider it bad luck to eat yams from the new harvest until after the annual Yam Festival, a harvest celebration held in honor of the Igbo earth goddess Ani.<sup>58</sup>

This research argues that some of these implicit and explicit beliefs drive some of the African worshipers' actions in worship today. A good example is a way Africans praise with passion and swaying, vigorous dancing, and sternly enforcing the authority of Jesus over evil. Most Africans read spiritual meaning into almost all things, and this reflects in the way they sing and dance and pray. African worshipers believe they need to take authority and pray out the territorial spirit in mission fields. To any worship leader reading this research, further study should be made to investigate this notion.

### **The Implication of Performance Arts**

Literature that has to do with the spoken word is usually termed oral literature. African literature, in this context, Nigerian, derives its material from oral tradition defined as testimonies and other accounts of past events that have been recorded and transmitted by eyewitnesses and the inheritors of their legacies. Nwaru refers to oral tradition as the body of a people's spoken culture that includes folktales, fables, myths, legends, incantations, libations, and riddles, a social product, which has its root in a defined cultural context. The performance reaches beyond entertainment and extends to the generational teaching of young Africans, their history, religion,

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<sup>58</sup> Chukwuma O. Okeke, Christopher N. Ibenwa, and Gloria Tochukwu Okeke, "Conflicts Between African Traditional Religion and Christianity in Eastern Nigeria: The Igbo Example."

environment, customs, norms, and values of the African society. The most important feature of these forms of oral tradition is their close link with music.<sup>59</sup>

In performing arts, dance and music are perhaps the two most vibrant forms of Nigerian art. Nigerian music is dependent on energetic rhythms supplied by many drums and percussion instruments. Genres like Highlife is a type of music heavily influenced by Western culture.

American artists such as James Brown heavily influenced one of Nigeria's best-known Afro-beat artists, Fela Kuti. Palm wine music gets its name from the palm wine saloons where it is traditionally heard. Its fast-paced, frenzied rhythms reflect the rambunctious nature of many palm wine bars. Perhaps Nigeria's most popular form of music is juju, which uses traditional drums and percussion instruments to back up vocals and complicated guitar work. Famous juju artists include King Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Obey, and Shina Peters.<sup>60</sup> These entire genres and their musical elements are used in today's African Christian contemporary praise and worship songs. Further study is encouraged for any worship leader who has an interest in the African way of leading worship.

The connection between culture, social life, and politics will always cause ripple effects in the local church and community. Worship leading could encounter a strong pull from the cultural and social practices of an African community. The thought of an average traditional

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<sup>59</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, "Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre," University of Northampton, Northampton, UK, April 15, 2015, 21, accessed September 10, 2019, [https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066\\_55686.htm](https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066_55686.htm).

<sup>60</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, "Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka" (PhD diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), 2, accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

African is rooted in cultures. A worship leader could face stiff opposition in the separation of the mind rich in tradition from the music or the art of the symbol it represents.

There is a parallel from the Scriptures. A good example is the symbol of the cross. To Christians, it signifies a place of pain and agony for redemption and repentance. The same is true of any symbol or tune in any culture. It will be challenging to separate a mind accustomed to the root meaning of a cultural symbol or song from what it stands for in practice. The cultural practices of Africans slip into their worship practices, and because the two are woven together, in worship leading, it could be hard to separate them. The recommended solution is to immerse it in the cross-cultural and transcultural element of worship and let the people choose the right way of worship without syncretism.

### **Implication of Festivals and Ceremonies**

Festivals are a means of passing on customs, values, ethics, and cultural norms to other generations. It gives expression to the crafts, technology, psychology, and philosophy of a people, their social control, dance, music, religion, and government.<sup>61</sup> Worship leading could be very effective through the medium of Christian calendar observation while imbibing the African context as a medium of dissemination.

### **Summary**

The work of art may be in the form of printing, sculpture, dance, music, literature, or drama, and this constitutes what Tolstoy calls “external signs.” It could be written or oral, and it could be expressed in physical or verbal form. It could be apprehended through sight or hearing

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<sup>61</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka” (PhD diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

in whatever form; the work of art could be regarded as an objective representation of the artist's feelings and experiences. The blending of these, in a performance setting, would promote and uphold African cultural heritage.<sup>62</sup> The worship leaders should reach out to imbibe these cultural elements and their poetry, riddles, and proverbs in modern or contemporary worship while avoiding syncretism.

By using different literature reviews, this chapter describes the strategies for the development of culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication skills and identifies few worship practices common to African cultures, in this context, Nigerians. Also, it recognizes cultural issues that affect worship leading and describes influences of such on worship leading. The subjective implication is the argument of what makes Africans respond to worship leading and the implication of the implanted syncretism that worship leaders should avoid.

So, worship facilitators would do well if they follow the principles laid out by Hiebert. In developing the principles of critical contextualization, worship leaders need to:

- Understand the cultural practices involved.
- Examine relevant Biblical passages and theological principles in the cultural practice assessment.
- People's assessment of their cultures and their responses based on the new Biblical understanding.
- Give room to a change that falls in line with the Scripture while retaining cultural and contextual dimensions.
- With this truth in place, indigenous people can express the worship of God within their own culture.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, "Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre," University of Northampton, Northampton, UK, April 15, 2015, 21, accessed September 10, 2019, [https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066\\_55686.htm](https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066_55686.htm).

<sup>63</sup> Eunhye Chang, et. al. 2009. "*Paul G. Heibert and Critical Contextualization.*" *Trinity Journal* 30, no. 2: 199-207, accessed May 23, 2018, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_429941\\_1&content\\_id=\\_23067541\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_429941_1&content_id=_23067541_1)

### **Chapter Three: Method**

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative historical study regarding the role of leading worship in the African church and the role that the worship leaders play in effecting the pure biblical perspective of worship in the context of African settings. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of African worship experience rooted in their historical background and influence from their cultural values. It also provided a way to develop a proposition from the information gathered from the literature reviews in order to understand what motivates African worshipers and how to help African worship leaders in training and mentoring on the role of worship leading. The organization of this chapter includes the research overview, including the methodology, observation, content analysis method, and summary.

#### **Research Questions**

This study sought to build a premise or proposition in answer to the following research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the worship leader impact growth in the African church community?

RQ2: What role do church leaders play in the training of the lay worship leader's theological training?

RQ3: In what ways does professional and theological training of the worship leader impact the spiritual formation and the growth of the church congregation?

As stated in the first chapter of this research, the method of study imbibed in this research is the Qualitative historical research design. This method includes the biblical research and interpretation, historical research, and literature reviews on worship, the theology of worship and discipleship, philosophy and methodology of worship, the foundation of Christian worship,

*ethno*-doxology, balanced worship and worship missions, church growth, the pastoral role and the spiritual formation of the worship leader, in the context of African perspective and worship community.

In keeping with Creswell, the qualitative historical research design is appropriate because: first, the study necessitated addressing emerging questions through scholar resources, while also making interpretations of the meaning of the resources. Second, qualitative research involves intentionally selecting and examining documents to understand the research problem and research questions. Third, qualitative historical research is useful for examining historical data through a theoretical lens to formulate interpretations that will lead to a call for change.<sup>64</sup>

Historical research or historiography, “attempts to systematically recapture the intricate nuances, the people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have influenced and shaped the present.”<sup>65</sup> Historical research helps researchers and people understand how cultures have developed and how an organization has evolved. The understanding of what happened in the past allows educators or leaders to prepare emerging generations or leaders of tomorrow. The purpose of historical research is to preserve and interpret facts. The researcher gathers the facts and then attempts to assimilate the facts into a meaningful order. The researcher also triangulates the facts.<sup>66</sup>

This research gathers numerous scholarly journals and specialized magazines on African

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<sup>64</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 4, 185, 199.

<sup>65</sup> Historical Research Method, ECU library, assessed October 14, 2019, <https://ecu.au.libguides.com/historical-research-method>.

<sup>66</sup> Brad Wesner, *The Value of Historical Research Parks & Recreation* (/library/p5888/parks-recreation) Vol. 29, No. 2 (/library/p5888/parksrecreation/ i2888371/vol-29-no-2-february) February 1994.

culture and contextual worship. African cultures are learned through oral means and works of literature written from primary sources. For that, this research gathered information through various pieces of writing written on African cultures and practices. This researcher attempts to verify the facts using data collected from African literature sources and interviews. The interpretation of these points extracted from the pieces of literature gives meaning to the argument on the role of worship leading in the African perspective. That said, this research gathers numerous scholarly journals and specialized magazines on African culture and contextual worship.

Historical studies generally fall into one of six categories: the history of movements, individual people, groups of people, a single subject, a geographical area, and an idea.<sup>67</sup> These categories are explored in this research, and they contribute to the knowledge and support the notion of the uniqueness of the African worship perspective and how it affects the role of worship leading in the African church. Fundamentally, history involves a process of interpreting the past based on the evidence available in the present, and this entails using accounts from earlier times. Although each generation re-interprets history referencing light of contemporary questions, history claims a scientific status through careful use of sources and the weighing of evidence.<sup>68</sup>

### **History Research and Content Analysis**

Although things have changed and evolved, strong evidence from the earlier times can beam light into the implicit implication for the healthy African worship perspective and the role that a robust theological perspective on the role of worship leading plays in it.

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<sup>67</sup> Brad Wesner, *The Value of Historical Research Parks & Recreation*.

<sup>68</sup> History may be Bunk but you can still debunk historians and other academics. Irving Hexham 1992, 1999.

Chapter two introduced literary reviews on African cultures and determined their implications on the role of worship leading among emerging African worshipers. In doing so, the researcher used published writings, statistical data from literary sources, and oral evidence correlated with data and information gathered from documented interviews as part of primary and supporting secondary sources.

These collected narratives give insight into the life and worship perspective of the African people and aggregate information within Nigerians in the diaspora. This researcher, with insights from the published materials, submits that in leading worship in the African local churches, culture is substantial and should not be seen as an abstract object. It is expressed in the everyday reality of which constitute their cultures in social and religious ways. Also, today's research observes that the new generation of African descents feeds on oral and literal works of African poets, as well as ancestors, to preserve homeland cultures, this is necessary, in part, due to the influence of foreign cultures and hybrid perceptions becoming worship interpretations in traditional African worship methodology.

### **Participant Observation**

Growing up in the African community has developed the realization of the implicit and explicit values that drive African worshipers, the role unique and strategic worship planning plays, and observations affecting budget restraints affecting worship ministry, minister employment, and the lack of fulltime positions in African church congregations have been obvious. These observations, after fifteen years of African church ministry, have reiterated the traditional approach of African churches minimizing the need for fulltime music leaders.

Also, little value has been placed on the role of academic development in the African church due to traditional methods of oral learning and oral message dissemination or communication.

### **Implicit and Explicit Religion**

Following the approach used by Social and Cultural Anthropologists, it seems that what people do is more important than what they say. That is, implicit beliefs found in actual behavior are as much a subject for study as the explicit statements made by individuals about their beliefs. Orally, in their various communities, Africans have expressed their life experiences, which constitute their cultures in social and religious ways.

Within African contexts, religion as a way of life is far from individualistic. It is rooted in and lived through the human community and all of creation.<sup>69</sup> Human nature, the crux of culture, defines humanity, and should be apparent in human interaction. Besides, culture must be defined beyond a simple abstract definition. It is expressed in the everyday reality of life.<sup>70</sup> The people of culture take their cultural practices with them across to other nations where they live. These cultures are the foundations on which they build their perspectives. As a Nigerian American, the research observes that the new generation of African descents feeds on the oral and literal works of African poets and parents to preserve their culture mingled with foreign cultures and the hybrid perception creek in their worship methodology.

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<sup>69</sup> Itonde A. Kakoma, ed. 2005. *Worship in the African Contexts of Holism and Crisis and Crisis*. Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches, accessed August 15, 2019, [https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/Worship\\_African\\_Context.pdf](https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/Worship_African_Context.pdf).

<sup>70</sup> Christian Ikehukwu Nwaru, *Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre*. University of Northampton, Northampton, UK, accessed September 10, 2019, [https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066\\_55686.htm](https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066_55686.htm).

The fact is, history and culture are the pillars that hold any community together, and the influence of the duo could define the worship of that community. Although changes happen from one generation to another, somehow, the impact of history and culture is passed from one generation to another. Through the first five books of the bible, it is clear the history and culture, developed over the year, formed the daily expressions of the Jewish people. In turn, these expressions translated beyond singing and dance, finding inclusion in Israelite worship practices.<sup>71</sup> In response to the mercy of God, the psalmists clarify the acceptability of laments on oppression, violence, disease, and hunger in worship practices,<sup>72</sup> and this, in turn, attests to the notion that history and culture can inform worship leading.

In Africa, there are many sides to culture. “Culture includes our arts and artifacts, crafts, folktales, folksongs and poetry, music, dance, beliefs, ideas, occupation, technology, etc. They are handed from generation to generation through socialization and education and are our cultural heritage.”<sup>73</sup> Worship leaders, longing to impact the community of culture like the Africans, should consider worship reaching beyond just singing and dancing. Such leaders should contemplate leading worship from the perspective of African culture and tradition. This research submits that the standard to which the culture revolves should be on the biblical view of worship.

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<sup>71</sup> The Torah: Genesis – Deuteronomy.

<sup>72</sup> Psalm 120-150.

<sup>73</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre. University of Northampton, Northampton, UK.

### **African Perspective Observation**

In training African worship leaders or for anyone who wants to embark on worship leading in the African church, consideration should be given to the history and culture that feed the perspective of the people. African worship is necessarily dynamic, incorporating the entirety of creation's experience. As human beings, our expressions of worship are informed and shaped by our environments—including that which is ecological, cultural, socio-political, historical, and contemporary.<sup>74</sup> As it might be in any culture, African mythology feeds the philosophy of many African worshipers, which, in turn, might affect their method of worship in and outside the church. Acceptance and respect for Nigerian culture and their ways of life will help worship leaders who are not familiar with the culture to explore the art of worship leading in a local African or Nigerian church.

To that effect, this study explores the need to embrace the best of Nigerian cultures while focusing on the three primary cultures, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa cultural heritage and imbibing the biblical literature and truth to make the worship leading a better tool for spiritual formation and growth among Africans, in this context, Nigerian worshipers.

### **Research Overview: Minta Survey**

The past several decades have witnessed an influx of African immigrants coming to the United States. These immigrants have hailed primarily from sub-Saharan Africa and within sub-Saharan Africa, mostly from Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, and Ethiopia.<sup>75</sup> In the process

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<sup>74</sup> Itonde A. Kakoma, ed. 2005, *Worship in the African Contexts of Holism and Crisis and Crisis*. Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches.

<sup>75</sup> Kojo Minta, *The Reverse Diaspora: African Immigrants and the Return Home*, University of Pennsylvania, accessed August 16, 2019, [https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf\\_2007](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf_2007).

of seeking for academic and economic opportunities, many settle down to raise their families in the western culture while maintaining the African heritage and link to Africa. This perspective of a blend of the two worlds they bring into worship in their various local churches.

In a survey conducted by Minta, the argument is made that the majority of African migrants, majorly of the respondents from Ghana and Nigeria, have brothers and sisters, and extended families in Africa. Sixty-four percent visit Africa about once a year, while only twenty-seven percent have never visited. A staggering eighty-seven percent send money back to Africa; this is particularly important because it shows a tie that exists between the immigrant in America and those back in Africa. Twenty-four percent sent between \$1,200 and \$2,999 a year to Africa, fifteen percent sent between \$601 and \$1,199 a year back. Eighteen percent sent between \$3,000 and 11,900 a year. Only three percent sent more than \$12,000 to Africa a year. The overwhelming majority, eighty-two percent, is sent back to family members.

This study reinforces the notion that there is an active link to family in Africa that remains in immigrants to the US. While only seven percent of respondents own businesses in Africa, fifty-two percent own property in their country of birth. This is important because it implies a strong bond between the immigrant and their country of descent.

Minta further submits that one of the most crucial questions is, "do you intend to be buried in your country of birth?"<sup>76</sup> Forty-six percent indicated yes, eighteen percent indicated no, and thirty-seven percent had no answer. This question is the most explicit determinant of whether a respondent is genuinely going to return to Africa. It indicates that they most probably intend to go to Africa unless they plan on having their remains shipped and stay there. Seventy

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<sup>76</sup> Kojo Minta, *The Reverse Diaspora: African Immigrants and the Return Home*, University of Pennsylvania, accessed August 16, 2019, [https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf\\_2007](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf_2007).

percent of respondents also celebrate traditional African festivals or cultural events such as their country's Independence Day. Again, this indicates a living bond with both the land itself and the culture represented in that country. "Comparing the culture of your country of birth to the culture of the United States, which do you prefer?" Eighty-one percent indicated they preferred the culture of their country of birth, six percent preferred the culture of the US, and thirteen percent did not know. This directly correlates with the Eighty percent who wished to return home.<sup>77</sup>

The implication of the bond of the African worshipers to their culture is daring and crucial in contextual worship leading. The survey mentioned above implies that many African migrants want to return home and impart their community with the wealth of knowledge acquired in the Western world. The philosophy here can apply to the issue of worship leading and discipleship for Africans in the diaspora. The researcher argues that worship leaders in the diaspora need to be equipped with the role of worship leading in their churches. In turn, they need to understand through mentoring to pass this knowledge on to their people, thereby building a new community of worshipers who have the basic knowledge of true worship. The truth is that many Nigerians are naturalized citizens who are married and now have children who are U.S. born citizens. There is an implication of passing Nigerians cultures and pure worship cultures to new generations who are foreign-born. The researcher sees transfer in many Nigerian and African local churches, and the transfer happens through music, dance, and movement, which are the essential elements of worship leading.

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<sup>77</sup> Kojo Minta, *The Reverse Diaspora: African Immigrants and the Return Home*, University of Pennsylvania, 12, accessed August 16, 2019, [https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf\\_2007](https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=uhf_2007).

## **Communication: Music, Movement, and Songs**

Dances and songs are significant ways to Nigerians to communicate. Enactment and performance are two words that could feed worship leading in the African community. These words are used in the sense of African cultural activities. They serve as a means of artistic, cultural communication in the community as well as the means of heritage transfer from the older generation to the new generation.

### **Fellowship and Relationship through Traditional Enactment: Megbowon Survey**

In her research, Funmilola Kemi Megbowon submits that in the indigenous Yoruba society, festivals are performed in honor of their pantheon of gods. For example, the Egungun festival honors the ancestors; the Sango festival celebrates the god of thunder, so also other traditional festivals are performed in honor of other divinities. Worshippers, in the course of festivals, introduce the kind of music, songs, and drums that the god or deity is associated with, as well as cultivate specific movements or dance patterns of worship. With the songs, drums, dances, the spirit of the worshipped deity manifests in worshippers who are possessed in active participation in the religious enactments.<sup>78</sup>

Another traditional festival in Yoruba culture is the “rite of passage.” The Yoruba people royally mark the rite of passage with the participation of the extended family as well as the broader community. These rites of passage include wedding, naming, burial, chieftaincy titles and housewarming, and many more. Festivals among the Yoruba are used to appease the deity.

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<sup>78</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka” (PhD diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), 2, accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

They serve as “communion between divinities and the worshippers.”<sup>79</sup> The implication is fellowship and relationship through traditional enactment using music and movement as the core pillar that holds worship and the participation of the worshiper. The festival, according to the calendar of time, drive and attract community fellowship and worship expression to God and in their context to gods.

The annual festival is often a time of regeneration of the relationship between the people and the divinities. The pleasure derived from such entertaining enactments is responsible for this attitude. Dancing, drumming, singing, chanting, and masquerading, which are significant constituents of traditional rites and religious worship, have since been employed in secular festivals and at social functions for entertainment.<sup>80</sup> These activities find utilization in African worship leading. A biblical perspective of worship, through proper theological training, is crucial to active worship leading in the African communities and local churches.

### **Culture and Religion**

The argument is valid that Nigerian Americans boast of a wealth of traditional and modern music and dances because, to them, dancing and music form a focal point in life. At birth and death, on happy and sad occasions, and in worship, dancing and music are present. Although Western education and influence have changed this tradition, Nigerian Americans who want to recreate their culture retain this separation. In their writing, Stella U. Ogunwole, Karen R. Battle, and Darryl T. Cohen argue that drums form an integral part of Nigerian dances and music. Juju music, a prevalent form of music from Yoruba land, is a slow, spaced, and very relaxed guitar-

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<sup>79</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion.”

<sup>80</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka.”

based music. One specific musical style, “Highlife music,” is accessible in all parts of West Africa, including Nigeria. Highlife music usually consists of brass, vocals, percussion, drums, double bass, and electric guitar. Nigerians from the North practicing Islam enjoy music that has origins in North Africa. Such music is varied, but the instruments commonly used include trumpets, flutes, long brass horns, percussion frame drums, cymbals, and kettledrums.<sup>81</sup>

All these artistic elements influence the implicit and explicit expressions of African congregations, which constitute the emerging generations who mix the African ingredients of worship with the western creative worship elements. The mixture of the two worlds has a significant influence on worship leading in African communities. The implication is that Nigerian Americans, returning from visits to Nigeria, bring back with them both contemporary and old music. Nigerian Americans enjoy music from all over the world. In addition to American and British music, reggae, calypso, and Zairian music are popular.<sup>82</sup>

Considering the use of such African worship elements mentioned above is still widespread among African worshipers in the diaspora, and it has a strong influence on worship leading in the African or Nigerian church. Any worship leader who longs to know more about the musical language of Nigerians should read more about this concept and make a proper application of it in worship leading in the Nigerian or African local church where he or she intends to serve.

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<sup>81</sup> Stella U. Ogunwole, Karen R. Battle, and Darryl T. Cohen, “Characteristics of Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups in the United States: 2008-2012,” June 28, 2017, Report Number ACS-34, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/acs/acs-34.pdf>.

<sup>82</sup> Stella U. Ogunwole, Karen R. Battle, and Darryl T. Cohen, “Characteristics of Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups in the United States: 2008-2012,” June 28, 2017, Report Number ACS-34, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/acs/acs-34.pdf>.

## Summary

The goal of this chapter was to outline the research method used to answer the research questions. Few works of literature were reviewed to explore the procedures that recapture the intricate nuances, the people, meanings, events, and ideas of the past that have influenced and shaped the present worship perspective in the African church community. The literature reviews were used to argue the notion that artistic elements, such as music and movements, are vital parts that drive implicit and explicit expressions of African congregations.

Building an active worship community in the African settings requires pastoral leadership, mentoring/ training of second-tier leaders, and a clear biblical perspective of cultural aspects of worship language from the perspective of the African congregation. Theology, African mission, and spiritual growth must be determined outcomes. Although this perspective might be unique to the African community, in proper biblical worship training, it should follow the same spiritual principle of pure biblical theology in the context of African culture, while avoiding syncretism.

## Chapter Four: Results

This chapter contains the results of the historical methodology study conducted to answer the research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the worship leader impact growth in the African church community?

RQ2: What role do church leaders play in the training of the lay worship leader's theological training?

RQ3: In what ways does professional and theological training of the worship leader impact the spiritual formation and the growth of the church congregation?

Additionally, the inclusion of discussions relevant to analytical research gained from various literary reviews considering African worship perspectives revealed consistency with historical research methodology providing insight on analysis of the three research questions. Beyond literary reviews, this chapter includes a coherent biblical perspective of worship, considering the necessity of balance within the implicit and explicit perspective of African worshipers attempting to achieve meaningful and missional worship among Africans. In the analysis, there were different levels of analysis on cultural values that feed the worship philosophy of Africans. Parallel worship implication and suggestion are made to how the African perspective and elements of worship can apply to meaningful worship leading experience. These results lead to how theology should balance cultural contextualization in the African worship leading experience.

Works of literature reveal the historical root of what feeds the philosophy of average Africans. The discussion was consistent on the fact that African literature derives its material from oral tradition, and written pieces of literature feed the emerging African generations with chronicles of historical events that have been recorded and transmitted by eyewitnesses and the

inheritors of their legacies. Oral and written works of literature are the expressions of African tradition and culture, and this has implications for the way they respond to worship leading. In his research, Nwaru submits that culture comprises a material, institutional, philosophical, and creative aspects. Material aspects consider artifacts, tools, clothing, food, medicine, utensils, and housing in its broadest terms. Institutional perspectives consider; political, economic, social, and legal structures erected to help achieve material and spiritual objectives. Philosophical and creative elements reveal people's literature (oral or written), visual arts, and performing arts, which are typically molded by and help define specific aspects of culture.<sup>83</sup>

“Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts.”<sup>84</sup> Cultural heritage is behavioral patterns; it is a lifestyle, which informs social structures. In some cases, they form norms that are passed on from one generation to another. Cultural tenets of the people of culture are reflective in their implicit and explicit expressions, which form the norms of the society, and these norms guide their philosophy and the way they respond to social, political, material, and religious activities. In Africa and among Africans, these norms are reinstated and disseminated through performing arts like singing, dancing, and acting.

Literary studies reveal that visual and performing arts are the vehicles through which the messages are transmitted to the core of African minds. For active worship leading among

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<sup>83</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, *Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre*. University of Northampton, Northampton, UK.

<sup>84</sup> Funmilola Kemi Megbowon, “Aesthetics of Yoruba Culture and Religion: An Examination of the Cultural and Religious Conflicts in the Plays of Wole Soyinka” (PhD diss., Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of the University of Fort Hare, 2015), 2, accessed September 10, 2019, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Aesthetics-of-Yoruba-culture-and-religion-%3A-an-of-Megbowon/87f076fec0d8dd566c5914aa087392a65a333350>.

Africans, the biblical perspective of worship and how it can function in a cultural context of music and movement within various languages or ethnic group should be given maximum priority.

The influences of language connected to the performing art and that of religion are significant implications that set the African worshipers apart. There is a constant cultural flow between African roots and its diaspora. In the process of migration, Africans bring cultural worship philosophy. Jacqueline Brown defines this process, “diasporic resources,” to be: “A diaspora is constructed as much in the fluid and messy contexts of social existence, differentiation, and struggle, as in the discourses of the intellectuals and political elites. Its development involves the mobilization and appropriation of what Jacqueline Brown calls “diasporic resources” – cultural productions, people, and places, and their associated iconography, images, ideas, and ideologies.”<sup>85</sup> Be that as it may, significant consideration could be given to the way Africans respond to worship through music, dance, and language. Pastors can support the use of indigenous language for worship and the use of the indigenous bible in missions.

Culture is considered to be a term that has various meanings to different people. In worship leading, that is tailored to target the African mission. The intersection of Nigerian culture and the biblical perspective of worship, using worship studies materials that inform contextual worship, will give meaning to the social organization on which African society is built both inside and outside Africa. Every community or social organization has a unique language informed by its culture, and this, in turn, informs its religion.

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<sup>85</sup> Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *The African Academic Diaspora in the United States and Africa: The Challenges of Productive Engagement*, accessed August 15, 2019, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.542.7448&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

## **The Implication of Syncretism**

The second tier of worship leaders, pastors, should consider the implication of Syncretism, which is still prevalent among Christian worshipers who share the blend of the two religions. That said, the review establishes the fact that the worship leader needs to know the truth that Christianity is not a religion but a faith movement through Christ. They also need to know the implication of Africans who in between two worlds of religion in worship, the implication of rituals and cleansing, the implication of festivals and ceremonies, the implication of performing arts and cultural activities. Many Africans pray with vigor, screaming, and shouting to cast out demons and break generational curses. Sometimes they sing loud with vigorous movements to shake off the devil, and this should not be a strange thing to worship leaders to seek to do missions among Africans, especially Nigerians.

### **Theological and Cultural Contextualization in Worship Leading**

Culture binds a group of people together and expands one generation to another. Culture influences all aspects of life. Culture establishes what is right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable, and generally provides standards of conduct and beliefs allowed by the community. Culture is inseparable from language art and music, and culture establishes meaning for forms and symbols. Culture directs community elements like laws and associations, social activities, and religion. Culture is always changing, and societies usually resist rapid change in culture.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Troy Bush, Theological and cultural contextualization, (2016) Lecture, Module 2, WRSP 821, LUO, Lynchburg, Virginia, accessed in August 2020, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1).

In biblical history, culture has been part of the dominating worship influence. In the New Testament, Jesus observed and fulfilled his mission under Jewish culture. His mission, according to fulfilled prophecy, brought a change to Jewish traditions. In the Old Testament, God chose to dwell with the Israelites. Jesus began a new covenant to fulfill the law of the Old Testament and allow all to experience the presence of God. In his presentation, Dr. Troy Bush said: “The scriptures clearly indicate that we have culture all around us and it has a dominating effect; however, the gospel and the transformation of the gospel always overcome it.”<sup>87</sup> The composition of African root history with ethnic diversity attests to the fact that culture is a powerful medium of social norms dissemination, and the cultural elements like songs, dance, recitation, should be harnessed for the good of the community and the purpose of worship leading in the African local church. Be that as it may, worship leaders should encourage progressive biblical contextualization.

### **Progressive Contextualization**

In the worship culture of the Molokans, for example, singing is an integral part; it takes on specific meaning and significance. Singing is critical to Molokan’s faith. They believe in direct communication with God, and it has the power to evoke the Holy Spirit.<sup>88</sup> Through (Molokans) music and singing, the older people preserve their cultural values. These cultural values, keep them together and preserve their ancestral heritage. Regardless of location, America, or Russia, Molokans make serious effort to preserve their values and keep the younger generations within the tradition. Just as it is in the African community in diaspora, will the

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<sup>87</sup> Troy Bush, Theological and cultural contextualization.

<sup>88</sup> Philip Bohlman, Edith Blumhofer, and Maria Chow Eds.. *Music in American Religious Experience*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 83.

second generation of these immigrants (Molokans) continue to hold up these traditions? If worship leaders are going to connect with this younger African generation, they will have to understand their implicit and explicit perspectives, historical roots, and a modern worldview to develop worship tools that connect African roots to present cultural civilization.

### **African Historical Influence on Worship Leading**

In his writings, Steven Marini ruminates the vital importance of hymns and spiritual songs in American history. Of historical importance in Marini's research is the commonality of the Bible and hymnbooks in evangelical faiths in the United States. Hymns performed different spiritual functions in the early-American evangelical worship experience. "For all evangelicals, hymn singing was a primary vehicle of the numinous, the very wind of the Spirit itself. Singing, hearing, or praying upon hymn texts frequently mediated the regenerating moment of the new birth, evangelicalism's most characteristic form of spiritual experience."<sup>89</sup> In other words, hymns play a considerable role in the liturgical and devotional life of early American evangelicalism. The importance of hymns, in the development of biblical understanding and theological truth, cannot be underestimated in the liturgical and devotional life of early evangelicalism. According to Marini, hymnody developed four significant areas of religious culture: doctrine, the church, worship, and piety.<sup>90</sup>

Besides, Hymns are vehicles through which the older generation passes on biblical characters to their children. Just like other cultures, early Christian evangelicals learned hymns from infancy, then recited and sang them in a wide array of social, ecclesiastical, and familiar

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<sup>89</sup> Philip Bohlman, Edith Blumhofer, and Maria Chow Eds. *Music in American Religious Experience*, 124.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

contexts wherein their beliefs were publicly expressed and approved.<sup>91</sup> Regardless of style or usage, hymns have long been intermediaries through which older generations pass on biblical characters for future generations. Just like secular cultures, early Christian evangelicals learned hymns from infancy, recited and sang them in various social, ecclesiastical, and familiar contexts to advance beliefs for public expression and approval. Furthermore, “The hymnal served as a model for acculturation because one participated in acculturation when singing from it.”<sup>92</sup> This notion cuts across different immigrant congregation in America. The use of hymns unites different cultures and races: German American, African American, and Asian American.<sup>93</sup>

The same notion applies in African worship leading while still incorporating unique African worship traditions. Adapting to African worship distinctive can bring transformation to the context in which the local churches communicate the gospel. African ethnic groups should see the gospel through their cultural lenses and let them live with the understanding of how the ethnic groups or different age groups are going to receive and understand the truth of the gospel in the language they understand.

The Importance of the Gospel movement, thriving through cultures while bringing change in cultural perspectives, must be realized by the younger generations. The Gospel is transcultural; this is the purpose of theological discipleship of the worship leaders and the training of second-tier worship leaders in the African local churches. Troy Bush argues that if we

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<sup>91</sup> Bohlman, Edith Blumhofer, and Maria Chow Eds. *Music in American Religious Experience*, 137.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.,185

think about culture in the context in which we live today, it is vital as it has ever been that we understand the culture and that we practice Gospel-driven contextualization.<sup>94</sup>

A clear understanding must be realized about cultural contextualization, African historical root, and worship perspective of Africans. Besides, the African church must seek adequate worship leading, specify the role of senior pastor as a lead worshipper, and disciple the second tier of worship leaders in theological worship training. Just as the Apostle Paul encouraged his disciple Timothy to preach the gospel in the context of Ephesus without compromise, likewise, worship leaders should see progressive contextualization as a means to communicate the gospel of Christ truthfully with understanding within the African community of culture.

### **The Implication of African Arts in Worship Leading**

In Nigerian performing arts, dance and music play vital and vibrant roles. Nigerian music is dependent on energetic rhythms supplied by many drums and percussion instruments. Worship leading can encounter a strong pull from cultural and social practices. A worship leader can experience stiff opposition in the separation of the mind, rich in tradition, from the music or art represented. These rich traditions, including symbols and paintings, have practical uses in African church worship leading.

### **Theological Implication of Symbols and Painting in African Worship**

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie

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<sup>94</sup> Troy Bush, module 2 lecture, Liberty University.

down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.<sup>95</sup>

Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.”<sup>96</sup> “Behind your doors and your doorposts, you have put your pagan symbols. Forsaking me, you uncovered your bed, you climbed into it and opened it wide; you made a pact with those whose beds you love, and you looked with lust on their naked bodies.”<sup>97</sup>

The Old Testament is full of symbols and metaphors of the intentions of God for humanity. In the book of Revelation, these symbols are significant: seven churches, seven angels, seven seals, seven plagues, and seven horns or trumpets, Golden Lampstand, Almond Tree, Fig tree, the blood of the lamb on the lintel, and the Lion, and the Lamb. In the Old Testament, symbols include the Tabernacle, the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, and many more. These symbols have spiritual meaning in the Old and New Testament. The Old Covenant is the symbolic representation of the New Covenant. The Old, like a shadow, fades into the New for fulfillment.

Biblical stories are filled with symbols, poetic words, and metaphors, emphasizing many worship implications. These specify God's activity with the Saints, the children of Israel, the judgment of humanity, and the grace by which man can be saved. Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to overturn or do away with the law or the words of our prophets. *On the contrary*: I have not come to overturn them but to fulfill them. This, *beloved*, is the truth: until heaven and

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<sup>95</sup> Deuteronomy 6:6-9 (NIV).

<sup>96</sup> Deuteronomy 11:18-20 (NIV).

<sup>97</sup> Isaiah 57:8 (NIV).

earth disappear, not one letter, not one pen stroke, will disappear from the sacred law—for everything, everything in the sacred law will be fulfilled and accomplished."<sup>98</sup>

All around the Holy Land are symbolic structures that reveal the entire Biblical stories from Genesis to Revelation, from Egypt to the Temple Mount and the hope of consummation on Mount Olives. Judeo-Christian souvenirs remind the pilgrims of the Biblical stories in space and in time. These acts the Ethiopian Orthodox Christians follow. The only other works of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church known to emerge were wall paintings and manuscripts. Susan argues that the strength and authority of this art lie in its close ties with Christian iconographical traditions as well as in its uniquely African characteristics. Ethiopian celebration of faith involved the interpretation of sacred themes and their translation, through symbols, motifs, composition, and color, into a distinctly African formal language.<sup>99</sup>

This research argues that Christian faith and stories can move from generation to generation through symbols, which worship leaders should not idolize. God would allow the children of Israel to use symbols as a memorial that proclaims the name and the act of God from generation to generation, of which the fulfillment is in Jesus Christ. Likewise, worship leaders should use African paintings and symbols that find parallel meaning in the Scriptures. The use of paintings and symbols could be beneficial in worship missions.

Visual image is crucial in the development and understanding of Biblical teaching. The Christian faith, born from Jewish culture, emphasizes Patriarchal and Priestly writing, the works

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<sup>98</sup> Matthew 5:17-18 (VOICE).

<sup>99</sup> Susan Stedman, 1979. "Ethiopia: The Christian Art of an African Nation." *African Arts* 12, no. 3 (May): 82-83.

of the Prophets, the writings of the Psalmist, reflections from the apostles, the ministry of John the Baptist, the sacrifice and teachings of Jesus, the early church, and the missionary works and writings of apostle Paul. The church utilized visual art to teach the followers of Jesus, and indoctrinate new converts into Jewish-Christian faith. The method serves as a means of preserving the biblical history and is utilized as a tool for teaching emerging generations the Jewish-Christian faith. Susan Stedman says, “The church has always recognized the efficacy of the visual image in enhancing its teachings so that, with this new policy, the corollary of semi-familiar imagery to implement religious enculturation was only natural.”<sup>100</sup> The same applies to African culture.

Although the paintings and symbols may not be the actual representation, it affords worship facilitators to tell the real story of Jesus in a cultural connotation, which could give congregants the primary meaning of Scriptures in their local language and ancient paintings. These paintings could vary from culture to culture in the African community, but worship leaders will have to research work in collaboration with the native artists to get to know the cultural connotations (Ideas or primary meaning) of their painting, which could apply to Biblical stories. While paintings and symbols may not be the perfect means of communication, with the narrative of Scriptures as the authentic source of information, missionaries could use paintings to their advantage to preach the gospel of Christ in the African community. A further study of African cultural symbols and paintings is encouraged.

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<sup>100</sup> Stedman, 1979. “Ethiopia.”

## The Theological Implication of Dance and Movement in Worship Leading

Why Dance? LaMothe Kimerer answers questions specific to the use of dance by stating, "Why don't Christians dance? I soon realized it was more complicated than I had imagined. Christians throughout history have danced and are dancing their faith. It is just that theologians and philosophers interested in theorizing "religion" have tended not to notice."<sup>101</sup> Kimerer further argues that there are mixed feelings about the sanctity of dance of religious faith.

Scholars have tended to perceive "dance"—rhythmic bodily movement that may be spontaneous or improvised—as offering an indirect contribution best. Dance appears as a symbolic enactment of represented in verbal forms, or as a physical means states of consciousness whose meanings are, again, in verbal forms. The implications of these assumptions studies are far-ranging, for nearly all traditions, global and local, hold some form of dancing as integral to religious life.<sup>102</sup>

So, what kinds of theories and methods would religious studies scholars produce if they acknowledged that dancing could be an active element of “religion”?<sup>103</sup>

Dance is a medium for expressing the implicit message that the dancer carries. The dancer subjectively connects the messages in different coded gestures and steps performed to music with melodic, harmonic, rhythmic musical elements. On this premise, the dance could serve as an expression of religion or cultural practices. Dance could express the actions of life in time, either from the past, present, or future. Since the Judeo-Christian faith is rooted in historical events from Genesis to Revelation, as worship facilitators, just as Biblical texts express the words of the Bible, so the dance can utter the biblical words and the stories in visual form in a way African natives can grasp.

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<sup>101</sup> Kimerer L. LaMothe, 2005. “Why dance? Towards a theory of religion as practice and performance.” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 17, no. 2: 101-133.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

While reviewing the literature of dance and expressive movement, the researcher draws the parallel that Africans, just like Duncan, see dance or movement as expressions of life. With the movement to complex interlocking rhythms, African worshipers express their implicit thoughts. Duncan's case is a good case study for the implication of expressive dance in worship leading. Duncan inherited her critical perspective on Christian religion from her mother, Mary Duncan, who, when Duncan was five months old, renounced her Catholicism and divorced her husband. It was Mary Duncan who instilled in her four children a passion for the arts—music, literature, the visual arts—and a commitment to developing their artistic spirits. Supported by her family, she nurtured her passion for dancing into a conviction that dancing is the art capable of overcoming western Christian antipathy. In 1899, convinced that Americans did not understand her vision, she left for Europe, family in tow. Indeed, in Europe, Duncan found the inspiration and audiences she needed to develop her principles of dance and performance. Duncan sees dance as an “expression of life.” She sees dance as more than religious belief and text; instead, she sees dance as a religious practice and performance of awakening the soul. She sees dance as a means of expressing theology in bodily form. She believes that dance is a movement flowing from an awakened soul.<sup>104</sup>

Expressive movement draws from the overflow of the mind. The expressive movement could be a way to inject biblical truth into worshipers and have them internalize the truth, which could find expression to the congregation. The worship leaders should see dance as an expression of worship that is unique to African worshipers. In their case, Duncan and Van der Leeuw, not only encourage and pioneer dance as conceptual tools for appreciating dance as a medium of religious experience and expression but also demonstrates how religious studies

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<sup>104</sup> Kimerer L. LaMothe, 2005. “Why dance? 18 – 24.

scholars can find in the study of dance, valuable resources for developing theories of religion as practice and performance that offer an alternative to text-based approaches.<sup>105</sup>

In fostering strategic worship leading in the African church, expressive movement should be a tool for meditation and memorization of God's truth. The dancer, performer, or minister should discern and disseminate required attributes involved in dancing gracefully as not to dilute the message conveyed to the congregation. In the cultural practice, the expressive dance could serve as a means of getting into the spiritual realm for invocation, and that is why every art, including music and dance, need purging by the Word of God. Worship facilitators or pastors as spiritual leaders should not demonize dance; instead, they should purify it by the Word of God and make the dancers understand the Biblical or theological mysteries behind the movement.

### **The Biblical Principle on Movement**

In facilitating worship leading in the African church, the worship leader should mentor and disciple Second-tier worship leaders and the congregation on what the bible says about movement in worship and the implication of dance in worship expression. The Psalmist calls for a movement of praise through various means. He said,

Praise Him with the blast of trumpets *high into the heavens*, and praise Him with harps and lyres and *the rhythm of the tambourines skillfully played by those who love and fear the Eternal*. Praise Him with singing and dancing; praise Him with flutes and strings of *all kinds!* Praise Him with crashing cymbals, loud clashing cymbals! *No one should be left out;* Let every man and every beast—every creature that has the breath *of the Lord*—praise the Eternal! Praise the Eternal<sup>106</sup>

These scriptures command worshipers to praise God with melodic rhythm, harmonic rhythm, body rhythm, and movement, vocals, and instruments. Why? Heaven and earth thrive and function on constant movement. Music is movement, and movement is music. Prophet Ezekiel

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<sup>105</sup> Kimerer L. LaMothe, 2005. "Why dance? 5.

<sup>106</sup> Psalm 150:3-6 (VOICE).

wrote concerning the Spirit of God moving in an object, the living creatures went wherever the spirit directed, and the wheels stayed right beside them; for the spirit of the creatures directed the wheels. “When the creatures moved, so did the wheels; when the creatures stood still, so did the wheels; when the creatures rose from the ground, so did the wheels, because the spirit of the *four* living creatures was in the wheels.”<sup>107</sup> Ingalls Monique and Amos Yong argue that musical bodies in the charismatic renewal add to our understanding of the social and theological relationship between music, religious renewal, and embodiment. More specifically, music facilitates emotional entertainment between bodies in the context of sacred space.<sup>108</sup>

The effect of music has roots in the social environment and social interconnection. Music unites social gatherings with a focus on the worship of the Supreme Being, who is God. Worship is spiritual, and the motivating medium is music, which constitutes rhythmic elements that can penetrate the human spirit, soul, and body. The mind and the body respond to the path of the spirit, which connects to the divine. According to Ingalls, Chris Shilling philosophically argues, “The body is the locale for the production of music involving techniques of fingering, vocalizing, and breathing, but the body is also the locus for the reception of music and inspires behaviors such as foot-tapping, finger drumming, swaying, and dancing.”<sup>109</sup>

Humanity is created to respond to the divine through various means. One of the most significant ways of responding is music, which is an integral part of worship. Music is divine, and it feeds the soul with the divine. It is a vehicle that transports the message that it carries into

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<sup>107</sup> Ezekiel 1:4-28 (VOICE).

<sup>108</sup> Ingalls, Monique, and Amos Yong. *The Spirit of Praise: Music and Worship in Global Pentecostal Christianity*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press), 2015), 31.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

the soul, however good or bad. In the African Pentecostal-charismatic movement and the social world, worship through music plays a renewal role. Worship leaders should allow the Holy Spirit to inspire the music and the movement. On the other hand, according to 1 John 4:1, worship leaders should always test the spirit. Excellence in worship leading requires using the elements of music and movement as tools for evangelism, especially in a community rooted in cultural practices.

### **The Theological Implication of Syncretism in African Worship Leading**

Mediums of human-created deity do not determine the worship of God. According to John's Gospel, worship, as God determined and desires, occurs in spirit and truth.<sup>110</sup> "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."<sup>111</sup> "Do not make idols or set up an image or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the LORD your God."<sup>112</sup> Father is Spirit, and those who worship him do so in spirit and truth. The three Hebrew children did not bow to the image of Nebuchadnezzar because God has commanded them not to worship or bow.<sup>113</sup> In obedience to God's commands, Christians should have no other Gods before the King of kings. True worship is determined by God and fulfilled by humanity. The exploration of this research explores considers authentic worship while giving credence to African contextual acculturation, ancient symbols, signs, and practices. Moreover, with a biblical worldview and theological understanding, African congregations can

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<sup>110</sup> John 4.

<sup>111</sup> Exodus 20:4 (NIV).

<sup>112</sup> Leviticus 26:1 (NIV).

<sup>113</sup> Daniel 3.

understand worship from God's perspective and shift their focus from the worship of nature and human deity.

God knows the heart of man; he knows humanity is moved by what they see.<sup>114</sup> The image captures the mind giving the brain a focus, either good or bad, which can be a distraction to spiritual worship. Every image that is worshiped has a root or historic meaning attached to it. To Christians, there is only one image that is the truth, the Cross of Jesus. So, it is of paramount importance for worship leaders to educate the local African churches on the truth that only the Cross of Jesus is the right image of salvation.

The African continent is vast, filled with many cultures, practices, and natural beauty. One such natural attraction found in Nigeria is "Olumo Rock" found in the Abeokuta. Abeokuta is just about an hour's drive from the metropolitan city of Lagos, which is the center of commerce for Nigeria's economy. Historically, the "Egba" people used the "Olumo Rock" as a fortress, in the early 19th century for monitoring the enemy's advance, eventually leading to victory. Olumo rock, which has a height of 137 meters above sea level, is one of the most popular tourist destinations in West Africa. The rock sits in the ancient city center of Abeokuta, and it means "Under the rock." To the *Egba* people in Nigeria, *Olumo* Rock carries a lot of implicit and explicit emotional meaning.

The same is true in other parts of the world. In India, according to Diana Eck, "The most ancient non-Vedic cultus of India was almost certainly aniconic. Stones, natural symbols, and earthen mounds signified the presence of a deity long before the iconic images of the great gods came to occupy the Sancta of temples and shrines."<sup>115</sup> The author further writes, "Another

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<sup>114</sup> Genesis 3:1b-6 (VOICE).

<sup>115</sup> Diana L. Eck, 1986. "Darshan of the Image." *India International Centre Quarterly*

common word for the Iconic image is *Vigraha*, a word which means, "body." As a noun, *vigraha* comes from a verbal root (vi + grah), which means "to grasp, to catch hold of." The *Vigraha* is that which enables the mind to grasp the nature of God. The images of the gods are not "likeness" of any earthly form. They are fantastic forms, with multiple heads and arms, with blue, green, or vermilion coloring, or with part- animal bodies. They are not intended to "represent" earthly realities, but rather to present divine realities. They stretch the human imagination toward the divine by juxtaposing earthly realities in an unearthly way."<sup>116</sup>

Looking at the above examples through a biblical lens, these are examples of idolatry worship. Worship facilitators should disciple worshipers and teach them parallels, found in biblical stories, relating to iconic indigenous signs and symbols. Worship leaders will have to be willing to pay the price for the salvation of the unknown cultures in unfamiliar territory, and also learn to sacrifice and stoop low to wash the feet of the strangers in alien cultures all for the sake of the gospel.

### **The Theological and Narrative Functions of Images in Missions**

Images are not only visual theologies; they are also visual scriptures. Worship leaders cannot do much if they criticize the culture. They need to sit down, understand where the people are coming from, and get to know the meaning, and the philosophy behind what, how, and why they do things differently. With the help of the Holy Spirit, the study of ethnographic practices, and ethnodoxological training missional common ground, for the preaching of the Gospel, can be gained. It may be difficult, but over time, they might gain the trust of the people and impart the Gospel of Christ. Theological training and worship discipleship programs should be sought.

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13, no. 1 (March): 3.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 7-8.

Knowledge gained will equip the missional worship leader with an understanding of biblical symbols, meanings, and methods to guide those who value symbols and meaning to Christian philosophical beliefs.

According to Diana Eck, the traditions of the sculptural representation of the gods, as they emerged during these centuries, served both theological and narrative functions. First, Hindu images were visual "theologies," and they continue to be "read" as such by Hindus today.<sup>117</sup> Images are not only visual theologies; they are also visual scriptures. The many myths of the tradition are narrated in living stone. In the west, the great-carved portals of the Chartres Cathedral, for example, presented the stories, the ethics, and the eschatology of the Christian tradition for the vast majority who could not read. Even earlier, Pope Gregory stated, "I recognize the didactic value of images. For that which a written document is to those who can read, that a picture is to the unlettered who look at it. Even the unlearned see in that what course they ought to follow; even those who do not know the alphabet can read there."<sup>118</sup>

There are implications that worship leaders can disseminate messages through coded music, dance, or drama. Historical and biblical events can be declared through cultural means. In worship leading, facilitators can harness the power of redemption through the enactment of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. God's absolute truth is the only authentic means through which the message of Christ can be effectively shared. The cross of Jesus is the visual theology that informs Christian worshipers of the full story of redemption.

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<sup>117</sup>Diana L. Eck, 1986. "Darshan of the Image," 10.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 10-11.

## **The Missional function of Images through Technology**

Diana Eck argues that modern technology has been eagerly employed for the presentation of traditional myths. “In Indian commercial films, for example, one will see Shiva, standing in his animal hides in the high Himalayas, with animated artificial snakes swaying to and fro about his neck, or one may see a cartoon rendering of the primordial contest of the gods, and the demons when they churned the Sea of Milk.”<sup>119</sup> In response, people watch these animated scenes with fascination and devotion, lingering to tell one another the stories reminding one another of the details. Finally, the mass printing of color reproductions has extended the availability of images. Hindus are great consumers of these polychrome glossy images of the gods and their deeds. Taking them home from a temple or a place of pilgrimage, the devout may place such images in the home shrine. Thus, one may have *darshan* not only of the image but also of the picture of the image!<sup>120</sup>

For years, evangelist and missionaries have presented films to African villages for a visual presentation of the Gospel. Upon viewing these films, villagers would reflect, with great joy, the stories of biblical miracles, symbols that testify of the power of God, the creation and redemption of humanity, the story of Moses, the Crossing of the Red Sea, the Fall of Jericho, the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, and the story of Queen Esther, to name a few. Purposefully, these films were used by God to share with these villagers the Gospel, leading many into a saving knowledge of Him.

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<sup>119</sup> Eck, 1986. “Darshan of the Image,”

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

The implication is that worship leaders and facilitators can use technology to bring people to Christ. Nothing can indeed thrive out of their natural habitat. Worship facilitators should not lead the African church with supposition or impose a personal idea on the people.

Dr. Katherine Morehouse submits that the goal is not to discourage any involvement; the goal is to figure out how the worship facilitator can best get involved. Sometimes, worship leaders have to avoid assumptions on the meaning of a look, spoken words, and verbal or physical expression. Worship facilitators need to take time to understand the meanings of visual expressions and body language that are coded in drama, dance or music may express. It is essential to clearly define the message of a song, drama, or dance. Assuming that a message is understood, due to visual expression, vocal tone, fundamental structure, modal style, of song speed, lacks wisdom. Culturally, these messages can be misrepresented, and contextualization must be considered.<sup>121</sup>

So, in leading worship in African assemblies, worship leaders must assess cultural practices, symbols, and meaning to analyze the cultural impact that could occur.

### **The Theological Connections of Symbols and Identity in Worship Leading**

Like the habitus, identities are at once individual and social; they are the affective intersection of life experiences variably salient in any given instance. Identity is comprised of what we know best about our relations to self, others, and the world, and yet is often constituted of the things we at least able to talk about. Identity is grounded in multiple ways of knowing with affective and direct experiential knowledge often being paramount. The crucial link between identity formation and arts like music lies in the specific semiotic character of these activities, which make them particularly effective and direct ways of knowing.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Katherine Morehouse, "Semiotics, Dance, and Ethnodramatology" [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=429941\\_1&content\\_id=23067566\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=429941_1&content_id=23067566_1).

<sup>122</sup> Turino, Thomas. 1999. "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircian Semiotic Theory for Music." *Ethnomusicology* 43, no. 2, 221-255.

Signs represent more than what we see on the surface; the feelings behind these signs are released through different expressive cultures as dance, drama, arts, music, and other forms of artistic expressions. Quoting Peirce's definition of a sign, in his journal, Turino Thomas writes that sign is "something that stands for something else to someone in some way."<sup>123</sup> He further expounds on the three essential elements of semiotic processes. First, "the sign, something that stands for something else to someone in some way; second, the object, which is the "something else," or entity, stood for by the sign, be it an abstract concept or a concrete object; and third, the interpretant, which is the effect created by bringing the sign and object together in the mind of a perceiver."<sup>124</sup> In a local setting, symbols must be considered about a particular culture. The meaning of signs, what a symbol represents, and the effect of specific symbols and signs on the observer, including emotional sensation, physical reaction, ideas articulated, and processed language.<sup>125</sup>

In Nigeria, Yoruba people have images of different human warriors that lived and fought battles for their liberation. They worship them as local human deities. One is called "Sango" (*the god of thunder*). They believed that when he speaks, he spits fire from his mouth, and they worship him for that. On the walls of "Alaafin of Oyo," a temple dedicated to human deities in a Yoruba tribal city, wall paintings of deities are worship. Deities like "Sango" (*the god of thunder*), "Aje" (*the god of prosperity or wealth*), "Esu" (*the Devil, known to them as the messenger*), and so on. The irony is, they painted "Aje" (*the god of wealth*) in white, and Devil in

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 3.

black. The truth is, in every religion, there will always be a subjective point of reference or connection to the divine God. This point of reference should be an entry point for worship facilitators. In the case of the Yoruba's, white for "Aje" could be a point of reference. God is holy and clothed in shining unapproachable light. He is the one who gives the power to make wealth.<sup>126</sup> The story of Abraham and how God blessed him could be used as well for wealth. The submission here is, only the Word of God can cleanse any religion, not our criticism or compromise.

To the Yoruba tribe in Nigeria, West Africa, these signs and symbols create their historical past and their social identities. One can tell the story of the Yoruba indigene by looking at the symbols and reenacting the entire history of the Yoruba and their deities through music, dance, and drama. That is how coded signs can be utilized. Signs can tell the represented identities and thereby recall the cultural identities of a local community. The implication is enormous when it comes to biblical worship leading. Worship leaders, who are well trained in the theology of worship, can harness these functional, cultural elements for sound congregational worship leading and missions.

### **Summary**

“The subtle rhythmic patterns—basic to how we speak, how we walk, how we dance, how we play music—are unspoken signs of who we are, whom we resemble, and thus whom we are with.”<sup>127</sup> God has called us to be the ministers of the New Testament. As able ministers of the New Testament, just like Apostle Paul, worship leaders must preach the Gospel with a mind open to all cultures and languages. As worship facilitators looking to engage African worshipers,

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<sup>126</sup> Deuteronomy 8:18.

<sup>127</sup> Turino Thomas, 14.

local culture must be understood about the sign means, the object behind the sign, and the effects of signs on the community. Cultural gestures, signs, and language meanings must be considered. Further research needs to be made into the functions of musical sounds, dance steps, drum sounds, and linguistic sounds, considering how they connect to their worship.

In worship leading among Africans, worship leaders should strike a balance between expressions of music arts and the theological concepts that glue them together. Theologically, God commands people to worship, not the symbols, but worship him in spirit and truth. The bible is full of symbols that have meaning in our worship. These holy symbols give real meaning to worship. Ultimately, Jesus is the purposeful object of all biblical symbols and metaphors. Pointing to his redemptive work is the real meaning of Christian worship in any culture.

## Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative historical study was to identify what motivates African worship in worship leading and the implication of leading such uniquely guided worship according to the biblical principles of worship leading, as expressed by Apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11-16<sup>128</sup> and 1 Timothy 5:17-18,<sup>129</sup> as well as relevant literary reviews. The focus of this study is on worship leading and discipleship in the African local church. The researcher submits that leadership should focus on biblical doctrines of worship leading and the implication of the role of the worship leaders in the development of the spiritual formation of the local African congregation. While doing so, worship leaders (worship pastors) should diligently protect congregations from wrong doctrines.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, this research explored the need for the senior pastor to create discipleship awareness to educate African second-tier leaders, worship musicians, and music leaders of the need to pursue professional and theological education, as well as develop curricula for worship leading while serving in local African evangelical churches. Besides, this research considers the need for church leaders to empower lay worship leaders and embrace a biblical and theological model for Christian musicians who are called to worship leading in their local churches.

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<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, he gave some people as emissaries, some as prophets, some as proclaimers of the Good News, and some as shepherds and teachers. Their task is to equip God's people for the work of service that builds the body of the Messiah, until we all arrive at the unity implied by trusting and knowing the Son of God, at full manhood, at the standard of maturity set by the Messiah's perfection. Ephesians 4:11-16 (CJB)

<sup>129</sup> The leaders who lead well should be considered worthy of double honor, especially those working hard at communicating the Word and at teaching. For the *Tanakh* says, "You are not to muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain,"<sup>[a]</sup> in other words, "The worker deserves his wages." 1 Timothy 5:17-18 (CJB)

<sup>130</sup> Frank Page and Lavon Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 123.

This chapter includes a discussion of significant findings as related to the literature on contextual worship leading and its implication on Africans in the diaspora, the role of worship leaders in worship leading, the foundation of pure biblical perspective of worship leading. Also included is a discussion on African cultural perspective and how it connects with worship leading relating to the foundation of Christian worship and the Great Commission. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study, areas for future research, and a summary.

Also, this chapter contains discussion and future research possibilities to help answer the research questions:

RQ1: In what ways does the worship leader impact growth in the African church community?

RQ2: What role do church leaders play in the training of the lay worship leader's theological training?

RQ3: In what ways does professional and theological training of the worship leader impact the spiritual formation and the growth of the church congregation?

By using different literature reviews, this chapter describes the strategies for the development of culturally appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and identifies few worship practices common to African cultures, in this context, Nigerians. Also, it recognizes cultural issues that affect worship leading and describes influences of such on worship leading. The subjective implication includes the argument on what makes Africans respond to worship leading and the implication of the implanted syncretism that worship leaders should avoid.

The research further argues the need for theological training and proper discipleship program that can empower the second tiers worship leaders in the African local churches. This study explicitly reveals eleven conclusions. First, culture is a way of life, just as worship is a way

of life. Culture sets people apart according to their languages and families, and it gives language and uniqueness to worship among Africans in the diaspora. Second, worship without adequate attention to what drives the mind, perspective, or implicit consciousness of the African people may suffer or meet unresolved challenges just as it was recorded in history.

Third, cultural heritage is behavioral patterns; it is a lifestyle, which informs social structures. In some cases, they form norms that are passed on from one generation to another. For healthy worship leading among Africans, the biblical perspective of worship leading should inform their cultures and nurture the growth of the emerging generation.

Fourth, Nigerians in Diaspora are well informed and educated. They blend the elements of culture with education, and these two inform the way they live and worship. Without compromise, worship leaders should consider the implication of the cultural flow between Africa and its Diaspora and the role that theological training plays in leading informed African communities who blend the cultural perspectives with a biblical perspective of worship.

Fifth, the combination of music, dance, and language, are the primary communicative ways worship leaders, especially music pastors, can use to impact worship leading among Nigerians. According to the literature review, in today's worship leading in the Nigerian churches, worshipers sing in the three major languages, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo, and the varied movements associated with each tribe accompany these songs and the worship experience. To the contemporary Africans in the western world, English woven into African songs and dance are common. Significant consideration should be given to the way Africans respond to worship through music, dance, and language. Pastors can support the use of indigenous language for worship and the use of indigenous Bibles in missions. In performing arts, dance and music are, perhaps, the two most vibrant forms of Nigerian art. Nigerian music is dependent on energetic

rhythms supplied by many drums and percussion instruments. In Africa, there are many sides to culture. “Culture includes arts and artifacts, crafts, folktales, folksongs and poetry, music, dance, beliefs, ideas, occupation, technology. They are handed down from generation to generation through socialization and education and are aspects of cultural heritage.”<sup>131</sup> Worship leaders who aspire to impact the community of culture like the Africans should see worship beyond singing and dancing. Such leaders should consider leading worship from the perspective of African culture and tradition, in this context, Nigerian. The researcher submits that the standard to which the culture revolves should be on the biblical view of worship.

Sixth, two collective worship practice (Culture and religion) are still prevalent, not only among traditional Africans but also among Christians who still share the cultural view of indigenous Africans; and this cultural links in worship are shared at home by parents and impact the training of the second generation, foreign-born, Africans. In other words, the worship perspectives of the foreign-born generation are influenced by the thoughts that are rooted in African histories. To ignore that in worship leading among Africans is to ignore the root that feeds the perspective of average first-generation Africans. The research argues that syncretism is still prevalent among Christian worshipers who share the blend of two religions. However, in training the lay worship leaders in the African churches, the worship leader needs to know the truth that Christianity is not a religion but a faith movement through Christ.

Seventh, the implication of syncretism is seen in the notion that many Africans pray with vigor, screaming and shouting to cast out demons and break generational curses. Sometimes they sing loud with vigorous movements to shake off the devil, and this should not be a strange thing

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<sup>131</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, “Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre.” University of Northampton, Northampton, UK.

to worship leaders who seek to do missions among Africans, especially Nigerians. Moreover, the implication for ritual cleansings reveals the fact that many traditional people in Africa believe in cleansing. Cleansing, in this context, means appeasing the gods for peace through traditional rituals, which may include an invocation by singing, dancing, and traditional prayers. To this end, the investigation exposes the fact that some of these implicit and explicit beliefs drive some African worshipers' actions in worship today. African worshipers believe they need to take authority and pray out the territorial spirit in mission fields.

Eighth, worship leading could encounter a strong pull from the cultural and social practices of an African community. Because the thought of an average traditional African is rooted in cultures, a worship leader could face stiff opposition in the separation of the mind rich in tradition from the music or the art of the symbol it represents. The cultural practices of Africans slip into their worship practices, and because the two are woven together, in worship leading, it could be hard to separate them. The recommended solution is to immerse it in the cross-cultural and transcultural element of worship and let the people choose the right way of worship without syncretism. Also, considering the cultural calendar as a guide in the local community, worship leading could be very effective through the medium of Christian calendar observation while imbibing the African context as a medium of dissemination.

Ninth, culture is expressed in the everyday reality of life.<sup>132</sup> The people of culture take their cultural practices with them across to other nations where they live. These cultures are the foundations on which they build their perspectives. As a Nigerian American, this researcher

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<sup>132</sup> Christian Ikechukwu Nwaru, "Upholding the Igbo Cultural Heritage through the Theatre." University of Northampton, Northampton, UK, accessed September 10, 2019, [https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066\\_55686.htm](https://file.scirp.org/Html/2-1250066_55686.htm).

observes that the new generation of African descendants feeds on the oral and literal works of African poets and parents to preserve their culture mingled with foreign cultures and the hybrid perception creek in their worship methodology.

Tenth, the research overview by Minta reveals that an active link to family in Africa that remains in immigrants to the US is an implication on the worship of Africans in the diaspora. The implication of the bond of the African worshipers to their culture is daring and crucial in contextual worship leading. The implication is that many African migrants want to return home and impart their community with the wealth of knowledge acquired in the Western world. The philosophy here can apply to the issue of worship leading and discipleship for Africans in Diaspora.

Eleventh, worship leaders in Diaspora should undergo training on the roles of worship leading in their churches. In turn, they need to understand through mentoring to pass this knowledge on to their people, thereby building a new community of worshipers who have not only the basic knowledge of true worship but also how the roles function in the cultural settings.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

Looking at these eleven points, it is clear that in worship leading among Africans, heritage transfer happens through music, dance, movement, which are the essential elements of worship leading.

Second, touching on these roles (dancing, drumming, singing, chanting) and tapping them as vehicles of worship leading, wrapped in the biblical perspective of worship through proper theological training, is crucial to active worship leading in the African communities and local churches.

Third, African artistic elements and instruments such as trumpets, flutes, long brass horns, percussion frame drums, cymbals, and kettledrums.<sup>133</sup> These artistic elements influence the implicit and explicit expressions of African congregations, which constitute the emerging generations who mix the African ingredients of worship with the western creative worship elements. The mixture of the two worlds has a significant influence on worship leading in African communities.<sup>134</sup> The use of such African worship elements is still widespread among African worshipers in the diaspora, and it has a strong influence on worship leading in the African or Nigerian church. Any worship leader who longs to know more about the musical language of Nigerians should read more about this concept and make a proper application of it in worship leading in the Nigerian or African local church where he or she intends to serve.

Fourth, in training African worship leaders, consideration should be given to the history and culture that feed the perspective of the people. “African worship is necessarily dynamic, incorporating the entirety of creation’s experience. As human beings, our expressions of worship are informed and shaped by our environments—including that which is ecological, cultural, socio-political, historical, and contemporary.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Stella U. Ogunwole, Karen R. Battle, and Darryl T. Cohen, “Characteristics of Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups in the United States: 2008-2012,” June 28, 2017, Report Number ACS-34, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/acs/acs-34.pdf>.

<sup>134</sup> Stella U. Ogunwole, Karen R. Battle, and Darryl T. Cohen, “Characteristics of Selected Sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Ancestry Groups in the United States: 2008-2012,” June 28, 2017, Report Number ACS-34, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/acs/acs-34.pdf>.

<sup>135</sup> Itonde A. Kakoma, ed. 2005, *Worship in the African Contexts of Holism and Crisis and Crisis*. Geneva, Switzerland: The Lutheran World Federation – A Communion of Churches.

Fifth, as it might be in any culture, African mythology feeds the philosophy of many African worshipers, which, in turn, might affect methods of worship in and outside the church. Acceptance and respect for Nigerian culture and their ways of life will help worship leaders who are not familiar with the culture to explore the art of worship leading in a local African or Nigerian church.

Overall, the results of this study align with literature regarding the significance of the need to embrace the best of Nigerian cultures while focusing on the three primary cultures, Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa. Cultural heritage and imbibing the biblical literature and truth to make worship leading a better tool for spiritual formation and growth among Africans should be considered. Touching on these roles (dancing, drumming, singing, chanting) and tapping them as vehicles of worship leading wrapped in the biblical perspective of worship through proper theological training is crucial to active worship leading in the African communities and local churches. In a step further, the expressive acts of worship should be done in a decent way to avoid distraction to visitors who are not familiar with the culture. In other words, the cultural worship and acts will be authentic if it stays within the boundary of the Scripture.

### **Worship leading Practice and its implication**

Dr. Bush submits that the recognition of a necessity for dialogue between descendants' culture and receiving culture so ecumenical understanding can occur. Also, there must be an understanding of differing contextual cultures.<sup>136</sup> Worship leaders must learn from the example

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<sup>136</sup> Troy Bush, module 6, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id= 103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id= 103_1)

that Apostle Paul set in the Athens community.<sup>137</sup> Jesus used the same method of contextualization in John 4 when He shared the gospel to the Samaritan woman. In his communication, Jesus used a common need of water to convey the message of His role as the living water that leads to eternal life, thereby leading her to accept him as the Messiah that brings the whole village to Christ.

Hilbert describes this process as critical contextualization. At the heart of critical contextualization is “taking the gospel to communicate it across cultures, which includes across generations, and to do so such a way that the message is clearly understood in one direction and in a cultural context, the message of the Gospel is heard, received as truth, and evidenced in changing of cultural norms that are beyond the scriptures.<sup>138</sup> The Gospel message should be best presented through the framework of ethnicity. The Gospel message redirects ethnicity and all aspects of people to the one and only God, the author of our Christian faith.

### **Action Step**

The result of this study proves that worship in western Africa is similar to other worship elements in Africa, which find a connection with the Africans in the diaspora. This research suggests that worship leaders should research African cultural elements and, in turn, connect them with Scriptures to balance cultural and Biblical practices.

“There is one body and one Spirit, and God called you to have one hope. There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. There is one God and Father of everything. He rules everything

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<sup>137</sup> Acts 17:22-28: Apostle Paul interpreted the gospel into their context so that they would know the unknown God.

<sup>138</sup> Troy Bush, module 6, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

and is everywhere and is in everything.”<sup>139</sup> In the story of culture and its function in society, the truth remains; God is the object and subject of worship. The story of the bible traces from ages past through the vehicles of the myriad of changing, fading, and evolving cultures, the story is still ever fresh. The story passes on in different expressions of worship, and in different languages across the globe, yet, remains constant. The redemptions story, from Genesis to Revelation, is the foundation of worship. Worship expression and traditions may differ in musical styles and genres yet should be based biblically and theologically as the anchor on the rotating wheels of cultures. Krabill argues that Christianity should not lock this Gospel message in any cultural straitjacket. Instead, we should find a place, time, dress, forms, and music that kindle and carry a passion for the supremacy of God in all things.<sup>140</sup>

According to the biblical truth, the people of all cultures are created for the exclusive worship of God. "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."<sup>141</sup> Africans, as well as other races, are created to please God with body, soul, and spirit. Hall rightly says, “Real worship begins only after a turning of heart, soul and mind to God.”<sup>142</sup>

True worship begins in Christ. Any worship or culture without Christ is False and in Vain. In his presentation, Benham quoted Dr. Bruce Leaf of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, explaining three classifications of worship. True worship is the worship of the right

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<sup>139</sup> Ephesians 4:4-6 (NCV).

<sup>140</sup> Krabill, James R., Frank Fortunato, Robin P. Harris, and Brian Schrag. *Worship and the Mission for the Global Church: An Ethnodoxology Handbook*. Kabrill, 102, emphasis added.

<sup>141</sup> Revelations 4:11.

<sup>142</sup> Krabill, EthnoDoxology Vol. 3, No. 1, 12.

God in the right way; it is always accepted and always blessed. False worship is the worship of the wrong god; it is always rejected; it is always punished. Vain worship is the worship of the right God in the wrong way, which is always rejected and always punished. Benham further presents that acceptable worship is the worship of the believer, which is done in spirit and truth. The truth that cuts across all cultures is the worship of God done in spirit and truth. We know that Jesus is the truth.<sup>143</sup> Therefore, this research supports the uniqueness of African culture, provided it is done in the right way according to the biblical standard of worship leading.

### **The Knowledge of God**

According to the literature review in the previous chapter, there are different religious views in Africa. In Nigeria, as cited, there is a mixture of Islam and Christianity, which informs some Nigerian perspectives on worship. Because of this, senior pastors need to train lay worship leaders on worship with an accurate understanding of the nature of God. In several places in the world, people have different views on the nature and character of God versus what the Holy Spirit through the Bible reveals. In her presentation, Dr. Morehouse shares that one of the things with Muslim culture is their view of who God is, even though they call him Allah, which is just an Arabic word for God; their understanding of who God is so vastly different from the Christian knowledge of God.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Benham, False or Vain Worship, accessed, August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

<sup>144</sup> Katherine Morehouse, Contextualization vs. Syncretism (WRSP 811, module 1), accessed, August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

This research submits that in the African community, especially among traditional African worshipers, the theological truth about the knowledge of the holy God and the difference between him and other deities should be addressed in worship leading. The second-tier worship leaders should go through proper training to know the understanding of who God is, what He has done for the world, and why worship is futile without Him. The senior pastor, as a worship leader, should set up discipleship training to elicit theological information. Dr. Morehouse shares on the worship target of ethnodoxology as "an accurate understanding of God's gift of Jesus to us, and who we are without Him, sinners dead in sin. In Him, abundant and eternal life is found. Now, in him, we have the gift of the Spirit, the gift of sonship, and the right to talk directly to God."<sup>145</sup>

### **The Role of the Worship Leader in Training Lay-Worship Leaders**

This research submits that, in the face of a myriad of cultural practices and beliefs, worship leading, in all cultures, should have an accurate understanding of the truth of God's Word. Also, worship leading should have a real authentic expression of love in honor of the one true God, who sacrificed for humanity to create a way for a genuine relationship with Him.

In training African worship leaders, the senior pastor should facilitate training with the understanding of worship in Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. The focus of training should center on the foundation of worship (Discipleship on authentic worship of Abel, the weakness of the sacrifice of Cain, the nature of the mind, heart, and will, which are the essential components of the soul of man (Hebrews 11:4). Also, the truth about the worship of Abraham and Noah (Genesis 8-9; 22; Hebrews 11); the lesson worshipers can learn from the Golden Calf worship experience (Exodus 32) and additional biblical worship principles.) Benham submits: "We love

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<sup>145</sup> Morehouse, Contextualization vs. Syncretism (WRSP 811, module 1).

God with our whole heart; we know him with our whole mind, and we obey him with our entire will.”<sup>146</sup>

Moreover, worship training should focus on many more true teachings that reveal biblical principles that cut across different cultural expressions of the worship of God. In addition to teaching worship through Old Testament characters, the essence of pure, vain, and false worship should be taught, citing different Biblical stories that support this teaching. Also, training should focus on Biblical principles of New Covenant worship and the Great Commission worship. In focusing on worship and culture, emphasis should be on, Worship as Transcultural: The resurrected Christ whom we worship, and through whom by the power of the Holy Spirit, we know the grace of the Triune God, transcends and indeed is beyond all cultures. The mystery of His resurrection is the source of the transcultural nature of Christian worship, and this should not give room to the dislike of Christian worship in other cultures. Worship leaders should try to acculturate Christian worship styles minding the worship language of the people.

### **Worship as Contextual**

A given culture’s values and patterns, insofar as they are consonant with the values of the Gospel, can be used to express the meaning and purpose of Christian worship. It involves re-expressing components of Christian worship with something from a culture that has a similar meaning, value, and function. Dynamic equivalence goes far beyond mere translation; it involves understanding the fundamental meaning both of elements of worship and the local culture and enabling the meaning and actions of worship to be “encoded” and re-expressed in the language of local culture.

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<sup>146</sup> John 4:24.

Worship as Counter-cultural: some components of every culture in the world are sinful, dehumanizing, and contradictory to the values of the Gospel. From the perspective of the Gospel, they need critique and transformation.

### **Worship as Cross-cultural**

The sharing of hymns, art, and other elements of worship across cultural barriers helps enrich the whole church and strengthen the sense of the community of the church. Care should be taken that the music, art, architecture, gestures, postures, and other elements of different cultures are understood and respected when being used by churches elsewhere in the world.<sup>147</sup>

### **Implication of Contextual Worship Leading**

The submission here, according to the literature reviews, is that the adaptation of contextual music in worship helps the indigenous worshipers to express their heart worship to God and helps the music pastors and leadership to disciple African communities. “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”<sup>148</sup> Jesus’ prayer focuses on the will of God for the nations. God intends to make all nations one in worship. Culture is not a hindrance to true worship. Not all! Culture is not the issue in redemption. All cultures are one in Christ. Paul said, “For Christ, himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.”<sup>149</sup> Therefore, if the goal of worship leading is to glorify God, then worship leaders will have to do it with one voice and not as in one language

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<sup>147</sup> Charles E. Farhadian, *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*. (Grand Rapids: Erdmans Publishing, 2007), 286-290.

<sup>148</sup> Matthew 6:9-10 (MEV).

<sup>149</sup> Ephesians 2:14 (NLT).

because of our ethnic diversity. Worship of God is one united in the spirit of Christ. In his book, “Worship Outside the Music Box,” Newby wrote that the issue of oneness was in the early church, and he said that the first-century church was ethnically diverse. Many Jews and Gentiles decided to work together for the advancement of God’s kingdom. Together as one, they worshiped Jesus Christ in a way that blended their cultural preferences to become united.<sup>150</sup> Not only was there cross-cultural worship in the first century, but worship also brought the old together with the young, the rich with the poor, the master with the slave, and men with women. This attests to the fact that Christ is the center that blends cultural preferences in contextual worship among Africans in the diaspora. According to Ephesians 4, the church is united by One Spirit, One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all.<sup>151</sup> These transcultural elements of worship should theme worship leading, even in the face of African cultural differences.

The literature reviews reveal that cultures shape Africans, and culture counts in worship leading. Africans see from the perspective of what they experience, especially in their backgrounds, upbringings, and education. Fairness demands that worship leaders discern and discover what others enjoy and value, which in most cases are rooted in their culture and background. Since cultural differences create a unique approach to worship, worship leaders should give room for diversity of expression focusing and driven by a higher point of view to which these differences are anchored, in this context, Nigerian culture. The caution here is, in Christ, there is no style confinement. Therefore, the worship leading in the African community

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<sup>150</sup> Stephen M. Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box*. Enumclaw, WA: Redemption Press, 2015), 9.

<sup>151</sup> Ephesians 4:4-6 (MEV).

should be done in faith through the Holy Spirit, who is not confined to space and culture.

In Jesus' discourse with the Samaritan woman, He acknowledges her culture as a Samaritan, Jesus said to her, "the hour is coming, and is nowhere when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth."<sup>152</sup> The discussion of Jesus is not on being a Samaritan or Jew; it is on the spiritual kingdom worship. So, when worship leaders train lay-worship leaders in the African community, emphasis should center on Jesus as the center of worship with people of cultures pursuing one God, one faith, one Lord, one baptism.<sup>153</sup> Worship should be through the same grace and provision of Jesus Christ. The grace that lifts people to the high point where they worship above personal preferences and learn, through flexibility and humility, to embrace cultural differences and worship with the perspective that is rooted in biblical concepts and principles of authentic worship.

### **Cultural Music Appreciation in Worship Leading**

Cultural Appreciation is learning about another culture with respect and courtesy. It is appreciating a specific culture enough to take time to learn about it, interact with people among the culture, and understand the culture.<sup>154</sup> Cultural appreciation fosters the success of worship in the African church. Quynh wrote, "Embrace the culture *YOU* come from while staying open-minded, knowledgeable, and accept other ethnic group and culture among you."<sup>155</sup> Worship

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<sup>152</sup> John 4:23-24 (MEV).

<sup>153</sup> Ephesians 4.

<sup>154</sup> Quynh, Cultural Appreciation vs Cultural, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://www.psych2go.net/cultural-appreciation-vs-cultural-appropriation/>.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

leaders, seeking to lead worship in the African community, have to be creative with flexibility and humility, embracing African cultures by appreciating and receiving what is culturally brought into worship. Dr. John Benham, in his presentation on "Worship, Music, and Theology," said: "Theology is the truth. It is eternal; it is universal; it does not change. Culture is diverse. There are many cultures, and they change from time to time, often from generation to generation. One of the important aspects of culture is music, and music has the formation of one's identity, culturally and individually."<sup>156</sup>

### **Logogenic versus Melogenic**

African music, in most cases, is used to tell stories and disseminate ethical, cultural norms, which makes it appropriate for telling the Gospel message. Cultural music in Africa is word dominated with few melodies. Emphasis is always on the text and message being passed. At this point, the research submits that African music is a great tool to disseminate the glorious Gospel of our Lord. The caution is, before a leader can bring in these cultural influences, the leader should consider the issue of appropriateness and function, and then use musical tools wrapped around great Gospel messages to build bridges among African ethnic community or local church.

### **The Implication of Intergenerational cultural worship leading**

“Worship is not solely an individual process; worship is a shared, social activity... Worship is a social process with profound interactions—spoken and unspoken, overt, and

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<sup>156</sup> Benham, (2016) Lecture, Module 2, WRSP 821, LUO, Lynchburg, Virginia, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1)

covert—between those gathered together.”<sup>157</sup> The power of music, through inclusive liturgical planning, can bridge the divide between generations. The younger African generation responds to the use of contemporary tools to bring them into the same truth that traditional worship planning gives to the older generation. In order to achieve this, senior worship leaders must groom second-tier leaders who can bridge gaps between the two worlds. The senior leaders and the worship pastor can develop a discipleship course that focuses on intergenerational worship and its effect on the emerging church. This leadership course can help to improve the worship sense of the church in a way that will benefit both the emerging and older generations. The impact of this training and awareness could promote the worship mission.

### **The Implication of Great Commission and Worship Leading Discipleship**

The passion of Jesus was stated to all his disciples before he ascended to heaven. He said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."<sup>158</sup> In promoting worship mission, worship leaders can use diverse cultural music teams to help in supporting various evangelism outreaches, thereby showcasing what the church will offer if converts come to fellowship with them. Jesus said, “Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they set it on a lamp stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Gerardo Marti, *Worship across the Racial Divide: Religious Music and the Multiracial Congregation*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 10.

<sup>158</sup> Matthew 28:19-20.

<sup>159</sup> Matthew 5:15.

## **Unity in Cultural Worship Leading**

Change is multicultural. About the Ephesians 4, true worship is united, not in culture or personal preferences, but one faith in Christ. In Acts, the record was written of how the disciples received people that were not like them and “all the believers were together and had everything in common.”<sup>160</sup> They were united in one faith in Jesus, one Spirit of Jesus, one Father of Jesus, and the God of heaven and earth.

The bible is a reference point of unity in cultural worship leading. God's Holy Word and the teachings of Jesus about creation, redemption, and eschatology cut across cultural lines or barriers. These truths, although the same, can be spoken in different languages with the same meaning, so that traditions may be done in harmony, but with different expressions. The church of Christ with one body, one head, with many members can speak in unity, with one Spirit to one another in different native languages, and expressed worship differently, but united to one God. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope to your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."<sup>161</sup>

## **Looking Beyond Cultural Art in Worship Leading**

Art is about people, but worship is about God.<sup>162</sup> Christian's identity is to be summed up in Jesus Christ.<sup>163</sup> The only way to stand in unity, within the diversity of cultural contexts, is to

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<sup>160</sup> Acts 2:42-47.

<sup>161</sup> Ephesians 4:4-6 (MEV).

<sup>162</sup> Stephen M. Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box*. (Enumclaw, WA: Redemption Press, 2015), 33.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

embrace the grace of Jesus, which He extends to all humankind. A story was told about a man who stood before Jesus in heaven. In the discus, Jesus showed him a lovely garden. Down at the entrance of the garden are many streams flowing into the garden. However, at one point, all the streams meet to become one more significant stream flowing into and feeding the garden. Then Jesus told the man streams are what people call denominations on earth. However, in heaven’s eye, these join together to become one colossal stream, one family of God feeding and flowing into God’s kingdom.

Regardless of ethnicity, worship leaders should see one body of Christ with many members that are diverse yet joined under Christ as the head of the church. “As we use art to worship God, our motives and intentions are Holy Spirit casted and driven, and the use of multiple art forms honors God. These multiple artistic renderings mirror how Jesus Christ will reconcile and bring together all things.”<sup>164</sup> Christians gather in God’s name, not in the name of any culture. Jesus died to reconcile all things together with God’s worship and thereby has committed into humanities hands the message of reconciliation. “God, through Christ, is reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their sins against them, and has entrusted to us the message of reconciliation.”<sup>165</sup> This should be the balance to worship leading in any context.

### **Implication of Discipleship Training**

It is only by the power of relating to the next generation and praying for them that we can help them become change agents for God’s kingdom.<sup>166</sup> Worship leaders must uphold and express biblical values that give room for the enlistment of young people and leaders. In training

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<sup>164</sup> Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box*, 32.

<sup>165</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19.

<sup>166</sup> Newby, *Worship Outside the Music Box*, 46.

second-tier worship leaders, senior leaders should include the younger generation in program planning, in leadership, allow them to lead in worship, share leadership responsibilities with them, give allowance for error, provide correction in love, set aside pride, and learn from their strength. Through discipleship and sharing leadership with younger generations, worship leaders can win the next generation to Christ and impart to them wisdom from the elders. Paul is an excellent model of this. He mentored Timothy in the way of the Lord and charged him to exhibit training he has received to grow the church of God entrusted into his care.<sup>167</sup> Intentions, motives, and innovations for cultural worship among Africans should propel worship mentors to explore the possibility of intergeneration worship leading among Africans in the diaspora, and this can be best done through music discipleship. Worship leaders must model the importance of diversity in music, culture, and relationship.

### **Contextualization and Biblical Teachings**

According to Dr. Troy Bush, experiences and teachings are two significant descriptions of the dimensions of culture. In a biblical context, the gospel message and biblical teachings shape beliefs and values and feelings.<sup>168</sup> Theology shapes the perspectives and methodology of things in life. Christian cultures are based on biblical values, which are the teachings of Jesus. These values transcend any physical culture and make multiple diverse cultures in Christian communities. Beliefs on the Word of God shape the Christian worldview. In her book “Culturally-Conscious Worship,” Kathy Black said, “Biblical and theological foundations are crucial to support culturally-conscious worship and the various ministries of multicultural

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<sup>167</sup> 1 Timothy.

<sup>168</sup> Dr Troy Bush, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1).

congregations.”<sup>169</sup> It is evident in Acts 2 that God has ethnicity and nations in mind for the makeup of his kingdom. However, the same kingdom values tie them together in the face of cultural diversities.

Be that as it may, if worship leaders do not take seriously the biblical culture that forms core values in Christianity, the result is a Christian ethnocentric assumption that the way we worship, the way we practice Christianity, and our cultural norms should be universal and that everyone else should follow those.<sup>170</sup>

### **Implication of African Arts in Mission**

Artistic creativity breeds newness in existing cultural practices. Worship leaders need to train lay worship leaders to answer these questions: who are the creators? What are their skills, knowledge, and techniques for creativity? What are the dos and don'ts, the Taboos that can hinder the acceptance of new creativity? What are the underlying traditions that are passed from generation to generation?<sup>171</sup> So, while working on African worship facilitation, worship leaders want to consider the diversity in culture. Study and observe diverse languages, diverse art forms associated with communications, and various expressions through music, dance, stories, and other arts. Besides, worship leaders should look keenly into preexisting traditions and geographical locations, then study, learn, relearn, and build relationships and bridges that can connect the culture to kingdom values.

Worship facilitators are called to be aware of the art form of communication in the existing culture, which may include meanings, languages, and social context. It may be in a

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<sup>169</sup> Kathy Black. *Culturally-Conscious Worship*. (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 35.

<sup>170</sup> Dr Troy Bush, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

<sup>171</sup> Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together*, XIX.

multilingual, multicultural, or militaristic community. Also, worship facilitators may have a unique way of expression, but in facilitating contextual worship, in a local church or community, the primary job is to help others make new things in genres that are already known. The worship team should work and create a collaborative atmosphere, a co-creation that involves local musicians and singers in a collaborative environment.

In a broader sense, Schrag shares seven steps that we can adapt to facilitate creativity in a community such as the African community,

- Meet a Community and its Arts – making a relationship with people and listing the kinds of arts that run through the community.
- Specify Kingdom Goals – Set and work towards a Kingdom goal. Show the community how artistic communication has spread and deepened the Kingdom of God.
- Select Effects, Content, Genre, and Events – Working on the chosen goal, decide which effects, art forms, content, and events would likely feed into that Kingdom goal.
- Analyze and Event Containing the Chosen Genre – Get the details of art forms and their meaning so the community can identify the elements that will penetrate a community for the Kingdom.
- Speak Creativity – Do worship workshops that will gear people toward performing an act that results in a new bit of artistry coming into existence. It could be composing a song for celebration or festival.
- Improve New Works – Evaluate further improvement in meeting the spiritual, social, and physical goals of the community. Evaluate the songs created after the workshop and teach them on how to improve on writing Scripture-based songs.
- Integrate and Celebrate for continuity – Integrate Kingdom creativity into the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly lives of the people by teaching them to encourage musicianship and discipleship in the community, teach newly created works of art to others and plan for people to keep creating.<sup>172</sup>

So, in taking a glance at the African community, worship leaders should,

- Make a quick list of artistic genres that exist in the community
- Research likely social contexts for genre performances and pay attention to their unique features like singing, dancing, acting, carving, and other preexisting features.
- Pay attention to why people react to certain things differently.
- Pay attention to different languages in their social and conceptual context.
- Learn by observation and imitation to know how the community functions.
- Pay attention to learning style – relational or analytical, structured, or energetic, then

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<sup>172</sup> Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together, XXIV-XXVIII*.

watch, imitate, and practice what to learn. Learn by asking questions, building the relationship through observation, imitation, asking, and practicing. Ask questions and interview local people.

- Learn by writing and recording and taking still images.
- Pay attention to the indigenous perspectives, love, and celebrate who they are and what they know. We are created in the image of God.<sup>173</sup>

In Specifying Kingdom goals, worship facilitators should,

- Let the people value their culture and their cultural identity.
- Let the people value education by teaching their traditions to their children. Let them pass on the right parts of their culture to their children and grandchildren.
- In addition to receiving and learning artistic communications from others, encourage the community to contribute to the recording of their arts through local, regional, and global media.
- In the wake of war, natural disasters, sexual exploitation, disease, slavery, hunger, and thirst, encourage the community to rise with the creation of healing and restoration music and related forms of arts with Scripture-based lyrics. The use of Psalm should be encouraged.
- With the use of arts with different expressions, the community should come together to reconcile with each other. The arts should form the bridge that connects the community and the outsider.
- The artistic form of communication should provide opportunities for rest and play, which could reduce stress and raise hope and improve emotional and physical health.
- The community should draw on their artistic strength to instill hope and encourage solidarity and generosity. God hates robbery and loves justice.
- The community should harness the penetrating power of art to teach educational subjects and Christian themes and subjects as well.
- They should honor those who create arts and reward their contributions to the community.
- The communication of arts should be used to teach and memorize the Scriptures and promote deep communications with God and with each other.
- The communication of arts should be used tailored to enhancing significant events and ceremonies in the community.
- The communication of arts in any local setting should be used effectively to witness to unbelievers. Scripture-based communication should lock with special and daily activities of life, and this makes the Scripture relevant in the social and entertainment world.
- The communication of arts should promote spiritual formation through prayer and meditation.
- The communication of arts should bring the Bible to real-life situations.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together*, 1-22.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-52.

In facilitating new artistry worship leaders need to,

- Choose a genre that can communicate the content and produce the desired result and effects.
- Choose an event that can enhance the content through a unique performance.
- Plan an art workshop to teach, reflect on artistic resources and specify the needs and how the artistic resources can help respond and meet those needs and then produce samples of artistic performance that may meet these needs and integrate these into the life and contexts for continued artistic creativity.<sup>175</sup>
- Know how music and arts are used within the chosen community.
- No imposition of outside music forms
- We promote natural and authentic expression of the indigenous faith.
- The Wheel helps the people to find a wider variety of culturally appropriate song genres, themes, and uses that may incorporate other arts as well.
- There should be a reflection on how these song genres can be used to express their faith in God.
- Go deeper, showing the people that, by the help of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, they can create songs for themselves, songs for others, songs for God, and songs for special occasions, such as ceremonies, festivals or celebrations.
- Then, they can use the four categories to explore other songs and genres.<sup>176</sup>

To reach out to any culture, worship facilitators have to understand the theology behind the use of heart language to reach out to indigenous, and this will apply to any culture regardless of geographic location. The functional purpose of heart language through music and various arts embedded in the culture is the bridge that can link cultures together under the umbrella of Christian faith and religion.

### **Discipleship Training Case Study 1**

In the root of African music, villagers express their activities using drums with complex rhythms, dance, chants, call, response, or antiphonal responsorial form of singing. These happen spontaneously. This expression is not done individually, but collectively, that is, it is a community thing. In his article, “Christian Music in Africa,” Corbitt writes: “African music is

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<sup>175</sup> Schrag, *Creating Local Arts Together*, 54-58, 197.

<sup>176</sup> James Krabill, *Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 169.

often cyclical. The repetition complements and fosters participatory dance and reflective thought. Indigenous Christians often used this music as self-expression in the absence of Western musical influence.”<sup>177</sup> On the other hand, different from what happens in remote villages of Africa, in urban settings, there is blended music. Due to colonization and opening Africans to the marketplace, African music has undergone a metamorphosis. “African Christians often added syncopated rhythms and guitars in a unique African sound, which they could call their own. Texts, always a prime consideration in African music, were written within the context of African town life and spiritual realities.”<sup>178</sup>

In formations, African worship could begin under a tree, unlike in the developed western world. Greg Kernaghan shares his experiences with the worshipers in Nigula, Southeast Africa. He recalled that “the church building was under a mango tree, and this is an oral culture; few if any of these men can read. They compared notes, so to speak, and then ‘pack’ the teaching into a song that all will learn. Then they sing this song as they walk the long journey home, after which they unpack the teaching and give it to their people over the next weeks.”<sup>179</sup>

Generally speaking, African worship in the remote area is done informally, they are spontaneous and thrive on the wings of oral transmission; they are not printed for publication, but passed on orally from people to people, house to house, village to village, and city to city. However, this approach and cultural practice, creates a unified message, “For God expressed His

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<sup>177</sup> Kabrill, “*Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 5.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 216.

love for the world in this way: He gave His only Son so that whoever believes in Him will not face everlasting destruction, but will have everlasting life.”<sup>180</sup>

### **Discipleship Training Case Study 2: Meeting the People Cross-Culturally**

An excellent example of contextual worship is the worship among Apostles and Zionists in Southern Africa. The worship was contextual by an original method of using the mother tongue or African language rather than western words. These worshipers avoid western liturgies and practices. They believe in the charismatic manifestation of the Holy Spirit. The leaders of this movement are not educated, and the worshipers usually consist of poor and unlettered people.

Just like Paul listened and connected with Athens worship and Biblical worship, so this forms a colliding point between African tradition and biblical cleansing. Besides, worshipers remove shoes before they enter the sanctuary, which depicts reverence for the holy place. Besides, they wear a white garment to portray purity before God. Parallel to the belief of Africans, who live symbolically and derives meaning from nature and colors, the Zionist believes that Green represents life, prosperity, and wellbeing. “White represents purity and sanctity. Red represents both spiritual danger and the power of the Holy Spirit, while Blue represents wellbeing, of water, and fertility.”<sup>181</sup> The book of John gives a parallel, “This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him, there is no darkness at all.”<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> John 3:16 (VOICE).

<sup>181</sup> Kabrill, “*Worship and Mission for the Global Church*, 54.

<sup>182</sup> 1 John 1:5 (NIV).

Moreover, as in common African tradition, singing and dancing play an essential role in worship. It alleviates boredom and takes worshipers to a high spirits mood. According to Daneel and Roberts, the principal instruments are drums, rattles, and Kudu horn trumpets, all of which are indigenous instruments.<sup>183</sup> Singing and dancing often lead to prayer, while song and prayer are intermingled. Sermons and testimonies are the hallmark aspect of African worship. Preachers draw direct connections between biblical figures and practices to worshipers and issues that concern them. Preachers use African cultural forms to explain theological and moral teachings. The content of sermons ranges from immediate political and social problems to recurring themes such as testimonies of healing and ongoing spiritual warfare against evil forces. Healing encompasses all of life, such as the need for rain, jobs, work, sound family relations, and physical health.<sup>184</sup> Bishops are allowed to lay hands of both males and females. Parallel Scriptures supporting these liturgical practices are found in, Psalm 150, a psalm of praising God with all kinds of instruments; “And these signs will follow those who believe: they will be able to cast out demons in My name, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink poison without being harmed, and lay their hands on the sick to heal them.”<sup>185</sup> This supports the laying of hands and healing.

Following Christian Calendar or liturgical calendar provide insight into special seasons of celebrations: vaPostori, Easter, rain conference, seed conference, and a thanksgiving conference

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<sup>183</sup> Charles E. Farhadian, *Christian Worship Worldwide: Expanding Horizons, Deepening Practices*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2007), 56.

<sup>184</sup> Farhadian, *Christian Worship Worldwide*, 64-65.

<sup>185</sup> Mark 16:17-18 (Voice).

that connects worshipers to the African Traditional Religion, and this finds parallel with the Jewish celebrations and Christian celebrations.

Worship integrates community cultures into worship lifestyles. Consequently, these can draw members of the community.

### **Training Lay Worship leaders**

Training lay-worship leaders in roles of worship leading among Africans is the focus of this study. Worship leaders should have a well-structured plan for developing second-tier worship leaders and lay-worship leaders. A worship leader exercises various gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and elsewhere. These include pastoring, leading, administration, and teaching. Under the oversight of the pastor, worship leaders combine these gifts with the musical skill to care for, guide, and instruct God's people as they sing his praises.<sup>186</sup> “So now, may the God of peace *make you His own* completely *and* set you apart from the rest. May your spirit, soul, and body be preserved, kept intact and wholly free from any sort of blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus the Anointed.”<sup>187</sup> Bob Kauflin wrote, “A faithful worship leader magnifies the greatness of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit by skillfully combining God’s Word with music, thereby motivating the gathered church to proclaim the gospel, to cherish God’s presence, and to live for God’s glory.”<sup>188</sup>

A faithful worship leader must commit to a balanced ministry and grow to become the one that reaches the entire population of the church to encourage, build up in Christ, disciple

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<sup>186</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*. (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008), 54.

<sup>187</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (VOICE).

<sup>188</sup> Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 55.

them, and to do so in the power of the Holy Spirit. The focus of the training should center on worship balance, worship communication, and worship discipleship. A worship leader should commit to personal balance, family balance, ministry balance, intergenerational balance in worship, and corporate ministry in general.

### **Worship Communication**

Worship discipleship programs are the best way to connect with all these ministries. The worship leadership must bring the ministries together, create a focus to reach the lost, and develop church family members in alignment with the church goal. Bierma and Witvliet wrote, “The best practices in worship planning today stem from healthy communication and collaboration among increasingly diversified and decentralized planners.”<sup>189</sup>

Bierma and Witvliet explain the importance of worship integration,

These approaches to integrating worship and congregational life can teach us a great deal. Church educators can remind us how worship forms and disciplines us. Pastoral care experts can teach us how public prayer, music, art, and preaching work to comfort, challenge, and sustain us during life’s mountaintops and valleys. Evangelists can show us how worship leads us to look outward to the needs around us. Social justice advocates can help us realize that our praise of God is not a neutral expression, but rather a prophetic cry against the idols and injustices of our age.<sup>190</sup>

According to Dr. Zettler, the biblical way of worshipping involves all generations involved and integrated. “We need all the generations to engage in the worship service

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<sup>189</sup> Nathan Bierma and John Witvliet, “*Seven Ways to Integrate Worship into the Congregation’s Life and Ministry*”, accessed December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>190</sup> Bierma and Witvliet, *Seven Ways to Integrate Worship into the Congregation’s Life and Ministry*”, assessed December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

actively.”<sup>191</sup> This researcher submits that worship ministry is the best way to bridge the gap between generations and create a bridge of hope for discipleship.

### **The Personal and Professional Roles of the Worship Leader**

The role of a worship leader involves more than leading music; it involves ministry to the entire congregation and the evangelical community. The functions of a worship leader are useful in fulfilling God’s mandate and building disciples for the growth of a local assembly or community. The personal and professional roles of a worship leader shared in this paper are based on biblical, historical, philosophical truth.

#### **A Worshiper**

A worship leader must first be a worshiper. Drawing from the life of David, as the King worshipped and lead worship, so the top priority of a worship leader is personal involvement in private worship. King David was a worshipper of God. God called him a man after His heart. Psalm 5:17 states, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise. It is clear from this passage that God wants to use broken people. According to Whaley, the worship leader, therefore, must be the one who is broken in Spirit, broken of self, and broken and surrendered.”<sup>192</sup> Learning to be a good worshiper of Christ should help a worship leader become better in the primary tasks for leading congregational worship and to educate

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<sup>191</sup> Zach Zettler WRSP 851 *Balanced Worship: Balance with Ministries to Family* (Liberty University Online), accessed December 9, 2015

<sup>192</sup> Vernon Whaley, *The Role of a Worship Leader*, WRSP 820 video presentation, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1).

through worship, disciple through worship, edify through worship, encourage through worship, evangelize through worship, and enlarge believers' territory through worship.<sup>193</sup>

## **A Disciple**

The complete worship leader must not only be a theologian but a disciple, who worships God with accuracy and integrity, understands the redemptive history, and become participants in the gospel story.<sup>194</sup> In serving the evangelical community, a worship leader is called to be a disciple.

A disciple is a matured follower of Christ who has experienced salvation and seeks to follow Christ willingly and serve Him by the power and Spirit of Christ. Dr. Whaley shared his view on 2 Peter 1:3-9, he gave some steps to being a follower of Christ,

- Salvation – Faith in the person of Christ
- Separation – Living above reproach (moral excellence)
- Knowledge – Knowing God by spending time with God n His word
- Service – Response toward God
- Disposition – Reaction to circumstances
- Deportment – Actions in culture
- Perseverance – Endurance in righteous suffering
- Submission – Humility before others and meekness before God
- Sharing brotherly love – Always putting the needs of others ahead of self.<sup>195</sup>

Worship leaders should learn to promote brotherly love, cares for the team, and, together with the team, proclaim the gospel to others.

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<sup>193</sup> Vernon Whaley, *The Role of a Worship Leader: Brokenness and Worship* (Liberty University), WRSP 820 video presentation, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1)

<sup>194</sup> Kevin Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 2001), 49.

<sup>195</sup> Whaley, *The Role of a Worship Leader*.

## **A Professional**

As a professional, a worship leader has a recognized profession as paid staff, and should have a high standard of skill, competence, character, and follow these values:

- Intermingle with the cultures around the community
- Hold high the values and image expected by the organization
- Relate to other ministries within the organization
- Develop a friendship with other ministries
- Abide by moral principles, values, and code of conduct
- Be sensitive to the need of those around him
- Have a high degree of skill and confidence
- Have insight into the profession of worship
- Strive for excellence when standing before the people to lead worship
- Be accountable in skill – continued education
- Be involved in evangelism
- Look for opportunities in business and ministry in meeting the need of the community.<sup>196</sup>

Worship leaders should learn to be more responsible for responding to public details, responding to emails and phone calls in a timely fashion, be financially accountable, and learn to pay attention to details in the local assembly as a professional.

## **A Theologian**

As a theologian, a worship leader must be a complete student of the bible. Theology is the study about God. It shapes philosophy and effects methodology. The worship leader needs to know that the word of God is God-breathed, without error from the beginning to the end, and that the Holy Spirit illuminates the heart to know God's Word. A worship leader as a theologian should recognize the relevance of theology concerning repentance, redemption, regeneration, restoration, and more. These biblical themes inform and strengthen one's faith in the Lord Jesus. Lay worship leader, in theological training, should learn to address these questions, and much more aptly, what does worship say about God? What do people want from worship, and what

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<sup>196</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: The Role as the Worship leader as a Professional, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1).

does God want from worship? Is one's worship the worship of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and is worship the worship of Baal? Does worship have a Biblical standard? What is the object of worship?<sup>197</sup>

### **An Artist**

The worship leader needs to know that, as an artist, one's work must pass the test of:

- Time – communicate to more than one generation
- Complexity – repeated with inspiration over and over
- Intensity – Able to draw or move people
- Unity – all the elements must fit together
- Multivalence – able to appeal to a different culture at a time

As an artist, the worship leader should be able to:

- Appreciate and to create
- Be part of the creative process
- Understand that God placed in us a creative spirit
- Compose and create because this is our calling.<sup>198</sup>

In training, worship leaders should learn to influence and articulate, through art forms, the message of the Gospel. True worship will give birth to artistic expression.<sup>199</sup> Worship leaders should understand that all senses of a worship leader should appreciate the excellent work of God and express these works through the gift of music while focusing on the order of beauty as listed in Philippians 4:8: Truthful, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. In turn, this will help

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<sup>197</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as a theologian* – power pint presentation, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1).

<sup>198</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as an Artist*, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1).

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

worship leaders/pastors strike a balance between the artistic and biblical perspective of spiritual worship.

### **A Musician**

As a musician, the worship leader is a performer of music, leader of music, and a student of music. His three responsibilities as a musician include:

- Formalism – all skills about performance
- Expressionism – Emotional aspects of performance
- Referentialism – the point of emphasis, (Jesus Christ and His Kingdom)

A worship leader/pastor and a musician should learn how to help people see Jesus and the kingdom of God through the exploration of God-given talent of the worship team. The application of this principle will be useful in the choice of songs that the local church sings and the appropriateness of the music that the worship team prepares for the congregation.

### **A Servant Leader**

The perfect example is Jesus Christ, who exhibited a servant heart in His earthly ministry. As a servant leader, a worship leader must seize the opportunity to move people into God's plan for their lives, depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance, and see the big picture shared by the lead pastor to develop vision and strategies that result in meeting goals. Also, a worship leader must understand and follow God's plan, have no hidden agenda, operates not by fear of man, must not be ambitious, must be humble and gentle, and must be ready to yield when perceives that a wiser and more gifted man than himself has appeared.

### **A Pastor**

As a pastor, the worship cares for and nature the people of God, and sets the spiritual, ministerial, cultural, and relational goal for the worship ministry, be able to encourage, teach, and build others. A worship leader must be a contender for the truth and should be able to visit

the hospitals, remember birthdays, preside over funerals, and participate in weddings. A worship leader should be equipped to care for the worship staff, to care, guide, and correct when necessary under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with the permission of the pastor.

### **An Administrator**

The worship leader's role as an administrator includes but is not limited to:

- Calendar preparation
- Scheduling
- Worship planning
- Managing people
- Arranging music
- Selecting songs
- Encouraging people
- Discipline young worship leader
- Articulating task and delegating the task

As applied to vision planning, a worship leader must be able to:

- Inspire people to do things with excellence
- Communicate goals and dreams
- Model the people to what God wants them to be
- Set aside time for vision casting
- Cast clear vision
- Develop plans and patterns and follow them through
- Remind people about the plans and their roles in the plan
- Articulate the vision regularly
- Perform vision audit
- Develop fresh vision statement in line with the big vision from the senior pastor
- Update the vision statement often
- Incorporate the vision with other areas of ministry
- Establish a formal line of communication
- Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!<sup>200</sup>

A worship leader must make adequate effort to spend time with the worship team, develop a dialogue to create unity and to communicate via email, Internet, eye contact, and

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<sup>200</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as an Administrator*, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1).

Facebook with a heart of love and acceptance. A worship leader should be available and practice open, honest, transparent communication, follow and respect the chain of command, establish organizational chart, establish a clearly defined job description, establish a method for staff training, reaffirm the calling of people, look for an opportunity to mentor and disciple, and practice honest affirmation.<sup>201</sup>

### **A staff member, team member and a Teacher**

The worship leader works alongside the senior pastor of the church. As a subordinate, the worship pastor seeks to build the congregation numerically and help develop a genuine love for one another. The worship leader should develop relationships and recognize the need to serve, know the people's needs and attend to them, must be teachable, should partner with the senior pastor as a co-worker, and serve as unto to the Lord. The worship leader should see calling in connection with the senior pastor's calling to lead and guide the church, and they must work as one.

As a team member in the worship ministry, the worship leader should encourage the team to trust one another, promote one another, and accomplish much together as they minister together. Also, the worship leader and team should work together as skilled musicians and singers, with each part supplying one another.

As a teacher or mentor, a worship leader guides the team to develop skills in life management, time management, leadership development, and team spiritual formation (worship practice in private).

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<sup>201</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as an Administrator*.

As a student, the worship leader should be committed to the following:

- Submission and surrender - should submit to the Holy Spirit and authority. He should provide to the need of the worshippers and learn how to work with people.
- Teachable spirit – should listen to other people’s opinions; take advice when faced with challenges, waiting for the right time to make changes. He should also look for ways to improve and develop his skills.
- Understanding the truth – should be committed to knowing the word of God, apply the truth to worship, and be committed to theology.
- Committed to being an excellent student – should be given to idea, concept, and principles related to worship.
- Committed to leaning – should learn from the examples of other professionals, seek mentors and teachers to acquire skill as musicians and professionals, and should be surrounded by those who can challenge and motivate him in the area of competence.
- Committed to change – should be committed to healthy change and be ready to take the team through healthy change.
- Committed to time management – should be able to balance schedule and managing calendar. He should be a good student of worship pedagogy and should set aside time for retooling and learning because learning is for life.

As a family person, the worship leader should be able to provide for his family and must be able to lead them in the things of God.<sup>202</sup>

As an educator and counselor, a worship leader trains and develops impart knowledge to people, helps to build the community, strengthens the local body by reaching out to those in need and seeking to improve them, contributes to mend the brokenhearted, and desires to repair broken lives. A worship leader should educate and counsel people on the principles of the Word of God. A counselor possesses three personal characteristics,

- Accurate empathy – they have a healing impact on the counselee
- Non-passive warmth – they care about the wellbeing of the counselee
- Genuine – they are real, open and avoid phoniness<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Deuteronomy 6:1-12.

<sup>203</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as an Administrator*, accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=\\_103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_103_1)

A worship leader strives for a spiritual formation that can foster proper counseling:

- Humble Spirit – He is eager to listen
- Emotional Stability –
- Have a good relationship with Jesus
- Reliance on the Holy Spirit
- Know fundamental biblical teaching<sup>204</sup>

A worship leader trusts God, has an open ear, open heart, and open head, seeking to respond honestly and carefully.

### **The principles of Spiritual formation**

Worship is the reason for the existence of the church.<sup>205</sup> ”Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”<sup>206</sup> A worship leader, as a spiritual leader in a church organization, should be able to engage the people of God. Robert Morgan shared ten principles that can foster and nurture the spiritual formation of a worship leader or worship pastor:

- Learn from twelve-year-old (Luke 2:49): “The decision to adopt God’s will for yourself is a lifetime, lifelong choice, and it is the only starting place for mastering life,” said Morgan.<sup>207</sup>
- Develop a workable daily plan.<sup>208</sup>
- Live on purpose: “When our lives are set to God’s course, our clocks can be wound to His schedule. When our lives aren’t aligned with God’s course, our hands move around uselessly.”<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Vernon Whaley, WRSP 820: *The Role as the Worship leader as an Administrator*.

<sup>205</sup> Kelvin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001), 13.

<sup>206</sup> 2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV).

<sup>207</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It’s Too Late: 10 Strategies for a Life of Purpose*. (New York: Howard Books, A division of Simon and Schuster, 2015), 16.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 33.

- Redeeming the time: Management of time is our greatest stewardship, even greater than the stewardship of our money. “Time is like a currency of a different realm; it is the coinage of life.”<sup>210</sup>
- Orderliness: “God is not disorganized, and when Jesus ministered on earth, His work was methodical and orderly.”<sup>211</sup>
- Maximize morning time with God.<sup>212</sup> “Our divine appointment with the Lord encapsulates our daily walk with God.”<sup>213</sup>
- Get some rest.<sup>214</sup>
- “Operate and strengthen yourself in the Lord.”<sup>215</sup>
- Cultivate the attitude of joy.<sup>216</sup>
- Despise not the day of little beginning.<sup>217</sup>

The ten principles mentioned above are interwoven with these spiritual disciplines:

### **Intercession**

In his book, “Spiritual Leadership, Sanders writes, “Great Leaders of the Bible were great at prayer. They were not leaders because of the brilliance of thought, because they were exhaustless in resources, because of their magnificent culture or native endowment, but because, by the power of prayer, they could command the power of God.”<sup>218</sup> God has committed to all

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<sup>210</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late*, 46.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>212</sup> Robert Morgan, *Mastering Life Before It's Too Late*, 108.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 117.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 163-164.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 230-231.

<sup>218</sup> Oswald J. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 91.

believers in Christ, the ministry of reconciliation, which begins on their knees.<sup>219</sup> A worship leader can succeed in the ministry not only by knowing the Word of God but also by praying the Word by the Holy Spirit. Meditation, mastering the art of biblical meditation aids a leader in understanding the Scripture by heart. With the Scriptures in the heart and mouth, worship leaders wage war against the accuser of brethren.

### **Biblical Meditation and Psalm**

It is expedient to submit that the best book of the Bible for prayer and spiritual warfare is the Psalm. The Psalm is the hymnbook of the Old Testament. Prayers should go with praise. Wrytzen writes, “Never underestimate the magnificent power of the combination of Holy Spirit-inspired Scripture with song.”<sup>220</sup> These two elements, the use of Psalms and hymns, are very significant in effective prayer. “The Psalms are given to us to this end, that we may learn to pray them in the name of Jesus Christ.”<sup>221</sup>

### **Biblical Meditation and Prayer**

God renews the mind of a worshiper through the process of Biblical meditation. In Joshua 1:8-9, God commands Joshua to meditate on his Word day and night; as a result, he would have success and prosperity, strength for each day, and each battle and sustaining the sense of God’s presence wherever he would go.<sup>222</sup> “Meditation helps and heals the mind while

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<sup>219</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17-18.

<sup>220</sup> Don Wrytzen, *A Musician Looks at the Psalms: 365 Daily Meditations* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2004), 27.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>222</sup> Joshua 1:8-9.

shoring up the soul. It lessens anxiety, reduces stress, and generates peace.”<sup>223</sup> Biblical meditation is a therapy for the soul, heaven’s medication. Through this process, a worship leader comes to understand God’s good, perfect, and pleasing will.<sup>224</sup>

### **Theologies and Culture**

The better (i.e., the more accurately) we know God through his Word, the more genuine our worship will be. The moment we veer from what is true about God, we are engaging in idolatry.<sup>225</sup> Theology carries significant influence in worship practices. Understanding of who Christ is and how He reveals Himself in the biblical perspective will change the way people worship. A worship leader needs to know how valuable theology is for people’s worship practices. Culture is acceptable as long as it bears the banner of Scripture.<sup>226</sup> Bob Kauflin submits, “Regardless of what we think or feel, there is no authentic worship of God without a right knowledge of God.”<sup>227</sup> The knowledge of the scripture is crucial to the perspective the worship leader portrays in worship leading and worship presentations.

### **Theologies and Doctrine**

Worship leaders should understand the connection between worship and theology through the lens of Scripture. Scripture is the first and foundational element, the theological

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<sup>223</sup> Robert Morgan, *Reclaiming the Lost Art of Biblical Meditation: Find True Peace in Jesus*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 10.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 80, 83.

<sup>225</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*. (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 28.

<sup>226</sup> Block, Daniel I. *For the Glory of God: Recovering a Biblical Theology of Worship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 29.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

grid.<sup>228</sup> It is the lens of history, which allows one to look at past events, and see how the church has responded, governed and guided, and then applied it into a more modern concept.<sup>229</sup> Finally, it is the lens of culture, allowing the worship pastor to look at situations in current society and culture, and try to gain understanding.<sup>230</sup> “To be an effective worship leader in this new day means becoming “complete.” It means more than having a prestigious music degree, more than playing incredible guitar riffs, more than being “the voice.” It is being theologically aware and responsible; to be daily maturing in faith and practice; to be conversant with diverse, artistic expressions; and to be able to lead others into passionate, Christ-honoring expressions of their gifts.”<sup>231</sup> The worship of God is impossible without theology and doctrine. Kauflin claims that without both theology and doctrine, we cannot worship God in the right perspective. Why? Theology reveals the truth of the scripture; it includes our concept of God, as a result of that study (or lack thereof). Doctrine is everything the Bible teaches on a particular topic, such as worship, holiness, the church, or spiritual gifts.”<sup>232</sup>

Furthermore, lay worship training should address the foundations of Christian Worship: worship in the Pentateuch, worship in the Kingdom Books, worship in the Books of Poetry,

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<sup>228</sup> John Kinchen, “Transition in Theology.” Accessed August 2019, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab\\_tab\\_group\\_id=103\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/lulm-lander-BBLEARN/app/lander.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=103_1).

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> John Kinchen, “Transition in Theology.”

<sup>231</sup> Kevin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 2001).

<sup>232</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*. (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008).

worship of the Prophets, worship in the Gospels, worship of Jesus, worship in the Epistles, and worship in the End Times.

Practical training should address the theology and philosophy of worship: the theology of worship, prayer, singing, theology, philosophy, methodology, preaching, keys to worship and preaching, theology on holiness, worship doxology, the Theology of serving, theology of giving, theology of revival, and brokenness.

The foundation of Christian worship informs the worship leader of:

- Worship is what people were made for
- People must read the word of God
- Brokenness is a prerequisite for genuine worship
- Obedience is the very nucleus of worship
- Real worship demonstrates personal integrity
- True worship embraces love for the people of God—demonstrated through service
- Multifaceted God loves multifaceted worship
- Genuine worship transcends time and culture.
- The formula for biblical worship will also remain the same. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength” (Duet. 6:5 NKJV). That is worship that transcends time and culture. That is our calling.<sup>233</sup>
- Stay focused on the worship of the Lord.
- Stay faithful to know the God of Worship.
- Respond to God’s Word to be fervent in worship.
- Brokenness is the prerequisite for genuine worship.
- Demonstrate our worship expression through total submission to God as Lord and daily commitment to holy living.
- Worship should compel us to the level of moral and ethical character that rises above reproach, and worship leaders have to be practitioners of true worship.
- Worship should move to love people. Love to people God created will create social change.
- God is calling people to worship him in spirit and truth.
- Worship involves singing, praying, giving, evangelizing, and feeding of God’s Word.
- Genuine worship transcends time and culture.<sup>234</sup>
- People need to answer the call to worship.

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<sup>233</sup> Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 333-337.

<sup>234</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Foundation for Christian Worship*, accessed May 2017, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_354156\\_1&content\\_id=\\_16916878\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_354156_1&content_id=_16916878_1).

Answering the call to worship, the worship leaders should disciple leaders in the theology, philosophy, and methodology of worship. While emphasizing theology of worship types (true, false and vain worship), the theology of worship and revealed truth, the theology of worship and speaking of God's word, the theology of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, the theology of worship procedure, the theology of the components of acceptable worship (Revelation and Response), the theology of worship and sacrificial giving in the Old Testament and New Testament, the theology of worship, prayer, petition and thanksgiving, the theology of basic biblical pattern for worship, the theology of the tenacity of worship and prayer, the theology of holiness in acceptable worship, the theology of worship and revival, the theology of worship and Spiritual Awakening, the Theology of worship in spirit and truth, and the theology of worship and Doxology.

### **Conclusion**

While this research explains the African factor in worship leading and cultural shift in African culture, the truth remains that the same principle of worship leading applies to all cultures. According to Ephesians 4, worship leading is by one Lord, Father overall, who is above all and who inspires and directs worship leading by his Spirit. The methodology may differ, but methodology should draw from philosophies of the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation. Every worship leader should have the understanding that God has called everyone to seek to bring change to this unruly, ungodly, and unfriendly culture. God has called every worship leader to reclaim, redeem, restore, and maybe even reconfigure the arts for his glory.<sup>235</sup>

In our contemporary world, it is a fact that civilization is currently going through profound shifts, even in the African culture in the diaspora. According to Whaley, there are

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<sup>235</sup> Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader*, 2001.

changes in our methods and communications, shifts in cultural and philosophical norms, a radical change in politics, and growing financial uncertainty, also, change in our homes, changes in education standards, changes in the evangelical church.<sup>236</sup> Regardless, worship leaders need to stand and disciple others in all cultures to stay focused on the worship of the Lord, stay faithful to know the God of worship, respond to God's Word to be fervent in worship. Also, worship leaders need to know that regardless of culture and background, brokenness is the prerequisite for genuine worship. Worshipers demonstrate worship expression to God through total submission and daily commitment to holy living. Worship should compel people of all cultures to the level of moral and ethical character that rises above reproach. The authentic worship leader is a practitioner of true worship. Love is the key. Worship should move people to love, and love will create change.

In the face of culture and cultural change, God is calling people to worship him in spirit and truth, and this worship involves singing, praying, giving, evangelizing, and feeding on God's Word. Genuine worship transcends time and culture.<sup>237</sup> Therefore, leading worship in the local African assembly should answer the call to foundational principles of worship: Why is God worthy of glory? God is now and forever will be triune; he is God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The beauty of Trinity is the foundation of our worship.”<sup>238</sup> Second, God reveals

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<sup>236</sup> Vernon Whaley, *The Relationship between our Artistic Disciplines and Worship of God – A Holistic Approach*, accessed May, 2017, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_354156\\_1&content\\_id=\\_16916878\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_354156_1&content_id=_16916878_1).

<sup>237</sup> Vernon Whaley, *Foundation for Christian Worship*, accessed May, 2017, [https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_354156\\_1&content\\_id=\\_16916878\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_354156_1&content_id=_16916878_1).

<sup>238</sup> Sten-Erik Armitage, *Theology of Worship and Doxology*, (presentation video) by Liberty University Online, accessed October, 16, /2016

himself through his Son. His Son is the express reflection of his glory (Hebrews 1-3). Our doxology is both to the One who sits on the throne (Yahweh) and to the Lamb (Jesus Christ).

In his presentation, Dr. Armitage shared seven reasons why the Son is worthy of worship. These should be the focus of worship leading in any culture:

- The Son is the heir of all things; he is the one who stands to inherit all that is.
- He is the agent of creation, the one by whom all things were made.
- He is the radiance of the glory of God. The Son, the second person of the Trinity, is indeed God. The Son has eternally existed, and he has unbroken fellowship with the Father, and his glory is inherent in the Son, it is not a reflection, but the Son is the glory of the Father and the Father the glory of the Son, to this end the Father and the Son are one.
- The Son is the exact imprint of his nature.
- He upholds the universe by the word of His power. He was born in a manger and yet sustaining the manger where he was born.
- The Son has made purification for sin. He sat down at the right hand of the majesty of high.<sup>239</sup>

Why is Jesus worthy of glory?

He is our High Priest, under the New Covenant. Jesus continued to facilitate worship as the High Priest. He is seated at the right hand of majesty, making intercession for us. The writer of Hebrews declares, “Here is the point of what we are saying: We have a high priest who sits on the right side of God’s throne in heaven. Our high priest serves in the Most Holy Place, the true place of worship that was made by God, not by humans.”<sup>240</sup> On earth, Jesus completed the work of redemption on the cross, died, rose victorious, and completed the work of revelation. In

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Hebrews 8: 1-2.

heaven, He assumed His rightful position of honor and authority that was rightfully His since the beginning. It is finished, and He is now seated until he comes again.

Why is God the Lamb worthy of glory?

In the beginning and Creation, according to Colossian 1:15-20, the Apostle Paul reveals that,

- He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- By him, all things are created in heaven and in earth visible or invisible, all things are created through him and for him.
- He is before all things, and in him, all things hold together.
- He is the creator and the Sustainer.
- He is entirely God, together with the Spirit sharing unity.

“Christ reigns over all things and reconciles all things. Therefore, every aspect of life should come under His authority, and it should drive authentic worship. The *Doxo* of God, the glory of God, brings us to our knees when we consider who he is and what he has done.”<sup>241</sup>

Why is Christ worthy of worship?

In the New Covenant, He is worthy of glory and praise because,

- He is the head of the body the church
- He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead that in everything he might be preeminent.
- He is the head of the church. The church and his relationship with Christ are critical in the redemptive plan. Salvation is found in the church, for by the grace of Christ, we are saved; this is the gospel. The church is the incarnation of Christ to the world and the mediator by which one approaches God.
- He is the giver of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Christ ascended to heaven to be with the Father, and the Spirit was sent.
- In Him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell (Colossians 1: 19).
- He is the God who restores and redeems (Ephesians 1:7).

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<sup>241</sup> Armitage, *Worship and Doxology*, (presentation video) by Liberty University Online, accessed October, 16, /2016  
[https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course\\_id=\\_333699\\_1&content\\_id=\\_14308428\\_1](https://learn.liberty.edu/webapps/blackboard/content/listContent.jsp?course_id=_333699_1&content_id=_14308428_1).

In conclusion, culture is the means through which Africans can be touched. In worship leading, the fundamental principles remain the same across all cultures and tribes. All creation unites through one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one hope of calling to one Father of all, who is above all and has revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>242</sup>

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

While this researcher still agrees that historical qualitative research was the right choice for this study, qualitative research tools, such as literary reviews, are not designed to capture hard facts. More credibility could be given to this study if coupled with qualitative research with interviews and quantitative research. For example, a survey designed for quantitative research, and subsequent statistical analysis may offer more evidence to strengthen the data discovered using qualitative research tools.

Several areas for future research on targeted African demographics could add to the findings in this study. A quantitative study could be developed to understand roles. Additionally, a quantitative study would help with this study's finding using a more extensive and diverse African population, potentially comparing the perspectives of African worshipers in diaspora and their connections to the root or motherland.

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<sup>242</sup> Ephesians 4.

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**IRB-FY19-20-31 - Initial: Initial - Non-Human Subjects Research**

irb@liberty.edu <irb@liberty.edu>

Fri 1/24/2020 2:06 PM

To: Adu, Emmanuel <eadu2@liberty.edu>; Seel, Thomas Allen (Dept. of Music and Worship) <taseel@liberty.edu>



January 24, 2020

Emmanuel Adu  
Thomas Seel

Re: IRB Application - IRB-FY19-20-31 THE ROLE OF LEADING WORSHIP IN THE AFRICAN CHURCH

Dear Emmanuel Adu, Thomas Seel:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study does not classify as human subjects research because:

- (1) it will not involve the collection of identifiable, private information.
- (2) "scholarly and journalistic activities (e.g., oral history, journalism, biography, literary criticism, legal research, and historical scholarship), including the collection and use of information, that focus directly on the specific individuals about whom the information is collected," are not considered "research" according to 45 CFR 46.102(l)(1).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued non-human subjects research status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this determination or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your application's status, please email us at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,

**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**  
*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*  
**Research Ethics Office**