

Worship and the Quest for Justice

By Dr Brian Harris

This article is found in: Harris, B. "Worship and the Quest for Justice." In *In Praise of Worship: An Exploration of Text and Practice*, edited by David Cohen and Michael Parsons Eugene:Wipf and Stock, 2010.

Our local newspaper recently reported the findings of a survey on the most unpopular inventions. While I can't confirm the rigor of the research methods used or dogmatically affirm the survey's findings, I was intrigued by the outcome. Religion was rated the 10th least popular invention, with mobile phones claiming the number one spot.

My initial instinct was to think that respondents were probably not thinking of Christianity when they spoke of religion. After all, Christians can claim credit for many of the positive social advances made in the last 2000 years. While multiple social factors are invariably at work in societal evolution, it is not fair to explore the abolition of slavery, the protection of the rights of women and children, the development of the welfare state or the shift in focus from retributive to restorative justice, without repeatedly referring to the Christian faith that motivated and inspired most of those who championed these causes. And they represent a small selection of an impressive array of humanitarian achievements.¹

It would, however, be simplistic to assume the argument could be closed by referring to some of the more satisfying outcomes resulting from the interface between the Christ story and human history.² There is also a shadow side. There have been many times in the history of the church when it has been supportive of a right wing agenda, which on occasion has revealed itself in racism, sexism, homophobia, militarism, ecological and economic exploitation, cultural insensitivity and more beside.³

Even if not actively supporting exploitation, faith can easily wear unattractive masks.⁴

¹ For a fuller, though very accessible account, see Alvin J. Schmidt, *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Culture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001). Another very simple, but thought provoking introduction to the topic is found in Dave Andrews, *People of Compassion* (Blackburn, VIC: TEAR Australia, 2008).

² While it can be argued that we should distinguish between the Christ story and the history of the churches founded as a result of that story, in practice this is difficult to do. It is however true that the Christ story could (and probably should) serve as the filter to determine the faithfulness or otherwise of the churches formed to their mandate to serve as Christ's body on earth.

³ So, for example, Jim Wallis, speaking of the mixed legacy of Evangelicalism, laments, "Evangelicals in this century have a history of going along with the culture on the big issues and taking their stand on the smaller issues. That has been one of the serious problems of evangelical religion. Today, many evangelicals no longer just acquiesce to the culture on the larger economic and political issues, but actively promote the culture's worst values on these matters." Jim Wallis, *The Call to Conversion* (Herts: Lion, 1981), 25.

⁴ The following three paragraphs are a slightly modified form of part of a brief newspaper article I wrote in 2007. Brian Harris, "When Faith Is the Problem," *The Advocate*, April 2007.

There is faith as escapism. I still remember the parents of an early girlfriend of mine informing me that they had declined membership of their voluntary pension scheme because Jesus would return long before their retirement. I backed out of that relationship fast! They spent their money on trivia and trinkets, while engaging in endless debate about the exact timetable of Christ's return. They looked forward to the future God had for them, but ignored the gift he has already given... today. It never struck them that *today* should be enjoyed and that it confers great responsibility.

Then there is faith as the status quo. This mask bears no resemblance to what's required to be an authentic Christ follower, but nonetheless for many people things are good provided they've been around for more than 20 years. Nostalgia, rather than a commitment to a daring faith agenda, is the driver. Onlookers fail to find it inspiring.

There is also faith as smugness and self-righteousness. While most have renounced the wagging finger, the image of Christians as people who see themselves as morally superior to lesser mortals and who tut tut at the folly of unbelievers, persists.

This alerts us to an important truth. Faith can spark life's loftiest journeys but paradoxically, can also accompany and bolster its most misguided and tragic detours. Dawkins and Hitchens are just two of a growing number of popular writers who have alerted us to the potentially poisonous harvest resulting from religion.⁵

Because of the potentially abusive nature of faith it is important to highlight some of the warning signs that it is at risk of proving toxic. While an exhaustive list is beyond the scope of this essay, danger signals include an insistence on unquestioning faith, or faith as compulsion instead of faith as invitation, or where there is legalism without love, or any form of faith that aims for power and control and attempts to justify the unjustifiable in the name of God.

What can be said about religion in general can also be said of religious worship. While expressions of worship vary greatly, they can serve as a transforming power for good or as instruments of oppression and injustice. At the extreme end, religious worship has sometimes included human sacrifice. Peter Berger's classic *Pyramids of Sacrifice* documents all too chillingly the unacceptable sacrifices made to placate the gods, all in the quest of a utopian tomorrow.⁶

Thus alerted to the potential shadow side of worship, I would like to shift the focus to ways in which worship can accompany the quest for justice. I will explore the theme under three broad headings, worship and the quest for justice for the self; worship and the quest for justice for the

⁵ Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion* (London: Bantam, 2006), Christopher Hitchens, *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve, 2007).

⁶ Berger's work suggests that whereas in the past calls for sacrifice came in a religious guise, parallel calls for political sacrifice are now made with the assurance that the sacrifice of today will lead to a utopian future. Peter L. Berger, *Pyramids of Sacrifice: Political Ethics and Social Change* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

neighbour and third, worship and the quest for justice for the planet. I would then like to conclude with some thoughts on worship as a doxology of hope.

Worship and the quest for justice for the self

Simon Chan has reminded us of St Bernard's outline of four stages of love for God. He writes: "For St Bernard, growth in the spiritual life is growth in love. One may begin with love of self for self's sake, proceed to love of God for self's sake, advance to love of God for God's sake and finally end in love of self for God's sake."⁷ It is significant that both the opening and closing stages revolve around love of self, though the intent of that love has morphed from love of self for self's sake in stage one to love of self for God's sake in stage four.

When worship accompanies the journey of justice for the self it sometimes follows a similar route. At times when the self is crushed, and hope is at best a distant category, worship can provide an anchor for the self, a place for gentle reorientation, an affirmation that we still matter and that even if unknown to others or rejected by others, we are known to God. The one who notes the sparrow's fall, notes our struggles and is not unsympathetic. Those who are older might sing the C Austin Miles hymn which speaks of coming "to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses" and finding that in that garden "He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own."⁸

This very private version of faith extols the God encounter as an escape for the self. Worship is a cosy conversation between Jesus and me. While this can verge on a suffocating isolationism, there are times when this is a prerequisite for the restoration of the self. It is the self looking out for the self, and clutching on to faith as a means of survival. But St Bernard's version of the spiritual journey is loftier. He envisions a later stage when love for self is channelled for God's glory. Jesus' summary of the two great commandments, recorded in Matthew 22:37-39, require us to love not our neighbour and our self, as if the two are separate categories, but to love our neighbour as our self. It would appear that healthy self love accompanies an ability to love the neighbour and to move beyond one's own boundaries.

Without worship, it is difficult to truly love the self. Deprived of a transcendent perspective, the self is constantly reminded of mortality and frailty. As 1 Peter 1:24-25 notes, "All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever."⁹ By contrast, when we worship we encounter the one in whose image we are made, and are reminded of our remarkable identity as beings called to be *imago Dei*. Without such encounters we are at risk of forgetting our distinctiveness, and of measuring our days in terms of limitation, rather than against the backdrop of the eternal. In the

⁷ Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 90.

⁸ Fred Bock, ed., *Hymns for the Family of God* (Nashville: Paragon, 1976), 588.

⁹ 1 Peter in turn, is quoting from Isaiah 40:6-8.

absence of an eternal perspective we succumb to fear and anxiety. By contrast, when guided by hope we find the freedom to confront our demons. In the presence of the one who is the light of the world, the power of such forces dissipates.

Worship accompanies the quest for justice for the self as in genuine worship encounters we are liberated to abandon false images of the self. Scazzero writes that “The vast majority of us go to our graves without knowing who we are. We unconsciously live someone else’s life, or at least someone else’s expectations for us. This does violence to ourselves, our relationship with God, and ultimately to others.”¹⁰ Earlier he quoted from Augustine’s *Confessions*, “How can you draw close to God when you are far from your own self?” and St. Teresa of Avila’s insight in *The Way of Perfection*, “Almost all problems in the spiritual life stem from lack of self-knowledge.”¹¹

This leads to the question of which comes first, the liberation of self-knowledge allowing a genuine God encounter, or meeting with the Divine as a route to self-awareness and healing. Reality is rarely linear. Worship accompanies the quest for justice for the self not by seeking a single transforming encounter, but by creating safe spaces of hopefulness to which the self regularly returns. Though no magic panacea, it is rarely disappointed. Be it in the garden alone, with the dew still on the roses, or in the strange silence that can descend as one chooses to listen for a different voice in the midst of rush hour traffic, or in mighty cathedral with flickering candles and stained glass beauty compelling one to gaze upwards, the self bowed in adoration and worship finds the courage to abandon the caricatured self and its accompanying idols. Release from bondage to a self defined by performance, possessions or popularity is gradually gained.¹²

However, there is no true liberation for the self in permanent isolation. Prior to his elevation as Pope Benedict XVI, Joseph Ratzinger located the essence of the church in the arc between the self and the whole, envisioning it as the communion between the human ‘I’ and the divine ‘Thou’ in a universally communal ‘We.’¹³ In liberating the self to be most true to the self, healing experiences of worship do not leave the self in isolation. We are *Created for Community*, to cite the title of a work by theologian Stanley Grenz.¹⁴ Worship draws us into community with fellow travellers. We do not journey as separated individuals but as a family of faith. In the cut and thrust of this household, the self enlarges. We weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who rejoice.¹⁵ All this is done together with the One who is present where even two or three meet in his name.¹⁶ In the words of the Graham Kendrick song we pray as we sing, and

¹⁰ Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 66.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹² The categories of performance, possessions and popularity are suggested by Scazzero. *Ibid.*, 74-78.

¹³ Discussed in Mirsolav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 30.

¹⁴ Stanley J. Grenz, *Created for Community: Connecting Christian Belief with Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998).

¹⁵ Romans 12:15.

¹⁶ Matthew 18:20.

invite Jesus to “stand among us, at the meeting of our lives,” and to “Join our hearts in unity and take away our fears.”¹⁷

In that unity we discover our name. It is a name that does not disappoint. Like Jacob, now renamed as Israel and limping from his God encounter, we shuffle away from Peniel, hesitantly but surely directed on the journey of reconciliation. We begin to see in the face of Esau not our enemy, but our brother. In the healing of relationships, our own self finds healing.¹⁸

Worship and the quest for justice for the neighbour

It is sobering to realise that the Bible itself seems cautious about the role of worship. Genesis 4, where Cain and Abel present differing offerings to God, is the Bible’s first record of an act of worship. However, it leads to the first murder, clearly a less than promising start. There was no temple in the Garden of Eden, and in John’s vision of the future he assures us that in the New Jerusalem there will be no temple.¹⁹ Much worship in the Bible is deemed to be unacceptable to God, and invariably this verdict is linked to an exploitative lifestyle rather than to a liturgical oversight.²⁰

If worship is to accompany the quest for justice for the neighbour, we need to begin in the place of repentance, and recognise that at times it has aided oppression. All genuine *metanoia* involves an about turn in both our thinking and action. Too often the music that has accompanied our acts of worship has been triumphalistic, justifying a militant stance towards all those who have opted for an alternate view of the world. While the military language of a hymn such as *Onward Christian Soldiers* springs rapidly to mind it is hardly an isolated instance, nor is this imagery limited to the older hymns of the church. We should filter all our music through a simple grid that asks what kind of world is envisioned by this music. To the extent that worship is transformative and contributes towards the creation of the world of which it speaks or sings, it is important that the test is not bypassed and a pleasing tune is not allowed to justify flawed theology.

If some worship is actively aggressive, other forms can validate escapism or a placid acceptance of the status quo. Marx’s complaint that religion serves as an opiate for the masses has often been cited. One does not have to dig too deeply to discover reasons for his unease. The music of many of the classic African-American Spirituals is a case in point. It is perfectly understandable that those entrapped in slavery and with little hope of liberation in their lifetime would sing soulfully of the sweet chariot that would swing low to carry them home. Indeed, we must guard against a quick condemnation of such music. It might have been escapist, but for some reality is such that the most humane option is escapism. It is too easy to pass judgment from a safe and

¹⁷ In Christine Dare, ed., *Praise the Lord* (Rondebosch: Scripture Union, 1981), 131.

¹⁸ This imagery flows from Genesis 32:22-33:4.

¹⁹ Revelation 21:22.

²⁰ For some thoughtful reflections on this see Matthew Myer Boulton, "Unholy Rites: What's Wrong with Worship?," *Christian Century* 126, no. 2 (2009).

comfortable historical distance.²¹ We should however question why some, who live in comfortable homes and have great social security, continue to feed on such images. In many contexts such escapism is a flight from responsibility.

Perhaps it is at the level of expectation that we need to begin. When, for example, we invite worshippers to turn their eyes upon Jesus, assuring them that by so doing “the things of earth will grow strangely dim,” do we not encourage worship to be viewed as a departure from reality?²² Is it not more biblical to assert that as we turn our eyes upon Jesus the things of the world come into clearer focus and perspective? Surely genuine worship encounters help our hearts to resonate with the heartbeat of God. They alert us to the *missio Dei*, and give us the courage to accompany God in his work in the world. And they keep us in touch with those who are fellow travellers on the journey, the community of faith to which we have been called. Corporately this group of pilgrims is commissioned to serve as a sign of hopefulness – a city set on a hill that cannot be hidden, or even more daringly, people who are called to be the light of the world.²³

How then might our worship facilitate the birth of such a community? Perhaps Martin Luther King’s famous *I Have a Dream* speech can alert us to the possibilities inherent in our worship.²⁴ While the reality of the world in which King’s dream was birthed was far removed from the world that he envisioned, the act of giving hope words helped facilitate the creation of a new order. To dream “that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood,” seemed audacious in 1963. However each improbable dream articulated by King planted seeds of discontent with the status quo. Slowly that discontent has borne fruit. In a similar fashion, worship that focuses on reality as God intends it to be creates the impetus and hunger for such a reality. Portrayal precedes the actual creation. Just as a building exists first in the architect’s mind, then in a plan and then in reality, so a new order is first dreamt, then expressed and if the dream and its expression takes root in our hearts, it eventually becomes reality. The apostle Paul dares to dream of a day when all will be reconciled in Christ. His inclusive vision embraces all things in heaven and all things on earth.²⁵ When our worship points to such a vision and invites us to believe it and to live in the light of it, it empowers the realisation of this new reality. As we affirm and celebrate our hope, we find the strength to live in the light of our hopes, rather than to obsess about the avoidance of our fears. Our worship invites us to be larger and trivium no longer

²¹ It is sometimes maintained that many African American spirituals, including *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*, were coded with instructions to be used by runaway slaves on the Underground Railroad (as the informal network of safe homes in which runaway slaves could seek refuge was known). If this theory were true, it would change the sense in which the lyrics are escapist! However, the likelihood of this theory being valid is, at best, slight. See James B. Kelley, "Song, Story, or History: Resisting Claims of a Coded Message in the African American Spiritual 'Follow the Drinking Gourd'," *The Journal of Popular Culture* 41, no. 2 (2008).

²² Peter Horrobin and Greg Leavers, eds., *Mission Praise* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1990), 712.

²³ To use the images of Matt 5:14. It is suggestive to hold the statement “You are the light of the world” from Matt 5:14 in creative tension with Jesus’ “I am” claim in John 8:12, “I am the light of the world.”

²⁴ The speech was delivered on the 28 August 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington D.C.

²⁵ See for example Colossians 1:20.

dominates the agenda. When we live in the light of our faith, “we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.”²⁶

Worship that reminds us of the common humanity we share with our neighbours, the goodness of creation and the reality of a realm beyond our current gaze, enlarges our outrage at prejudice, violence, pettiness, needless poverty, exploitation and greed. We are invited to be responsive to the work of the Spirit in our lives, a work that produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.²⁷ As the Apostle Paul goes on to note, against such fruit “there is no law.”²⁸ All celebrate the world transforming power of such virtues.

At times the reality of worship in the local church is vastly different. Worship, rather than revolving around the world creating significance of the truths we affirm and embrace, can degenerate into battles over volume and instruments. The status of the drummer in the local church band usually provides the clue as to the state of affairs. If the drummer is ostracised or non-existent, this is a church that has failed to move with the times. Its pews are likely to be filled with those with greying hair. As in Henry Lyte’s famous hymn “*Abide with Me*” change may well be linked with decay, and it is often resisted with great tenacity.²⁹ The pendulum often swings as far in the opposite direction. The worship team can attain the status of rock stars, and for those who rise to the top, the royalties from their music can be considerable. As the battles rage, victors sometimes embrace their worship style as an opiate that deadens the cry of the vulnerable. Personal taste and selfishness can become all consuming, and the eschatological vision can be reduced to one which harmonises with the current status quo. Clearly when this happens worship, rather than aiding the quest for justice, becomes an accomplice of inertia, or worse, a boost to the power base of current stake holders.

We must therefore be careful not to assume an automatic connection between worship and the quest for justice. We should carefully consider the worship journey we have embarked upon. If necessary, course corrections should be made. We might ask questions as to who our worship welcomes. It is not enough to hang a sign affirming that all are welcome to join us in our acts of worship. Hospitality and inclusive worship belong together. Genuine hospitality involves being open to seeing the world from the others perspective and adjusting one’s own practice accordingly. There are many practical and simple steps we can take to show our openness to the neighbour. They can be as simple as projecting readings up in different languages, using

²⁶ To quote again from King’s *I Have a Dream*, speech.

²⁷ To quote the summary list provided by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23.

²⁸ Galatians 5:23.

²⁹ The last two lines of the second stanza read: “Change and decay in all around I see: O Thou who changest not, abide with me.” Horrobin and Leavers, eds., 4.

photographs and images that reflect a delight in diversity, and praying for concerns beyond our immediate neighbourhood.³⁰

Worship and the quest for justice for the planet

While Christians have often looked to the stewardship motif of Genesis 1:28-30 to shape their ethical understanding of their responsibility to the environment, an increasing number of theologians are urging that this responsibility be located more widely within the broader biblical metanarrative, taking into account the sweep of concerns articulated in both the Old and New Testaments and allowing all narratives to be interpreted in the light of Christ.³¹ This broader based ethic shows much promise, as the stewardship motif of Genesis 1:28-30 has sometimes been twisted to justify the commodification of the planet, with the environment providing a useful set of resources which are seen to exist for the benefit of the human race. We have ruled over the earth with human comfort and pleasure providing the rationale for our decision making, only to realise that such selfish short sightedness serves neither the interests of humanity, nor the planet. Our destiny is intertwined. We long for the day when all things in heaven and on earth are reconciled in Christ.³²

How then might our worship strengthen the quest for justice for the planet?

There is much in our tradition to encourage us. The music of the church often celebrates the goodness of creation. Many of our mothers and fathers in the faith approached creation with reverence and awe, spotting in each insect, flower and tree the fingerprint of God. The second stanza of George Wade Robinson's nineteenth century hymn *Loved with Everlasting Love* asserts that "Heaven above is softer blue" and earth "sweeter green" "since I know, as now I know, I am His and He is mine."³³

Robinson's sentiments are worth pondering. Genuine love for the Creator is likely to lead to a love for creation. The opening account in Genesis notes that God proclaims each stage of creation to be good. The divine delight in creation should be echoed in our journey through life. We live in a populated planet. Not all its inhabitants are human, but all were spoken into existence by the voice of God.

At a time when humans are increasingly alienated from creation and often spend the bulk of their waking hours in concrete monstrosities with little natural light or air, it is understandable that our relationship with nature is fractured. We need to rediscover the spirituality of creation. On Palm Sunday when Jesus was asked to order the crowd to desist from praising him, he confidently

³⁰ For ten practical suggestions, see C. Michael Hawn, "Cross-Cultural Worship: Praying Justly," *Clergy Journal* 80, no. 6 (2004).

³¹ For a good example of this see M.A. Srokosz, "God's Story and the Earth's Story: Grounding Our Concern for the Environment in the Biblical Metanarrative," *Science and Christian Belief* 20, no. 2 (2008).

³² As in the Pauline vision in Colossians 1:20.

³³ Horrobin and Leavers, eds., 452.

asserted that if they fell silent the stones would cry out in praise.³⁴ It was not an idle sentiment. A few days later Jesus' death at Calvary is met with jeers and sneers by the majority of human onlookers. Nature proved more sensitive, and the sun refused to shine.³⁵ It should come as no surprise. The Psalmist did not hesitate to invite creation to join in the song of praise to God. Psalm 148 is a good example. Each realm is invited to praise the Lord. It is only in verse 11 that humans are invited to join the song. Sun, moon, stars, clouds, sea creatures, lightening, hail, snow, wind, mountains, hills, fruit trees, cedars, wild animals, cattle, small creatures and birds all receive their invitation before the first human representatives are mentioned. Human worshippers simply join the existing chorus of praise. Draper's reworking of St Francis' hymn *All Creatures of our God and King* reflects a similar trajectory. The burning sun, the silver moon, the rushing wind and clouds, together with flowing water and fire are invited to join in the chorus "O praise Him, O praise Him, Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah," before any persons are present. Indeed, it is only in the fourth stanza that humans are requested to join the ever swelling ranks of worshippers.³⁶

While we should not labour the point, it reminds us that anthropocentric assumptions about worship are neither rooted in scripture nor in the tradition of the church. If we view nature as a fellow worshipper we will be more respectful of her. We will realise that we have much to learn from her, and will steward her well. Often the best way to steward nature will be to leave her alone. Nature exploited or devastated quietens the chorus of praise to God. For a worshipping community this is always unacceptable. In protecting and preserving the earth we safeguard nature's cry of adoration to the Creator.

If worship is to strengthen the quest for justice for the planet it will be when worship is holistic. Rosemary Radford Ruether is correct when she asserts that

It is not enough to have a once a year "earth day" liturgy that focuses specifically on ecological issues or to have an occasional prayer that mentions ecology. There needs to be a total reconceptualization of liturgical theology that integrates the whole creation as the context for the human-divine relationship. Instead of a privatized "me and God" theology, the human being needs to be understood as embedded in community and community in creation.³⁷

Worship as a doxology of hope

In worship we embrace our highest hopes and aspirations. Spirit enlivened worship assures us of the presence and reality of the risen Christ. Worship affirms our eschatological longing and vision. And when, as in the Wesley hymn *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*, we experience the

³⁴ Luke 19:39-40.

³⁵ Luke 23:44-45.

³⁶ Horrobin and Leavers, eds., 7.

³⁷ Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Ecological Theology: Roots in Tradition, Liturgical and Ethical Practice for Today," *Dialog* 42, no. 3 (2003): 231.

mystery of being “lost in wonder, love, and praise” we are able to anticipate something of the future God has in store for us.³⁸ German theologian Jürgen Moltmann has stressed that by looking from the future back to the present we find the courage to anticipate future reality in the present. It is this refrain that comes through in his *The Experiment Hope*. At the end of the work he approvingly quotes from a poem of Ingeborg Bachmann that speaks of a reward “for desertion, for bravery in the face of the friend, for betraying all unworthy secrets and the disregard of every command.”³⁹

This is worship at its best. It gives us the courage to act out our faith. Rather than idle escapism, this kind of worship serves as a doxology of hope. We affirm and delight in the hope we have not to enable a deadening of the senses to the struggles of the present but to liberate us to serve as co workers with God committed to constructing the reality we long for and which we believe will ultimately be attained. As participants in the *missio Dei* we align ourselves with ultimate reality. Be it the neighbour who is in need, a species in danger of extinction, rain forests which are disappearing or prejudice which is being rationalised, we, the people of God, follow the example of our incarnated Lord. We stand in the place of those who cannot defend themselves. We are empowered to do so because of the healing and wholeness we have found in Christ. And we know that when we stand in the gap for others, we sing a song of praise that will not be extinguished. And it is thus that in worship we further the quest for justice.

Andrews, Dave. *People of Compassion*. Blackburn, VIC: TEAR Australia, 2008.

Berger, Peter L. *Pyramids of Sacrifice: Political Ethics and Social Change*. New York: Basic Books, 1974.

Bock, Fred, ed. *Hymns for the Family of God*. Nashville: Paragon, 1976.

Boulton, Matthew Myer. "Unholy Rites: What's Wrong with Worship?" *Christian Century* 126, no. 2 (2009): 30-33.

Chan, Simon. *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Dare, Christine, ed. *Praise the Lord*. Rondebosch: Scripture Union, 1981.

Dawkins, Richard. *The God Delusion*. London: Bantam, 2006.

Grenz, Stanley J. *Created for Community: Connecting Christian Belief with Christian Living*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Harris, Brian. "When Faith is the Problem." *The Advocate*, April 2007, 4.

³⁸ Horrobin and Leavers, eds., 449.

³⁹ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Experiment Hope*, trans. M. Douglas Meeks (London: SCM, 1975), 189-190.

- Hawn, C. Michael. "Cross-Cultural Worship: Praying Justly." *Clergy Journal* 80, no. 6 (2004): 3-5.
- Hitchens, Christopher. *God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*. New York: Twelve, 2007.
- Horrobin, Peter, and Greg Leavers, eds. *Mission Praise*. London: Marshall Pickering, 1990.
- Kelley, James B. "Song, Story, or History: Resisting Claims of a Coded Message in the African American Spiritual 'Follow the Drinking Gourd'." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 41, no. 2 (2008): 262-280.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Experiment Hope*. Translated by M. Douglas Meeks. London: SCM, 1975.
- Radford Ruether, Rosemary. "Ecological Theology: Roots in Tradition, Liturgical and Ethical Practice for Today." *Dialog* 42, no. 3 (2003): 226-234.
- Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- Schmidt, Alvin J. *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Srokosz, M.A. "God's Story and the Earth's Story: Grounding our Concern for the Environment in the Biblical Metanarrative." *Science and Christian Belief* 20, no. 2 (2008): 163-174.
- Volf, Mirsolav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Wallis, Jim. *The Call to Conversion*. Herts: Lion, 1981.