

Leading the Pentecostal Worship Service
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ABSTRACT

This project centers on the Church's effort to become an authentic worshipping community in the midst of cultural change. Opinions coalesce around two poles: cultural relevance and cultural distinctiveness. I recommend that churches and their leaders adopt a both/and and not an either/or stance. Churches that disregard their cultural context risk their future by refusing to adapt methodologically. Likewise, churches bent solely on cultural relevance, put their future at risk by adapting so much of the culture that they cease to be a people that uniquely belong to God. Scripture provides necessary theological footing for the Church to resist both syncretism and traditionalism, pursuing both relevance and distinctiveness with equal vigor.

This project developed a college course, *Leading the Worship Service*, which grounds students in Scripture and exposes them to the various models of worship that seek to provide authentic worship within an emerging postmodern context. It aims to develop leaders with discernment, who display the flexibility required to adapt to changing cultural realities, but also speak prophetically against the idolatries inherent in any human culture. This course gave special attention to the contribution of Pentecostal theology and spirituality.

At the conclusion of the highly interactive course, students displayed a developing ability to lead a worship service that seriously attempts to integrate relevance and biblical distinctives. Leaders in training benefited from worship education that treated theological as well as practical concerns.