

Christian karaoke

It seems to me that almost every time I attend a Christian service these days, I hear the same songs, sung by a 'band', in the same style as everywhere else. Most of the songs seem to be the latest from the Christian popular singers and are often unsuitable for congregational singing as they were written to be solos. Sometimes even the theology of the songs is questionable and wouldn't be acceptable if a visiting speaker preached it. We are encouraged to stand up, sit down, clap our hands and 'give Jesus a cheer'.

Even if the songs are the 'good old hymns' they are so often presented without any thought of their presentation. They oscillate between vertical songs (addressed to the Lord) and horizontal songs (addressed to one another).

Whether they are modern songs or old hymns doesn't really bother me – what does, is the obvious lack of thought about the reason why and how we are singing them.

Corporate worship is made up of individuals worshipping (not just singing along as in a karaoke presentation.)

Worship is addressed to the Lord – it is our expression of adoration and love to Him, and the task of the worship leaders is not to lead us in singing (if we are able to sing at all to their often off-beat leading), but to lead us into the presence of Jesus at the throne room, so we can be 'lost in wonder, love and praise'(Wesley). This might involve moments of singing, of silence, of meditative reading and congregational responses. I guess I've been spoiled because I have experienced such times of corporate worship – and now everything else seems so superficial.

I'd much prefer to be led in worship by a worshipper who has some ability in music than by a musician who has limited experience of worship.

See my teachings on Praise & Worship.