



**2011**

*PLATFORM*  
*LEADERSHIP*  
*AND*  
*TECHNIQUE*

*Lecturer:*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

As we approach this vital subject of Platform Leadership, it is important to note that those who become involved in this area of ministry have a great opportunity to lead a congregation to places in worship, and in the realm of the Holy Spirit, that many of them have never experienced before. It is an exciting and important area of ministry in church life.

The leader has the opportunity to influence the life of every church attendee, as they open up to God in praise and worship, and thus are open to be challenged, to grow and develop in this area of their spiritual life. People can also be encouraged in the exercise of the Spiritual Gifts by the Platform Leader.

**This involves great responsibility and should not be approached lightly. The Leader can make or break a worship meeting!**

Remember that, regardless of the type of meeting you are leading, **leading** is the key; do not drive or force people – you are ministering to them.

The Leader of a meeting, generally speaking, occupies the platform for about the same time as the preacher: he can make as big an impact on the meeting as the preacher. Because so few leaders can be found who will put the same amount of prayer, faith and dedication into the meeting as a preacher is expected to, many preachers prefer to lead their own meetings.

A church meeting is a spiritual event and must first be soaked in prayer and preparation. Leading a meeting is a definite ministry and should be approached with the same prayer, faith and dedication as expected of the preacher.

## **I. PREPARATION AND PLANNING.**

- a) Prayerfully plan and prepare a program outline, including time allocation if necessary. If new in leading a meeting, rehearse your program for the timing. The program should fit the style of the meeting. It may be helpful to know the speaker's topic. The Lord may lead the meeting along a certain theme.
- b) Prepare as if there was no Holy Spirit, and it all depends on you, - and run the meeting as if there was nothing BUT the Holy Spirit.
- c) Use the songs as a means to an end. Keep your goal in mind so that the mechanics are not an end in themselves.
- d) Do not bring too much change from what is normally done in the meeting. One change in a meeting is plenty as people are slow to respond to change - e.g. : no more than one new song.
- e) If new at leading a meeting, stick to familiar choruses and format. This gives people time to adjust to change – i.e.: new leader.
- f) A fine Line of Balance. No order of service should become a straightjacket. Be prepared to adapt and change at the prompting and flow of the Spirit. It is essential to understand the relationship of good planning from the Spirit-filled life, and the freedom demanded by

God on the occasion. Remember – when we give leadership to the meeting, we do so in the Name of the Lord, and He is really in charge.

- g) Clearly set out your program on paper for yourself and be sure that musicians, singers and overhead projectionists get a list of intended choruses. Give the number, key, and name of the chorus.
- h) If new at leading a meeting, check the program with an experienced leader.
- i) If you desire to do something different from the normal, check first with the pastor or appropriate persons. Testimonies, items, etc., should also be checked.
- j) If not musically minded, check your song list with a musician to ensure that it flows musically.
- k) The song list should:
  - i) have an aim – e.g.: Praise, emphasize a theme, etc.;
  - ii) have a pattern of progression;
  - iii) flow together musically;
  - iv) flow together spiritually.

**In summary** – one cannot over-stress the importance of being sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, so that the meeting flows spiritually.

## **II. THE CHORUS LEADER'S PURPOSE.**

The chorus leader's job is to lead in bright, positive, inspiring choruses, bringing the people in out of the world and into the spiritual realm.

The chorus leader should as a general rule, stick to the following guidelines:

- a) Keep basically to familiar choruses;
- b) Keep the people seated; (to start with)
- c) Check your song list with the chairman, to avoid duplication;
- d) Never start with slow, worship choruses;
- e) Avoid talking between choruses;
- f) Watch the chairman. Be prepared to hand over to him if he steps up, even though you may only be halfway through your list;

- g) Remember, you don't have to have all the choruses on your list, or in the order on your list.

### **III. THE CHAIRMAN'S PURPOSE.**

- a) To guide the direction of the meeting as led by the Holy Spirit - i.e. : welcome, prayer, notices, offering, songs, worship, Spiritual gifts, communion, testimony, item, etc.
- b) To lead the people in an expression of their heart, as they offer Spiritual sacrifices, and minister in praise to the Lord as priests. ( Psalm 116: 12-14; 1 Peter 2: 5-9 )
- c) To lead the people into the presence of God, and make them conscious of His presence.
- d) Bring down the anointing on the people and prepare them for the ministry of the Word, so the preacher can preach with ease and the people can receive.
- e) To give leadership to musicians and singers. Remember – the meeting leader is just that! And should give definite leadership.
- f) To keep order (1 Cor. 14:40). “Let all things be done decently and in order” 1 Cor. 14:33). “God is not the author of confusion.”

#### **Workshop:**

- Discuss the meeting Format
- Put a meeting Program together
- Discuss various Formats

### **IV. SOME BASIC GUIDELINES FOR THE CHAIRMAN TO FOLLOW:**

- a) Watch the clock! Do not do the preacher out of his time!
- b) Always have a good list of bright choruses and slower worship choruses. Remember, you don't have to sing them all. The controlling factors in which choruses to have, and how much to sing them, should be the people's response, the moving of the Spirit, and the time available:

“Do not start what you have not got time to finish!”

- c) If praise flows, let it flow; lead it but don't force it. Encourage instrumentalists, look for visions, prophecies, tongues and interpretations, verses of Scripture etc. Be prepared to lead singing in the Spirit, clapping, etc. There should be clear direction by the leader in praise time. If the praise/ worship finishes – cut it off with a definite statement or climaxing prayer. There should be no uncertain or embarrassing silences. If you want silence, say so.
- d) Don't hog the meeting – i.e.: Don't pray all the prayers, or waffle between choruses, etc.

- e) After praise/ worship/ gifts – it may pay to reflect on the messages – especially if there are newcomers. Take notes during these times if you need to.
- f) If there is anything out of order, deal with it, or side-track it immediately; but be tactful:
  - e.g.: Long-winded, self-centered prayers;
  - Over-enthusiastic yelling, etc.;
  - Discordant singing – stop it and start the chorus again the right way.

## **V. GENERAL GUIDELINES.**

- a) Dignity in the conduct of a meeting offends no one, but many are offended if the meeting is disorderly ( cf 1 Cor. 14: 40 ). However, people do not want the dignity of a mausoleum. It is better to have life with a little confusion than the ordered peace of a graveyard.
- b) There are three kinds of crowd: heterogeneous (do not know each other and have mixed interests and feelings; homogeneous (the people have common interests, although they do not know each other personally); intimate (they have common interests and know each other). Each of these three groups requires a different approach – what is permissible with one crowd may deeply offend another. A sense of propriety is invaluable in good leading. (This rule also applies to the size of the crowd: a big crowd requires a different approach to a small crowd).
- c) Ask yourself: What is the mood of the crowd? Noisy, restless, indifferent, impatient, friendly, joyful, sober? The mood of the crowd will determine what is permissible in the conduct of the meeting. Do not take liberties with the emotions of the people; they will not forgive you. You can change the mood of an audience, but first you must get in tune with it, and go along with it; then you can tactfully change it (e.g.: by the careful selection of songs). Watch that the people are following – if not, don't force.
- d) Strive for ease of manner, and cultivate graciousness in your bearing. Tact is most important. Never say a word out of place. The confidence of a crowd is gained only with some difficulty, and it is easily lost. Be natural. Don't try to be what you are not. Smile – it encourages the people. Let your love reach out to them.
- e) Always take the blame yourself for mistakes the people make. If you make a mistake yourself do not distress the people by standing in stricken embarrassment; make some light comment that will relax both you and the people. Do not be afraid of being laughed at. Just laugh with the people. An audience intensely dislikes being embarrassed. If you embarrass, or hurt, or offend the people, you will find it almost impossible to regain their confidence.
- f) Use stories and jokes and relaxing comments when suitable but not to excess. Always be kind and courteous, never critical or caustic. Avoid negative words, statements and forceful phrases etc. Examples: - Don't say "there are not many here tonight, but we'll do our best anyway", or "you can sing better than that".

- g) Fear is your greatest enemy; confidence is your friend. Convey to the audience by your whole manner and bearing, that you are confident they will accept your authority as leader of the meeting. The person who has to berate an audience into following his instructions has failed in his task.

People will resist your leadership if you offend them by:

- An overt act; or
- By conveying to them a feeling that you are insecure in your position (expecting trouble from the audience:.) or
- By conveying to them a feeling that you are unsure of your ability to secure their co-operation.
- Develop confidence by training and practice.

- h) Dress conservatively. If you look good, the congregation will be proud of you and happy for you to lead them. Dress should suit the occasion, depending on the congregation, type of meeting etc. For example, a three-piece suit for a youth rally would be considered a little overdone!

**REMEMBER:**

You are an ambassador for Christ. You are on show to the world. You must put forth a good image, but still be in touch with the people.

- i) Remember, you are setting the atmosphere for the preaching of the Word.
- j) Do not be nervous, or agitated, or excited, or jerky, in the conduct of the meeting. Imagine you are a radio announcer, and develop a smooth, easy flow! Avoid unnecessary vacuums. A natural, winsome, pleasant approach will elicit the greatest response from an audience. Be enthusiastic, but not excitable; forceful, but not overbearing; cheerful but not flippant; vigorous, but not too rowdy; alive, but not extreme. Keep a sense of inner control and of definite purpose in all your words and actions. Be self-disciplined if you want a disciplined audience; that is, one that will respond properly to your leading.
- k) Wild extravagance, boorish noise, careless indifference, fanaticism, emotion for emotion's sake (without proper cause), will merely disgust most audiences. Even if the audience comes to reciprocate that behavior, the people will still be turned aside from rendering true spiritual worship to God.
- l) Generally speaking an audience will reflect the manner, character, and purpose of the leader. (An exception: when the leader's manner offends the people and they react against him). If he is nervous, unsure of himself, ill-prepared, without aim, this will have an unsettling effect on the audience. If he is confident, relaxed, friendly, and purposeful, the audience will instinctively respond, and will be properly prepared for the sermon, or for worship.
- m) Don't use the pulpit as a prop.
- n) Don't keep looking at the Leaders to see how you are going.

**VI. CONDUCT OF A MEETING.**

- a) Insist that all items be well practiced; ask for the best possible quality.
- b) Keep the platform area as tidy and uncluttered as possible. It is undesirable to have pictures or banners behind the speaker. Remove anything which might distract the attention of the speaker, It is best not to have other people on the platform during the sermon – let them join the congregation when the preacher takes over,
- c) Start the meeting on time. People will conform to whatever pattern is set in this regard.
- d) Start the meeting the moment you go to the platform; do not sit on the platform for a while and thus make the opening on the meeting indeterminate. Let the meeting begin with the immediate impact of your presence. Make eye contact with the people and smile at them.
- e) When you step on the platform go briskly to the pulpit, and at once greet the people – do not first fiddle with the papers. Having greeted the people, you can then sort out your papers and books, etc. People expect you to give them your first attention.
- f) If you are not leading the meeting, but are on the platform do not slouch, but sit gracefully at ease. Do not distract the people by unnecessary movements. Above all, appear interested in the proceedings.
- g) Extend to the people the courtesy of giving them time to find the song or Bible reading before continuing with the meeting – wait until at least the majority of the people are ready.
- h) Encourage audience participation by giving clear directions – e.g. when you want the people to stand indicate this with your hands as well as your voice. Don't hesitate to announce the number of a song or a scripture reference, several times if necessary.
- i) Don't have the people standing too long, or if needed give older ones, the sick etc., the option of sitting down. It will win respect and build their confidence in you because you have shown concern for them.
- j) Watch the Clock. You may not have the time to bring the meeting to where the Holy Spirit is leading, but the responsibility passes to the person in charge when your time runs out.
- k) Avoid excessive talking between choruses, waffling and talking about yourself.
- l) Seek to structure the service so that the people can bring their whole being, (spirit, soul and body) into the act of worship. True worship will be three things: intelligent, emotional, and spiritual.
- m) A certain amount of liturgy (regular ritual) is inevitable; in fact, it is desirable if the people are to be properly prepared for each act of worship. If they have no idea what is to happen next it is futile to expect from them a complete response. However, despite this, there may be occasions when a desired effect can be achieved by a sudden innovation; but let every action be governed by discretion. Announce clearly your intentions, letting the people know what you want.

**VII THE ART OF SONG – LEADING. ( Beating technique )**

- a) The purpose of beating is . . .
  - i) to set the time and rhythm and pace of the song;
  - ii) to convey emotion and feeling;
  - iii) to indicate points when you want the people to hold a note, or to sing softly, or loudly;
  - iv) to give clear direction to musician and people.
  
- b) The forearm and hand should move as a unit: avoid a flapping wrist. The wrist should be firm, but not stiff. Remember your hands speak a language.
  - i) Don't put hands in pocket.
  - ii) Don't put hands on hips.
  - iii) Don't clench in a fist.
  - iv) Don't point the finger.
  
- c) Keep your motions generous and free, not cramped and stiff.
  
- d) Cultivate the ability to use both arms, either singly or together. When using both hands, do not let them cross in front of the body – let them do no more than meet at the center. Further, do not drop your hands below the waist, except perhaps on a strongly accented downbeat, or cutting off gesture.
  
- e) On the down beat have the palm faced upwards. Avoid a clenched fist. Let the fingers be slightly apart with the palm loosely (but not flabbily) cupped.
  
- f) The accent invariably should come on a down beat. Not that every accent must have a down beat, but every down beat must be on an accent.
  
- g) Develop a decisive movement, usually a downward sweep, to close each song (or verse).
  
- h) It is not always desirable, or necessary, to beat time. Often the hands can be used just to convey the mood, volume, or rhythm, of a particular song.
  
- i) A slightly crouched posture, shortened beat, slightly pursed lips, will convey an impression of softness. By contrast, an open, extended posture, and vigorous wide beat, will lift the volume.
  
- j) Avoid facing an open palm toward the people, unless you want them to stop singing. An open palm has a repelling effect. It is better, when the hands are upraised, to keep them side-on to the audience.
  
- k) Do not allow the musician(s) to set the pace and rhythm of the song. You are to lead the singing, not the people themselves, nor the musician(s). If you cannot secure the co-operation of the musician(s) you may as well not be on the platform.

- l) Remember also that no musician can co-operate with you unless he can see you without having to twist and turn.
- m) If you are the chorus leader – watch the chairman. Be ready to hand over if he steps up.

**Workshop:**

- Select the first 3 songs for a meeting
  - Approach to the Pulpit
1. Welcome the Congregation.
  2. Announce your first song.
  3. Ask the Congregation to stand .....using the hands.
  4. Start your song ..... conduct.....
  5. Finish the song after first time through.....using hands.
  6. Sit the Congregation down.

**VIII THE MEETING LEADER HIMSELF.**

- a) Music is essentially masculine. Whether the meeting leader is male or female, therefore, a masculine approach will gain the best results. An effeminate approach (in voice, manner, or actions) is repulsive.
- b) Be sincere, down-to-earth, not a show-off. Authority and forcefulness must be qualified by a genuine humility: an audience is quickly repelled if the leader conveys a sense of pride or arrogance. The people in the congregation are your friends. Don't be afraid of them.
- c) Be confident in your ability to direct the singing and to meet every situation. The people are looking to you for leadership. Lead only what you are confident with.
- d) Have a genuine liking for the people, and a desire to bring them pleasure, inspiration, and blessing. If you are on the platform primarily for your own benefit or satisfaction, this will soon become apparent and will repel the people. The audience does not exist for the leader, but the leader for the audience.
- e) Every good song leader has a deep joy in his task, and approaches the platform with a sense of having a real mission to fulfil.
- f) Display vitality, good health, and enthusiasm – but not to excess.
- g) Do not insult the people by apologizing for lack of preparation, or for your personal shortcomings – unless you do so to provoke good-humored laughter against yourself. You should never try to “save face” at the expense of the crowd.

- h) Endeavor to sell the purpose of the meeting to all the audience and to retain their interest and expectancy.
- i) Be graceful and pleasant in movement without being affected, or starchy, or floppy, or over exuberant. The people do not want you to be a statue, nor a dancer.
- j) Come to the platform briskly. Before doing anything else look the audience in the eye and greet them pleasantly. As much as possible, from that moment keep your attention focussed on the audience, keep looking straight at them. Do not let your gaze wander abstractedly all over the auditorium.
- k) Be human and natural in manner and expression. Strictly avoid adopting an artificial tone or style of speaking. Many people, when they come to the platform, make themselves ridiculous by putting on a kind of “pious” intonation and phraseology. Speak simply and directly, cutting out superfluous words and roundabout speaking (circumlocution). Avoid peppering your speech with “glory”, “hallelujah”, “praise God,” etc. Use these terms only where their use will be truly meaningful. Used casually or carelessly they become only pious jargon, and evangelical slang.
- l) Be sure you can sing the chorus before you start it. Know how to stop and when to stop.
- m) Have your next chorus ready, before you finish the last one. This displays confidence and allows you to have eye contact with the people when announcing the next chorus.

## **IX HANDLING THE MICROPHONE.**

- a) Approach the microphone confidently and treat it as though it is not there. (A sound check should have been done before the meeting).
- b) Do not tap, blow, look at it, or ask, “Can you hear me?” These actions tell the congregation you are nervous, and they will lose confidence in you.
- c) When holding the microphone, hold it close at the start of the chorus to give a clear lead. Then establish a comfortable working distance to sing songs, bringing it closer when you need to direct the meeting.
- d) Fixed lapel microphones are not suitable for chorus leading.

**Finally:** as Christians, do not forget to pray about your ministry as a song leader. Strive diligently to perfect your technique, yet all the time remain natural and easy in your approach, not stiff and stilted. Earnestly apply yourself to the hints suggested above, sincerely develop your own style and personality; set to with a good will and with faith; love the people, and your contribution to their worship and the ministry following yours, will be immense.

**Workshop:**

Rearrange these items into an order of service:

- Announcements
- Closing prayer and/or song ..... Number .....
- Victory, praise and joy choruses
- Welcome
- Prayer for the sick
- Bible reading
- Hello time
- Communion
- Items Name of persons.....
- Worship choruses or hymn
- Sermon
- Testimonies
- Offering

Allow 1 3/4 hr for the service, allocate time to each part of the service, place the above items in order and select the choruses.

**PROGRAM**

**TIME ALLOCATION**

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
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10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

## **X COMMUNION TALKS.**

### **a) AIM**

While the communion service is sometimes treated as a ritual with little thought, in reality it is central to the Christian worship and should be carefully planned so that it has maximum impact. 1 Cor. 11:23-26

The cross is central to worship. We can only come into the presence of Almighty God through Jesus. Worship is not some activity that we engage in; rather it is the gift of sharing in the Son's communion with the Father, through the Spirit. It is a gift of God's grace. So the Lord's supper brings us right into the heart of worship.

The task of the person leading around the communion table is to focus on some aspect of the cross so that it impacts the people in a fresh way. It is a time of intimate communion with the Lord, so the thoughts presented should unfold some aspect of His work that elicits a heart response from the people. 1 Cor. 10:16,17

### **b) ONE MAIN POINT**

It is usually best to present one main thought at communion time. There are three reasons:

- 1) Communion talks usually have only a brief time allocation
- 2) Simplicity produces greater impact
- 3) You are not the preacher

### **c) APPLICATION**

As with almost every form of public speaking, communion talks should bring people to a point of application. There is something you want people to think or do as a result of what you say.

#### **Possible applications include:**

- Heart examination
- Repentance of some specific sin.
- Renewal of their first love
- Restoration of relationship with an individual or the body
- Exercise faith in healing

**XI THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN**

“How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 1 Cor. 14:26

To have a true New Testament church, and to make room for people to grow, we must draw them out in:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>a) Praying in Public</b>        | <b>h) Short sermon</b>  |
| <b>b) Bringing a Bible Reading</b> | <b>g) Share what communion means to them</b>                                |
| <b>c) Responsive Reading</b>       | <b>h) Take communion in small groups</b>                                    |
| <b>d) A Nominated Testimony</b>    | <b>i) Have ministry team serve communion and minister to family groups.</b> |
| <b>e) Sentence prayers</b>         | <b>j) Encourage people to step out in the gifts for the first time.</b>     |
| <b>f) Devotional Highlights</b>    | <b>k) Word sharing</b>  |

**The Ministry team needs to meet weekly to:**

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1. Pray</b>      | <b>4. Reflect</b> |
| <b>2. Plan</b>      | <b>5. Adjust</b>  |
| <b>3. Implement</b> | <b>6. Pray</b>    |