

The Song Leader

Cornerstone
BAPTIST CHURCH

This book is published by:
Cornerstone Baptist Church
NSW, Australia

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Publisher's Note:

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture is taken from the
King James Bible.

Date last modified: 12/09/16

Date last printed: 12/09/16

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
The Song Leader	5
Conclusion	17
Notes	18

THE SONG LEADER

The position of the song leader is one of the most vital positions there is in the church. Thus, this small booklet is designed to give you a few simple steps you must take in order to be a good song leader.

In order to be a good song leader:

1. You need to be Sharp looking.

When we read the Old Testament rules for the priests, ministers, and tabernacle; we can see very clearly that God does desire everything, including the outside, to be decently and in order. Therefore, if you are going to be a good song leader you must be prepared physically. Thus, you must smile, stand up straight and tall, be enthusiastic, sing loudly and to the best of your ability, have your hair combed, your teeth brushed, your clothes ironed and neat, your shirt tucked in, your facial hair neat and tidy, etc.

One of the first and easiest steps to being a good song leader is to be sharp looking. THIS WILL affect your song leading.

2. You need to be Scriptural.

You need to lead in a scriptural manner. Therefore, you need to know what the Bible has to say about music. Read and study the following:

A. God likes music and uses it to bring peace, joy, holiness, godliness, etc.

📖 Zephaniah 3:17 “The LORD thy God in the midst of thee *is* mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, **he will joy over thee with singing.**”

📖 1 Samuel 16:14-17 “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. Let our lord now command thy servants, *which are* before thee, to seek out a man, *who is* a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring *him* to me.”

📖 1 Samuel 16:19-23 “Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which *is* with the sheep. And Jesse took an ass *laden* with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent *them* by David his son unto Saul. And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer. And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight. **And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.**”

📖 2 Kings 3:11-15 “But Jehoshaphat said, *Is there* not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here *is* Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and

the king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. **But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.**”

2 Chronicles 5:11-14 “And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy *place*: (for all the priests *that were* present were sanctified, *and* did not *then* wait by course: Also the Levites *which were* the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, *being* arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) **It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up *their* voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, *saying*, For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: that *then* the house was filled with a cloud, *even* the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.”**

2 Chronicles 20:12-22 “O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes

are upon thee. And all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation; And he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle *is* not yours, but God's. To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD *will be* with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high. And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy *endureth* for ever. **And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.”**

2 Chronicles 29:25-30 “And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: for *so was* the commandment of the LORD by his prophets. And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the LORD began *also* with the trumpets, and with the instruments *ordained* by David king of Israel. And all the congregation worshipped, and the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded: *and all this continued* until the burnt offering was finished. And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped.”

Psalms 30:4 “Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.”

Psalms 47:6-7 “Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God *is* the King of all the earth: **sing ye praises with understanding.**”

1 Corinthians 14:15 “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: **I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.**”

1 Chronicles 15:16 “And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren *to be* the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.”

17 **Psalms 13:6** “I will sing unto the LORD, because he hath dealt bountifully with me.”

17 **Psalms 28:7** “The LORD *is* my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”

17 **Psalms 40:1-3** “I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see *it*, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.”

17 **Psalms 67:4** “O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.”

17 **Psalms 95:1-2** “O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.”

17 **Psalms 96:1-2** “O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.”

17 **Psalms 98:1-4** “O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.”

Psalms 149:1-6 “Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;*”

Isaiah 12:2 “Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation.”

Ephesians 5:18-20 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;”

Colossians 1:16-18 “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.”

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Music is a gift from God that he uses to cultivate:

- The mind and memories (Deuteronomy 31:19-21).
- The message (Psalms 40:1-3).
- The meetings (2 Kings 3:13-15).
- The members to be unified (2 Chronicles 5:11-14).
- The main thing, the spiritual nature (Ephesians 5:18-20; Colossians 3:16).

B. The devil uses music to confuse, control, and corrupt (Isaiah 14:11-12; Ezekiel 28:11-20). Satan's music is connected to a beat that is similar to a beat you would hear in a war that leads to fleshly dancing, nakedness, and worshipping false gods (Exodus 32:17-19, 25). I would say Satan's beat is loud, noisy, aggressive, vulgar, and brings confusion.

Thus, be careful what kind of music you allow in the church! If certain music is questionable, ask the pastor about it. As a general rule it would be well to follow the saying: "If it is doubtful then it is dirty". Do not let the subtle serpent deceive you, and in so doing, use you to corrupt the people of God. STAY SCRIPTURAL!

3. You need to be Spiritual.

Since the song leader is leading in the worship to our great God, the song leader must be spiritual.

📖 John 4:23-24 "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

The following was advice given to me from Brother David Armistead:

- Ask the Lord to help you pick out the appropriate songs for the church services.
- Start the church services out with a fast, arousing song. Proceed with another fast or medium speed song. Then end the song service with a medium to slow song with meaty words. Remember, these are only suggestions. The most important thing is to make sure you follow the Lord's leading!

4. You need to be Settled.

- Do not let your nerves control you. Rather, control your nerves.
- Do not be startled if the pastor asks you to sing more songs and you do not have any more picked out. Instead, ask the congregation if they have a favourite or just turn to some of your favourites.
- During the main service or during a special meeting, do not lead songs that you or the congregation do not know well.
- Do not fret, simply trust in the Lord and he will use you.

📖 1 Corinthians 14:32-33 “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

📖 2 Timothy 1:7 “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

📖 Psalms 37:5 “Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.”

5. You need to be Skilled.

1 Chronicles 15:19-22 “So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, *were appointed* to sound with cymbals of brass; And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries on Alamoth; And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obedom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith to excel. And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, *was* for song: he instructed about the song, because he *was* skilful.”

You should strive to be better at song leading every single time you do it. This will take work!

James 2:20 “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”


Ecclesiastes 9:10 “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

Some things you can do that will help you be a better song leader are:


- Learning a bit about music. A good book to use is “You can song lead singing, A song leader’s manual” by Glenn Lehman.
- Learning the hand motions.
 - a. A 2/8, 2/4, 2/2, (6/8, 6/4) are led with the hand going down up, down up, down up, etc. The downward motion is the first main beat whilst the upward motion is the next beat.
 - b. A 3/8, 3/4, 3/2, 9/8, (6/8, 6/4) are led with the hand going down, then out, and then up. The downward motion is the first main beat, the outward motion is the next beat, and the upward motion is the next beat.

- c. A 4/4, 4/8, 4/2, 12/8 are led with the hand going down, then in, then out, and then up. The downward motion is the first main beat, the inward motion is the next beat, the outward motion is the next beat, and the upward motion is the last beat before another main beat.
- Learning new songs to add to your repertoire of songs.
 - Making a list of the songs the church knows and use these when having a special meeting and add others throughout the years as special songs to learn.

Music is highly important to God. For instance, the largest book in the Bible is a song book (the book of Psalms). Music is important because it will affect your spirit. If a person wants to be filled with the Spirit then music will help (Ephesians 5:18-21). E.g. David, a man after God's own heart, was a man of music. So let us invest some time, treasures, and talent into learning music and be the best we can be. Let us strive to perfect praise unto our King! Let us do our best for the glory of God!

 Ecclesiastes 9:10 “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

The song leader must be skilful for his job is very important. The song leader's job is to lead the congregation in singing unto the Lord. He is to lead with his voice and enthusiasm. Consider the following examples from the Psalms. Note how the Psalmist exhorts the people to sing and praise God with him. He does not berate or scold. He encourages and instructs and leads, reminding the people why they should praise the Lord.

 Psalm 30:4 “Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness”

Psalm 34:3 “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together”

Psalm 47:6-7 “Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding”

Psalm 99:9 “Exalt the Lord our god, and worship at his holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy”

Psalm 100:1 “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands”

Psalm 105:1-2 “O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works”

Psalm 106:1 “Praise ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever”

Psalm 113:1 “Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord”

Psalm 117:1-2 “O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us; and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord”

Psalm 135:1 “Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord”

Psalm 147:1 “Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely”

Psalm 149:1 “Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints”

Psalm 150: 1, 6 “Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. ... Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord”

The Psalmists were good song leaders!

CONCLUSION

Work hard at being a good song leader. Keep the service alive! Anticipate meeting with the Lord and that will be displayed in your countenance, tone of voice, and attitude. Encourage the people to participate. Don't beat them down, encourage them. Speak to the people as friends. Keep a record of what you sing and don't get in a rut! Singing the same old songs all the time may be easy for you, but it will put the people to sleep mentally. Remember you are preparing the people for the preaching! Starting the service with lively music and bringing the mood to a thoughtful, reflective manner before the message is a good plan. Work at being a good and godly song leader!

