

# **SOUTHLAND INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTRE WORSHIP VISION**

## **Introduction**

All Christians (especially those involved in worship ministry) need to have revelation on the following verses:-

**John 4:23** But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

As members of the worship team of Southland International Christian Centre we need to understand that God is seeking us to worship Him in spirit and truth. If we desire to respond to our heavenly Father's search for such worshippers, then we need to be prepared to do those things which enhance our suitability for 'spirit and truth' worship. For this reason I will attempt to clearly expand on the vision which I believe God has given me for the worship ministry of Southland International Christian Centre. I also want to stir up our fervency in and understanding of worship so that we may be more effective as a worship team.

Pastor Graham has expressed the desire that we diligently seek for the presence and glory of God and tap into the Lord's current move of revival throughout the nations. There is a sound of revival which can be heard in songs of praise and worship coming out of the current move of God's Spirit. Any church moving in this flow will resonate with these songs. Exciting times of God's visitation await us as His revival gains strength. Let's be determined to follow hard after Him.

**Psalms 63:8** My soul follows hard after You; Your right hand upholds me.

I believe that the following vision statement describes both who we are and what we are more accurately becoming:-

**Southland International Christian Centre Worship Team are a group of passionate disciples of Jesus Christ who are called to offer God thanksgiving, praise and worship in spirit and truth with a desire to give the maximum glory to His Name and to assist others to do the same.**

## **In Spirit and Truth**

Whenever I think about what the term 'spirit and truth' in John 4:23-24 means, the following comes to mind:-

**Spirit:-** we are alive physically because God put our human spirit (breath) into us.

**Genesis 2:7** And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

We are alive spiritually when we are born again:-

**Romans 8:10** But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

**1 Corinthians 6:17** But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

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We are Christians if we have the Spirit of Christ in us; then it is possible for us to worship Him in spirit. This is our connection to God. We must seek to worship and serve God according to His Spirit within us and with our own spirit which has been made 'alive':-

**Romans 1:9b** For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son,

**Truth:-** Jesus prayed that we would be set apart by the truth of God's Word.

**John 17:17** Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

God will definitely answer His own prayer!

So we can see from this scripture that there is a setting apart which comes from God's Word. Any approach to worship ministry must be firmly grounded in the Word of God. Spirit and truth worship can then take place because the Spirit and the Word agree.

### **Passionate Disciples**

You might think that it goes without saying that to be a member of a church worship team that each member be a born again, Spirit filled Christian. However there are churches who have effectively waived this requirement. So just for the record to be a member of the Southland International Christian Centre music team you must be a born again, Spirit filled Christian. This is the essential requirement for anyone who would desire to please God because as the Bible makes clear:-

**Romans 8:8** Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

9 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

Throughout the Bible we are exhorted to be passionate disciples of the Lord as in the following example:-

**Romans 12:11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.

As any group of believers follows Christ the blessings are enormous. Unity is just one of these benefits:-

**Romans 15:5** May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,

6 so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The unity we enjoy in the music team is awesome. I believe that the Lord will strengthen this unity even more as He continues to pour His Spirit out on us as we follow Him. Unity brings anointing and is a factor connected with people getting saved in our church services.

**Psalms 133:1** <<A Song of degrees of David.>> Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

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### **Called**

**2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,  
11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Recently the Lord has been speaking to my heart about the distinction between calling and desire. We may desire and be able to do many things, including being part of a worship team, but this is not the same as being called to this ministry. Someone once said "what the Lord orders He pays for" and so it follows that if He didn't order it then He is not obliged to provide for or anoint it. I think it is healthy from time to time to check one's call. If we have peace from God concerning the call then we can proceed in confidence knowing that the Lord will work everything out. When David McCracken spoke at our church he emphasised that we are people of destiny. Once we are flowing in our calling then there comes an immense fulfilment and assurance in our hearts, far outshining any 'good time fleshly zing' we might receive from just playing music. If we are operating in a ministry that we are not really called to, then I believe we are risking giving the devil an open door into our lives.

We have already noted that Jesus prayed that we be set apart by the truth. If we believe that we are called then we will know that we are set apart. Our attitude towards our consecration has a major effect on our life and faith.

**2 Timothy 2:19** Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some for honour and some for dishonour.

21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.

Our dedication in this regard is encouraged by the following promises from the Lord:-

**2 Chronicles 16:9a** For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

**1 John 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

**Romans 12:1** Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

### **Offer God**

As the previous Scripture says, we are urged "to offer your bodies as living sacrifices" as an act of worship. Other translations of this verse say "reasonable service" instead of "spiritual act of worship"; meaning that; when we think about it, the very least we can do for God, in view of His mercy is to offer ourselves to Him. Jesus has bought us with a price anyway so we are not our own but His.

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**1 Corinthians 6:20** For you were bought at a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

For us to live in this truth we need to be determined in our attitude and 'reckon' this to be so for us:-

**Romans 6:11** Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Being set apart for the Lords use is really the key requirement for us as we seek to offer God thanksgiving, praise and worship.

**Psalms 24:3** Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place?

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.

### **Thanksgiving**

God has done wonderful things for us; It is a privilege to serve Him. Therefore it is important that we approach our service to the Lord with an 'attitude of gratitude':-

**Psalms 107:8** Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,

**Psalms 95:2** Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

**Psalms 100:4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

**Psalms 7:17** I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness and will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

**Psalms 69:30** I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.

**Psalms 50:23** He who sacrifices thank-offerings honours me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God."

### **Praise**

Praise is really the 'language of heaven'; we can see this from the view of worship in heaven provided by scripture:-

**Revelation 5:11** Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

12 In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!"

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The potential for God's glory to come is awesome as we speak this 'language' here on earth as it is in heaven:-

**2 Chronicles 5:13** The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; his love endures for ever." Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud,

**Psalms 22:3** But You are holy, Who inhabit the praises of Israel.

When God is tangibly present in our worship services then Jesus is standing among us in His risen power. We can then fully expect Him to do the things which He did during His ministry on earth:- people will be set free, healed, delivered and saved. Intimate times of worship can flow as the Lord graces us with His manifest presence. Then we need only reach out to touch the hem of His garment.

**Psalms 16:11** You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

### **Worship**

Much has been written and said on the subject of worship. Here though I would like to focus on a beautiful example of worship, which for me, pictures the essence of the worshipful heart; humble and costly sacrifice.

**Mark 14:3** While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

4 Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume?"

5 It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

6 "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

7 The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

8 She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial.

9 I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

This attitude of heart is shown also by King David in the following scripture:-

**2 Samuel 24:24** But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them.

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Any dedicated service to God will involve personal cost. This may be in terms of our time, effort, talents or indeed finances; the important thing is that we be willing to make the sacrifices required of us by God.

**Psalm 54:6** I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, O LORD, for it is good.

**Matthew 10:8b** Freely you have received, freely give.

### **Desire to glorify**

If we desire to glorify God then we will do this in a spirit of humility and servanthood. Jesus has told us that apart from Him we can do nothing:-

**John 15:5** "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Jesus has provided the ultimate example of humility in becoming a servant:-

**Philippians 2:6** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

By glorifying God in humble service we place ourselves in agreement with the Holy Spirit Who desires to glorify God's Son:-

**John 16:13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

### **Assisting others**

Pastor Graham has often pointed out that he considers anyone in platform ministry to be leaders. By this he is challenging us to be dedicated worshippers thereby providing encouragement to the congregation to worship also. It has been said that "you cannot lead where you have not been yourself;" therefore it is our responsibility to press into God by spending quality time worshipping Him in our private devotions. As the Apostle Paul exhorts:-

**1 Corinthians 11:1** Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.