



FAITH BIBLE COLLEGE

2 Timothy 2:15

*"Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needs not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth."*

CREATIVE CHURCH MINISTRY



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PHYSICAL ADDRESS

74 Falcon Crescent, EXT 2 - Lenasia South. 1829 GAUTENG, South Africa

POSTAL ADDRESS

P.O.Box 86, Kiasha Park 1829 GAUTENG, South Africa

Website: www.faithcollege-elearning.online

Email: faithcollege@lantic.net

Tel: +27 11 855 8783 Fax: +27 11 855 6337

WhatsApp +27 82 557 9308

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*"Leaders are those whose aroma lingers long after they have completed
the task and others who sniff it, wants to be like them"*

*"Leadership is not a title but a Function
& that Function pulls you to its Position
& the Position determines your Title"*

*Blessings & Graceful Studying
Professor Ronnie Moodley*

INDEX

Introduction	Page 2
The Church needs to change its perspective	Page 3
Change the method not the message	Page 4
Creativity in the church	Page 5
What is Creativity	Page 7
Negative attitudes that block creativity	Page 9
What is necessary for creativity	Page 10
Children's Ministry	Page 11
Youth Ministry	Page 22
Types of Creative ministry	Page 34
Creative Music	Page 34
Assignment	Page 38
Creative Dance	Page 43
Assignment	Page 53
Creative Drama	Page 54
Assignment	Page 63
Assignment	Page 68
Assignment	Page 72
Assignment	Page 74
Brainstorming: Beginning the Creative Process	Page 75
Assignment	Page 78
Bibliography	Page 79

INTRODUCTION

Post modern society describes a transitional time period in which our way of knowing and understanding our world has shifted. These changes have led to significant changes in education and communication. Therefore when presenting some new information or fact to individuals the old way of teaching no longer applies and is no longer as effective as in previous years. In order for the Church to remain as effective as they have done in the past – in being able to reach people through the communicative word – the Church needs to develop new ways in presenting the Gospel of Christ.

In our modern world, people:

Want to see visually what they are learning. Today people do not want to sit in a classroom environment and learn facts that someone else is teaching them. Education is not about learning facts verbatim and accepting what has been given or said as truth. Learning now takes on a different form – learning is by seeing something as being true. It is for this reason that Jesus spoke so clearly about our lives being a “light” (something that is visual) that will draw people to the knowledge of God (Matthew 5:16). When we not only speak the truth of the Gospel of Christ to those who we live with, work with and are friends with, but we also demonstrate this truth visually, people will see the truth and therefore be more prepared to hear the truth.

They want to experience what they are learning. They want to learn about the apprehension of an object, thought or emotion through their senses, mind, an event or a series of events in which they have participated personally. The only kind of learning which significantly influences behaviour is self-discovered or self-appropriated learning. Learning therefore becomes truth that has been assimilated in experience. It is therefore for this reason that people watch more and more reality television, like Survivor, Amazing Race etc. People want to be able to interact with the lives of these real people on the television and then make these experiences topics of conversations with their friends and fellow workers. They want to “live” in the experience through the lives of these real people and not fictitious characters.

Confucius said, “What I hear, I forget. What I see, I remember. What I do, I understand.”

THE CHURCH NEEDS TO CHANGE ITS PRESENTATION

There are three responses that the Church and the Christian can have towards culture and change:

- They can oppose change and cling to what they had before. This is a common attitude of the church as Christians are always looking back at what they had in the past revival. Even the Israelites had this mentality when they told Moses to send them back to Egypt where they used to enjoy leeks and garlic. Exodus 16:3 "'Oh, that we were back in Egypt," they moaned. "It would have been better if the Lord had killed us there! At least there we had plenty to eat. But now you have brought us into this desert to starve us to death." This mindset is one of complacency.
- They can assimilate change by becoming conformed to the cultural values that surround them.
- They can be a catalyst to change and be pioneers in the culture that they are living in. Daniel 1:11-16 "Daniel talked it over with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief official to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. "Test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said. "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's rich food. Then you can decide whether or not to let us continue eating our diet." So the attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the rich foods and wines."

For the Church to be relevant to the people that they have been called to preach to, they need to be like Daniel, and be willing to be a catalyst to change. They need to be creative in their thinking so that people will see the difference between the message that the world is offering and speaking and the message that the church is speaking. Why should we be a catalyst and pioneer to change in an ever changing society? Because we need to reach the unsaved for Jesus. In order to do this we need to be creative.

CHANGE THE METHOD BUT NOT THE MESSAGE

The church throughout history has repeatedly contextualized its message in an understandable language. By being creative we are not watering down the message, but we are presenting it through unusual means. It is vital to remember that the message will always be the same, but the method or the approach that we take in evangelism can change!

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE?

The message that we speak is the same message that has rung out since Genesis 3. This is the message of redemption by the sacrifice of a Lamb.

Present the plan of salvation – The Romans road

- **All have sinned, there are no exceptions:** Romans 3:12 "All have turned away from God; all have gone wrong. No one does good, not even one."
- **This sin leads to death:** Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."
- **But God sent Jesus to bring us life:** Romans 5:8 "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." John 10:10 "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness."
- **We can be saved when we confess and believe in His Lordship over our lives:** Romans 10:9-13 "For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, "Anyone who believes in him will not be disappointed." Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They all have the same Lord, who generously gives his riches to all who ask for them. For "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

CREATIVITY IN THE CHURCH

The whole purpose of the Church is to present the message of Christ to those who are not saved and disciple those who are saved. Therefore before a church can disciple, they need to be able to reach those who are lost. In order for the Church to become relevant and effective to all age groups and all races and people, we need to become creative in our ministry.

Why is creativity in ministry vital?

Words aren't always possible: Some countries restrict the means of Christian words and speech. To reach people in these countries the church needs to change their mind set of evangelism of that of crusade and street evangelism to something that is more relevant. Some religious groups will not listen if they know that they are being "preached" at about Christianity, for example Muslims.

Minds have become immune: Many people have already heard the Gospel in some manner and they have become "immune" to the message. This is seen in the following exert:

"A 30-second film shows six people playing basketball, three in white shirts and three in black. Volunteers are asked to count the number of times the white shirt team passes the ball. At the end of the film, they are asked if they saw anything unusual. Most do not. The unusual thing is: halfway through the film, a man wearing a gorilla suit walks through the players, beats his chest to the camera, then walks off. When shown the film again, people are utterly amazed to see this, to the extent that they often believe a different film has been substituted for the original one. Their focus on one task had blinded them to a truth."

The film illustrates a simple fact – that if we are only looking for one thing, we do not usually see anything different. This forms the basis of Professor R. Wiseman's new book, Spot the Gorilla.

The problem with church ministry today is in its relevance and its objectivity. The Church has the greatest story that will ever be told. It has the power to transform lives and yet few people are listening because the person who is ministering is not speaking the same language as the one with whom they are trying to minister or witness to. People are more open and ready to experience the mystery and awesome power of God and therefore we need to reconstruct how we communicate and educate concerning the Gospel so that we will be able to reach this ripe harvest for Christ.

Are we looking for something unusual and different? Have we the same mind set as the previous generation or are we willing to be different? Are we willing to be creative?

Variety is the very structure of the universe. Creativity started with God when we see in Genesis the grand story of creativity. Because God is a Creator and is in Himself creative, He has given us the ability, skill and imagination to be creative as well. Throughout the Bible we see God's spokespeople using a whole variety of methods to get His message across.

Eccles. 12:9-11 "Because the Teacher was wise, he taught the people everything he knew. He collected proverbs and classified them. Indeed, the Teacher taught the plain truth, and he did so in an interesting way. A wise teacher's words spur students to action and emphasize important truths. The collected sayings of the wise are like guidance from a shepherd."

WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is the ability to think or act differently. It does not necessarily mean to think up something new or to create something new but it means to be able to present something in a new and exciting way so that it will catch the attention of an individual long enough for them to listen to the Message.

“Creativity is defined as the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others.” (*Human Motivation*, by Robert E. Franken)

You would be demonstrating creativity if you:

- Invented something which had never existed before
- Invented a new process for doing something
- Reapplied an existing process or product into a new or different market
- Developed a new way of looking at something (bringing a new idea into existence)
- Changed the way someone else looked at something

Creativity is an ability:

A simple definition is that creativity is the ability to imagine or invent something new. Creativity is not the ability to create out of nothing (only God can do that), but the ability to generate new ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing ideas. Some creative ideas are astonishing and brilliant, while others are just simple, good, practical ideas that no one seems to have thought of yet.

Believe it or not, everyone has substantial creative ability. Just look at how creative children are. In adults, creativity has too often been suppressed through education, but it is still there and can be reawakened. Often all that's needed to be creative is to make a commitment to creativity and to take the time for it.

Creativity is an attitude:

Creativity is also an attitude: the ability to accept change and newness, a willingness to play with ideas and possibilities, a flexibility of outlook, the habit of enjoying the good, while looking for ways to improve it. Proverbs 18:15 "Intelligent people are always open to new ideas. In fact, they look for them."

Creativity is a process:

Creative people work hard and continually to improve ideas and solutions, by making gradual alterations and refinements to their works. Contrary to the mythology surrounding creativity, very, very few works of creative excellence are produced with a single stroke of brilliance or in a frenzy of rapid activity. Much closer to the real truth are the stories of companies who had to take the invention away from the inventor in order to market it because the inventor would have kept on tweaking it and fiddling with it, always trying to make it a little better.

The creative person knows that there is always room for improvement.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES THAT BLOCK CREATIVITY

Oh no, a problem! The reaction to a problem is often a bigger problem than the problem itself. Many people avoid or deny problems until it's too late, largely because these people have never learned the appropriate emotional, psychological, and practical responses. A problem is an opportunity. A problem is (1) seeing the difference between what you have and what you want or (2) recognizing or believing that there is something better than the current situation or (3) an opportunity for a positive act. Problems should not be seen in a negative mind frame.

It can't be done. This attitude is, in effect, surrendering before the battle. By assuming that something cannot be done or a problem cannot be solved, a person gives the problem a power or strength it didn't have before.

I can't do it. Some people think that the problem in their ministry or church can only be solved by an expert. They might think that they are not smart enough or creative enough to find a solution. Let us look at this fact: Who were the Wright brothers that they could invent an airplane? Aviation engineers? No, they were bicycle mechanics. The ball point pen was invented by a printer's proofreader, Ladislao Biro, not a mechanical engineer. Major advances in submarine design were made by English clergyman G. W. Garrett and by Irish schoolmaster John P. Holland. Therefore a good mind with a positive attitude and some good problem solving skills will go far in solving any problem and thus being creative.

But I'm not creative. Everyone is creative to some extent. Most people are capable of very high levels of creativity; just look at young children when they play and imagine. The problem is that this creativity has been suppressed by education. All you need to do is let it come back to the surface. You will soon discover that you are surprisingly creative.

That's childish. In our effort to appear always mature and sophisticated, we often ridicule the creative, playful attitudes that marked our younger years.

What will people think? There is strong social pressure to conform and to be ordinary and not creative

I might fail. Thomas Edison, in his search for the perfect filament for the incandescent lamp, tried anything he could think of, including whiskers from a friend's beard. In all, he tried about 1800 things. After about 1000 attempts, someone asked him if he was frustrated at his lack of success. He said something like, "I've gained a lot of knowledge--I now know a thousand things that won't work."

Fear of failure is one of the major obstacles to creativity and problem solving. The cure is to change your attitude about failure. Failures along the way should be expected and accepted; they are simply learning tools that help focus the way toward success. Not only is there nothing wrong with failing, but failing is a sign of action and struggle and attempt--much better than inaction.

WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR CREATIVITY?

Creativity in ministry requires a change of mindset. It means:

To be kid-minded: Matthew 18:3 "Then he said, 'I assure you, unless you turn from your sins and become as little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven.'" As we grow older we become more cautious about the way that we think and process information. This causes our creative process to slow down. In order to reawaken the creative side of us we need to become like a child and learn from them. This means that we need to learn to be care free (Matt 11:28-30) and fun loving.

To be creation-minded: We are created in God's image and therefore can fulfil our identity and purpose partially through engagement in creative process. It is therefore for this reason that we should use our imagination in winning the lost for Christ.

To be you-minded: Be you, dare to be different! God is a diverse God and therefore we need to get rid of conformity and shake off the need to be like everyone else. To be creative you need to break out of routine.

To be no-fear minded: 2 Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." We need to forsake our fears and be who God created us to be. This means that we are to rid our lives of the fear of rejection, fear of failure and the fear of trying new things because of what other people might say.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH MINISTRY

Scripture reveals that children are special to Jesus. In one instance, parents were taking their children to Jesus for Him to pray for their little ones. Jesus welcomed this act of trust and dedication. However, the disciples thought that Jesus was much too busy to consider any of these children and they tried to stop the flow of parents and children to the Lord. Jesus responded to the disciples actions by saying, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14). There was never a time when Jesus turned children away. He always welcomed and included them in His ministry, just as He did with adults.

As Jesus was concerned with children, so should the local church. The church is to be a place where children are welcomed and trained in the truths of the Bible. Sadly, many churches do not see children as Jesus did and, as a result, put little effort into developing a ministry to children that is well planned and intentional in training. Of course training within a children's ministry should begin with building biblical foundations in infants and preschoolers and should culminate in guiding older children to Christ. The process should then continue by developing these children into faithful disciples. Many churches may not have a well-defined children's ministry simply because they do not know how to organize and plan a comprehensive children's ministry. Others may lack an intentional ministry to children because they just do not want to invest the time. Whatever the case, it must be stressed that Jesus viewed children as a valuable part of the kingdom of God. Therefore, the church must strive for and fulfill this vision of Jesus.

A strong children's worship service serves the needs of parents and children. Parents benefit from having an uninterrupted period of worship. Children are able to have a time to worship with peers and be taught with a curriculum at their level of understanding.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Meeting the needs of the children:

The needs of a child are far different from that of adults. An adult is able to sit through a sermon which may extend to over an hour and be able to process the information which is given whereas a child needs to have the information provided split into 10 minute segments whereby the message of Christ is given in a variety of multi media and creative ministry types. Children learn better when material is presented at their level.

Church growth:

- An effective children's ministry will prepare a solid foundation for children for their life as a child of God. Thereby ensuring that as they grow older they will move from the children's church ministry, into the youth ministry and finally into the church without falling away. This thus provides for future membership and leadership in the church.
- It also allows for children to become evangelists to their unsaved friends by inviting them to join in with a fun filled children's ministry. A children's ministry that is active and planning ahead has a great opportunity for activities that assist the church in spreading the gospel. Children of non-Christians can be invited to activities without feeling threatened.
- Children's ministry also helps church growth by making it easier for new people to attend services. Parents will be able to listen to sermons without distractions. They will be confident that their children are loved, and that they enjoy spending time at church with their new friends. In this way, children's ministry helps evangelize parents.

The existence of a children's ministry helps validate the importance of children within the church. As a result, children feel welcomed and loved at church.

Spiritual nourishment:

Children who are given opportunities to be tuned in to their emotions through children's worship, associating Christianity with joy and love, will learn to be spiritually responsive.

Relationship nourishment:

Children need other children. They experience joy in making friends. Children's ministry can help children learn to establish and nourish friendships. It can accomplish this through the following ways:

- Direct encouragement, such as saying, Be friendly to these children, and they will be good friends.
- Personal examples of the volunteers as they relate to each other.

- Grouping children of similar ages so they have the opportunity to interact.
- Sponsoring children's activities that are open to community children.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH DIRECTOR

Regardless of the size of a congregation, it is helpful to assign someone to supervise children's ministry. The major tasks of the director include the following:

Developing a purpose for the children's ministry:

The leadership of the church should meet and pray asking God, "What do You want to accomplish through this children's ministry?" Begin to write down items that God reveals to you about the structure and direction of the children's ministry. From these God given ideas, develop a purpose statement for the entire children's ministry of your church. The purpose statement should be general, brief, and biblical. Be sure to support your statement with Scripture. This statement will provide a boundary for the entire ministry. Every activity and program should fit within the boundaries of the purpose statement. In writing the purpose statement consider these three fundamental truths.

- God has a concern for children (learning and discipleship)
- Children can have a relationship with God (evangelism)
- Children have a responsibility to others (missions)

Evaluating your current ministry to children:

Assess each age group separately to determine if the current programs and activities fit within the purpose statement developed. If not, then those activities or programs must be eliminated or altered to fit the standards set. Evaluate the spiritual progress each age group is currently making by asking, "Are these children growing the way God intends?" When answering this question, consider the following categories.

- Developmental effectiveness: Is there an intentional effort to reach out to children at their level of understanding?
- Complementing activities: Do the activities and programs currently in place work together to effectively enhance the spiritual learning of the children?

- Evangelistic emphasis: Are there intentional efforts to present the truths of the gospel on the children's level of understanding?

Evaluating the spiritual condition of a specific age group is very subjective, that is, it is your opinion. Only God knows their true spiritual condition. However, answering this question should reveal to the planning group the strengths and weaknesses of the current ministry.

Setting goals for each age group within your children's ministry:

The previous exercises have revealed the spiritual condition of the children within your ministry. This is a starting point. You must know where the children are spiritually before you can set a direction for them to grow. In setting the goals, consider the following tips.

- Each age group should have its own set of goals. The reason for this is because children have different learning capabilities at different ages. A first grader does not learn as a sixth grader does. Neither can a first grader learn the material age appropriate for a sixth grader.
- Goals are specific and measurable. They should be skills and knowledge that God desires for the children to learn. When setting goals consider the age and learning capabilities of the children.
- Goals should fit well within the purpose statement. Use the fundamental truths mentioned in step number one as a guide for setting goals.
- Goals should be achievable. Do not set goals that are impossible for an age group to achieve.
- Goals should be biblical. Support each goal with Scripture.

Developing a strategy to achieve the goals set:

Now that the goals are set, determine how best to achieve them. Each activity or program within an age group will have its own strategy to accomplish the goals set. Here are some tips to achieve the goals you have set.

- Each activity or program within an age group should have a part in striving toward the goals set. Each activity and program will not achieve ALL of the goals individually. However, the activities and programs TOGETHER will achieve ALL the goals set. For example, you may have eight goals set for one

age group and the music program of that group is designed to only achieve two of those goals. This is acceptable as long as the other activities in the age group achieve the other six.

- The style of teaching must be age appropriate. Teachers must understand how their age groups learn and be equipped to teach accordingly.
- Plan to achieve the goals set in a twelve-month time frame. Write a timetable of steps to achieve goals. Section this timetable by months and quarters. Be sure to share this timetable with all teachers to make them aware of the expectations.
- Build intentional evangelism into the strategy where appropriate. Determine which programs and activities will intentionally present the gospel to children.
- Teach not only for head knowledge, but also for a heart change. The ultimate goal of any ministry is to guide individuals to a personal and active relationship with Christ. As you are planning be sure you include activities to allow God to work in the hearts of the children.
- Use a balanced approach. Not all activities can be 100% evangelism. Neither can all activities be 100% outreach to the community. Consider the goals you have set and equally distribute the responsibility for achieving those goals among the activities you have planned.

Measuring the progress toward achieving the goals set:

Measuring the progress toward achieving the goals will allow you to see if the ministry is heading in the right direction. Measure regularly and reward the teachers and children for making progress toward the goals set. Each activity must be flexible enough to adjust if you realize one is not helping to achieve the goals. Also, if one or more activities are not accomplishing what you want, evaluate the teachers' methods. The teachers may lack the proper training to teach the age group they are with.

Choosing and coordinating a variety of activities:

A successful children's ministry should be active. A director should have activities in progress and/or be planning new ones. The activities must be coordinated in an organized and professional manner. Directors will often be given activity suggestions by others. It is the director's responsibility to evaluate the suggested activity within the framework of the overall mission. The decision-making process

works only if it includes consideration of the value of the activity as it relates to the major areas of emphasis in the mission statement. Once a plan is set in motion, much of the legwork can be delegated. The director should not be so tied down with details in every activity that he or she is drained of energy that could be used for creating future ministry plans. Although a director must be involved in coordinating some details, this is not the main job of a director.

Recruiting volunteers:

Recruiting volunteers is an ongoing project. No matter how many volunteers are found at the beginning of a program, there is usually a need for more. This need stems from several causes:

- Some volunteers are not committed to the ministry.
- Some burn out.
- Some move, become sick or become otherwise unable to help.
- Some are asked to serve in other ministries instead.
- New volunteers are necessary because of new projects.
- Selecting coordinators

An effective children's worship service needs a separate coordinator in the nursery, preschool, junior and senior primary sections. The director needs to therefore look at choosing the right leader for these areas:

Qualities of a Nursery Coordinator:	• Friendly. • Eager to help parents of young children appreciate the children's ministry mission. • Interested in evangelism and aware of how the nursery supports this. • Willing to read about child development and to be sure the staff is relating to the children in an age-appropriate manner. • Well organized. • Aware of safety concerns.
Qualities of a Preschool Coordinator:	• All of the above. • Understands that preschoolers need to learn about Jesus in a hands-on way. • Able to motivate the staff members to know that they are a powerful instrument in helping to shape the preschoolers' first impressions of Jesus.
Qualities of an Junior and Senior Coordinator:	• Able to motivate staff. • Strong organizational skills.

	• Appreciates the need children have to learn about Jesus at their own level. • Understands the classroom situation, both its weaknesses and strengths. It is important that the coordinator have some direct experience teaching with the curriculum being used. • Able to motivate others to capture the mission of children's ministry.
Qualities of a Music Coordinator	• Enthusiasm for praising Jesus with music. • Able to motivate others. • Joyful. • Understands the difference between a music program and worship music. (Children's church is not the place for choir practice. It is the place for children to learn how to praise and worship our Lord through music.) • Able to choose age-appropriate worship music for children from nursery through elementary.

Training volunteers:

At the start of a new church year or whenever there is a large influx of new volunteers, the director needs to conduct a series of training meetings. These orientation meetings should include the basic philosophy and vision of the ministry and the details of what is expected of the volunteers. A portion of the time is used in covering the basics of child development and how this knowledge can be used to better minister to the children.

Ongoing training and communication with the coordinators helps determine whether a children's worship service will grow or wane. Coordinators and the director need to be in frequent communication. This is the primary way the director learns of needs such as staffing and budgetary issues. The ongoing communication also sends the message to the coordinators that they are vital to the success of the ministry. It assures them the director is interested in what they are doing. It allows opportunities for the director to give input that steers the staff toward the mission in all the activities.

Planning and implementing children's worship services:

An effective children's weekly worship service is important. The director needs to be involved in the children's worship service: The elements of the weekly service include the following:

- Praise and worship,
- Biblical lesson,
- Play and fellowship,
- Refreshments and
- Prayer.

Although all the elements should be included, it is up to the director to determine the order and time allowed for each.

Encouraging spiritual growth of children and volunteers:

Without spiritual leadership, a ministry becomes simply a series of church-sponsored children's activities. As the director interacts with the volunteers, it is important that the spiritual component of children's ministry is not overlooked. A director always must be praying for the ministry, both privately and publicly. Meetings and training sessions are convenient times to pray for needs within the ministry. Prayers at the beginning and end of each training session send a powerful message about the ministry's spiritual goals. Allowing time for the volunteers to pray for needs in their particular areas is also helpful. Encouraging prayer during children's worship service by both the children and staff is another tool for spiritual growth. It is vital that children become comfortable with prayer at an early age. Prayer during children's church is one way to accomplish this goal.

Seeking creative methods to keep children motivated:

A church ministry can become stale if there is never anything new added to it. The director should ensure that mediocrity does not become characteristic of the ministry. There are many sources available for ideas to help alleviate this problem. Some ideas that can provide variety include:

- Have special children's church activities that are not on the normal schedule. For example, on a special week, serve ice cream before beginning the class. Another idea is to have a special theme, such as creation week. Children could come dressed in an animal costume, and the curriculum could include discussions about creation. An outside walk might be included.
- Once a month, have all the children meet together for singing, prayer and perhaps a Bible video and popcorn.

- Offer midweek clubs that have a variety of activities appealing to many different personalities. For example: sports clubs for boys and girls as well as drama clubs and dance clubs that will assist in church plays and productions.

Beginning programs that include community children and parents:

The church needs to reach out to the community. All ministries within a church have the Christian responsibility to encourage the conversion of non-Christians. A children's ministry can be a powerful tool in bringing new people into contact with Christians who can share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only does a strong children's ministry attract children to its activities, it also attracts parents.

Keeping the pastor informed of the ministry's plans and needs:

It is important that children's ministry work in unity with the pastor and other ministries in the congregation. In order to accomplish this, the pastor must be updated regularly. This is the director's responsibility. The pastor does not have time to regularly hear from each coordinator separately. The pastor can be updated in the following ways:

- Regular written reports.
- Written plans in which the director seeks comments and advice from the pastor.
- Personal meetings with the pastor on a regular basis.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH CURRICULUM

Many good curricula are available for children's worship and classes. When considering a curriculum, it is helpful to keep the following criteria in mind.

- Cost: An expensive curriculum does not necessarily mean it is better or worse than a less-expensive one. A more-expensive curriculum may simply provide more of the lesson supplies.
- Focus: Does the curriculum focus on the grace of God, or on behavior rules? Does it concentrate on scripture memory? Scripture memory is vital however one should not neglect how to *apply* scriptures to life.
- Practicality: Is the curriculum easy to use? Are the directions for the teachers clear? This is important. If teachers have to spend a lot of time on preparation, they will become discouraged, less effective in teaching and more apt to quit.

- Presentation: Are the lessons interesting and attention getting? If the lessons are boring, the children will not respond positively.
- Flexibility: Does the curriculum allow for different sizes of classes? Does it allow for combining grade levels when needed? Are there alternatives if a teacher is uncomfortable with part of the lesson? Flexibility that is built into the curriculum allows more teaching freedom.
- Are many hands-on activities built into the lessons? Children learn best by doing, by participating. They learn least by listening to lectures.

MUSIC

Worship should involve our whole being, including our emotions. Music is an element of worship that can effectively involve our emotions. Adults need music in their worship services; music is a necessary ingredient in children's worship services, too. A music coordinator can select volunteers to work with the children during the children's worship time. One format involves the volunteers moving from one classroom to another, giving each class a 10- to 15-minute singing time. Another format is to bring the children from several classes into one area for a music session. This requires fewer volunteers and works well in smaller congregations.

The two formats can also be combined: the first can be used during most weeks, and the second format once a month. Once a month, all the children can meet together for singing and praying. After about 15 minutes, they can watch a Bible video and make a craft instead of going to the regular classes. This will give variety to the children and to the teachers.

Regardless of the format chosen, here are some guidelines for children's worship music:

- Easy to sing
- Has an uplifting positive beat
- Has opportunities for movement

A wide variety of children's music and recordings is available in Christian bookstores. Even if a congregation does not have a musical volunteer, children can be led to sing along with recordings.

REACHING OUR CHILDREN

How can we reach children on an emotional and spiritual level? Here are a few keys:

- Use eye contact.
- Try to learn names quickly, and be sure to greet each child by name.
- Smile and say hello even before names are memorized.
- Recognize and make a special effort to acknowledge children from your class when you see them elsewhere.
- Allow a few minutes of every session for children to share how the previous week went or other thoughts they might have.
- Be enthusiastic about what you are teaching. Children are responsive to enthusiasm.
- Let the children know that you are turned on about Jesus. Let them know both directly (by saying it) and indirectly (by a positive attitude).
- A hug or a pat on a child's back can send a powerful message that you care.
- Give positive comments concerning each child's efforts — the more specific the better. For example, "I like that picture you drew of Joseph" is good, but it would be even more effective to say, "I like the colors you chose for Joseph's coat." Children know when praise is superficial.
- Telephone children who have been absent. Let them know you missed them.
- Use creative ways and means to put forth the message of Christ

YOUTH MINISTRY

YOUTH MINISTRY IS VITAL:

Firstly, it ensures that the following generations will continue to follow Christ. An example of this can be seen in the Old Testament where the Israelites who had been redeemed from the land of Egypt did not continue to teach their children about the things of the Lord. The result of this was that they began to seek other gods and thus disobeyed God. How do we know that the children of the generation that was redeemed from the land of Egypt did not teach the Law to their children?

- The law was given to this new generation before they entered into the promise land (Deuteronomy 5). This was a repeat of the law that was given in Exodus.
- The generation that entered the land of the promise was circumcised (Joshua 5). Circumcision can only occur once and therefore this reveals that the older generation did not continue to obey the law of circumcision.

In this time and age there is a greater need and urgency for the next generations to be protected and taught the correct ways of the Lord.

Secondly, it is important to reach the young generation of this world, because God has always used young people to be effective in the ministry. By looking at the following examples we can clearly see that God uses young people to reach a generation and to cause change to take place in the lives of the people:

- The call of Samuel
- David - David was anointed as a young man to be the king of Israel.
- Josiah was made king when he was eight years old.
- Jeremiah was called as a young man
- Timothy was called at a young age

The purpose of youth ministry therefore is to work to foster the total person and spiritual growth of each young person. This should be done in all dimensions, spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally through study, prayer, social events, counselling etc. It seeks to draw young people to responsible participation in life, mission and the work of faith in the community. It causes them to take an active role and be relevant within their community.

MINISTRY TO THE YOUTH IS:

- Temporal: We can only reach the youth when they are youth. Once they have matured, this ministry is no longer applicable to them. This ministry is therefore only effective once, when the person is a youth.
- Exclusive: Youth ministry is unique. This is due to the fact that the young people within society are experiencing many changes. It is therefore unlike any other ministry, e.g. children's church, church etc.
- Urgent: The need for the young people of this world to receive the salvation of Jesus Christ is growing every day. The devil has specifically targeted this age group and therefore it is a matter of urgency that the Church intercepts his plans of destruction for their lives.
- Spiritual: Youth ministry is not a matter of fun and games only, but it is to be spiritual as this is real life. Teenagers all over the world are in need of a Saviour. They need a Counsellor, a Comforter, a place of Refuge etc.

UNDERSTANDING THE YOUTH

Social scientists are able to tell us that some 50 % - 60 % of all South Africans are under the age of 19 years old. Our churches should reflect this same percentage. Because many churches today, do not reflect this percentage, it is obvious that there is not a bridge between the older and the younger generation. In order for the church to begin to reach the young people within society, it is important that the youth leaders begin to understand the youth. This can only be done when the youth leader begins to relate to the youth at a place where they are instead of where he is.

Paul wrote the following concerning his ministry to the church:

"And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, to them that are without the law, as without the law....that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, ...I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be a partaker thereof with you."
(1 Corinthians 9:20-24)

To better reach the youth it is important that the youth leader understands the different things that influence them as well as their different needs.

MAJOR INFLUENCES ON TEENS:

- **Family relationships:** As the young person begins to grow older, so they move away from their dependence of their families to independence. This often can cause many problems within the family life as the parents very seldom recognise that their children are growing up and are now able to make decisions for themselves.
- **Peer pressure:** The youth leader does not only work with the individual young people within the group, but they also work with the group. It is therefore essential that the youth leader can obtain the recognition of the whole group.
- **Behavioural orientated.** Young people are influenced by behaviour. Whatever you say must be backed up by actions otherwise they will not react in the way that you require them to.
- **Media:** They are strongly influenced by media - music, movies and fashion. Young people are extremely fashion conscious. The reason being is that it has been emphasised both on T.V. and in the written media, that to follow the latest trend is to be popular and in the crowd.
- **They are physically changing** and this thus leads them to have emotional extremes. The young person upon reaching the age of twelve and onwards begins to experience an awakening of their sexuality. This development within this area of their lives can cause many confusions and temptation as many people are seeking people with whom they can identify their feelings with and can share that which they are going through.
- **Music** is one of the greatest areas in which young people are influenced. If the youth leader can incorporate a dynamic music ministry within their youth group, this can be a drawing card and can thus minister to them.
- **Young people have many dreams and desires.** They want to be achievers and want to be taken seriously in the areas that are important to them.

THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE YOUTH

As the teenager begins to mature, there are certain things which cause them to become uncertain about their lives. These uncertainties are:

- **Their status in society:** As the teenager passes puberty, they begin to feel unsure as to where they fit into society, that is, they are no longer children, but not yet adults. The major reason for this is that their role of being merely a child and thus being dependent on their parents is no longer so. They are feeling independent and a desire to make their own decision. This change in their "status" within their family circle begins to disrupt their way of thinking. They begin to ask questions like, where am I going? Where do I belong?

It is during this stage that the youth leader can help the teenager with these feelings by offering a place in which they can feel comfortable and involved. By encouraging them to become more committed within the group can help them overcome this disorientation.

- **Their values:** A teenager needs to make their own decisions on their belief and values. To encourage the young people to make the right decisions it will be necessary that the youth leader focus some time on important values and what the Bible says concerning them.
- **A conflict of double standards.** The youth leader must become a major influence in the life of the young people that come to the youth meetings. This is because there are many other influences (T.V., magazines, friends ect) that can cause the teenager to be confused and have conflict as to what is the right thing to do.

THE THREE NEEDS OF THE YOUNG PERSON:

- The need for love (John 3:16, Romans 5:8)
- The need to be somebody (John 1:12, Romans 8:16-17). As a youth leader you need to reveal to the young people that they are called of God. This can be done by :
 - ❑ Helping them identify their calling,
 - ❑ Helping them explore it by creating opportunities within the youth group for them e.g. in the music team, follow up team, ushering team etc,
 - ❑ Helping them step into it. Never under estimate their potential.

- The need to feel secure (Romans 6:23, 1 John 5:13)

HOW TO RELATE TO YOUR YOUTH

Relating to the youth is one of the most important aspects for the youth leader. If the leader cannot relate to the young people within his group then he will not be effective and efficient in his work. In what different ways can the leader relate to the young people within their group?

Stay current:

Staying current with the young people within the youth group will help the leader relate to the youth at the place where they are at. One of the main reasons why the youth leader is unable to retain many of the youth that pass through the group is that they are basically out of touch and therefore are not relating to the youth group at their needs. They are unable to find the realities of life and meet the needs and the challenges of the young people in the present day world. If we are going to retain our young people, we need to start

- Building relationships: Talk to the youth group individually. Communicating with the individual young people within the group will enable the leader to understand where the youth are at. For example: what television programmes they are watching, what is happening in their family and in the academic situation. The youth group will be drawn to the leader that takes the time out for them and spends time discussing things that they deem to be important.
- Leading by influence
- Help them determine their ministry and reach them in the needs and their wants. We need to create an environment in which the Holy Spirit is free to help the young people to grow on and at their individualistic rate. Involve young people. When planning the programme and the vision for the youth, involve some young people who you feel are responsible and have the potential to join you on leadership. These young people will know what the rest of the youth are feeling and will have the ear of the youth.
- Listen to events on the radio and on the television. The youth are affected by what they hear and they see. By watching and listening to what is happening the youth leader will be able to relate to their likes and their dislikes.

- Read the magazines that are read by the youth.

Grow spiritually:

Youth are very easily bored with the same events that occur on a weekly basis. It is therefore important that the youth leader continuously has fresh ideas and programmes. Spend time in the presence of the Lord and ask Him for new ideas. When Jesus ministered to the various groups of people during His earthly ministry, He used various methods. The leader should ask God how he should teach specific subjects. The leader should ask God for the central themes in the Bible that will have a practical application for the youth group and then use various methods in which these themes can be brought forth.

Communicate with the youth:

What are some important topics to communicate to the youth group?

- ❑ Marriage and fidelity
- ❑ Ethics
- ❑ Morality
- ❑ Biblical foundations
- ❑ Character and the importance of it in the lives of the believer in order to be an effective witness
- ❑ Relationships

Proverbs 13:17 says "A wicked messenger falls into trouble, but a trustworthy envoy brings healing"

Communication is not merely speaking to the youth, but it involves listening and doing. Actions are thus an important means in which the youth leader will be able to communicate to the youth. For example, if a leader reprimands a youth member for speaking during a service and that same leader speaks in that meeting or another meeting, all the speaking in the world will not alter the impression that you have given them. Though they have heard you they will not listen, as they require your behaviour to match that which you say.

PRACTICAL WAYS IN WHICH THE LEADER CAN HELP THE YOUTH:

- Gain their confidence so that they will be open and honest with you regarding subjects that are private to them and yet are resulting in conflict of emotions.
- Provide an environment in which the young person can feel stable and loved.
- Be accepting regardless of what they do or say to you. Showing unconditional love can often win the toughest individual over to the Lord.
- Help solve problems that the youth may have. Do not give the solution with regards to the issues that they are confronted with, but rather guide them with the Bible.
- Be sensitive, sincere and available. Be ready to give up your free time in order to help those that are within your care. Have a heart of a shepherd.

STARTING A YOUTH MINISTRY

Pray. Fervently seek the Lord to guide the entire process, provide the necessary ideas and thoughts to make it all happen for His glory.

Put together a small core team of students, parents and volunteers who believe in teenagers and have heart for reaching them for Christ. Gather together and pray for wisdom, guidance and direction for this new ministry.

Develop a vision and direction with this core team. Answer some of these questions together: Why are we starting this group? Who specifically do we intend to reach? Where do we want to be this time next year? In five years? What kind of atmosphere do we intend to create for the students relationally and spiritually?

Based on your answers, formulate a strategy for accomplishing these things. How are we going to get to where God's called you to be? For example, if your group is led to specifically target unchurched students at "Smith High School", how are you going to connect with them, addressing both their felt and actual needs? What environment will allow you to communicate most effectively with these people?

Communicate the strategy with the church leadership when it is clear, written down and understood by all those on the core team. Make any revisions as you both deem to be necessary.

Assign roles and responsibilities to each of the team members involved for fulfilling the strategy. Determine launch dates for each aspect of the ministry. It's always better to do a few things well than lots of things mediocre, so give yourself the freedom to launch in only a one or two areas and build from there as the group solidifies.

Share your values and strategy with the church body as a whole sometime before the launch. There may be some people in the congregation who have contradictory opinions and values, but that's fine. Just listen to what they have to say, respect their opinion and let them know that you value their input. There will be many more who are excited and will support you 110%.

Launch the ministry and have fun! Constantly drench yourselves in prayer. Recruit other volunteers as necessary and get them on board with your vision and strategy. Teach them to habitually pray for the youth ministry, too.

After six months or so, reevaluate your values, goals and strategy and make whatever tweaks are necessary. What's been working well that should continue? What isn't serving its purpose and needs to be cut? What are the success stories God's had through your work? How is the ministry progressing in the direction you set and what are the next steps for taking it where it still needs to go?

Implement any necessary changes and proceed accordingly. Remember to pray, pray, and pray harder. The only way this ministry will genuinely succeed is if you're saturated in prayer, always following the Lord's direction and input for His ministry through you.

THE YOUTH MEETINGS

The youth meeting is the time in which the youth leader can be effective in the lives of the young people. A lot of time and prayer must therefore be involved so that the leaders can be ready to minister to the youth group and thus be effective in their ministry.

A foundational truth of the youth group is that it is not what we do that is important, but how we use what we do. Every activity should be based on how the activity can facilitate the growth and the development of the youth.

What are some important aspects of the meeting?

THE WORD

When presenting the Word of God to teenagers, ensure that you are being both creative and relevant to the age group that you are ministering to. Be prepared to share on topics such as sex, peer pressure, drugs, self esteem, being a godly man and women of God, careers and career choices etc. Remember that as a leader your aim is to equip the youth coming to the meetings with the correct truth and information that will help them make wise choices for their future.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Music is one of the most powerful and effective mediums for communicating the Gospel. Everybody loves singing. It is a universal language. It can be used as a message of love and of the power of the redemption of Christ. Teenagers are affected and influenced by music. It is therefore up to the leader to make use of this form of ministry in the most effective way.

Praise and worship should not be:

- Used to kill time before the teaching occurs. Do not entertain the young people. During praise and worship the young people can get very bored if they are not involved with the service. It is therefore important to constantly be aware of any lack of participation on their part.
- Used as an exercise to tire the young people so that they will sit and hear the Word. Praise and worship is not to be used merely as a time in which the leader can tire the youth group out so that they will remain silent during the rest of the meeting.
- Used because there is nothing better to do. Realise that praise and worship is a ministry unto the Lord and must not be used merely to fill in the programme. Killing time is not the objective when doing praise and worship

What is the importance of praise and worship in the meeting?

- Praise and worship places God in His rightful place.
- It brings the worshipper into the presence of the Lord, which results in rest, refreshment, conviction, gifts of the Holy Spirit and revelation.

- Praise and worship is able to defeat the enemy when we are in bondage (2 Chronicles 20:22)
- It brings healing and deliverance (Isaiah 61:3)
- It brings restoration (2 Chronicles 34:12)
- It brings blessing (1 Samuel 2:30)

The Worship Leader:

- Before you lead the praise and worship, look at yourself and your motives.
 - ❑ Firstly, the leader must have a clean heart before the Lord. Before he leads, he needs to have spent time before the presence of God searching his own heart. Before the priests in the Old Testament were able to enter into the Holy of Holies, they need to have cleansed themselves with the blood of the animal that was sacrificed. Before you are able to minister before the Lord, you need to be pure in heart (Ps 24:3-5).
 - ❑ Secondly, the leader must look at his motives for wanting to be involved in that type of ministry. Does he desire to be seen by the young people are thereby receive recognition and prestige, or does he have a desire to lead the young people in worship.
- Have a plan of the choruses that you are going to use. You cannot lead praise and worship with the attitude that God will give you the songs as you go along. You need to have a basic plan of choruses and then be flexible to God so that He can move and have His way.
- Choose songs for the type of meeting that you are having e.g. an outreach, a youth concert, a worship service etc.
- Decide whether the songs that you want to sing will fit the group? Have you chosen hymns and choruses from a century back? Will those songs keep the attention of the young person, or have you chosen songs that are upbeat and effective for this generation.

- Look at the lyrics and the ability of the musicians to play the song. The song that you want to sing should never be so complicated that the musicians will not be able to play them and therefore when you do sing it, it loses its effect because they are out of beat, out of tune etc.
- Establish good communication between yourself and the rest of the music team.
- Answer the following question as you lead: Am I performing or am I leading?

Involving The Young People:

Praise and worship must be fun and the young people must become involved in it. In what ways can praise and worship be made different so that the youth will not get bored:

- Don't only put praise and worship at the beginning of the service. Allow the Holy Spirit to move in the way, which He chooses. A good idea will be to put praise and worship at the end of the meeting.
- Make up dances that will be fun and that will involve all the young people. Often there is a group of young people that do not get involved in the meeting, make it a point to involve these teenagers by finding out what type of dancing they enjoy and then using them as a "leader" in this area.
- Use different types of music. Find out what type of music the majority of the group will enjoy and then use this type of music to reach the group. Types of music can be: jazz, rap, heavy rock music etc.
- Use flags and banners within the praise and worship.
- Have praise and worship at a different venue. A good idea to make things different would be to have a bonfire and then sing around the fire, or to have a Christian concert.
- Encourage all types of praise and worship. Young people are not as conservative as older people, and therefore it is important to encourage them to express themselves in any manner that they desire to. This can be done through dance, shouts of joy, leaping, waving hands ect....

OUTREACH

There are two ways in which the Youth are able to reach their society:

- Firstly, the youth are able to reach their nation through public evangelism. This type of programme is usually organised by the young people for the general public. This type of evangelism can take on various forms: a concert, a theatrical drama, street evangelism, a camp in which the public will be invited, a sporting activity and a crusade.
- Secondly, that of personal evangelism. This occurs when each youth member becomes involved in reaching their immediate surrounding with the Gospel of Christ. Their immediate surroundings are, their family, their school or their friends. This is thus the individual effort of each member to lead other individuals to accept Christ.

Where can personal evangelism be done?

- ❑ In the home (Mark 5:19)
- ❑ On the street and in the market place.
- ❑ Wherever you may go (Luke 24:32 & Acts 8:26-39)

What are the essentials of personal evangelism?

- ❑ A personal knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- ❑ A clean life. God desires clean vessels for His service (2 Tim 2:21)
- ❑ Filled with the Holy Spirit. Your affections and desires are to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is able to guide you as you speak to the various individuals and can thus give you the direction to answer the questions that the person has.
- ❑ Be a person prayer.

The youth leader must be able to generate an excitement and an expectation for the next week's meeting as the youth will only invite their non Christian friends if they know that they will not be embarrassed by the youth leader and his programme.

TYPES OF CREATIVE MINISTRY

Every area of the Church ministry can be made creative by the use of creative music, creative dance and or creative drama. For example, a sermon can be made creative by means of incorporating an illustrated sermon. Street evangelism can catch the attention of an individual by the use of a mime.

- **CREATIVE MUSIC**

Music has a powerful effect on human experience. Music can reach people of all ages on a deeper emotional level like no other medium. It has been recognized that music transcends our understanding and appeals to our intuitive nature. Therefore it is not surprising that music played an important part in the Bible.

THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN THE BIBLE

Music was part of everyday life for the ancient Hebrew people. Music was used for many different things, for example:

- Family merrymaking (Luke 15:25)
- Welcoming heroes and celebrating victories (Exodus 15:20)
- Making war and crowning kings (Judges 7:18-20, 1 Kings 1:39-40, 2 Chronicles 20:28)

Yet apart from these uses, one of the greatest was for the purpose of worship. The Scriptures recognizes music as a means for praise (Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9), a means of expressing joy (James 5:13), thanksgiving (Psalms 92:1-3), sorrow for sin (Isaiah 16:10), a means of prayer (1Corinthians 14:15; Psalms 72:20), and a means of teaching and spiritual communication (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19).

During Bible times, musicians were both professional (1Chronicles 15:22; 25:7; Isaiah 5:11-12; Ezekiel 33:32), as well as non-professional (Psalms 100; 1Kings 1:39-40; 1Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

HOW WORSHIPPED EVOLVED IN THE BIBLE

In the beginning: The first clear act of worship is mentioned in Genesis 4:2-7. The children of Adam and Eve recognized God and therefore brought simple offerings to Him. From this story it is clear that, firstly worship is required by man, and secondly, God alone is to be worship.

During the Patriarch: The patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob etc) worshiped God by building altars to Him and calling on His Name (Genesis 12:8, 13:18). This type of worship required no elaborate priesthood or ritual. They erected stone monuments and pillars (Genesis 28:18-22). These altars would be used as places where sacrifices would be made. The word "altar" literally means "a place of slaughter". There was spontaneity in the worship of the patriarchs.

During the time of Moses: After God's appearance to Moses and the deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptian slavery, God gave Israel a pattern of worship. This pattern was in the form of various rituals. We can read about this form of worship when we study the Tabernacle of Moses (Exodus 25-31, 35-40). It is important to note that this form of worship only permitted the high priest to enter into the presence of the Lord.

During the time of the possession of the land of Canaan: After the occupation of the Promised Land, Israel's exposure to Canaanite worship began to influence their way of worship. They began to adopt some of the pagan rituals that their enemies practiced. This incorporation of other "gods" caused Israel to lapse into idolatry and thus into bondage (See Judges).

During the time of David: When the Ark of the Covenant was returned to the Israelites, David built God a Tent, a place where He could dwell. This dwelling place was so unlike that of the Tabernacle of Moses. It was simple, having no divisions or veil to prohibit some from entering into the glory of God. It was within this tabernacle that the glory of God could be seen by everyone who was present. This is the type of place of worship that God is desiring to rebuild (Acts 15:16). The worship that took place from this time on incorporated musical instruments and singing. David himself made the musical instruments and set up a training system for singers and musicians, training 4000 of them during his lifetime. He divided them in 24 different groups for the purpose of day and night worship, according to the pattern of non-stop worship in heaven (1 Chronicles 23:5).

1 Chronicles 16:4-6 "And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of Jehovah, and to celebrate and to thank and praise Jehovah, the

God of Israel: Asaph the chief, and second to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with psalteries (stringed instruments/lyres) and with harps; and Asaph with cymbals, sounding aloud; and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually, before the ark of the covenant of God."

1 Chronicles 16:37,41-42 "And he left there before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, for Asaph and his brothers, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required;" And he left with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest who were chosen, who were called by name, to give thanks to Jehovah, because His mercy endures forever. And with them were Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those making a sound, and with musical instruments of God ..."

1 Chronicles 25:7-8 "They were well-trained in the sacred music, all of them masters. There were 288 of them. They drew names at random to see who would do what. Nobody, whether young or old, teacher or student, was given preference or advantage over another."

During the time of Solomon: After the death of David, Solomon built the temple of Solomon. This was more elaborate than the Tabernacle of Moses and the Tabernacle of David. This temple was the place of worship until the fall of Jerusalem and the captivity of the people of Israel.

The return from Exile: Zerubbabel and the first return of the people of Israel began to rebuild the temple so that they could once again have a place of worship. This temple was less elaborate than that of Solomon's and the building of it caused a spiritual reformation. This was known as Zerubbabel's temple.

In the New Testament, we a slight change in the "where and how" of worship. We see that the worship services and the forms of worship that are spoken of are less elaborate and thus having no specific form. They were characterized by joy and thanksgiving and at first were conducted in private houses.

CATEGORIES OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

"Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and the harp...." (1 Chronicles 15:28)

Nehemiah 12:27 "During the dedication of the new wall of Jerusalem, the Levites throughout the land were asked to come to Jerusalem to assist in the ceremonies. They were to take part in the joyous occasion with their songs of thanksgiving and with the music of cymbals, lyres, and harps."

The musical instruments used by the Hebrew people in worship were of three groups:

Stringed instruments with vibrating strings to make the sound:

- Harp: This was used in the temple orchestra to "raise sounds of joy" (1 Chronicles 15:16). This musical instrument is mentioned more than any of the other instruments in the Bible.
- Lyre: Other words that are mentioned in the Bible for the "lyre" are the harp, psalter, lute and the viol.

Percussion instruments which were struck to produce a sound:

- The timbrel: This instrument is correctly translated as a timbrel or a tambourine. Its sound is produced by a vibrating membrane. It was carried and beaten by the hand.
- The cymbals: They were used when the people were celebrating and praising God. They joined with trumpets and singers to express joy and thanks to the Lord (1 Chronicles 15:16, 16:5). Asaph, David's chief musician was a cymbal player. These instruments made a loud, distinctive sound when they were banged together.

Wind instruments which made sounds either by passing air over a vibrating reed or by forcing air through the instruments.

- The ram's horn: This was the most popular used trumpet. It can produce only the first two tones of the musical scale and usually not very accurately. Its main function was to make a noise.

- The trumpet: This was used by the priests. They were often used in pairs (Numbers 10:1-10). Originally only two were ordered in the temple, but the number could be increased to 120, depending upon its purpose (2 Chronicles 5:12). They were made of bones, shells or metals - all of which produced a shrill, high sound.
- The pipe or flute: This was a big pipe which had a mouth piece. It was able to produce sharp, penetrating noises somewhat like an oboe. The flute is mentioned in connection with the Temple only in the Book of Psalms (Psalm 150:4).

ASSIGNMENT

Study the different musical instruments that were used in the Bible times and explain their different uses. Provide scriptural references in your essay.

WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH TODAY

Worship is as vital to the Church today as it was during the times of the Bible. Most Christian services begin with a time of praise and worship. Some churches open with one or two songs, while others participate in an hour of worship. 20-30 minutes is typical for most churches. **Worship is our central calling as Christians.** We were created "to the praise of His glory..." (Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14). We were called out of darkness to worship Him (1 Peter 2:9) just as the Israelites were called out of Egypt to worship Him (Exodus 3:12).

The purpose of this time is to lift God up in praise, to express our love, gratitude and thankfulness to Him for all He has done for us. When we focus on the Lord, we remove our eyes from our own problems, and we end up being encouraged in the process.

In worship,

- **God's presence is manifested.** Although He is with us always, there are certain occasions when His presence is distinctly manifested (Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 5:4). The presence of the Lord is directly manifested during worship (2 Chronicles 5:13-14; Psalm 22:3). The presence of the Lord went with the Israelites and gave them rest (Exodus 33:14-16). Today, we can carry the presence of the Lord with us experientially as we live a worshipping lifestyle (Philippians 4:4-5).

- **God ministers to His people.** He speaks to people during worship (Acts 13:2). He convicts of sin and releases forgiveness (Psalms 73:16-17; Isaiah 6:1-6). He heals during worship (I Samuel 16:14-23). He delivers people during worship (2 Chronicles 20:20-24; Isaiah 42:10-13; Acts 16:25-26; 1 Samuel 16:14-23; Psalm 149:6). He releases prophecy during worship (Revelation 19:10; 1 Samuel 10:5-6; 1 Chronicles 25:3; 2 Kings 3:15, 16).

HOW SHOULD WE WORSHIP IN OUR CHURCH SERVICES?

Worship should contain jubilant celebration: David humbled himself without dignity to celebrate the presence of God (2 Sam. 6:13-23). Part of our celebration in praise and worship within the Church should include: singing (Psalms 47:6), shouting (Psalms 47:1), crying out (Isaiah 12:6), tongues (Acts 2:11), laughter (Psalms 126:1-3), musical instruments (Psalms 33:1-3), clapping (Psalms 47:1), lifting hands (Psalms 63:4) and dancing (Psalms 150:4).

Worship should contain humble adoration: Revelations 4:8-10 "Each of these living beings had six wings, and their wings were covered with eyes, inside and out. Day after day and night after night they keep on saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty— the one who always was, who is, and who is still to come." Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne, the one who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one who lives forever and ever. And they lay their crowns before the throne" Adoration is a proper response to the holiness of God. The way that we are able to adore God in our worship is by the lifting of hands (Psalms 134:2), bowing before Him (Philippians 2:10), kneeling (Psalms 95:6), singing in the Spirit (I Cor. 14:15), falling prostrate before Him (Nehemiah 8:6). Humble adoration releases intimacy with God (Psalms 27:4) as Father (Romans 8:15,16) and Friend (John 15:14).

INCORPORATING CREATIVITY INTO OUR WORSHIP

Because of the importance of the incorporation of worship and music in the Church service, we need to ensure that we are being creative and effective in bringing people to a place where they will worship God – in spirit and in truth.

John 4:23-24 "But the time is coming and is already here when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for anyone who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

Here are some ideas to becoming creative in your worship:

- **LOOK FOR CURRENT MUSIC AND NEW SONGS**

Don't become set in your ways as to the song choice in your worship service. Be sure that you are keeping current with the music that is offered. Even the more mature person likes to hear updated music so be sure to not be stuck in a time warp. Be current and include new anointed music into your worship.

- **BE CREATIVE IN THE CHOICE OF MUSIC**

When choosing songs for worship, be sure to choose the right music for each age group or a combination of songs that will appeal to a large audience. For example: When choosing songs for a youth group, the praise and worship leader will be able to use more upbeat rock songs than for a usual church service.

How to choose songs?

Know the message: Because there are so many different types of music and songs for the worship leader to choose from, the criteria for selection should be in the message of the song – in what the song communicates. Our worship should always be Biblically based with the sole purpose of glorifying God. Colossians 3:16 "Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts."

Know the songs the people are familiar with: Don't try to use more than ONE new song per worship session.

Know what makes a song effective in worship: An effective worship song will have a melody that is easily sung by the average believer, with lyrics that are edifying and easy to remember. Avoid songs that have large singing ranges (parts that are too low or too high). People will be uncomfortable singing such songs, or they will stop singing.

- **INCORPORATE DIFFERENT INSTRUMENTS**

There are a variety of musical instruments that can be used in worship that can enhance the song. Include a variety of instruments and arrangements. Once in a while incorporate an orchestra or an electric guitar to change the type of worship service. The type of instruments that you include in the worship will depend on the age group and the purpose of the service. Remember that you cannot have a rock band type praise and worship for a morning Sunday service. But you can have this type of worship when doing a youth service or a service for young adults.

- **ADD MULTI MEDIA**

Multimedia incorporates several elements of communication: text, graphics, animation, sound, and video. When properly used, these elements enhance the total worship experience and give new freedom to the worshipper. While using multimedia in worship may be considered "pioneering" by some and "radical" by others, it is not just a fad. Thousands of churches are already using multimedia to take worship to new levels.

Multimedia in worship is a combination of art, technology, and spirit. Every church has a unique personality. Multimedia, when used properly, complements this personality instead of working against it as technology alone can do. But multimedia should not be confused with contemporary worship. While they often go hand in hand, many churches use multimedia with a traditional style of worship and music.

REMEMBER

Though you want to stay current – the objective of praise and worship is exactly that – it is a time of giving to God.

Yes, we need to stay current and be creative but our end purpose and our focus should always be God. Never compromise your time of worship just to fit in or to stay "modern".

CREATIVE MUSIC IDEAS FOR MINISTRY

- Make the Sunday night Service a Praise Evening (only). Make this service like a music concert and incorporate lights and multi media. Use this service as a tool to bring the unsaved young people to the service.
- Use songs for memory verses for children: Use a tune that the children are familiar with and replace the words with the memory verse that they need to learn. Here are some suggestions of some popular toddler tunes that can be used as the background music for Bible verses for kids: A hunting we will go, Happy and you know it, Jesus loves me, Head Shoulder Knees and Toes. These tunes are only recommendations and are meant as a springboard to spark the creativity of teachers and parents to create meaningful praise and worship tunes to help children learn Bible memory verses.
- Choose a special holiday and have a musical concert that fits with the holiday. For example a Christmas Carol service. Use these concerts as a tool of evangelism.
- Get children in the Children's Church to bring homemade instruments or kitchen utensils from home to make a joyful noise to God. Show them that their worship does not require that they have musical instruments.
- Have a talent evening for the youth where they are able to worship God in their own manner

- **CREATIVE DANCE**

Psalm 150:4 "Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with stringed instruments and flutes!"

Dance and music go together. To express ourselves in movement is a very natural human instinct and it has always been thus. In human social life, dance has always played a huge part.

WHAT IS DANCE?

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines dancing as "to move or seem to move up and down or about in a quick or lively manner." Dance is a spontaneous result of a heart that is full of joy, love, passion, desire or even pain. Dance is a manifestation of what is happening in our hearts towards God. For example, a child joyfully jumping around, moving in a lively and spirited manner when receiving a present, is dancing. This is similar to David's dancing when bringing the ark into Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:29)

THE FORMS OF DANCE IN BIBLE TIMES

In the Old Testament, when people danced it was frequently a sign of celebration. For example, Miriam and her maidens danced in celebration at God's overthrow of the Egyptian army. Frequently dance was a sign of humility and complete spiritual surrender. It was evidence that the person wasn't holding anything back from God, surrendering even their bodies to be used in worship. In the Old Testament dance was used in:

- Processions: These were conducted as processional marches, which included music and dance.
- Festival dances: These were cultural and worshipful dances done at festivals
- Celebratory dance: Dances of rejoicing probably included circle dances and group dances.
- Dance for weddings: In Israel, there was no seam between society and faith; a celebration dance at a wedding was a celebration of something given by God.
- Dance of victory: Victory has always led to street dances.

- Dance of warfare: These were dances done by those going into a battle.
- Dance or the greeting of the Victor: This was done by the closest female relative to the leader in Israel. This was done to greet the victor after winning a battle. We recall that Saul and David were greeted by celebratory singing by those 'making merry.' See Judges 11 and 1 Samuel 18:6-7.

MINSTERS OF DANCE

- **Miriam**

Miriam was the first 'dance minister' the Bible mentions. She was a prophet and she was a leader. She did "the Dance of the Greeting of the Victor!" Exodus 15:20, "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, 'Sing ye to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously: the horse and rider he has thrown into the sea'". The Israelites were in a peak time of celebration, for they had seen their God deliver them from the Egyptians. Dance was a central part of that celebration. Miriam used a prop in her dance, a tambourine. As dancers there are things that we can dance with to expand our expression such as flags, tambourines, swords, sticks, or any other creative tool, things which will help to communicate what is in the heart of the dancer.

- **David**

David was a mighty man, both in battle and in worship. His heart beat for the purpose of worshipping and loving God. Nothing was too extravagant for David when he worshipped. His sacrifices were lavish, his songs (Psalms) intense and excruciatingly truthful, his dance utterly energetic and abandoned. David used every form of worship that he could employ in order to express his deep love for God. In 2 Samuel 6, as the Ark of the Covenant was brought into Jerusalem, there was a celebration, "And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of instruments made of fir, wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels and on cornets, and on cymbals," (vs. 5). This was a time of lavishly expressed worship. Every six paces there was a sacrifice. Evidently, much preparation went into this worship. "And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod..." (vs14).

THE HEBREW WORDS USED FOR DANCE

By examining the meaning of the Hebrew words used in the Old Testament, we can often arrive at a better understanding of what the people of those times experienced. In the case of words referring to dance, the student of scripture will be surprised to see: first, how often dance was part of Israelite celebration and, secondly, the variety of dance they employed. Dance, then as now, involved a much wider variety of movement and style than simply jumping up and down. The following meanings come from the Strong's Concordance:

Gul: There are some scriptures that use the word "rejoice" (gul) that have the meaning - to spin around under the influence of any violent emotion, usually rejoice or fear, be glad, joy, to go around in a circle.

- Psalm 9:14, "I will rejoice in Your salvation."
- Psalm 13:5 "But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation."
- Psalm 16:9 "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; my flesh also will rest in hope."

Macholah: In Exodus 15:20, when Miriam led the women out, the word for dance is "macholah". This means she led a company dance involving singing. It is the same meaning for the word dance when the women came out to greet David after killing the Philistine singing, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," (1 Samuel 18:6). Jeremiah 31:4, "And I will build you, and you will be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel! You shall again be adorned with your tambourines. And you shall go forth in the dances of those who rejoice." This too speaks of a dance company: a group of dancers who are set apart for the purpose of ministry in dance.

Karar: When David danced before the Lord, the word used is "karar" which means "to dance, whirl, or move in a circle, to exult, leap run". This dance denotes something very vibrant and expressive, full of joy and emotion.

Rekad: This means to stomp, to spring out wildly for joy, dance, leap, jump or skip.

- Psalm 29:6 "He makes Lebanon's mountains skip like a calf and Mount Hermon to leap like a young bull."

- 1 Chronicles 15:29 "But as the Ark of the Lord's covenant entered the City of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked down from her window. When she saw King David dancing and leaping for joy, she was filled with contempt for him."

Dalag: This means to spring or leap.

- 2 Samuel 22:30 "In your strength I can crush an army; with my God I can scale any wall."
- Isaiah 35:6 "The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will shout and sing! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the desert."

Chagag: This means to move around in a circle, specifically march in a sacred procession, to observe a festival, to celebrate, idea of leaping, dancing a sacred dance, to reel to and fro.

- Leviticus 23:41 "You must observe this seven-day festival to the Lord every year. This is a permanent law for you, and it must be kept by all future generations."
- Psalm 42:4 "My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks— it was the sound of a great celebration!"
- 1 Samuel 30:16 "So the Egyptian led them to the Amalekite encampment. When David and his men arrived, the Amalekites were spread out across the fields, eating and drinking and dancing with joy because of the vast amount of plunder they had taken from the Philistines and the land of Judah."

Hiliykah: This means a walking procession or march, a caravan or company. Psalm 68:24-25 "Your procession has come into view, O God— the procession of my God and King as he goes into the sanctuary. Singers are in front, musicians are behind; with them are young women playing tambourines."

Shuwr: This means to sing as strolling along, minstrel, to turn, travel, strolling along with a song. Psalm 100:2 "Worship the Lord with gladness. Come before him, singing with joy."

Halal: This means to make a show, to be clamorously foolish, to boast, to celebrate. Psalm 149:3 "Praise his name with dancing, accompanied by tambourine and harp."

THE GREEK WORDS USED FOR DANCE

Agalliao: This means to jump for joy, be exceedingly glad for joy, very much leaping. Luke 1:14 "You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice with you at his birth," Luke 1:47 "How I rejoice in God my Savior!"

Hallomai: This means to spring forth, to leap up. Acts 3:8 "He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them." Acts 14:10 "So Paul called to him in a loud voice, "Stand up!" And the man jumped to his feet and started walking."

Skirtao: This means to jump, sympathetically, to move leap for joy. Luke 6:23 "When that happens, rejoice! Yes, leap for joy! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were also treated that way by your ancestors."

ISN'T DANCING SINFUL?

As we have already seen in our study of "dance" in the Bible that dancing was used and was involved in an expression of joy in worship to God (Psalms 150:4) as well as a means to rejoice for the blessings of God. This type of dancing was not sin, but it was rather an act of worship. However there is also another type of dance that is mentioned in the Bible, the type of dance that was designed to stimulate the lust of the flesh (Exodus 32). Herodias' daughter performed a sensual dance that was probably more of Roman origin and influence (Matthew 14: 6).

Therefore is dancing sin?

Yes	No
Exodus 32:19-21, 31 "And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and <i>the dancing</i>: and Moses' anger waxed hot.... And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? Matthew 14:6-8 "But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias <i>danced</i> before them, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger." Galatians 5:19-21 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, <i>lasciviousness</i>, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, <i>strife</i>, seditions, heresies, <i>Envyings</i>, murders, drunkenness, <i>revellings</i>, and <i>such like</i>: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.... "	Exodus 15:20-21 "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with <i>dances</i>. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Judges 11:34 "And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with <i>dances</i>. 2 Samuel 6:14 "And David <i>danced</i> before the LORD with all his might. Psalms 30:10-12 "Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, be thou my helper. Thou hast turned for me my mourning into <i>dancing</i>:... Psalms 149:3 "Let them praise his name in the dance. Psalms 150:4 "Praise him with the timbrel and <i>dance</i>.

Conclusion: No, dancing itself is not sin, but rather it is the heart and the motivation of the people dancing.

Solomon said, "There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven --- a time to give birth and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot what is planted. A time to kill and a time to heal; a time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-4).

BIBLE PRINCIPLES FOR DANCING:

There are four principles we should apply to determine whether a particular dance is sinful.

- We are to **glorify God in our bodies, and exalt Christ** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Philippians 1:20). If a dance inappropriately displays our bodies, or includes movements unbecoming a Christian, it brings shame upon God. We can't involve ourselves with such dances.
- We are to do things that are **honorable and respectable in the sight of all men** (Romans 12:17; Philippians 4:8), obeying God in everything we do (Acts 4:19; 5:29). We must determine whether dancing in a particular fashion is honorable in our day and age. For example: If our community deems a particular dance inappropriate, we shouldn't involve ourselves in the dance.
- We **shouldn't engage in lustful and licentious (sensual) behaviors** (Romans 6:12; 1 John 2:16; 2 Corinthians 12:20-21; Jude 1:4). "Lust" is a strong desire to sin. "Licentious" is unbridled lust --- excess, absence of restraint, indecency, and wantonness. Dancing in a lustful or licentious fashion, as was the case with Herodias' daughter, is sinful.
- We **shouldn't engage in questionable behaviors** (Romans 14:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). If there is any question about participating in the dance, we should avoid it.

USES OF DANCE WITHIN THE CHURCH TODAY

DANCE AS PRAISE

The creative dance can be used in an expression of praise and worship. During this time, individuals can express themselves to God in the manner that they feel comfortable. Some people may dance whilst others will merely clap. This is completely up to each individual. Remember that our main aim in praise and worship is to glorify God through our expression and movement. The dancers of this type of dance do not have to be part of the dance ministry but can be part of the congregation.

DANCE AS A PERFORMING ART – EVANGELISM TOOL

The dancers that will be involved in the dance ministry are those who have some dance experience and thus are gifted and talented in this area. This is a tool of evangelism and ministry whereby these individuals can use their gifting and talents to glorify God as well as minister to people.

Some creative ideas where this type of dancing can be used will be:

- In plays and concerts that are held. For example during an Easter production or a Christmas play.
- In street evangelism as a tool to catch the attention of those who are passing by. Here dances can dance to songs that are strongly evangelical and which carry the Gospel message.
- In talent competitions in which the youth can show case their talents. This can also be used as a means to draw those youth who are not saved to come and watch. By using Christian music in dance these teens can be drawn to come back for a future meeting where the Gospel will be preached.
- As ice breakers or items in the Church or specific celebration meetings

WHY SHOULD EVERY CHURCH HAVE A DANCE MINISTRY?

- Because every person loves to watch some form of dancing. Dancing is an integral part of almost every human civilization and culture because this is a natural way to express different aspects of our humanity.
- Because dancing is enjoyable and is a useful tool for ministry. Dancing is an art, a creative act that produces extraordinary beauty. The beauty of dance gives us a glimpse of God's own beauty in his creation.
- Because dancing is worshipful. Scripture is replete with examples of God's people dancing in order to worship God, and many

STEPS TO BEGINNING A DANCE MINISTRY

- Step 1: Pray. Pray for God to bless the dance ministry so that through the ministry of dance, people will be encouraged and will come to a personal knowledge of the Saviour.
- Step 2: Begin dreaming about what the dance ministry could be, writing down whatever comes to mind. Have a dream and a vision for where you would like to see the dance ministry go.
- Step 3: Formulate a plan. Determine the mission, vision, and goals for the ministry. Put a timeline to it. Think about the look and function of the group. Decide on the ability level. Decide if you will hold auditions or allow anyone to participate. Decide when and where you will meet. Determine how often you would like to dance. Determine who will choreograph. Determine your budget for costumes, etc. When formulating a plan it is important to know the culture of your church and community.
- Step 4: Meet with the pastor and/or worship director in your church. Bring your plan with you and discuss your dream for the dance ministry within the Church.
- Step 5: Create interest. Once you have received the approval from your pastor, begin to create interest to join in the ministry. This can be through word-of-mouth, by holding an informational meeting, having a dance workshop or by holding auditions.
- Step 6: Implement the plan. Start dancing with the team, no matter the size. Your heart is what matters in this, not how many people are involved.

- Step 7: Prepare a dance for a worship item, an outreach program or a play. Practice and then present it to the Church.

WAYS TO ENHANCE CREATIVE DANCE MINISTRY

COSTUMES

Dance in worship is a powerful ministry that communicates in a visual way the message of the Gospel. Costumes used in dance can enhance the message of the dance and should definitely not detract from it.

Three important principles to remember about costume:

- The design and colours of the costume must be right for the dance
- The costumes must allow freedom of movement
- The costumes must be modest. This is extremely important so ensure that outfits are not too tight fitting, that necklines are not low especially when bending over, length of costumes are not too short. Leotards can be used underneath costumes especially if outfits are sheer.

Choosing fabric:

- Make sure that the fabric that you will be using to make the costumes is washable crease resistant fabrics that are easy to care for
- Plain coloured fabrics in "common" colours are usually repeatable if you want to add to the set of costumes later.
- Be careful with sheer fabrics - only use with a completely opaque lining underneath bodice and skirt

PROPS:

In Bible times, tambourines, flags and banners were often used whilst dancing (Exodus 15:20, Judges 11:34, Psalm 68:25, 149:3, 150:4). Banners and flags add dramatic impact to a dance performance.

ASSIGNMENT

You have been asked to start a dance ministry in your church. Format a plan with how you would begin this ministry. Things that you would need to consider would be:

- Age group
- Type of dance
- Platform where this dance would be used
- Music for the dance
- How you would advertise the dance ministry
- Where, when and how you would practice for this ministry

- **CREATIVE DRAMA**

The two most important ministries to emerge in recent years are Christian Contemporary Music and Christian Drama. While some churches have seen shrinking membership, others using these powerful ministries have experienced tremendous growth. Music and drama are powerful gifts that God, through His grace, has given us to not only worship and praise Him but to reach out to the unchurched. Through the use of Christian drama, whether it be musicals, church plays, sketches, skits or any other form of dramatic art, the message of redemption can be wonderfully experienced in a new, relevant and modern way.

DRAMA IN THE BIBLE

The use of drama as a communication tool in the Christian faith is not new. The tradition of drama goes all the way back to Biblical times.

APOSTLE PAUL'S POLICY OF EVANGELISM:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 "This means I am not bound to obey people just because they pay me, yet I have become a servant of everyone so that I can bring them to Christ. When I am with the Jews, I become one of them so that I can bring them to Christ. When I am with those who follow the Jewish laws, I do the same, even though I am not subject to the law, so that I can bring them to Christ. When I am with the Gentiles who do not have the Jewish law, I fit in with them as much as I can. In this way, I gain their confidence and bring them to Christ. But I do not discard the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. When I am with those who are oppressed, I share their oppression so that I might bring them to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone so that I might bring them to Christ. I do all this to spread the Good News, and in doing so I enjoy its blessings."

The above passage shows clearly that Apostle Paul "became as" (acted as) what he was not, to win those people he was imitating. He "became as" under the law whereas he was not. He acted as a Greek, whereas he was not.

PROPHET ELIJAH

1 Kings 18:31-35 "And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water."

Elijah used drama when on Mount Carmel. It was not necessary to call for all those extra buckets of water or to taunt the prophets of Baal about the vacation patterns of their gods. But all of this added to the climactic moment when Elijah drove home the point of the exclusive power of the God of the Bible. Dramatic demonstrations on the part of the prophets were a basic format of instruction during those days.

PROPHET EZEKIEL:

To be God's sign to the people, Ezekiel underwent the loss of all personal interests. He stood ready to do anything God asked of him in order to demonstrate the plan of God for His people, and God asked some extraordinary things of him. He shut himself up in his house (3:24). He was placed in weird positions (4:4-8). He ate his food by weight (4:10). He sacrificed personal appearance (5:1), smote with hand or struck with foot (6:11), and even moved personal and domestic goods out of his house to show the removal of Judah into captivity (12:2-7).

The story of Ezekiel acting a prophetic revelation drama is contained in the scriptures. He was actually acting with costumes and props while the people were watching live. "So I did as I was commanded. During the day I brought out my things packed for exile... I took my belongings out at dusk, carrying them on my shoulders while they watched" (Ezekiel 12:7). This is a vivid example of drama in the Bible. There was an actor (Ezekiel) and there was the audience (Israelites) watching. He was to pack his "belongings for exile", 'go from one place to another place', "go out like those who go into exile", he was to "dig through the wall and take (his) belongings out through it", put them on his shoulder and carry them out at dusk. He was to do all these while the people watched. And he did as he was directed in the presence of the audience.

Prophet Ezekiel did not talk at all, he only acted the word and what he had acted was considered a message from God: "Tell them what I, the sovereign Lord, am saying to them. This message is for the prince ruling in Jerusalem and for all the people who live there " (Ezekiel 12:10).

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

Jesus employed a form of drama in His use of parables. He told stories and painted mental pictures to teach spiritual truths. He never taught without using parables (Matthew 13:34). Often His use of parables was specific and pointed. At Simon's house, for example, a woman came in and anointed Jesus with expensive perfume and wept at His feet. Simon the Pharisee was unhappy that Jesus allowed her to do this. Jesus then told a parable about forgiveness and used the woman's dramatic actions to make His point to Simon (Luke 7:36-50).

AGABUS

Even Paul was shown something by the use of a kind of drama. On his way to Jerusalem the Holy Spirit moved a prophet named Agabus to meet Paul. Agabus took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet in a dramatic depiction of what awaited Paul in Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-11)

WHY IS DRAMA EFFECTIVE?

It arrests people's attention: Christian drama is not an end in itself but, rather, a valuable tool which has been used throughout church history to tell the greatest story ever told. We are 'hard-wired' for 'story'. The gift to create or understand an imaginary narrative, displays itself in children age two or younger, even when they can barely talk.

It is a tool for evangelism: The impact Christian drama makes on a church is basically two-fold: Drama touches those both inside and outside the church. The simple message of a powerful drama anointed by the Holy Spirit can touch lives with the gospel. Usually an outsider will be much more willing to visit a church to view a dramatic presentation than simply to hear a sermon and may even justify attendance in order to see a friend or relative perform. This has become one of our most fruitful forms of evangelism. Every dramatic presentation should include an invitation to the unsaved to respond to Jesus Christ. Why drama? Because drama is not just entertainment—drama is evangelism.

It is a different mode of teaching: The primary reason for drama is to consider the fact that not all people learn the same way, and not all people think the same way, and not all people need the same thing. But we know that Jesus always spoke in parables, to all groups high and low, and we know that God always used drama throughout the Bible, most powerfully in the Sanctuary service in the wilderness, and the whole ceremonial laws surrounding animal sacrifices (there were no merits in animal sacrifices, no sin was ever forgiven through animal sacrifices, but these rituals pointed forward to the TRUE sacrifice, Jesus Christ, and the rituals powerfully taught the sinner how devastating was their sin, necessitating the death of an innocent Lamb, necessitating the death of an innocent Savior).

We can only understand and remember abstract truth when it has 'visible clothes'. Good use of language in communication always 'paints a picture'. We remember far more of what we take in through our eyes and ears together.

PURPOSE OF DRAMA

The primary function of the drama ministry is to grow the church by bring entertainment that teaches and illustrates the message of the Gospel. Youth pastors, finding it increasingly difficult to teach God's word to younger children and teenagers with short attention spans, are turning to forms of entertainment or drama to engage their youth. Each year, a church drama team will perform the story of Christmas and the birth of Jesus, as well as a rendition of Easter and the Resurrection of Christ. During the rest of the year, drama teams may act out other bible stories, sing about Christ or offer plays dealing with struggles and concerns involving Christians. These plays present a moral issue and are resolved with the character becoming closer to Christ. Bible dramas should illustrate or illuminate a Bible verse, or doctrine, or message. The drama is tailored to the Bible, not the other way around. The Bible stays pure, itself, unchanged, whereas the drama is fluid in that it can bend and move to suit its purpose.

HOW CAN DRAMA ADD VALUE TO YOUR CHURCH PROGRAM

Drama is entertaining and provides a platform for the use of gifts: Churches traditionally stage events for entertainment or fellowship value, such as Christmas concerts or Easter play. The blessing is two-fold: (1) The event demonstrates the power of the celebration arts to an appreciative audience; and (2) Performers, directors, writers, designers, administrators, etc., have the opportunity to contribute their artistic talents for the glory of God

Community: A drama ministry can be a community-building experience, where individuals regularly support one another with prayer, encouragement, and companionship.

Connectivity: The small-group aspect of a drama ministry -- together with the universal language of theater -- can serve as a bridge to newcomers or those looking for a place to belong.

Strategic Direction: Do you know your church's Top 5 strategic initiatives? A drama ministry can be a powerful player in supporting and advancing the overall goals of your church. A strategically-oriented ministry always connects back to the strategic objectives, even for a seemingly-random sketch.

Outreach: Drama can be a vehicle for outreach beyond the church walls, through special events, collaborations with other arts groups, or touring

Public relations: Drama can accelerate word-of-mouth in both the congregation and community. It can generate press results and give a church a contemporary feel in ways that traditional service opportunities might not

HOW TO START A DRAMA MINISTRY IN YOUR CHURCH?

WHERE TO BEGIN?

Discuss it with leadership: It's important to have church leadership behind you. The pastor may offer valuable insight and suggestions to get your team off to a good start. With your pastor's support, you will probably secure a place to meet and rehearse. The pastor may help you in recruiting, knowing of other people in the congregation with similar interests. If you're serious about communicating through drama, be serious about communicating with those that can help make it happen.

To get a favorable response from who has the appropriate authority in your church, put together a businesslike presentation that presents points of interest about the proposed drama team and its potential benefit to the congregation. Churches are in the business of saving souls and spreading the gospel, so this is one of the key functions of the team for you to mention when asking for permission

Create a plan of action: Create an exciting plan of action that will attract potential team members.

Have a purpose: Decide on what the purpose of your drama ministry is. The priority of this should be to bring glory to God. Goals are important as it creates direction and focus to your team. Plan to avoid pitfalls by charting a clear course early.

Design policies and procedures for being a part of the drama ministry: Some aspects you should consider:

- How often will the drama team meet? (weekly, bi-weekly, etc.)
- How long will the rehearsals be?
- Will the team meet when there's no rehearsal material?
- How often will the drama team perform?
- What kind of venue would the team like to perform in? (worship service, dinner theatre, etc.)
- How will success be measured?
- What are the criteria for acting and being part of the ministry? What qualifications if any are required?
- Where you will get material for the drama ministry from?
- Who will be responsible for costumes, set development and make-up?

RECRUIT TALENT:

After you have gained proper permission to form the drama team, immediately begin recruiting interested members of the congregation. Via church announcements, let the congregation know a drama team will be starting; see how much interest the members exhibit. This will also help you determine if you will be able to physically perform the duties that come with putting on a production. Place announcements on the church bulletin board as well. Go to particular groups within the Church and encourage their active involvement in this ministry. You will find that you will have more success in recruitment when you speak to the youth and children.

BEGIN TO DEVELOP YOUR MINISTRY TEAM:

The most important step in growing your drama ministry is to accurately identifying the areas in which each team member (or the team as a whole) needs to grow. Each one is vital to the ongoing health of your ministry and therefore will need to grow in the following areas:

- **Experience and skill:** If your team lacks relevant experience, consider ways to build their confidence by providing classes that will help them gain experience and confidence of acting in front of people. Create a program that you will be able to offer to new drama members.
- **Spiritual Maturity:** Have a time of devotions and pray before you begin your practice time.

PRAY:

Every time you get together for practice, before you sit down to read the script or practice, pray. Ask God to empower the ministry team so that everyone involved will be bold in speaking His word and will be filled with the Holy Spirit. Ask God to help you. Ask God to give you the right motives. COMMIT THE DRAMA TO GOD. Psalm 37:5 "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

PLAN FOR THE FIRST DRAMA:

When you have a good idea of how many members the drama team will have, begin organizing your efforts in earnest. This means, either writing original sketches (they can be based on the pastor's sermons), choosing from appropriate material that has already been published or simply bringing the scriptures to life. Rehearsals should be held at a time agreed upon by the group, and at least once a week.

WAYS TO USE CREATIVE DRAMA IN CHURCH MINISTRY

CONCERTS AND PLAYS

Special seasons are a good time to incorporate drama into worship because people are more open to these things during Easter and Christmas.

Choose the right dramas:

There are several principles to remember when you are choosing your drama material. These principles are seen in 2 Samuel 12:

- **Principle 1: Effective dramas explore and expose, they do not explain.**

Nathan's dramatic story brought up questions; it did not offer answers. Good dramas explore difficult questions and get people thinking about the different sides of sensitive issues. Interesting characters are posed with intriguing choices that deliver real consequences. If the audience can see the end coming, or the writer adds a mini-sermon at the end of the sketch, it loses its effectiveness.

- **Principle 2: Effective dramas are honest.**

When scripts are written to make a point, they usually become trite, formulaic, didactic, and ineffective. However, when their goal is to tell the truth about life they are more likely to impact the listeners. That means we avoid clichéd endings, we include flawed rather than idealistic characters, and we don't shy away from the real gritty issues. Our goal in ministry should be to speak the truth in a way that moves people to the place where they can encounter God.

- **Principle 3: Effective dramas teach through tension.**

In real life, we tend to avoid tension and conflict, but when it comes to storytelling, conflict is essential! The more conflict a novel, movie, drama or story has, the more we're engaged in it. Through Nathan's story of selfishness and unrepentance, David was able to see his own sin exposed. In practice, this means that if you want to teach about how important it is to forgive others, don't include a drama about the benefits of forgiveness, but rather about the consequences of unforgiveness. There's no struggle just telling people how they're supposed to act. Conflict is the key. So if you want to teach what true love looks like, your drama would emphasize either the struggle of loving someone we don't like, or the consequences of being bitter and unloving. The more tension you include, the more attention you'll get.

- **Principle 4: Effective dramas resonate with the target audience.**

Good dramas present characters and situations with which the audience can identify. It was no mistake that Nathan told David about an injustice done to a sheep. He knew David's background as a shepherd. He carefully chose a situation that his audience could identify with. The most effective contemporary dramas are the ones with vulnerable people just like us who struggle with and question and try to overcome problems just like ours.

Remember:

- Choosing the right play for your church, is the first, most important decision in putting on a successful show. You need to make sure you select plays that your audiences will enjoy.
- Choose a play that has the right message. All drama ministry is to glorify God and is thus a tool by which people can be saved. Choose a play that will have the Gospel message in it in an effective way that will draw the attention of the people.
- Choose a play that your audience will enjoy. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. Ask yourself, who is going to be coming to see the play? If your audience will be mainly teenagers, you should look for a show that will speak to them, in their language, and be about something that is relevant to their lives and experiences. If your audience will be mostly parents and older folks, think about what their tastes and comfort level might be.
- Choose a play by considering the pool of talent that you will have on hand to work with. If your actors are not skilled or well experienced, you perhaps should not choose a play that has main characters but rather one where there are a number of characters and scenes.
- Choose a play that will fit into the budget that you have been given. Plays are expensive so you will need to consider whether the play is going to be affordable. How many costumes will be needed? How many sets are required? Can these sets be hired or made? What will the costing of the play be?

ASSIGNMENT

The Children's Church ministry has approached you and asked you to help them with an outreach that they will be having with the orphanages and local schools in the area. You therefore need to source an Easter play that you will be presenting at this outreach. Using the internet find a play you feel would be appropriate for this age group.

Keep in mind the following:

- How long the play will be
- Who would be doing the acting? How much experience would they have?
- Will there be music to keep the attention of the children? Will the music ministry be joining in this outreach? Will it be mainly from the Children's Church choir?
- Is the message on the right level to reach the children?
- How much information about the Cross and Crucifixion will you be giving?
- What sets and props would you need?

MIMING

Miming is another creative drama ministry that can be used within the church. A mime is a form of acting however it is without words. Mime is a non-verbal art that uses body movement in order to communicate what words cannot. Mime ministry involves drastic movements, facial expressions, and hand signs to depict God's Word, God's will, life's struggles and accomplishments. The responsibility of every mime is to bring the word of God to life with great intensity and divine excellence!

LEARNING HOW TO MIME

- The first step towards being a mime would be to understand the basic fact that a mime does not use his mouth for expression. Instead, it's the body and the facial expression that does the talking.
- Using a mirror, try different postures and expression. Decide on which movements convey successfully emotions, feelings, attitudes and reactions.
- Begin with the basic mime action that of manipulating a rope, ball or even wall. Walking in place, climbing imaginary ladders and leaning would also be beneficial in learning the art of miming.
- Now, choose a particular action and master it. For instance, mime opening a door. For this, you need to first reach out for the door, hold the knob, turn it and then push the door open. Open a door, a couple of times in reality, to know the exact posture in which your body bends.
- Thereafter, mime the whole action recreating every move but this time without the door.
- Repeat the action, a number of times, until you have attained perfection.
- Once you have mastered the art on physical grounds, i.e. performing the actions on imaginary basis, go a step further to make mime interesting. For this, take charge of the facial expressions. Emotions give substance to the art of miming. Choose a situation that demand emotions as well. Enact this in front of the mirror and watch out what your face and body does to show emotions. From a look of surprise to a feeling of disgust to strong emotional outbursts, mime each type of emotion until you become perfect in each sphere. Now that you have mastered the art through both body and facial

expression individually, combine the two to form a story. Reflect the story using your body and expressions.

Tips

- Remember, practice makes perfect. So, practice hard to learn the art of miming.
- Pray!
- Exaggeration holds the key for natural emotional display, when it comes to miming.
- Start enacting small short stories that demand less emotional display. For example: Creation etc.
- Make good use of make-up: Start with a white base and then add some white powder. Use specific colours like red or black (eg. for eyebrows, outlining eyes, lips etc).

PUPPET SHOWS

Puppet ministry refers to a ministry which uses puppetry to visualise themes, songs, stories or issues relevant to their audience. Many churches and children's ministries use puppets to help communicate messages and educate children. The entertainment provided by puppets helps to keep the children engaged and allows them to remember the lessons that they are taught through the puppet performances.

The reason why puppets are effective is because they can easily appeal to younger members of the groups, whether they be part of the performance, or part of the audience. Adults too can enjoy the show, while also encouraging the participation of the younger members. The entertainment provided by puppets helps to keep the children engaged and allows them to remember the lessons that they are taught through the puppet performances.

HOW TO START A PUPPET MINISTRY:

Start in prayer.

Decide on the puppets you will use? What kinds of puppets are best to use? Consider the size of your audience. Will you be ministering to 5 or 5000? Will you be behind a stage, out in front, or storytelling to a small group? There are a variety of types of puppets:

- **Full Body Puppets:** Full body puppets are puppets that have the entire body including legs and feet. These can be used behind the stage and in front of the stage.
- **Full/Half Body:** These puppets have a full body with removable legs. It gives you options.
- **Hand Puppet:** Hand puppets can be operated with just one hand. They are great for pretend play and storytelling with books. They are perfect for Sunday school teachers sitting at the table with the children.

One of the great things about puppet ministries is that you can make your own puppets if you're on a tight budget. If you use a little bit of creativity, you can make puppets from just about anything (socks, gloves, mops and brooms, and plenty of other things you can easily find around the house).

Decide on how many puppets you would need? If you are starting with a team, it would be nice to have at least one puppet for each puppeteer. However, it is not always financially feasible, necessary, or wise to buy everything at once. Keep in mind that although you may have many puppeteers, that only a certain number of them can be used at a time. This depends on your stage, ministry, and the scripts you are using.

Choose your puppeteers: Using children and teens in this ministry is a great way to involve them in a ministry that is exciting and dramatic. It also creates accountability and helps to build personal relationships.

Choose a script: You can either use a script that has already been written or you can write your own. Once you have found some scripts and skits to choose from, pick one to be used for your first performance. Choose one that you think will be a good fit for what you are trying to accomplish from your ministry or lesson.

Practice: Practice the skit before the performance. A more basic skit will allow for less practice time whilst a more complicated one will require more time in practice.

Create a Stage: In order to perform, you'll need some type of stage. Again, this is something that you can buy if the money is available, or you can make one yourself to save a lot of money. You can use just about anything you can find to stand behind (a table that you have placed on its side).

WAYS TO INCORPORATE PUPPETRY

Here's a list of ways to incorporate puppetry into you service:

- Have a puppet skit
- Have a puppet song
- Have live interaction between the puppet and a front person
- Have the puppet tell the story
- Have the puppet review the scripture verse
- Have the puppet present the object lesson
- Have the puppet welcome visitors
- Have a puppet read the review questions for the game
- Have the puppet ask discussion questions.
- Have the puppet sing a silly birthday greeting.

ASSIGNMENT

Design and make a basic puppet that you would be able to use when teaching to the preschoolers in your children's church.

CLOWNING

Proverbs 17:22 "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

Clowns can justify their actions by quoting 1 Corinthians 4:10, "We are fools for Christ," and 2 Corinthians 11:1, "I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness."

Foolishness may not always be what it seems. God's wisdom may not always seem rational or wise to us. 1 Corinthians 1:25 says, "The foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom." The wisdom of God's apparent foolishness can be dramatized by clowns.

The clown ministry is another important ministry that can be used in creative evangelism and preaching. Through this ministry,

- People see that they are important and lovable.
- People are given the opportunity to laugh at themselves and to recognize that they are not alone in their troubles.
- The ministers are able to gain the attention of the audience so that he will be able to teach an important truth.
- People can be preached the Gospel message.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CLOWNS:

The Whiteface Clown is the distinctive Pierrot, a harlequin clown. The face is completely white with markings. The costume is like that of the court jester. Make it colourful, showy, full, ample and baggy. The character is usually bossy, playing jokes on the clowns but quite dominating and takes the lead role.

The Auguste Clown is the typical clown featured in story books and circus posters. The face has a non-white base. Features include a large red nose, red mouth and shapes over the eyes, often half moons. The costume is too large or too small with wildly mismatched patterns. Suspenders, oversized shoes, ties, etc., are worn. Wild wigs with a tiny or huge hat. You may find some suitable clothes in charity or opportunity shops. The character is often the butt of most jokes but occasionally gets his own back.

Character Clown: There is a lot of variation within this type. She or he may be a sad face tramp or a happy character with a red nose, funny mustache, crazy haircut or costume, e.g., Charlie Chaplin. Comical figures can be developed using the professions, such as, doctors, nurses or police officers, especially the London Bobby. Alternatively animals, ballet dancers, pirates or even Vikings can be clowns.

CREATING YOUR CLOWN

Putting on clown clothes and make-up makes you look like a clown. However it takes more to BE a clown, than just a human in a clown costume?

- **Pray:** Pray about every aspect of your ministry.
- **Forget:** Forget the adult world and all its unwritten rules of how to act and think. Forget being logical and serious, and making sense.
- **Remember:** Remember what it was like to be a child. Live in the moment. Become excited about little things. Find wonder and awe in everything.
- **Watch & Mimic:** Observe children playing. Just watch and see what they do and how they react. Try to copy them. Act and play like a child with another clown or two.
- **Exaggerate:** Make your movements and gestures really big or really small. For example Walk differently. Take giant stride or tiny steps. Notice how you normally walk. Exaggerate your normal movements. Be aware of what your body, limbs, hips and head are doing.
- **Watch and copy different people.** Then exaggerate their movements. Exaggerate with words. Make an ordinary story into a tall story.

- **Feel:** Be in touch with your feelings and let them show. When your clown is sad, be really sad. A clown can even be angry. Act really angry, but not so much that you scare the children. Point your anger at an invisible or inanimate object. If you are tired, make it show. If something interests you get really excited and try to show everyone around you. If you are feeling uneasy or embarrassed about being a clown, or what it is your clown is doing, use that as part of the act and LET IT SHOW.
- **Experiment:** Try things out. Do things you're never done before. Watch others and see if what they do works for you. Be creative. There is no right or wrong way to clown. Find what you enjoy and what works for you. Your comfort zone expands as you practice and get experience. Don't feel silly if you try something and it doesn't work. Move on to something else.
- **Lighten Up:** Loosen up and see the funny side of things.
- **Move:** Use your body. If you feel restless, then be restless. If you are happy then dance. Run. Fly. Swim. Stamp your feet. Be expressive. Move your face muscles, pucker your lips and/or wiggle your ears.
- **Play:** Have fun. Fun is contagious. Enjoy yourself. Clowning is NOT serious business. Play games and fool around with children and adults.
- **Speak:** Record your voice on cassette recorder. Experiment with different volumes and pitches. Exaggerate the inflections of your voice. Whisper and shout. Try being dumb, then charming, then excited, Speak fast and slow. Experiment with different accents and invent your own accent. Don't use your regular human voice because you are no longer a regular human!
- **Imagine:** Imagine that you are a different person. Invent a name and all kinds of things about you. What do you do all day? What has happened in your life? What family do you have? Who are your friends? How old are you? What do you like? What do you hate? Where do you live? What mannerisms do you have? What are your favourite foods?
- **Be Gentle:** You want to touch people's lives; put a sparkle in their eyes and love in their hearts. Take it easy. Show kindness and love in ways that get through to them. Some children are scared of clowns. If they are scared of you, back off and find another way to reach them. Get down to the child's level. If the child is crying sometimes if the clown cries as well, the child wants to comfort the clown.

PROPS TO USE IN CLOWN MINISTRY

Every clown in every age has at least once used a “prop” to help make people laugh or cry. What is a clown “prop?” It is any object used by the clown to assist him/her in a comical situation. It can be as simple as a hankie or as complicated as a wilting flower. Props are essential to good clowning. However if we depend on them alone for humour then we have missed the timing of the comical situation. A prop alone is not funny. Take for example, juggling balls. By themselves they are lifeless, without humour, however in the hands of a juggler they become a source of great entertainment.

There are a number of props that can be used:

- Walk around Props: Visibility is important. Verbal banter and setting up an actual situation increases the effect of the banter. It is usually performed quickly and then the clown moves on to the next group of passers-by.
- Balloons: Balloons are fun. Give them away - helium filled, blown up or not blown up, with or without printed messages. Sculpture or model balloons.
- Balls: Balls of all shapes & sizes from the tiny bouncing balls to giant earth balls can be fun to play with.
- Bubbles: From small bottles that hang around your neck, to bubble guns and machines, to large containers from which you make giant bubbles with a wand to set the mood of fun or mystique.
- “Break Away” Props: As the name infers these props break away when you touch them or when they are triggered. The classic break away is the black wand Magicians use. In the magician's hand it is erect and solid, however when the child takes it, it breaks into several pieces.
- Jumbo Props: Large blow up objects, such as, baseball bats.
- Kites: Kites range from simple hand-made kites to huge colourful kites that can take you off the ground. Kites attract attention. They work well on beaches, or in large parks or fields.
- Music Instruments or Noise Makers: Bicycle horns, clappers, harmonicas, tambourines, whistles, etc., are other attention grabbers.

- Puppets
- Rope is very handy for scooping a crowd, tug-o-war, creating boundaries or a stage, or even tying up a pesky clown or trouble maker.
- Squirting Props: Any container that holds water and when released unexpectedly causes a great deal of excitement. This prop can be as innocent as a squirting flower or as obvious as a bucket. Avoid water pistols, as guns are not fun or clowny.

TIPS TO EFFECTIVE CLOWN MINISTRY:

- Every Clown Ministry should receive good training. The people who are going to be involved in this ministry should receive the necessary training to be effective. The use of books and video tutorials can be used to aid in the preparation of your clowns.
- Every clown ministry should look sharp. Make sure that the costumes that are made speak of the excellence of the ministry that you have created.
- Every clown ministry should practice, practice and then practice some more!
- Every clown ministry should keep the humor in good taste. Be careful that the laughs don't come at the audience's expense.
- Every clown ministry should never lose sight of your goal. Never forget your first goal is to serve Christ with the talents and tools you have in your hand
- Every clown ministry must know how to put make-up on.

ASSIGNMENT

Clown ministry does not necessary have to be used only in Children's ministry. Think of at least two other ways that you would be able to use this ministry and provide justification as to why this ministry would be effective for the:

- Situation
- Age group
- Message

ILLUSTRATED SERMONS

An illustrated sermon is a sermon that is preached as well as dramatically acted out. As the name implies, sermon dramas exist primarily as a part of the sermon. While it usually has all of the elements of a stand-alone piece, it really isn't intended to exist on its own. The purpose of sermon support drama is to augment the sermon itself and add to the message.

WAYS TO USE DRAMA IN A SERMON

There are four main ways to use drama as sermon support:

Teaser: This sketch usually occurs near the beginning of the service, or right before the sermon begins. The goal of the teaser is to get people thinking about the topic, maybe to imply the problem without actually saying it. Teasers tend to be light, but can be serious if that makes sense with your speaker's style. Teasers never have any sort of real resolution; they exist simply to broach the subject, and let the speaker take it the rest of the way.

Introduction: Similar to a teaser, an introduction sketch is usually right before the sermon, or near the beginning part of the sermon. Introduction sketches can be light or heavy, depending on the topic and the speaker's style. There can be some small resolution involved, but it should not "spoil the surprise" by hitting the points of the sermon too often. They will show someone dealing with the problem or topic of the sermon, and usually show that person beginning to deal with it, but shouldn't show them resolving their issues. One of the biggest differences between an introduction and teaser sketch is how, or if, the speaker references the sketch in the sermon. If the speaker will be making direct references to the sketch, then it should be an introduction sketch. If not, then it should be a teaser sketch.

Illustration: This sketch takes place in the middle of the sermon. It can be at the beginning of a point, or at the end of a point, but it should always be "in" the sermon. An illustration sketch takes a point from the sermon and demonstrates or expounds on the idea. Illustration sketches can be very powerful because they can easily and quickly take a complicated, intense, or sensitive topic, and present it in a way that directly identifies with the audience in their day-to-day lives. It's a matter of the whole "a picture is worth a thousand words" concept – sometimes it is more effective to show someone something rather than tell them about it. Like an introduction sketch, illustration sketches need to tie into the sermon in order to be effective.

Conclusion: A conclusion sketch can be an incredibly powerful addition to a worship service. Generally speaking, a conclusion sketch is the last part of the sermon, and comes after the speaker has made his own conclusion. Similar to an illustration sketch, a conclusion sketch will take the message of the sermon and show it in a very real and personal way to the audience. Conclusion sketches need to tie into the sermon in a strong way, as they will be the capstone of the entire message. Most effective conclusion sketches are dramatic as opposed to comedic, but that doesn't mean there can't be any humor at all. The tone of a conclusion sketch depends entirely on the tone your speaker wants to set at the end of the message. Whether it is hopeful, contemplative, regretful, energized, or whatever, – it's possible as long as the sermon and sketch tie-in together at a high level.

ASSIGNMENT

How would you present the following Biblical teachings in an illustrated sermon (choosing one of the above four methods)?

- The walls of Jericho (Joshua 6 & 7)
- Love (1 Corinthians 13)
- Putting off and putting on (Colossians 3)

BRAINSTORMING: THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS

To brainstorm means to generate ideas on a specific issue and then determine the best solution for the “problem” or the event.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN BRAINSTORMING?

- A facilitator: This is the person who will guide the session and will keep the group focused on coming to a solution. The facilitator is to encourage participation and is also there to write all the ideas that are spoken down on a board. The facilitator would usually be the pastor or the person who is in charge of the ministry that is being brainstormed
- Participants: These are the people who will be involved in the task of throwing ideas out to the group.

STEPS IN BRAINSTORMING:

- Define the issue that needs the solution. If there is more than one “problem” break it down into separate issues so that you can brainstorm them separately. For example if you are looking at the big picture of Church evangelism, it would be more effective if you broke the “problem” into age groups, for example, children, youth, young people, families etc. Why? Because they will all have different interests and common grounds upon which they will be successfully reached for Christ.
- Give a time limit in which you will be allowing the group to give their ideas.
- Shout out all the ideas and write each one on the board. This is not the time to be critical of the ideas and therefore no idea should be discussed at this point. If you stop to discuss each idea, you will be breaking the flow of creativity and will also discourage participation.
- Look at each of the ideas that have been given and chose five that everyone agrees on.
- Write down criteria for judging these five ideas. For example, “It should reach the young person through their senses”, “It should have an element of fun” etc.
- Ask “what if” questions. For example, “what if no tracts were distributed?”, “what if only art work was displayed?” “What if no one preached?”

- Score each of the ideas with the criteria that you have decided on from 1-5 points.
- The idea with the highest points will probably be the best solution to the problem. Keep a record of all the suggestions as you may use them later.
- Apply the solution that you have decided upon. An idea is just that unless you ground it with reality.

WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

A strategy does not replace the preaching of the full Biblical Gospel nor the power of prayer within evangelism, but it is a vehicle to carry the message into the hearts of the people.

Why do we need a strategy or method if we are depending upon the Holy Spirit?

- The word “preach”, (Matt 28:19), does not mean a “one-way” verbal communication for example like a sermon or an evangelical address. It means to “effectively communicate”. Therefore if we preach and no understanding takes place then no real communication or preaching has taken place either. Therefore we have not reached the goal that we have set out to do. We need a strategy!
- To communicate comes from the root word “communing” or “interacting” which speaks of being able to communicate with people upon some type of common ground. You cannot teach people, nor can you preach to them unless you have their attention. To be relevant means to be socially and culturally significant to real life issues.
- The Old Testament and the New Testament revealed that a strategy was always used when people preached the message of the Gospel. The prophets of old were given strategies by God to bring the message across clearly. Jesus had His own strategy on reaching His generation during His earthly ministry.
- Study of Church history also shows us that strategic methods were used to bring about revival and reformation in cities and countries all over the world.

GUIDELINES TO YOUR STRATEGY:

Adapt your communication style.

Just as people speak different verbal languages, they have different emotional, psychological and intellectual languages.

1 Thessalonians 2:4 "For we speak as messengers who have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He is the one who examines the motives of our hearts."

1 Corinthians 9:22 "When I am with those who are oppressed, I share their oppression so that I might bring them to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone so that I might bring them to Christ."

Jesus provided us with examples from His ministry by showing us how He adapted His style and method to fit the person whom He was speaking to.

- To the Samaritan woman He offered her water. He did not use the word sin. See John 4.
- To Nicodemus He reasoned spiritually with him. See John 3
- To the Pharisees He brought rebuke.
- To the leper and Blind man He met their needs.

Analyze your audience:

- What do they think about God?
- What issues consume them? AIDS? Poverty? Dating? SEX?
- Who are their heroes?

Jesus was always successful in His witness because He identified with His audience. He did not bring condemnation but He showed them respect and love. He identified with them and their needs even though He Himself was sinless.

Listen: Tap into their felt needs.

A felt need just covers the real need that a person has. Tap into these needs and find out what they are. This will be your starting point to find the right strategy and method in reaching them. Once people have opened up to you through your dealing with their felt needs it will be easier to preach the Gospel to them. It is easy to present a pre-packaged Gospel but how effective is it? We need to listen to people, not just by what they say verbally, but by their emotions on their face, by their eyes and their body language. When people begin to see the genuineness of your faith, and the love of Jesus in you, they will be drawn to God, the author of Love.

Location:

Find a way that you will be able to reach them on their "turf", a place where they feel comfortable and at ease. Sometimes street evangelism places people on the defensive before they are even approached by a person. At other times it may be the perfect place to reach those who are just aimlessly sitting around or having their lunch break.

ASSIGNMENT

You have been asked to help brainstorm some creative ideas for the following ministries or events in your church. Provide some exciting new creative ideas that will help make these ministries within the Church more effective in reaching those who are lost.

- Woman's meeting
- Men's meeting
- Children's Christmas Party
- Hospital outreach

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