DOES COLLEGE PREPARE THE WORSHIP PASTOR?

By

James Anthony Cooper, Sr.

A MASTER’S THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC AND WORSHIP

Liberty University

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Abstract

This study shows the relevance that musical skills, theological knowledge and ministerial experience provide in the encompassed ministry of a worship pastor and focuses on how colleges and universities prepare these ministers for a life called to service of the King. The literature reviewed showed an overwhelming response to the worship pastor being qualified in three areas: 

Musical Ability - there are certain aspects of this ministry that require the worship leader to be able to handle various musical situations. While these ministers need not be piano prodigies, it does require them to be able to lead musicians effectively and lead from the platform in such a way as to not be a distraction for the congregation to worship. Theological Knowledge/Understanding – understanding Scripture and what God says about worship is imperative. Along with worship, the minister must have a solid foundation in theology and doctrine, so that he/she may teach the congregation through song. Ministry Guidance – this all-encompassing category is hard to pinpoint, but it must offer guidance to the newly called minister in how to relate with people and staff. The data from collegiate degree plans shows that some schools provide training in all these areas and some do not. Each school has its own agenda in the preparation and implementation of a degree for worship leaders. There is no consistent template that universities use, each program stands on its own.
Dedication

I would like to thank my wife for all the support that she has given me. Without her continued encouragement, this journey would have been labor-some. Thank you, Jennifer, for keeping me on task. I could not have done this without you.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

For millennia, there has been a need to fill the role as music leader in the church. Even King David, when preparing for Temple worship, organized the musicians and gave them instruction. In I Chronicles 25, David and the chiefs appointed musicians, those that played instruments and those that were singers, to operate the music during the worship of God in the Temple services. But the key qualifiers for these leaders are found in verse 7 and it gives us insight as to why they were chosen: they “were trained” and they “were skillful.”

The musicians and leaders of Temple worship were trained and skillful at their appointed task. “In the Old Testament, an elaborate training system, the Levitical ‘guild,’ was established for the very purpose of learning to lead worship.”¹ Training was important for those who were to lead in the services. It was designed to teach those who served, proper technique and proper application. David had prescribed what Temple worship was to look like and sound like, so there had to be a place and time for those performing the tasks to be educated and indoctrinated to be able to complete the task without interruption or distraction, from the leader’s standpoint. It is in I Chronicles 15:22 that we read David appointed Chenaniah to direct the music “for he understood it.” (ESV)

Bob Kauflin points to two distinct skill sets in his book Worship Matters. One of the qualities of a good worship leader is musicianship. This is also evident from what we see in Scripture of why men were chosen to perform specific musical tasks within worship of God in the Temple. Mr. Kauflin also points to leadership as “the most neglected skill among worship

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leaders.”2 The fact is, worship leaders (or leaders of musical elements of worship), need to be also skilled at administration, theology, time management, networking, communication, etc., all things that make a good leader.

In this age of promoting the most vibrant and likeable “front man” as worship leader, have we left skill of music and skill of leadership behind? Just because someone can “play an instrument” doesn’t make him or her a skilled leader of music. Just because someone has a winning personality, doesn’t mean he or she has all of the tools to be a well-rounded leader. He will need to do other things, musically, in addition to playing guitar. What about directing a church choir? “David and Solomon ordained great choirs to lead the nation in worship. This is important for anyone who believes in the power of the ministry of [choir] music in the local church.”3

How do they get “trained” to be skillful at these tasks? From the full-time, in charge of a 200-voice choir/50-piece orchestra/TV production, worship leader, to the part-time, work a secular 45 hour-a-week job/spends Saturdays planning tomorrow’s worship schedule; what tools and programs are available to enhance skill at any level? Is the academic community providing enough in their collegiate degrees for churches to be confident in the person they have hired?

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State of Problem

With the vast array of job positions available for worship pastors and each one of those job positions requiring its own unique duties, the dilemma is real. Have we catered the once strictly music degree to fill the gaps that come along with the ministry of being a worship leader? As described above, the worship leader is in a position to be a leader of a team (not necessarily the front-man during Sunday morning worship) that requires another set of skills altogether. Additionally, there has to be a foundation in theology if this “minister” is to effectively lead in worship. Darlene Zschech, Worship Pastor of Hillsong Church, in Sydney, Australia describes the duties of the total worship pastor: “The worship pastor is shepherd first, musician second—a true worshiper, one who leads with skill, wisdom and godly devotion.”

So then, how is the modern worship pastor trained in skill (competent musicianship, the ability to play or sing a primary instrument and aid in volunteers becoming better at their craft), wisdom (counseling, communicating, resourcing, managing people, places and things) and godly devotion (helping others in their personal spiritual lives, engaging corporate worship, effectively deciphering what songs belong in church)? There are three main avenues to achieve the role as worship pastor: 1) **Collegiately Educated**-this person has received a degree from a university. The problem with this tract is that each university has a differing opinion of what is important to the role of worship pastor, not to mention the university must satisfy the Board of Regents. A music degree (which focuses mainly on skill and performance) is usually what is on the resume. 2) **Performance Gifted**-this person has caught the attention of a committee or pastor based solely

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on a given venue. The position of worship pastor cannot be based on merely one aspect of the job requirements. Many churches have gone after the most recent trends only to find huge voids in musical training, administration and/or godliness. “As the style of music has shifted from the traditional model, stemming from classical genres, to one dominated by popular music, many of these musicians see theory education as impractical or at least unneeded given their particular stylistic approach.”

3) Availability—this person is just that, available. Many churches, especially rural, small churches do not have the resources to hire a full-time worship pastor; especially one that has an impressive resume and has been trained explicitly for that position. It is usually handed to the strongest singer/leader from the choir that the pastor pleads with.

A singular above-mentioned pathway is neither the wrong way to do it or the preferred way to do it. They are based on the situation at hand. But are these people becoming effective well-rounded worship leaders, regardless of how they got there? Are the universities providing ample opportunity to learn things other than musical abilities? Is the front man capable of becoming an effective administrator? Is the bi-vocational/volunteer music director receiving the resources to be able to provide excellent music in worship? In the end “we must take a hard look at our own lives as well as the current condition of our church and be honest about what needs to change for the purpose of God being glorified.”

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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this document is to paint a picture with broad strokes on how the university graduate might excel or lack in preparation to an overall approach for the position of worship pastor. What classes are offered for music? What classes are offered for theology? What classes are offered to be an effective administrator? Some colleges or universities will be stronger in areas and weaker in others. This document will not, however, get into specific styles of worship, which is another area of concern.

For the latter two paths, Performance Gifted and Availability, the worship pastor will need to search for viable resources to become excellent in every aspect of worship (video, arranging, theology, time-management, etc.) As the worship pastor learns and grows in his understanding of worship, he can then pass it on to his congregation. “While we most often think of teaching happening through preaching in worship, we should remember that the songs, readings, prayers, spoken elements, and even the structure of worship educate, build up, and form the people of God.”\(^7\) Whichever background one comes from, it is impossible to ever assume that a person can ever attain all that he/she needs to know about the subject of worship. There will always be gaps that need to be filled. There will always be new material that needs to be sifted through. There will always be a part of our own personality or weakness that needs to be addressed. “If you are going to master a subject, you must be committed to being a lifelong student of your subject.”\(^8\) Not just one piece of the puzzle, this includes the entire discipline of worship.


worship music ministry (this paper will focus on the music aspect and not venture into other sub-disciplines such as art, dance, etc.).

**Significance of Study**

This study will help increase awareness of the need to reevaluate current practices in regards to worship pastor education from a collegiate level. It will also help rising worship pastors to know what some of the pressing needs of the worship ministry are and how to effectively evaluate degree programs. Once graduated, they will have the proper tools necessary to be an effective worship pastor. While some colleges adhere to teaching a strict style that conforms to a specific denomination, the areas of concern in this paper will address broader scope areas such as working with vocalists, working with instrumentalists, and practical theory application. In regards to biblical worship study, this paper will look at all courses in theology and worship ministry, if offered. Just because a program offers a music degree, doesn’t mean that it equips for areas such as theology. The converse is true, just because a program offers a worship degree, doesn’t mean that one will have the technical skills necessary to facilitate an orchestra rehearsal.

The other intent of this study is to help give resources to those who haven’t had the opportunity to follow a collegiate program. These resources could be online helps for arranging, finding music that fits your church and/or budget, lists of books that include topics from major scales to chord extensions or biblically based worship magazines articles and lectures from respected worship leaders. A worship pastor must not be content with mediocrity or status quo, be willing to learn and grow to become all that God wants him to be. “Every Christian is obliged
to be the best for God. Like any other worthwhile activity, if leadership can be improved, we should seek to improve it.\textsuperscript{9}

\textit{Research Questions and Sub-Questions}

1. Is the question posed in the thesis topic real or perceived? Is the problem widespread or isolated to certain geographical, socio-economical, denominational groups? What is the magnitude of the problem?

2. What are the real life training necessities of a church worship leader in the evangelical church of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century? Does today’s American evangelical church require leaders of music ministries to have and develop these skills? Are these skills obsolete or absolutely necessary in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century American evangelical church?

3. What programs of education and development are available to teach and train both pastors and worship leaders in these deficient skills? How can pastors and worship leaders who are already in a full-time ministry, incorporate further education and effective training into daily schedules that are already quite demanding?

4. What attainable solutions are there for providing success in raising the musical standards, skills, and leadership potential of today’s worship leaders?

These research questions serve as a guide to collect data and to narrow the scope of related topics. The following chapter will take the opportunity to unpack the literature reviewed and the data that has been collected.

Definition of Terms

Worship Pastor – There are several roles attributed to worship pastor. 1) Worship Leader. This role combines planning and implementation of the corporate worship setting. It demands attention be given to musical understanding, design and skill. 2) Minister. People make up 100% of this ministry. This role requires the worship pastor to understand personalities and develop spiritual gifts among volunteers. In Peter’s 1st epistle chapter 5:1-3 he addressed the elders: “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them – not because you must, but because you are willing… eager to serve; not lording it over them, by as examples to the flock.” (NIV) Jesus was the consummate servant when he taught servant hood by washing the disciples’ feet (see John 13). 3) Pastor. Theology and doctrine are extremely important components of worship. In his epistle to Titus, the Apostle Paul reminds him that the elders of the church must teach sound doctrine to those in their care. The songs used in corporate worship provide a vehicle to teach and memorize truths found in Scripture. Also, as pastor, it is important to teach a lifestyle of worship. Again, in the epistle to Titus, an elder (pastor) is someone who lives a life above reproach. (Titus 1)
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

It is apparent, as discussed in chapter one, that the role of the worship pastor/music minister is not one sided; that is, this position is not defined strictly by music performance, or musical understanding. It is also not steeped in the knowledge and practice of the worship arts. Finally, only understanding theological ideas and issues does not provide an atmosphere of professional seamless worship.

The fact remains, a worship pastor needs all three. It is a tripod of sorts that stands firmly on a foundation that is not easily knocked over. But, if one of the legs of the tripod is weaker than the other two, the picture will be askew. Conversely, if one of the legs is strong and is solely relied upon for stability, the other two are neglected and can push the frame out of alignment.

In this chapter, the landscape of collegiate offerings for the training of worship pastors will be reviewed. A close look at the undergraduate level training of worship pastors is the primary focus of this investigation. The scope of the review will be limited to how each program gives attention to the three aspects of a good worship pastor. This paper will not promote an academic institution over another. The intent is to determine the overall collegiate landscape in training worship pastors.

Research was gathered to understand the types of degrees that are being offered from the colleges/universities that would incorporate the following three areas: Musical Training, Ministry Training and Theological Training. College offerings might be labeled Church Music/Sacred Music, just Music, or no degree at all for a worship pastor/music minister. The subject matter within the three areas would include: 1) Musical Training (Theory)-both written and aural; History-strictly musical; Applied Music-primary instrument/voice and subsequent
areas of applied concentration; **Ensemble Involvement**-choirs, orchestras, etc.;

**Arranging/Instrumentation**-how instruments work and how to appropriately involve them), 2) **Ministry Training** (**History**-ancient, early and modern church worship practices; **Ministry**-the role of a pastor/minister; **Practicum**-applicable ministry opportunities, internships; **Leadership Development**; **Teaching/Preaching**-how to prepare sermons and/or lessons; **Resource Development**), and 3) **Theological Training** (**Old/New Testament Surveys**; **Systematic Theology**-Christology, Soteriology, etc.).

Research was gathered from sixty-one colleges and universities from across the country. Denominations that were included in this research were Free Will Baptist, the Southern Baptist Convention, Nazarene, Grace Brethren, Reformed Theology, Presbyterian PCA, Church of God and evangelical but interdenominational Moody Bible Institute. Research was taken from two-year colleges with hundreds of students up to Universities with multiple colleges and thousands of students. Although this does not constitute a complete list of Evangelical schools, it does provide ample support for mainstream Evangelical thought.

**Section I: Bachelor of Arts, Science or Music**

Before a discussion of the concentrations and course requirements gets under way, attention should be drawn to the actual conferred degrees. Colleges and universities can only offer one of three types of degrees: Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Music (Bachelor of Fine Arts is considered the same). The Bachelor of Arts degree is usually reserved for subject fields like languages, literature, the arts and history. These would be considered more on a social sciences and humanities scale. The Bachelor of Science degree is usually reserved for subjects like biology, engineering or even agriculture. This degree is more technical in nature. However, these degrees are not exclusive to their main field of study. Boston University
offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology. 

“A Bachelor of Arts in music, which has more of a liberal arts focus, aims to prepare students for [various] goals.”

A Bachelor of Arts degree also affords the opportunity to study in another field or refine skills within the academic discipline. For instance, one could get a BA in Music while also accumulating courses and skills in business administration to pursue a career in the recording industry or seek courses in exercise science to earn a graduate degree in music therapy. A Bachelor of Science degree is less flexible with curriculum, there is less opportunity for elective credits and it may require some additional courses in the sciences to fulfill degree requirements. Both the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees are considered identical academically and are accepted as such from any employer or institution of higher learning.

The Bachelor of Music (or a Bachelor of Fine Arts) is usually the degree offered from a school of music or a college of fine arts. The focus of this degree is in training musicians for a professional career. It is heavily inundated with applied areas of performance. The degree is “designed to develop not only students’ performance abilities, but also their practical and academic skills.” The degree is also diverse, in that, it can be used for a variety of musical professions. Some universities offer dual programs to graduate a well-rounded, academically astute person to engage in the working world.

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13 Eastman School of Music, admissions website.
Fig 1 shows the types of degrees offered, with their percentages. While there are probably certain criteria for a college to offer a Bachelor of Science versus a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Music, this paper will not delve into inner workings of administrative responsibilities or accreditation body requirements.

Figure 1-Degrees Offered

Fig 2 shows a comparison of degree concentrations. While schools title various degree concentrations and with various thought in mind, they all, in some way or another, give a description as to the content of the concentration. These titles only provide a general idea of the concentration and should not be the deciding factor of which school or which degree to apply for. An in-depth study of the degree program and the degree curriculum should be assessed.
Figure 2-Degree Concentrations
Section II: Musical Training

One of the means by which our praise is offered to God is music. If Worship Leaders, Music Ministers or Worship Pastors are going to aid the congregation to worship the Almighty, then those individuals need to be competent in musical ability. Even Haydn “urged the archbishop elector of Cologne to send his young charge to Vienna for further study.”14 Beethoven would then go on to study with Haydn, Schenk and Albrechtsberger. Suffice it to say, no one is done honing his/her skill of music. Old Testament worship was highly structured and highly organized. King David was tasked with creating all of the Temple Worship, although he would never see it to fruition. The musicians for Temple worship came from the tribe of Levi. Hebrew tradition tells us that “each musician in the tribe of Levi was required to complete a five-year training period in music and worship. Asaph designed the curriculum and appointed instructors from the tribe of Levi to help.”15

Those who train our next generation of worship pastors, and those who are currently in the role of worship leader, should learn to be proficient in music. While each college might vary in the amount of musical training available in the degree, there must be a certain level of musical proficiency to help gauge what categories of musical training need to be available in a degree program that trains full-time or part-time worship pastors.


One thing that distinguishes Western art music from many other kinds of music is its emphasis on harmony. In other words, just about any piece that you perform will involve more than one person playing or singing different notes at the same time or, in the case of a keyboard player, more than one finger pushing down keys. There are exceptions, of course, such as works for unaccompanied flute, violin, and so on, but an implied harmony background is often still apparent to the ear in such pieces.\textsuperscript{16}

If harmony is so important in our music, then it must be learned technically. Theory and Aural Skills are valuable assets to the Minister of Music. These classes teach a student how to read music, how to decipher modes and keys and formulate chordal structures. The aural side of the written theory portion, provides skill in detecting those areas by ear. It’s not an expectation of perfect pitch “the ability to identify any note by name or to sing a given note without hearing a reference note beforehand,” but relative pitch “to perceive and sing musical tones relative to each other.”\textsuperscript{17}

Knowing the intervals, keys and chords by ear and by sight is a major skill set that the Music Minister will need. Most schools researched, if they included music in their major or degree, had some form of theory and aural skills training. Most schools required four semesters of theory and four semesters of aural skills. Of the schools researched offering a degree for music/worship ministry, forty-seven offered four or more classes in theory/aural skill courses, eight offered three courses, five offered two courses and one offered one course. Some schools offered advanced theory, like Form/Analysis or counterpoint.


Applied Concentrations (Primary/Secondary)

The area of applied concentration is the instrument that will be the primary musical tool studied (this also includes voice). Schools of music, offering majors in music, require a certain amount of college credit dedicated to learning vocal skills or focusing on a specific instrument. Also available in some programs is the availability to have a secondary applied instrument. Depending on the program, some schools have a mandatory piano proficiency that all aspiring music ministers need to pass.

The lineage of instrumental music can be traced back to a pre-Flood time period. Jubal was “the father of all those who played the lyre and pipe.” (Genesis 4:21) Knowing how to play an instrument or at least the function of the instruments can be a valuable asset when standing in front of a praise band or an orchestra. If this category of training isn’t in a program or wasn’t part of the program that a current minister had, additional training and resources should be sought out.

Conducting

One of the key components of being a music leader is being able to direct the band, the choir and/or the congregation. Leading a choir or an orchestra is more than just waiving your arms around trying to keep time. It’s about bringing cohesiveness to the group by helping them provide a balanced sound. Knowing what vocal part or instrument to back off and which to bring forward is essential to providing a clear, balanced sound from the ensemble.

Another major part of being a good conductor is knowing how to analyze the score for rehearsal. This is the foundation for all rehearsals and performances. “By analytically breaking
the score into both its overall form and the smaller motivic components, the conductor begins the process of understanding how the composer originally crafted the musical work.”

**Section III: Theological Training**

As stated previously, the value of training in Bible and doctrinal issues are paramount for the worship pastor. In the opening to his book, *Proclamation and Praise*, Ron Man states:

> What is needed above all in our day is a broadening examination of unifying theological concepts of worship – trans-cultural, trans-congregational, trans-denominational. We should be asking: What are biblical truths about worship which are non-negotiable – which we may only apply, not reject or change? What are those aspects of worship about which we can all potentially agree, even while we in grace allow for differing applications of those truths in different local bodies?

In a day and age of “melting-pot” congregations, the local music minister has to be conscious of theological issues and be grounded biblically. The songs that are being written need to be thoroughly vetted before they are taught to the congregations. Also, which areas do our current songs focus on? Are they mainly about Christ’s death on the cross? Has the resurrection been neglected? Being deliberate in the song selection based on doctrine can be a great way to make sure that the congregants are being fed a healthy dose of truth. “True worship must be of a spiritual mature or realm, and it must be in accordance with truth as God has revealed it.”

Dr. Enns’ summary of John 4:24 is extremely important to adhere to. But, do worship pastors know the Truth well enough to be able to critique the words and message of the songs that are being sung from the platform in their churches?

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Learning a musical skill is very important, but equally, if not more, important is to know the Scriptures and to know sound doctrine. The Word of God is vital to our understanding and practice of worship. The following is an attempt to catalogue what God considers

ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

Worship is giving to God

The nature of Christian worship is not that of getting (good feelings, peace, fellowship – though indeed these may be perfectly legitimate by-products). “As you come to him... offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (I Peter 2:4-5) Having received so bountifully from God the riches of his grace, consider what we can give back to him: our love, our children, our service, our time, talents, our resources, and our total beings.

We give him our bodies

“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1)

We give him our love

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37)

We give him praise and adoration

“Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.” (Hebrews 13:15)

We give him broken and contrite hearts

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:17)
We give him our service and our work

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for with such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” (Hebrews 13:16).

“Whatsoever you do, work heartily, as and not for men,” (Colossians 3:23).

We give him our resources

“God loves a cheerful giver... which will produce thanksgiving to God.” (II Corinthians 9:7, 11)

Consider Mary’s loving gift of fragrance (John 12), the widow’s mite (Luke 21), the gifts of the wise men (Matthew 2:11).

We give him our children.

“I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life, he will be given over to the Lord.” (I Samuel 1:27-28)

“Joseph and Mary took him (Jesus) to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.” (Luke 2:22)

The priesthood of the believer makes worship our privilege and responsibility. All believers have free access into the presence of God, the Holy of Holies, because of what Christ has done for us!

“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

(Revelation 1:5-6)

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” (Hebrews 10:19-21)
“The opportunity we have as Christians to meet together and interact with the God of the universe is nothing less than extraordinary” (Morgenthaler, p. 9). Meeting God, bowing humbly in His presence, and giving Him honor and praise must be central to every worship service.

Worship of God is more than a privilege; it is a divine mandate. How dare one take this holy privilege lightly, or absent ourselves from worshipping with the Body of Christ, His church?

“Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” (Matthew 4:10)

“not neglecting to meet together.” (Hebrews 10:25)

According to the Westminster Confession of Faith:

God is to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.21

Sincerity of the heart is essential

We cannot fool the Lord. Earnestness and intensity should characterize our worship. We want all our communication to be authentic and genuine.

“those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

“This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain they do worship me,” (Matthew 15:8-9)

“We renounce all shame and deceit and hypocrisy and pretense and affectation and posturing. We do not desire an atmosphere of artistic or oratorical performance, but the atmosphere of a radically personal encounter with God truth.” (Piper, 1990)

Our worship seeks to engage the head and the heart

“I will sing praise with my spirit, and I will sing with my mind also.” (I Corinthians 14:15)

“Our worship, therefore, aims at kindling and carrying deep, strong, real emotions toward God, but does not manipulate people’s emotions by failing to appeal to clear thinking about spiritual things based on shareable evidences outside ourselves.” (Piper, 1994)

True worship produces changed lives that are obedient and pleasing to God

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (II Corinthians 3:18)

True worship produces changed lives that are obedient and pleasing to God

We must not settle for an entertainment fix or a feel-good fix in our worship services. A right heart attitude, obedience, and righteous living are prerequisites to acceptable worship of God.

The Lord told Israel:

“I hate; I despise your feast; I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you bring me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. Take away from me the noise of your songs; the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:21-24)

“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, and to you who feel secure on the mountain Samaria... who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp and like David invent for themselves instruments of music... but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph.” (Amos 6:1, 5, 6)

Acceptable worship is love for others

“Whoever loves God must also love his brother.” (I John 4:21) Our love for others is a demonstration of the reality of God within us.

“If I speak [sing] in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” (I Corinthians 13:1) Love turns a mere performance into communication.
Love releases us from self-consciousness, makes us others-conscious, and gives us freedom from fear.

“Perfect love casts out fear.” (1 John 4:18) The spirit of love for each other is absolutely necessary for authentic worship. By its very nature, corporate worship requires the uniting of hearts in love, if it’s to bring honor and praise to the Lord. A full worship experience will include singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, confession of sin, confession of faith, baptism, communion, prayers, reading of Holy Scripture, proclaiming the Gospel, instruction in the Word, and response to the Word.²²

“One of the root ideas in the word doctrine is instruction.”²³ It is the responsibility of the worship pastor, along with the senior pastor, to teach doctrine. It can be done in music. A lot of times, these doctrines can become engrained into the worshiping Christian because songs are easily remembered. Of course, this is not a new phenomenon. The church has been using song to teach and memorize truth and doctrine for millennia. The ancient world of the Bible, much of the collecting, preserving, and spreading of truth was done through song.”²⁴ Even Paul, in his letter to Titus, reminds him to “hold firm to the trustworthy word that was taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine...” (Titus 1:9) The pastor, or worship pastor, is to make sure that those within the church are given sound, biblical doctrine. John MacArthur weighs in on this subject. He explains that the word “sound,” used here by Paul, is the Greek word hugiaino, which is where we get our word hygiene. It conjures an attitude of being in right

²² Keith Currie, Acceptable Worship, (used by permission, 2016).


²⁴ Robert J. Morgan, Then Sings My Soul, 10.
health. It should also be one of the worship pastor’s objectives to enlighten the congregation “in doctrine that protects and preserves their spiritual health.”

Sadly, this appears to be an area of great concern. The colleges and universities in this generation are not giving enough scholarly, biblical attention to this subject matter. The worship pastors and music ministers that leave the colleges in pursuit if being a leader and pastor are not being given enough to help them in this endeavor. Of the sixty-one colleges and universities researched, only thirty provide any type of theology class, and many of those are only a generic Christian theology course.

Of the sixty-one colleges and universities researched, only four did not offer a course for introductory Bible. Most programs required a course in Old Testament and a course in New Testament. The vast majority of them were labeled Old Testament Survey and New Testament Survey. These two courses were not offered as part of the music/worship programs but, rather, as the general education core required for all degrees being conferred in that university. This means, the graduating accountant gets the same Bible education as the worship pastor. This is excellent news for Christianity placing biblically aware people in the secular workplaces, in our school systems and in the local governments. However, our ministers should be getting so much more biblical education.

The puzzling thing is that only twenty-four schools out of sixty-one offered a course in biblical worship. Of those twenty-four schools, only two offered a course in the book of Psalms. A biblical foundation of worship is imperative for the worship pastor. It would be important to any minister of the gospel to understand the biblical concepts and biblical practices of worship.

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The worship leaders of our churches can’t give the “how to” of worship if they don’t completely understand the “why” of worship. This is probably why, in the American culture at least, most people associate only the music of the Sunday morning service as worship.

Music can be an expression of worship or a vehicle for worship, but so is the offering, so is the prayer/petition, so is the edification of believers, so is our sacrifice in serving, all of which comes from the revelation of God’s Word. This is a domino effect. If our ministers are not getting sound doctrine, then they aren’t teaching the congregation sound doctrine through worship. A.W. Tozer emphatically states, “It would be impossible to overemphasize the importance of sound doctrine in the life of a Christian. Right thinking about all spiritual matters in imperative if we would have right living. As men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles, so sound character does not grow out of unsound teaching.”

Section IV: Ministry Training

This topic was a little harder to isolate because there are some very broad subjects that can be assimilated to “ministry training.” For instance, Christian counseling is a great asset to any minister working in a church. However, this subject can be covered in a leadership class, or it can be coded in a general education course, not in the Christian Ministries department. However, all that is needed cannot be covered within the confines of a single undergraduate degree. Small portions of each can be covered within a broader ministries course. Subjects like, “How to Prepare and Maintain a Budget,” “Knowing Your Personality Type and the Personality

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Types of Those in Your Ministry,” or “Conflict Resolution,” and so much more, are valuable resources, but are often considered on the job training.

For this paper, these were the questions that needed to be answered: 1) Did the degree provide a Christian Ministries course? This could be a generalized course for all ministers. 2) Did the degree provide a Christian ministries course specifically for the worship pastor? A course designed for the preparation of a music minister/worship pastor. 3) Did the degree provide an internship that would allow mentoring? In these times, practical, real-world problems can be dealt with in a somewhat controlled and governed environment.

After review of the collected research, twenty-five schools provide a generic ministry course for all pastors and ministers, thirty-six have designed a specific course for music ministry and forty-two have networked with other music ministers/worship pastors to provide an internship program. Some of the schools require all three of these courses in the degree program, while some offer none of them, and everything in between.

In any case, Paul’s words to Titus ring true, “the older…are to train the younger,” (Titus 2:3-4). There are a lot of books that have been written on Christian ministry. There are a lot of ministers available to give insight to the next generation of worship pastors. Not only is it the responsibility of academia to provide adequate support for practical application, but it is also the responsibility of current and former ministers to aid and guide the young. “Taking a position of leadership in the church means that we take on the responsibility of helping others as they move on their journey through life in preparation for their final destination.”

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CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Gathering information for a research paper is not something to be taken lightly. There are two very important questions that need to be answered: 1) What information needs to be gathered and 2) how is that information going to be gathered? While these might seem innocent at first glance, great care needs to be ascertained. “Before entering the field, qualitative researchers plan their approach to data recording. The proposal should identify what data the researcher will record and the procedures for recording data.”

As Creswell defines further, there needs to be a protocol in place for gathering data. There can be discrepancies in the data if a protocol is not followed. “Literally, protocol (Greek word, protokollon - first page) means a format procedure for carrying out a scientific research.” An established protocol will allow all of the data being collected to be gathered in the same manner. This could include what sources are established as credible. For instance, are hard copy texts the only acceptable format of data from the institution of higher learning or is their official internet site sufficient to download information for use?

Other information to consider would be the documentation allowed as a primary source and the denominations the institutions belong to. Both of these bear weight on the final, processed data. In the case of this paper, the information gathered was produced from the

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29 Ibid, 193.

official website of the school or retrieved from a faculty member. The information gathered was either a degree completion plan and/or an academic catalog.

One of the problems faced was that these institutions are continually updating their academic catalogs or degree completion plans for the upcoming year. Most of them kept a copy of the previous years and they were available. It was evident early on, that downloading the catalog and/or degree completion plan was imperative and then using that source exclusively. Because most of the research in this paper was gathered in the late spring, schools were making their changes for the incoming students.
Design

What is being taught in our institutions of higher learning to the next generation of worship pastors and music ministers? This is the question that this paper seeks to answer. As stated in chapter 1, there is a need for a solid music foundation that includes, applied lessons, theory, aural training, conducting and arranging. Also, there needs to be a sufficient level of Biblical knowledge including Systematic Theology and surveys that cover both Old and New Testaments. Finally, practical application in the form of Christian Ministry courses will prepare them for life in the ministerial role.

The desire of this paper is to provide an overview of the current landscape of higher-education institutions. This overview will help future worship pastors decide what elements of a degree they will receive and what elements they may need to find additional resources on. The problem is that 1) many aspiring worship pastors do not know what elements of music, theology and ministry they are going to need. If these individuals do not attend an institution of higher learning at all, how will they be able to sufficiently guide the ministry that is set before them? 2) Previous attempts to train worship pastors has led to performance musicians who are weak in ministry assets or, the opposite end of the spectrum, ministers that are musically inept. There must be a balance. Creswell is right that we do not clearly identify the problem. It’s not the questions that drive the research but the problem.

By gathering information, the research should show the areas of concern where the community of higher education is failing our next generation of worship pastors. Having said that, it can’t be presumed that all institutions are exactly the same in form or function. Some

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colleges and universities have done the research and have designed their degree programs accordingly. This paper will just show an overall picture of the collegiate community.

The research was collected, mainly via the internet. The main websites for the Southern Baptist Convention, the National Association of Free Will Baptist, Church of God and the Church of the Nazarene served to provide an exhaustive list from those denominations for schools in which this paper would research. Also, included in the research was one school from the following affiliations: Reformed Theology, Grace Bible, Presbyterian PCA and Interdenominational.

Once the schools were established, an effort to attain degree program information was set forth. Again, this was mainly accomplished through the, aforementioned, schools’ websites. Most school provided a current Degree Completion Plan on their website. If there wasn’t one, then an email was sent to the department head for assistance in acquiring such a document. All the institutions that were contacted complied and were all but eager to assist.

A degree completion plan was sufficient enough if it gave the complete course title (e.g. “Psalms” not just “BTOT-3140”). Some of the degree completion plans were not as descriptive and only gave a course number. In this instance, the academic catalog was acquired and the course number was researched to be able to apply the course properly within the study. Some institutions provided a detailed plan by academic year for the students, but this information was not a necessity for this study.

Once all of the information was gathered, a spread sheet was formed to be able to adequately categorize the information in the following way: Institutional Name, Degree then

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32 Taken from the degree completion program of Cedarville University, 2015-2016 Undergraduate Academic Catalog for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Worship.
Major or Concentration. This information gave the researcher valuable information as to the type of course offered. As discussed in chapter 2, there are differences in a Bachelor of Arts, Music or Science. These subtle differences shape the way the degree is designed. Also a factor, but not researched in this paper is the accrediting body. Some schools were NASM, some were accredited by the State Board of Regents and some by a national or regional accreditation bodies. These organizations have a direct say in the design of the programs, the number of hours required for the programs and key elements of general education requirements.

Because of the established, three-fold, criteria set forth in Chapter 1, the data was then processed through the lens of Music, Theology and Ministry. The following categories were assigned and used to collect data for the amount of classes that the degree required: **Music** – Theory/Aural Skills, Advanced Harmony, Applied Lessons (Primary), Applied Lessons (Secondary), Conducting, Ensemble, Arranging/Instrumentation and Recital/Ministry Program; **Theology** – Bible (included Old/New Testament courses, books of the Bible courses), Systematic Theology, Biblical Worship Foundation; **Ministry** – Christian Ministry (foundation, counseling, etc.), Worship Pastor Ministry (e.g. Role of the Worship Pastor), Internship.

Again, the music portion is somewhat standardized, whereas, the ministries is a little tougher to single out. That is why the categories are generic. There are a number of courses that could be offered in ministry, so the research was divided into general Christian ministry and worship ministry. The important data gained was more of “how much” ministry is the student getting not necessarily “what specifics” are they getting.

With the Bible portion of the data, the researcher was only interested in three areas: specific Bible courses, Systematic Theology or Doctrines courses, and specific Worship Theology courses (Biblical Foundations of Worship). These three areas formulated the target of
what was covered in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. The researcher wanted to find out how much Bible was being given. This could include Old and/or New Testament Surveys, Old and/or New Testament Intros or it could be a specific category or book of the Bible. Something like “The Pentateuch” or the “Book of Acts” would be considered part of this group. Also to be collected is the amount of Systematic Theology the students were getting. Finally, in this category did the degree program contain courses on Biblical foundations of worship. This group could have courses like “A Theology of Worship, “Biblical Foundations of Worship” or something similar.
Questions and Hypotheses

There were two main focuses in this research: 1) What does the Worship Pastor or Music Minster need to fulfill their responsibilities and duties as a musician and as a minister? 2) What college and university degree programs provided to teach and train these vocations, whether paid or volunteer?

The first question, in regards to the educational needs and resources of a worship pastor or volunteer, was dealt with in Chapter 1. According to Scripture and prominent worship pastors, the three-fold main categories included: A) Theological Training – Biblical Perspectives of Worship, Systematic Theology, etc., B) Musical Training – Theory, Applied Lessons, Arranging, Conducting, etc., and C) Ministry Training – Team Building, Planning a Worship Service, Setting the Table for Worship, Collecting a Musical Repertoire, Preparing a Budget, Administrative Skills, etc.

The second question, in regards to adequate education within the degree programs of universities and colleges, was examined in Chapter 2. Gathering Degree Completion Plans and Academic Catalogs proved to be a beneficial system. However, because there is no standard for labeling courses, at times it was necessary to follow up in the “Course Description” portion of the catalog to make sure that the course was properly categorized. The music portion of the research was fairly standard. The general classes offered seemed to be the same. The amount of classwork varied, but the type of classes did not. For example, all conducting classes were just that, courses on conducting. Some were instrumental and some were choral, but there was no misunderstanding what the course was about.
Hypotheses

1. **Standardization of the music course comes from the accreditation body for that institution.** Some of the schools were only governed by the University or College accreditation body while others were governed by NASM (National Association of Schools of Music).

[NASM] established national standards for undergraduate and graduate degrees and other credentials for music and music-related disciplines, and provides assistance to institutions and individuals engaged in artistic, scholarly, educational and other music related endeavors.33

2. **The Ministerial and Theological courses would be harder to gauge because there is no set of standards or requirements, especially if it is a music degree.** Because there are no set standards it would be hard to require a school to have a certain amount of courses in ministry, for example. To go even further, since they are not required to have a set number of courses, the institutions of higher learning are also able to decide which ministry courses they will offer. Some might offer a course in Administrative Skills and another might offer a course in Christian Leadership but not both.

3. **There will be fluctuation among the institutions as to the percentage of music, theology and ministry that is required in their degree programs.** This could also be dependent on the type of degree that is offered. For a music degree, it would seem plausible that it would be music intensive. However, some of the music course could be designed for ministry purposes. If the degree is part of a school of divinity, then it might

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be excessive in the theology aspect and leaving the music portion waning. It would be
interesting to see how well rounded the programs are. But that’s still not to say which
one is correct.

4. **Even though the institution does everything in its power to provide a quality
   program, there will still be deficiencies.** There is no possible way that a single
   undergraduate degree program can cover all of the potential criteria that a music minister
could need. There are capacities in the total number of hours an undergraduate degree
can have. The truth is there are Music Performance degrees, there are Theology degrees
and there are Christian Ministry degrees and now all three of them are being shove into
one program. Some things are going to get left out and must be done at the graduate
level or at conference, seminars or online tutorials.
Participating Schools of Higher Education

Anderson University
316 Boulevard
Anderson, SC 29621
(800) 542-3594
www.andersonuniversity.edu

Baptist University of the Americas
7838 Barlite Blvd.
San Antonio, TX 78224
(800) 721-2701
www.bua.edu

Baylor University
One Bear Place
Wace, TX 76798
(800) 229-5678
www.baylor.edu

Blue Mountain College
PO BOX 160
Blue Mountain, MS 38610
(662) 685-4771
www.bmc.edu

Bluefield College
3000 College Avenue
Bluefield, VA 24605
(800) 872-0176
www.bluefield.edu

Boyce College
2825 Lexington Road
Louisville, KY 40280
(800) 626-5525
www.boycecollege.com

California Baptist University
8432 Magnolia Avenue
Riverside, CA 92504
(877) 228-3615
www.calbaptist.edu

Campbell University
143 Main St.
Buies Creek, NC 27506
(800) 334-4111
www.campbell.edu

Carson-Newman University
1646 Russell Ave.
Jefferson City, TN 37760
(865) 471-2000
www.cn.edu

Cedarville University
251 N. Main St.
Cedarville, OH 45314
(800) 233-2784
www.cedarville.edu

Charleston Southern University
9200 University Boulevard
Charleston, SC 29406
(843) 863-7000
www.csuniv.edu
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<tr>
<td>Chowan University</td>
<td>One University Place, Murfreesboro, NC 27855</td>
<td>(888) 424-6926</td>
<td><a href="http://www.chowan.edu">www.chowan.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College at Southeastern</td>
<td>PO BOX 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27588</td>
<td>(919) 761-2100</td>
<td><a href="http://www.collegeatsoutheastern.com">www.collegeatsoutheastern.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College at Southwestern</td>
<td>2001 W. Seminary Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76115</td>
<td>(817) 923-1921</td>
<td><a href="http://www.swbts.edu/academics/faculty/college/">www.swbts.edu/academics/faculty/college/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant College</td>
<td>14049 Scenic Highway, Lookout Mountain, GA 30750</td>
<td>(706) 820-1560</td>
<td><a href="http://www.covenant.edu">www.covenant.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas Baptist University</td>
<td>3000 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas, TX 75211</td>
<td>(214) 333-7100</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dbu.edu">www.dbu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis College</td>
<td>400 Riverside Drive, Johnson City, NY 13790</td>
<td>(877) 949-3248</td>
<td><a href="http://www.davisny.edu">www.davisny.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Texas Baptist University</td>
<td>One Tiger Drive, Marshall, TX 75670</td>
<td>(800) 804-3828</td>
<td><a href="http://www.etbu.edu">www.etbu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Nazarene College</td>
<td>23 East Elm Ave., Quincy, MA 02170</td>
<td>(617) 745-3000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.enc.edu">www.enc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner-Webb</td>
<td>110 S. Main St., Boiling Springs, NC</td>
<td>(704) 406-4000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gardner-webb.edu">www.gardner-webb.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace Bible College</td>
<td>1011 Aldon St SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49509</td>
<td>(800) 968-1887</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gbcoll.edu">www.gbcoll.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannibal-LaGrange University</td>
<td>2800 Palmyra Road, Hannibal, MO 63401</td>
<td>(800) 454-1119</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hlg.edu">www.hlg.edu</a></td>
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</table>
Hardin-Simmons University
2200 Hickory (877) 464-7889
Abilene, TX 79698 www.hsutx.edu

Hillsdale College (now Randall University)
3701 S. I-35 Service Rd (405) 912-9000
Moore, OK 73160 www.hc.edu

Houston Baptist University
7502 Fonden Rd (281) 649-3000
Houston, TX 77074 www.hbu.edu

Howard Payne University
1000 Fisk Street (800) 880-4478
Brownwood, TX 76801 www.hputx.edu

Judson College
302 Bibb St. (800) 447-9472
Marion, AL 36756 www.judson.edu

Leavell College
3939 Gentilly Blvd (800) 662-8701
New Orleans, LA www.nobts.edu/leavellcollege/default

Liberty University
1971 University Blvd. (434) 582-2000
Lynchburg, VA 24515 www.liberty.edu

Louisiana College
1140 College Drive (318) 487-7011
Pineville, LA 71360 www.lacollege.edu

Mars Hill University
100 Athletic Street (866) 642-4968
Mars Hill, NC 28754 www.mhu.edu

Mid-America University
3500 S.E. 199th Street (405) 691-3800
Oklahoma City, OK 73170 www.macu.edu

MidAmerica Nazarene University
2030 E. College Way (800) 800-8887
Olathe, KS 66062 www.mnu.edu
Midwestern College
5001 North Oak Trafficway
Kansas City, MO 64118
(816) 414-3826
www.mbts.edu/college

Mississippi College
200 S. Capitol Street
Clinton, MS 39056
(601) 925-3000
www.mc.edu

Moody Bible Institute
820 N. LaSalle Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60610
(800) 356-6639
www.moody.edu/home

Mount Vernon Nazarene University
800 Martinsburg Road
Mount Vernon, OH 43050
(740) 392-6898
www.mvnu.edu

North Greenville University
7801 N. Tigerville Road
Tigerville, SC
(864) 977-7000
www.ngu.edu

Northeastern Baptist College
104 Kocher Drive
Bennington, VT
(802) 753-7233
www.nebcvt.edu

Northwest Nazarene University
623 S. University Blvd.
Nampa, ID 83686
(877) 668-4968
www.nnu.edu

Oklahoma Baptist University
500 W. University
Shawnee, OK 74804
(405) 585-5000
www.okbu.edu

Olivet Nazarene University
One University Avenue
Bourbonnais, IL 60914
(800) 648-1463
www.olivet.edu

Ouachita Baptist University
410 Ouachita St.
Arkadelphia, AR 71998
(870) 245-5000
www.obu.edu

Point Loma Nazarene University
3900 Lomaland Drive
San Diego, CA 92106
(619) 849-2200
www.pointloma.edu
Reformation Bible College
465 Ligonier Court
Sanford, FL 32771
(888) 722-1517
www.reformationbiblecollege.org

Samford University
800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35229
(205) 726-2011
www.samford.edu

Shorter University
315 Shorter Avenue
Rome, GA 30165
(800) 868-6980
www.shorter.edu

Southeastern College
532 Eagle Rock Rd.
Wendell, NC 27591
(919) 365-7711
www.sfwbc.edu

Southern Nazarene University
6729 NW 39th Expressway
Bethany, OK 73008
(405) 789-6400
www.snu.edu

Southwest Baptist University
1600 University Avenue
Bolivar, MO 65613
(800) 526-5859
www.sbuniv.edu

Trevecca Nazarene University
333 Murfreesboro Road
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 248-1200
www.trevecca.edu

Truett-McConnell College
100 Alumni Drive
Cleveland, GA 30528
(706) 865-2134
www.truett.edu

Union University
1050 Union University Drive
Jackson, TN 38305
(731) 668-1818
www.uu.edu

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
900 College Street
Belton, TX 76513
(800) 727-8642
www.umhb.edu

University of the Cumberlands
6178 College Station Drive
Williamsburg, KY 40769
(877) 713-8767
www.ucumberlands.edu
Warner Pacific College
2219 SE 68th Ave.
Portland, OR 97215
(503) 517-1020
www.warnerpacific.edu

Warner University
13895 Highway 27
Lake Wales, FL 33859
(800) 309-9563
www.warner.edu

Wayland Baptist University
1900 W. 7th Street
Plainview, TX 79072
(800) 588-1928
www.wbu.edu

Welch College
3606 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37205
(615) 844-5000
www.welch.edu

William Carey University
498 Tuscan Avenue
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
(601) 318-6051
www.wmcarey.edu

Williams Baptist College
60 W. Fulbright Avenue
Walnut Ridge, AR 72476
(870) 886-6741
www.wbcoll.edu
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The need for instructional material geared to worship pastors and ministers of music is very evident. The Bible calls for educating them and the worship leaders around the country are begging for it. What are the colleges and universities in the evangelical realm doing to facilitate maturity to those in charge of leading our congregations in worship? How are they fulfilling the desire of these leaders to gain a better understanding of worship and ministry while balancing the need for a skill set that provides excellence in the worship service?

In this chapter, three areas will be discussed in regards to what material is being provided by the programs of the colleges and universities listed in chapter 3. The first area viewed will be Musical Training. In this section, it will be determined what aspects of musical skill are mandated for the degree program. Attention will be given to Theory/Aural Skills and Advanced Harmonies, Applied Instrument or Voice and Ensembles, Conducting, Arranging and, finally, Recital/Ministry Capstone.

The second area viewed will be Theological Training. This includes the study of Systematic Theology, Bible specific courses, and Biblical Worship Foundations. In this section, it is prudent to remember that the knowledge the Worship leader has of Scripture and how Scripture invites us to worship the Almighty, is imperative. A foundation in such things is necessary for the Worship Pastor to continue that study long after he or she has left the world of academia, not to mention the ability to teach theology from the designed worship experiences.

The last area of content will be that of Ministry Training. While there is a plethora of books written on “How to do” ministry, it is important for the minister to have some idea of what ministry will be like when he or she has finished the degree. The range of Christian ministry
courses is too broad to be able to categorize effectively, so they have all been lumped in to one Christian Ministry course. There are, however, some schools that offer Worship Ministry specific classes and those will be counted in a separate category of Worship Pastor Ministries.

The last thing that was looked at in the Worship Ministries section was for some sort of Internship. The Bible instructs “the older…to teach what is good… and train the younger…” There will be no more valuable lesson than what a young worship pastor can glean from a more experienced minister. God commands us to teach others what we have learned about God. “God’s purpose in commanding such practices among His people included both His glory and their good.” The same is true for ministry. There are many benefits to making a network of more experienced ministers.

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34 Titus 2:2-4

**Section I: Musical Training**

Since music is the mode by which the worship leader conveys his or her message, it only seems fitting that music has a strong emphasis in the curriculum of a degree program. Based on the data collected, this holds true. All the schools offered some sort of theory and ear training. There is one school that offers one course, five schools that offer two courses, eight schools that offer three courses, forty-five schools that offer four courses and two schools that offer five courses. These freshmen/sophomore level courses provide a foundation of musicality that future worship leaders need to be able understand. Fig 3 shows the number of courses required for freshmen/sophomore level music theory and junior/senior level advanced harmony.

![Figure 3-Theory & Advanced Harmony Requirements](image-url)
Fig 4 shows the degree that each college from Fig 3 offers.

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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Worship and Music</td>
<td>Boyce College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Worship</td>
<td>Cedarville University</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Arts in Church Music</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Worship and Music</td>
<td>Hillsdale FWB College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Music in Worship Studies</td>
<td>Liberty University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Music in Worship and Music</td>
<td>Moody Bible Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Art in Sacred Music</td>
<td>Reformation Bible College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These schools represent a varied denominational affiliation. There doesn’t seem to be any correlation for the amount of theory/aural skills offered pertaining to a certain degree type or denomination affiliation. Fig 5 and Fig 6 list seven schools from the Nazarene denomination.
Even within a denomination, there is not a set standard of criteria for either degree program or program criteria.
Figure 6-Theory & Advanced Harmony in Nazarene Affiliated Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Offered</th>
<th>University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Music</td>
<td>Eastern Nazarene College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Music</td>
<td>MidAmerica Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Worship and Music</td>
<td>Northwest Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Music in Music Ministry</td>
<td>Olivet Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Music Ministry</td>
<td>Point Loma Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Worship Arts</td>
<td>Southern Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Science in Music</td>
<td>Trevecca Nazarene University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5-Nazarene Affiliated Schools and Degrees Offered
After the core, lower level, music courses, the curriculum changes, based on the type of degree being offered. For instance, only twenty-seven schools offer a course in a junior or senior level music theory (e.g. Form & Analysis, Instrumentation, Arranging, etc.). These upper level music theory courses were confined to the Bachelors in Music and Bachelors of Arts, while the Bachelors of Arts was split with some not having any upper level theory. There were no upper level theory classes in for the Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Religious Education.

The applied science of the music programs includes primary and secondary instruments, conducting, and ensembles. These courses offer direct application and instruction for instruments or voice. All the degrees researched require some sort of time spent on a primary instrument (including voice). This time varies, per degree requirements. Surprising, at least to this researcher, was the amount of institutions that require a secondary instrument, including voice. Forty schools require an applied secondary concentration. Again, this varies, depending on degree program requirements. Some programs even require applied courses in voice, piano and/or guitar. This makes sense since the worship leader may be tasked with helping those in his or her ministry attain skills. This way the worship leader will have some knowledge of a variety of instruments.

Another applied skill that has been discussed in this paper is conducting. Conducting is not just relegated to adult church choirs anymore. A worship leader might be required to rehearse bands, orchestras, small vocal ensembles, etc. The skills learned in conducting classes (i.e. score management, rehearsal techniques, etc.) can be quite important. Fifty-three schools require some form of conducting. Some schools require further conducting training. To be exact, twenty-eight schools require more than one course in conducting.
Musical ensembles give the student-learner an atmosphere that will enable them to enhance their musical ability, plus the ability to learn from their instructor on how to conduct rehearsals and performances. Only one college did not require participation in a musical ensemble. That degree program was a Bachelor of Arts in Worship Ministry. There were varying requirements, in regards to musical ensemble, from each degree, but overwhelmingly, it seemed to be a priority from an institutional standpoint.

The final area, in the applied concentration, has to do with a capstone project. This project reflects the student’s musical or applied ministry aptitude. This could come in the form of a recital or ministry project. Thirsty-five schools require a capstone project/recital.

Section II: Theological Training

Theological training gives the aspiring worship leader the foundation needed to make ministry decisions based on biblical evidence. These courses could be specific to books of the Bible like Psalms, The Book of Acts, etc. or could be a category like Old Testament/New Testament Surveys, the Pentateuch, the Gospels, the Epistles, the Prophets, etc. The courses could also be designed for theological curriculum, such as Systematic Theology, Doctrines, etc. Since a music minister’s theology is tied directly to their idea of worship, theology plays an important role.

Fifty-nine schools require courses in theology and/or biblical studies. The two institutions that did not require any type of theological training only offered degrees that were specific to music. The student could, if they so choose, take some of these courses as an elective. The research only recorded courses that were required.
Broken down further in courses specifically for Bible, fifty-seven required classes in biblical studies. The courses were varied and dealt with specific books like Psalms, Acts, etc. or could have been categorized like the Pentateuch, Books of Poetry, the Gospel, etc. Since the schools observed were considered Christian institutions of higher learning, most of them required lower level biblical literature classes, like Old Testament Survey or New Testament Survey as part of the general education requirements for all students at the college/university, not just those pursuing ministry degrees.

In regards to courses specifically for theology/doctrine, thirty schools required classes in general theology. Again, these courses varied throughout the institutions researched, but dealt with topics similar to Systematic Theology. And again, since the schools researched were denominationally affiliated institutions, many of them required all their students to take a history/doctrine course pertaining to those denominational affiliations.

One other category, within theology/doctrine, that was observed was a specific course that dealt with developing a theology of worship. Twenty-four programs offered such a course. “Biblical Principles of Worship,” “Theology of Worship,” and “Biblical Foundations of Worship” were some of the titles offered by schools. Worship is definitely covered in courses for theology and doctrine, but having that extra ministry foundation will prove to be invaluable.

This area of concentration seemed to be the most varied in the number of courses required. Some institutions were theology/doctrine heavy, requiring as many as eighteen courses, and some only required one or two. The focus of the college/university has much to do with this, as several of the institutions were tied directly to a seminary and several programs were designed specifically for music performance.
Something else to consider might be that the faculty in the music department may not be equipped with a degree to handle the Bible/theology portion of the program. Professors may only have a Masters in Music or a Doctor of Musical Arts. Hiring an adjunct or full-time faculty may be cost prohibitive and relying on another department, like Biblical Studies, may only provide a small solution, since they were hired for other roles. Many factors guide the inclusion of so many or so few biblical/theological courses. If a degree falls within the ministry or biblical studies department it is easier to incorporate courses like theology or doctrine. But, if the degree is under the umbrella of an applied art, like music, it may prove harder.

Section III: Ministry Training

This is a very peculiar category, since there is a broad range of course offerings and curriculum that could be perceived to aide in ministry. The intent in gathering research for ministry training was to determine if future worship leaders were getting the skills necessary to deal with people and ministry responsibilities. Many of these situational skills could be dealt with in a generic Christian ministries course. If the students are introduced to many of the people and ministry skills that will be needed, this will give them the head start they need to find resources or be familiar enough with situations to make informed decisions.

An internship also provides students to be in a safe environment under the direction of a seasoned worship leader/minister. The time spent out of the classroom will provide an applicable learning environment that will be crucial in the student’s development.

Twenty-five schools offered a course in Christian ministries. These courses are counted separately from worship ministry specific courses. That means only forty percent of schools require students to participate in a general Christian ministries course. Maybe the institutions
feel that they can cover general ministry material within the Worship Ministry course or that the student will get practical ministry with an internship. Either way, careful attention needs to be given by the prospective student when pursuing a degree to determine if the degree encompasses general ministry topics.

Thirty-six schools offer a ministry course designed specifically for worship leaders, worship pastors or music ministers. Whatever title is given to those that lead our congregations in worship, this course offering in worship ministries is a must. Titles that were found included “Introduction to Worship Leadership” or “Principles of Worship Leadership.” Courses like these can be very beneficial in providing core, key components that are specific to the worship ministry.

Forty-two schools provide an internship program where students have the ability to mirror a seasoned worship pastor. This course gives real-world application to the student in an environment that has direct supervision. Not only does this provide immediate benefits, but the student now has begun a network in which he/she can call upon when future questions or issues arise. This brief step into ministry allows the student to do a self-assessment as well. Strengths and weaknesses of the intern can become very apparent and can be dealt with by someone who is a trusted mentor.

An encouraging number is that thirty-three schools provide a degree that has a Christian ministry or Worship ministry course combined with an internship program. This kind of focused ministry education will truly benefit anyone who feels called to ministry. The resources gathered during this time can be used far in to the future of that minister and give them the tools to research and gather new tools as time goes on.
A number that is disheartening is this: eight schools do not require any type of ministry-vocational course. That means that the ministers who graduate from these programs will not have a measurable practical skill level. This will all be attained in their first ministry post. Hopefully, senior pastors and search committees take in to account the ministry opportunities that have been afforded the new hire. The learning curve will be much steeper for those who have not had the previous opportunity of ministry courses or internships.

**Conclusion**

The best part of graduating from college is knowing that the degree that has been sought after has prepared the individual for the calling in which God has placed on him/her. Unfortunately, it appears that not all colleges and universities share the same philosophy in preparation. The collegiate degree landscape for worship leaders is so varied in regards to trends or what is important to the worship leading community. There are too many factors that play a part in a degree program to determine patterns of a single snapshot across the institutions of higher learning. It is important to understand that institutions of higher learning portray their objectives within the degree programs they offer. Fig 7 shows a comprehensive balance of four colleges from the same denominational affiliation. Notice that Anderson University has a higher theory count, including advanced theory. Boyce College focuses more on biblical studies, requiring significantly more Bible and Theology. Cedarville University, doesn’t seem to require as much course work, but offers something in all categories. Liberty University provides something in all areas.
The research has provided, however, a clear snapshot of each individual program. This is very helpful in knowing what a school has to offer. The numbers generated from the research give great insight into which schools provide a heavy music program or ones that focus more on doctrine and theology. It also allows the ability to view which schools provide internships or ministry opportunity. This information is critical in narrowing down a prospective student’s choice of which program to go visit. Just because a college is affiliated with a certain denomination or if a university is close to home, doesn’t mean that it is well suited to prepare one for the worship leader ministry.

It is up to the prospective student and his or parents to seek out the information that will guide them in making the proper choice for the best program. “There are not enough advisors

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**Figure 7-Comprehensive Overview of Degree Plans from Four Schools**
making sure parents and their children [are] picking the right school."³⁶ Making an informed decision based off good research can prevent areas of weakness in future ministry positions. Below are some examples of how some schools fared and how an aspiring student can gather data for the schools of interest. These charts show how someone can present a college degree program in a manner that shows strengths and weaknesses, in regards to requirements for various categories.

Figure 9 - College at Southeastern
Figure 10 - Grace Bible College B.M. in Worship Arts

- Theory/Aural Skills
- Advanced Harmony
- Applied Primary
- Applied Secondary
- Conducting
- Ensemble
- Arranging/Instrumentation
- Recital/Ministry Program
- Bible Courses
- Systematic Theology
- Worship Biblical Foundations
- Christian Ministries
- Worship Pastor Ministries
- Internship
Figure 11-Liberty University
Welch College - B.S. in Worship Ministry

Figure 12-Welch College
Figure 13 - William Carey University
Northwest Nazarene University - B.A. in Worship & Music

- Theory/Aural Skills
- Advanced Harmony
- Applied Primary
- Applied Secondary
- Conducting
- Ensemble
- Arranging/Instrumentation
- Recital/Ministry Program
- Bible Courses
- Systematic Theology
- Worship Biblical Foundations
- Christian Ministries
- Worship Pastor Ministries
- Internship

Figure 14 - Northwest Nazarene University
Again, the previous charts are examples of what the research provided. These are only the required courses. It is up to the student to fill the elective choices. Those could be other music courses or ministry courses. They could also be business courses or foreign language courses. The research only gave credit to the required courses by the colleges/universities. The charts above do provide a good understanding of the degree program, though. It is apparent, by viewing these charts, which courses are important to an institution for the degree program.
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This paper, hopefully, brings to light the important aspects of a worship leader’s ministry. There are skills that must be acquired and knowledge that must be possessed in order to effectively minister to the people that God has called someone to. Whatever the background might be, all worship pastors must self-assess strengths and weaknesses of their ministry and provide themselves with alternatives to correct insufficiencies. College is one way to get a good head start in that direction.

Not all colleges offer the same curriculum or share the same program values. Choosing the right school can prove to be a lasting benefit. Analyzing college programs and making sure the degree offers a well-balanced offering for music, theology and ministry will keep one from having to rely on other resources to get the information. This data is not only useful to future and current students, but it is also helpful to the churches that hire these students.

Often, churches assume that because someone has a degree in worship or music that they have everything they need to lead a productive ministry. Churches can also analyze college programs to see if the job position they need to fill is being met by the degree program an applicant is listing on his/her resume. This would allow the search committee a better understanding of the candidate’s training.

It is up to the individual minister to make these assessments and to be honest with themselves on which areas need the attention. Whatever the case, there is always room for
improvement. “It involves growing and realizing a person’s ability and potential by means of learning experiences and self-directed (self-managed) learning.”

Conclusions

Some very interesting conclusions have come about during the data collection and literature review. In all the literature reviewed, it seems that a four-year collegiate degree was a primary goal. Shaping someone into a capable, well-rounded worship pastor doesn’t require time spent on a college campus. Yes, a collegiate experience is able to capture all the requirements on one campus at one time, but it is not the end all. “Competencies, not bachelor's degrees, may become the more valuable currency in the job market.” Ministry is not intended to be a “job market,” but churches may be looking for ministers who are competent in their field instead of just having a degree.

The literature reviewed is simply imploring worship pastors to take stock of their current personal ministry. It is important to take note of what is going right and what needs work. Once, the process is completed, the worship pastor can decide which avenues to explore, then try and fill in the gaps. If there is a need for musical training, then maybe the worship leader can take a class at the local college or from a private instructor. If ministry or theology is lacking, networking with other worship pastors may be beneficial to find out what books they are reading.


or how certain approaches to song selections have worked. There are many ways to support a bi-
 vocational or volunteer music minister.

It might be a worthwhile project to research the various aspects of online resources for those that may not be able to attend a traditional institution of higher learning. It is not restricted to just the non-degreed minister either. As the data reflects, there are holes or gaps that just cannot simply be covered. Having a resource of this magnitude could provide useful for worship pastors across the board.

Another conclusion found is that degree programs do not follow a template in regards to the value of worship ministry criteria. In Fig 3 of chapter 4, the data is inconclusive as to what the collegiate landscape is supporting. Some schools were higher in music requirements while others leaned heavily on Bible knowledge and steered clear of practical application. The same is true for schools within a denominational affiliation. There were inconsistencies. Since this research focused on a single point in time, it doesn’t give examples of how the degrees have changed over time. It could quite possibly be that all of the degree programs are heading in a certain direction and some schools are reaching that goal ahead of others. It might show that some schools are moving forward while still yet others are standing still.

Never the less, simply viewing the charts and data provided in this research paper do not support trends over a period of time. Further research using data from an extended time frame would be able to show what kind of transitions have taken place and might even be able to predict what transitions could take place. The data does show how each institution values and prioritizes their degree programs.


Recommendations

It is important that worship leaders gain all the wisdom and understanding they can from those who have knowledge and insight. A four-year college and/or university is a great place to find such knowledge and insight. As the research has shown, there is not a template that all institutions are using to prepare worship pastors. Therefore, choosing the right program is crucial. It is vital that parents and students make a concerted effort to research which program best fits the abilities and aspirations of the future worship leader.

Program descriptions and academic criteria are easily attainable via college websites. Academic catalogs contain all the necessary information for program requirements. Departmental information can be found on institutional websites as well. It would be prudent to contact department chairs to discuss program elements and to schedule visits with applied lesson professors. A campus visit will help determine if the facilities are adequate to be able to advance a student’s musical skills.

A lot of times, worship pastors don’t have the opportunity to get formal education in worship ministry. Maybe a person with musical abilities is asked to prepare and lead worship services for their home church? Maybe a person with a heart for worship has been given the task of directing the worship team for Sunday mornings? This doesn’t mean that the bi-vocational or volunteer worship leader should quit his/her job and pursue a degree in worship ministry. There are plenty of online opportunities that universities and colleges are providing, that aide in balancing out the skills, abilities and knowledge. Many degree programs are completely online and designed for the working student.
“Distance learning is an increasingly important component of higher education.”

Whether straight from high school or straight from little league practice, being able to be the best worship leader God has called someone to be is as easy as “point and click.” The resources are out there and they are readily available. Current worship pastors must determine which areas in their ministry need to be addressed, then pursue online classes or conferences that address and/or provide ways for more knowledge or better skills in areas of weakness.

In all things, we must adhere to excellence. “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” As leaders in ministry, this should be a mantra, a call to arms, that encourages each other to not be satisfied with just getting by. The call is for us all to pursue after excellence. In this paper, it has been shown for a worship pastor what excellence might look like in ministry. It is now up to the individual minister to take a personal inventory of his/her ministry to determine which areas need attention.

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40 Colossians 3:23-24 (ESV).
BIBLIOGRAPHY


