

Calvin University

## Calvin Digital Commons

---

Symposium on Worship Archive

2014 - The Book of Exodus

---

### Seven Deadly Sins of Choosing Music for Worship

Greg Scheer

*Church of the Servant*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.calvin.edu/uni-cicw-symposium>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Scheer, Greg, "Seven Deadly Sins of Choosing Music for Worship" (2014). *Symposium on Worship Archive*. 15.

<https://digitalcommons.calvin.edu/uni-cicw-symposium/2014/allitems/15>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship at Calvin Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Symposium on Worship Archive by an authorized administrator of Calvin Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [dbm9@calvin.edu](mailto:dbm9@calvin.edu).

*The worship music planner plays both a pastoral and prophetic role in the life of the church. Join Greg Scheer in discussing the deadly sins that can derail a healthy song repertoire—and the rules of thumb that can help keep a pastoral, prophetic music ministry on the tracks.*

Introduction

- Repertoire is theology.
- A song is not just a song. It allows us to adore, confess, proclaim, remember, meditate, pray, etc.
- *Traditional* and *contemporary* are very narrow slices of a very large pie.
- Songs are liturgical “real estate.”
- Music is a marker of cultural identity.
- Worship music is pastoral work and Christian formation.

Seven sins of worship song planning:

- Enlightener than thou.
- More words = better theology.
- Bloodier is better.
- Graven Images. (Vain repetitions.)
- Newer is better/Older is better.
- Worshipful rather than worship.
- Inflexibility.

A Balanced Diet

*Origin*

New ..... Old  
 Local ..... Global  
 Denominational..... Ecumenical  
 “Paperback” ..... “Hardcover”  
 Known..... New  
 Highbrow ..... Lowbrow

*Approach*

Pastoral ..... Prophetic  
 Revelation ..... Response  
 Doctrine..... Devotion  
 Information..... Ecstasy  
 Head ..... Heart  
 Formation..... Expression

*Form*

*A cappella* ..... Accompanied  
 Leader..... People  
 Note..... Rote  
 Wordy ..... “Wee”  
 Planned ..... Spontaneous  
 A variety of liturgical forms..... strophic, verse/chorus,  
 Call/response, cyclical, chant

## Greg's Rules of Thumb

- Know your congregation. Enter their stream.
- Start at the sweet spot (pastoral), but stretch in all directions (prophetic). In every service each worshiper should experience a place of comfort and a place of challenge.
- Worry more about overall health and less about individual “meals.”
- Don't move too fast.
- Take the long view: *What are you going to sing by heart around a campfire? What are you going to sing at a funeral? Five years from now, will your people have a more expansive view of Christ and his kingdom?*
- Be a shepherd of the people's song, a theologian of the heart, an expositor of scripture in music.