

Getting Started with M2J

M2J Manual



Getting Started - M2J Manual

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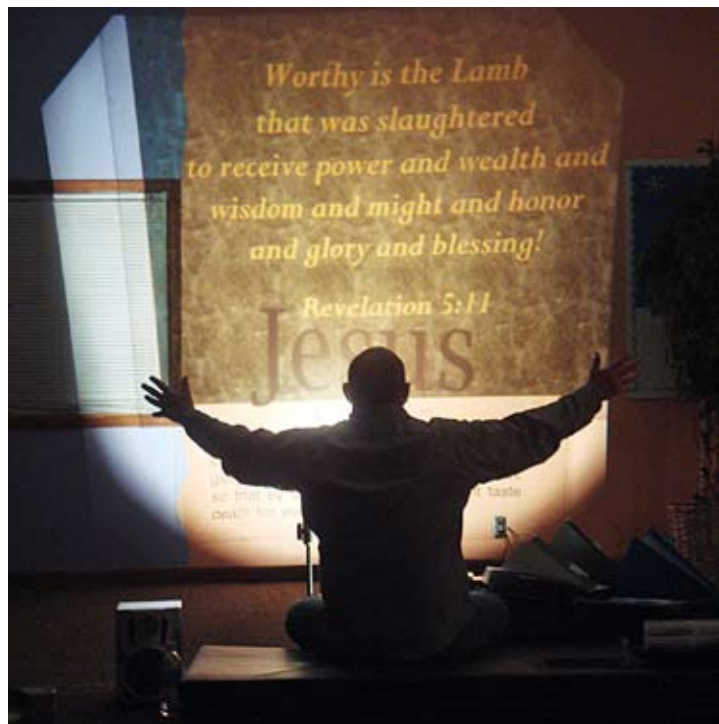
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Getting Started with M2J

Section 1

Understanding the purpose of M2J



Understanding the purpose of M2J

What Ministering To Jesus is about

The **substance** at the heart of Ministering to Jesus (M2J) is **the love and worship of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Around the substance we have placed **a certain form**, M2J, which is the unique way in which we pursue it.

Ministering to Jesus is corporate, personal and intensely focused devotion to God. We commit together certain times and places each week to worship. We call these times 'worship watches' which usually last for one or two hours. Each watch has an appointed leader who uses CDs, Scriptures, musical instruments, silence, etc. to aid in bringing a fragrant offering to the Lord, ministering to His heart.

People are free to come and go during that time as they are able. Typically as people enter, the leader is worshiping the Lord by playing music, displaying the words on a screen or the wall and putting up related Scriptures. Each person there, following the lead given, enters into personal devotion each in their own way - sometimes standing, sometimes kneeling, sitting, prostrate on the floor or using the banners.

This is not a meeting in the regular sense. We have no announcements, no opening prayer, no times of direct fellowship. It is not a prayer meeting. Rather we are there to give our full and undistracted attention to the Lord. We are there for Him. We are there in His presence. We discourage corporate singing. Rather we take the words of 'God-centered' songs and Scriptures and meditate and worship in our hearts. There are some times of 'seeking' Him but mainly we pour out our love and admiration on Him, declaring Him King of all creation, celebrating Him. Ephesians 5:19 "...singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."



M2J is one of many forms in our day pursuing the substance of loving Him. Other forms that you may use include private devotions, reading Scripture, church worship, 'harp and bowl' worship, contemplative prayer and other.

Our Goal: Ministering to the Lord

One thing I have desired of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple. Psalm 27:4

This is the heart of Ministering to Jesus: learning to spend time with Him, being comfortable in His presence, actively ministering to Him in love and worship, bringing Him pleasure, making Him central in our lives. We desire hearts continually fascinated by Jesus, hungry to pursue Him and regularly encountering Him face to face.

Why we do M2J

We worship, adore, meditate on, exult in, and celebrate... **because He is worth it all.**

"Let them praise the name of the Lord, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven." Psalm 148:13... "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Revelation 5:12

We are learning to love Him intimately and exuberantly, learning to enjoy spending time with Him... because He is our lover and our friend.

"Surely then you will find delight in the Almighty and will lift up your face to God." Job 22:26 ... "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I took great delight and sat down, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." Song of Songs 2:3... "Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume, she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." John 12:3

We are making eye contact with Him... because His eyes range throughout the earth looking for those whose hearts are set on Him. "For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him." 2 Chronicles 16:9... "You have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes." Song of Songs 4:9

We comfort His broken heart by offering up a sweet smelling sacrifice of praise.

"The Lord was grieved that He had made man on the earth, and His heart was filled with pain." Genesis 6:6... "The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in His heart: 'never again will I curse the ground because of man.'" Genesis 8:21... "Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:2

We are interceding for others as we come before Him in the holy place, with the names of those we love on our hearts and our shoulders. "Whenever Aaron enters the holy place, he will bear the names of the sons of Israel over his heart... as a continuing memorial before the Lord." Exodus 28:12, 29

We are stirring up our Warrior King as we provide the drumbeat to His battles.

"Every stroke the Lord lays on them with his punishing rod will be to the music of tambourines and harps, as he fights them in battle with the blows of his arm." Isaiah 30:32

We are taking, by our priestly worship, the sin offering of the Lamb of God right into the Most Holy Place to deal with the sin of the world... so that God can continue to presence Himself with us. We exercise His power, driving back His enemies and releasing His love and mercy into the world. "And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gates to make the people holy through His own blood. ... through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise; the fruit of lips that confess His name." Leviticus 4 and Hebrews 13:11-15

As we love and long for Him, how can He resist not coming to us...

Why we recommend M2J as a helpful 'form' to learn to know and love Him.

- It is very **focused**. Our worship is totally focused on God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit; but especially on Jesus, the incarnate One.
- M2J **helps us to purify our motives**. The emphasis in our time is of worship - it is all about Him, not about us.
- We have **no other agenda**. We are there simply to spend time with Him and bring Him pleasure. Our worship is active not passive. As we spend time with Him, we want to “minister” to Him. We actively stir up our spirit to love Him from the heart.
- M2J is very **simple**. Anyone, anywhere can learn to lead a worship watch. Elderly people can lead, also children. Equipment is kept to a minimum. We do not need a worship band or even much space. We can easily worship for many hours, often through the night. It is very “do-able”.
- We are **training our hearts**. Generally, we do not sing in our worship watches. At first, this is a hard discipline. How else can we express our love to the Lord? As we go on, we discover that by keeping our mouths shut, our hearts are beginning to ‘make melody to the Lord’. (Ephesians 5:19) in a way we have never known before.
- We are **disciplining our lives**. We put regular times in our week when we choose to spend time with Him. The worship watch team that we belong to helps us to be accountable. The encouragement of others worshipping in the same way gives us great joy. Slowly a new discipline develops.
- In M2J we are developing a **rhythm of life**, clear committed times in our days or weeks when we “go in” to the Lord in prayer or worship and then “come out” to our world.
- It reminds us to **die to self**. Each watch leader leads differently, and might have a style of leading or play music not preferred by other worshipers. We choose to die to our own preferences and focus on the glory of His presence, offering our worship to Jesus without judgment.

Worshiping in community

This model of worship is personal and yet is not private. When we minister to Jesus corporately, there is a powerful statement concerning the Body’s need for the Head, the Bride for the Bridegroom. He is our bridegroom and we are the bride. We need each other as we focus on Him. This is a taste of heaven. We remember the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ: “where two or three come together in my name, there and I with them.” Matt 18:20

Sometimes it’s tempting to think to ourselves, “I can spend this time in His presence in my own home away from the distractions of others, playing the music that I love, reading the Scriptures that I prefer, for as long as I like. Time alone with the Lord is vital.” Although all this is true, we also know that from the beginning, the Lord has emphasized to us that Ministering to Jesus needs to be corporate as well as personal. On the personal side,



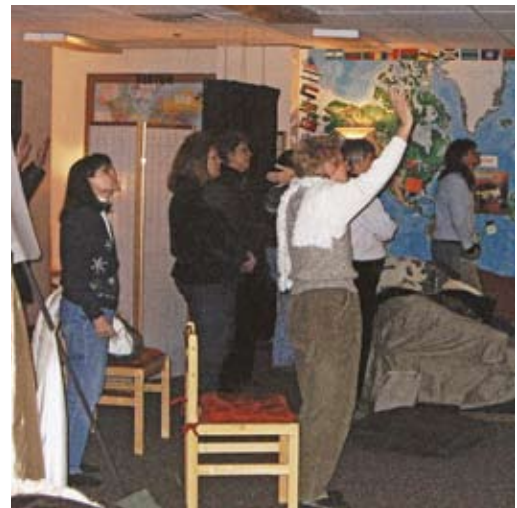
we encourage everyone to have their personal space in the room and to give their full attention to the Lord alone and undistracted. But at the same time we believe that we need to do this together. There are practical and scriptural reasons for this:

The Practical:

Coming to worship watches with others helps us in many ways. Even though we are personally focused on the Lord as we minister to Him, having others there doing the same thing helps us to keep focused. The team keeps us accountable too. If we were alone at home, ministering to Him, there would often be a reason why we would cut our time short -the phone would ring, our kids would come looking for us or we would see an urgent job to do. At 6 a.m. on a cold and snowy morning, the thought of others on the team waiting for us at the worship watch is a good motivation to get out of bed! When you function as a team, you take turns leading the watch as well as being there on a committed basis. This builds relationships as well as gives team members more flexibility if they cannot attend a watch once in a while or need to be out of town. It helps us to be disciplined and faithful with the worship watches. There are very few times when we have to cancel a watch because we have others on the team to cover times when we can't be there.

Spiritual:

We believe that there is a wonderful tension in scripture between the personal and corporate. We are all invited into a wonderful personal intimate relationship with a Living God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the Father created us uniquely, Jesus died for us, forgave our personal sin, gave us new life and much else. But the Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament, is all about community, the people of God corporately. In the book of Revelation, we see what is ahead of us. We will personally and individually fall on our faces before the throne and worship God (Revelation 7:11). We will be part of a great multitude that no one can count. (Revelation 7:9). Many of us live in a culture of radical individualism. We can be very self- focused. The balance between the wonderful experience of God's great personal love for us and yet realizing that we are not the centre of the universe is very important. Worshiping as a team helps us in this. We learn to work together, to appreciate each other, to be accountable to each other, to enjoy each other's taste in worship music. We also believe that as we worship together, even though it is very individual, the Lord is pleased. Strangers walking into our worship watches are often struck by the strong sense of the presence of the Lord in our midst.



One of the greatest enemies to growing in the Lord in our culture is the 'me' focus: what I like, what I want, what I seek. Because of our emphasis in M2J on personal intimacy and focus on the Lord, this could easily go sour. Our worship and love of the Lord could become more important than anything else. However, because we are doing this together, we "look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" and "do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others

better than yourselves." Philipians 2:3-4. Each worship leader will lead the watch differently, with different music, Scriptures and ways of ministering. As we learn to love and minister to Jesus, He challenges us to "lay down our lives for the brethren." 1 John 3:16

In M2J, we are putting ourselves in that place of the Bride of Christ. We want to learn intimacy, undivided commitment and devotion to Jesus, the heavenly Bridegroom. We want to learn to be innocent, pure, beautiful, expressing our love and longing in anticipation of that day when we will see Him face-to-face. In human terms, the bride and bridegroom represent a relationship that is utterly personal, private and intimate. We learn much of this in Song of Songs which is also a beautiful picture of our relationship in the Spirit with our great Lover.

It is very clear in the New Testament that the Bride of Christ is the Church. The Bride of Christ is not individual but corporate. This is confusing to us. How can a bride be personal, private, and intimate along with thousands of millions of others? In M2J we begin to learn this. We have often experienced being in a M2J worship watch with 30 or 40 other people or more. Each one is lost in intense personal devotion to Jesus and yet we are all metaphorically falling on our faces together. This is a beautiful preview of our life in heaven. (Revelation 5:11-14)

Establishing a regular discipline

We desire our lives to be an expression of unceasing prayer and worship. Without the help of certain disciplines, this remains a vague ideal, something that has romantic appeal but not at all realistic in our contemporary world. We need something specific and concrete to create a context in which this kind of life of continuous worship is nurtured. Ministering to Jesus in a regular way provides this context. In the middle of all the other responsibilities that He has given us, we are taking specific time out to tell the Lord that we love Him, purely for who He is, not for anything we can get from Him or do for Him.



Afghanistan 2001

We believe that Ministering to Jesus helps re-establish a part of our Christian heritage lost to much of the church in recent centuries. This is a rhythm of life which puts into place clearly defined, committed times in our days or weeks when we "go in" to the Lord in prayer and worship and then "come out" to go to work, look after our families, care for others, etc. Our "going in" to Him is vital to our "coming out". By those fixed times in our schedule, we are saying to the Lord that He is the centre of our existence. He is the Source for the outworking of our lives. He is the One that we seek and then, as we go out, we carry Him out to the world.

How we express our worship in M2J

Singing with our hearts, not voices. We seek to minister to Him from the heart. In order to develop this, we discourage corporate singing. We focus on the words. We focus on the Scriptures. A time may come later when we reintroduce singing in some form.

Body language. This often reflects what is going on in our hearts. – standing in His presence, kneeling at His feet, prostrate in awe of Him, stirring up our hearts as we walk.

Banners and flags. We use these to express outwardly what is in our hearts-Joy, celebration, declaration of His Greatness, agreement with what we are hearing and seeing on the screen

Small musical instruments. Small drums, shakers, tambourines etc all can be used to express outwardly what is in our hearts towards Him. However, they may be distracting if people are too loud or offbeat!

Dance. This can be a wonderful way to express ministry to Him in an area of the room where it does not distract others.

Silence. There are times in our worship watches, especially if we have been doing it for many hours, when we want to turn off the music and minister to Him in silence. These are active times of awe and wonder, meditating and reflecting on the Lord, using the Scriptures or words before us on the screen.

For most people, the way that we minister to the Lord is very different than any form of worship that they have done before. It takes some time to get used to this very personal and focused way of spending time with the Lord. However, the bottom line is always that we are there for Him not for ourselves. We are there to minister to Him, not for Him to minister to us. There are times where we feel dry and we do not feel His presence, but we believe that we are bringing pleasure to His heart by choosing to set time aside for Him. However, we find that we can never out-give Him, and He faithfully fulfills His promise of drawing close to those who draw close to Him (James 4:8).

To examine more extensively what light Scripture throws on our understanding of M2J, go to the section, "What Does the Bible Say?"

Link to ["What Does the Bible Say?"](#)



Getting Started with M2J

Section 2

Getting set up to do worship watches



Getting set up to do worship watches

1. Building your first watch team

- **Find like-minded people.** It's very important to know the hearts of the people you entrust to lead watches – that they are wholeheartedly committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and grounded in the Word. We minister with a reverent fear and awe of our most Holy God. In addition, each person leading watches needs to understand what M2J is, and why we worship in this way.

[Link to "Statement of Faith"](#)

- **Commitment to a regular day and time.** Each person on your watch team should commit to attending and leading watches regularly. Watches are typically held weekly, usually for 1-2 hours at a time.
- **Team size.** We recommend starting with a minimum of 3-4 people. That way you can take turns leading watches and will have a committed community to worship with. This is an important aspect of M2J. It also helps sustain the regular worship watch schedule as you cover for each other if someone is sick or out-of-town. You can build your watch team, or multiply the number of watches at your location, by inviting people to worship with you regularly and then later inviting them to lead watches as you observe their commitment and heart for M2J.
- **Meet to pray and learn together.** As you put together watch leader teams, it's important to have occasional times when all watch leaders come together for fellowship, prayer, and teaching in addition to your M2J watches. This is especially important if you have more than one watch team. It helps build community and unity among your leaders, and keeps everyone focused on important Truths of the Word. This enrichment is carried into our worship watches and assures everyone is aligned in heart and in practice.



2. Finding an appropriate location to hold your watches

- **Public access.** It is best to find a public location, usually your church or a local House of Prayer rather than a home. M2J worship watches are intended to be open to the whole Body of Christ. If a worship watch is located in a private home, new people can feel awkward about walking into someone's home if they don't know them. You want to make watches as accessible to the largest number of people possible.
- **Permission and support of leaders.** It's important to meet with the pastor or prayer center leader at the location you've chosen. You'll want to explain Ministering To Jesus and get their commitment to allow you to meet there regularly.

It is important that the pastor feels comfortable with what we are doing in worship watches. Even if he's not able to come to any of the worship watches, it is also very helpful if he is willing to promote M2J in the church. All the pastors that we are connected with have been very supportive. We even have a number of pastors who have begun to incorporate M2J in some small form into their regular church service. One church in our area does a continuous 12-hour M2J worship watch on Good Friday. Members of the congregation come in and out throughout the day.

- We also believe that by establishing M2J in a church or Christian institution, we are making a spiritual statement on behalf of that group. At the heart of the church, we are telling the Lord that before "doing" anything else – preaching, teaching, discipling, evangelizing, children's programs, etc. – our focus and our attention is on Him. He is the Lord.

3. Room set-up

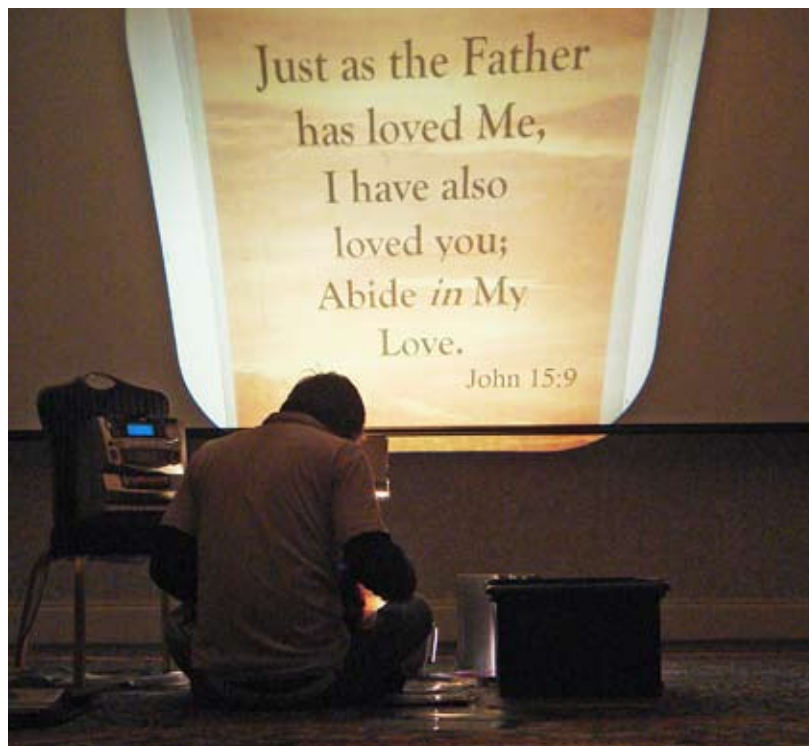
- **A "set apart" space.** Foremost, the room needs to be "sacred space" where people ministering to the Lord are not interrupted by people walking through the area to get to their offices, or by people chatting or intercoms breaking in on the worship!
- **Blank wall or screen.** You need to have a blank wall or a screen on which you can project song words and Scriptures. This provides an important visual focus point for ministering to Him.
- **Personal space for worship.** You need a room large enough for each person in the watch to feel free to minister to the Lord personally. Because people will be standing, sitting, kneeling, or lying prostrate before the Lord, there should be enough room for people to spread out. In many watch locations, we also have flags that worshipers use to express their joy and love to their King. If you're interested in using flags, you have to be sure you have enough room for people to wave them without interfering with other people's worship. When picking a room big enough for M2J, be sure you plan for additional people besides just your immediate watch team. Others will want to join you!
- **Carpeting.** Carpeting is recommended because people often like to kneel or lie before the Lord. If carpeting isn't available, it's good to have throw rugs or blankets people can use when on the floor.
- **Chairs and/or cushions.** We recommend you have chairs or cushions available for worshipers. Scatter them throughout the room so that each person has some personal space for sitting or lying prostrate.
- **Beauty.** Beauty is an expression of God. We want to create a place of beauty where God is welcomed and honored. Having a worship space that has been thoughtfully arranged and decorated creates a sense of peace, order, and serenity that's inviting to worshipers as well. Keeping this in perspective, though, is important. The beauty of the room is simply an aid to worship. As we gaze internally on the beauty of the Lord, as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, we may sometimes only give a passing look to beauty around us.
- **Low lighting.** This creates a more intimate space, and also makes it easier for worshipers to see the projected words and Scriptures. An inexpensive and effective way to create soft lighting is by using a couple of floor lamps set around the perimeter of the room.

- **Storage cupboards or closet.** It's ideal if you have a designated place within or near the worship room to store M2J resources in-between watch times. If that is necessary in your location, it makes set-up time for each watch much quicker and easier when all the equipment is in one place.
- **Room entrance away from the projection wall.** People sometimes have to come and go during a watch, and you want their movement to be as unobtrusive as possible so it doesn't distract or disturb worshipers. So it's ideal if the room entrance is opposite the wall used for projection, or at least not in the same general area.

4. Technical Resources

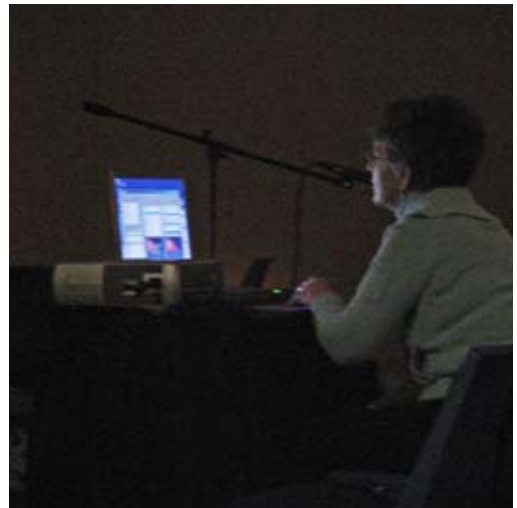
Low tech

- overhead projector
- Multiple CD player (needs to be able to store and access at least 3 CDs at a time)
- 1-2 file boxes to store song and scripture overhead sheets, backgrounds, and CDs.



High tech

- Computer, preferably a laptop. Must meet the requirements of the worship program software. The computer runs the worship software and the music.
- Computer projector. This projects worship program from the computer onto a screen or blank wall.
- Sound system that can plug into the computer. There are many relatively cheap ones on the market that will do a good job, and are still small enough to be portable.
- Software:
 - Word processing software such as Microsoft Works
 - A Worship Program capable of showing the song words, Scriptures, and backgrounds (most of our locations use the program "Easy Worship" found at www.EasyWorship.com.)
 - iTunes – to organize and play the music. This is free and can be downloaded from the internet www.iTunes.com



When electricity isn't available: Other ways to approach watches

We have learned that projecting words and Scriptures for everyone to focus on corporately is a very important aspect of Ministering to Jesus. But in some areas of the world electricity isn't always de-

pendable. If that's your situation, you should have a back-up system available for those times, such as an iPod and battery-powered sound system.

When you're faced with no electricity, you won't be able to provide all the song words, but might choose to write some key words or phrases from each song as it is being played. Write out at least a couple of key Scriptures on large paper and post them on the wall throughout the watch.

Music and Scriptures

Each time we minister to Jesus in the worship watches, we put up words of scripture or words of songs that are scripturally based. We play music that speaks of the greatness of God our Father and the centrality of Christ His Son. We inform our minds, our hearts and our spirits of the truth of God's great reality. As we do this, we soak our lives in His Word during each watch. Through this soaking, He is cleansing us. He is using His Word to wash us through. He is renewing our minds. He is humbling our hearts. He is preparing His Bride.

- **Selecting suitable music.** Our main concern in choosing the music is the focus of the words, not the style (loud/quiet/fast/slow, etc.) In selecting music, we ask ourselves: Do the words point us to God – Father, Son or Holy Spirit? Do the words cause our hearts to rise to desire and seek Him? Do the words give us content to worship Him – for instance, His greatness, goodness, love, or work on the Cross? Are the words based in Scripture? Can we point to specific Scriptures?

Be careful about words that focus exclusively on "me" and what God does for me. Some songs about our personal relationship with God are appropriate, because they are about our desire/hunger for Him and go on to point us to Him. But be careful that these do not dominate the entire worship watch. We can easily become too 'me'-focused. The bulk of our time should direct our worship on to him.

At times, you will want to focus solely on the Word of God, so it's good to have some instrumental-only worship music in your music library.

List of recommended CDs

[Link to "List of Recommended CDs PDF"](#)

- **Creating song words** (for overhead transparencies or on the computer). Use word processing software on a computer such as Microsoft Works or Word to create the song word documents. Don't let the magnitude of the work to create these documents overwhelm you. Start small, picking the songs you most want to use, and over time slowly add more song words. It helps, too, if you can recruit others to help you produce song word documents!

If you purchase whole CDs, you can almost always find the song words on the inside jacket of the CDs. If you purchase music through iTunes, you can typically find the song words through an internet search engine like Google by entering the song name and artist (example: "Indescribable Chris Tomlin lyrics", or "Saviour King Hillsong lyrics"). You will need to cut-and-paste the words

into a word processing software (e.g. Microsoft Works). If you do get the words from the internet, we recommend you listen to the song and check the words to be sure they're correct and in the right order.

You should include the name of the CD and artist at bottom of each song document.

- **Creating Scriptures** (for overhead transparencies or on the computer). As with the song words, you will need access to a computer with word processing software such as Microsoft Works or Word to create the scripture documents.

If you're using a computer with a worship program software, you should have access to Scriptures within that program. You can choose to just use the Scriptures as is, or you might want to create documents with favorite Scriptures that you can access quickly and can format as you like (e.g. highlighting or underlining key words or phrases). Again, we recommend you start small – a couple from each category – and build up from there over time.

When preparing the words, choose fonts that are easy to read, and be sure the print is large enough to be read from all areas of the room. We recommend you put scriptures on one page only, and don't project too many words at one time – it's harder for worshipers to read and absorb them all at once.

- **List of recommended Scriptures**

[Link to "List of recommended Scriptures PDF"](#)

- **Collecting artwork or pictures as backgrounds for overhead transparencies or for the computer**

"One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord." Psalm 27:4

In Ministering to Jesus, we believe that there is an important connection between worship and beauty. God longs to reveal Himself to His people. He has done this supremely through the bodily incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ but also through His written Word and creation.

Beauty in nature is an aid to worship. It points us to different aspects of God's personhood, whether it is His power in a mighty tornado or His creativity in the colors of ocean fish swimming deep in the sea. So we may use some nature backgrounds to our words or Scriptures on the overhead projector screen, such as pictures of flowers, sunsets, mountains, lakes, etc.

Additionally, symbols such as the Cross, the Lion, the Lamb, a heart, or a drawing of a world surrounded by singing children can be equally powerful as backgrounds to the song words or Scriptures. As people are worshiping, seeing certain symbols – visual aspects of Christ – may connect with a scripture that they are already meditating on.

Be careful not to use “busy” backgrounds that make it hard for people to distinguish the words from the background. Your backgrounds should never compete with the song words and Scriptures for worshipers’ attention. Instead, they should draw worshipers to focus on them.

- **Where to find good backgrounds.**

If you’re using a computer and worship software, the worship software should provide a variety of backgrounds you can use. You can also download art and photographs (even ones you’ve taken!) into the worship software. If you’re using an overhead projector, you can copy photographs and artwork directly onto transparencies. The internet is a good source of free graphics, artwork, and photographs.

Link to [“List of FREE Background Links”](#)



M2J in two languages - Romania 2007

Getting Started with M2J

Section 3

Learning to lead a watch – practical guidelines

**Different approaches to selecting the songs for a
worship watch:**

Displaying song words and Scriptures.

Using backgrounds

Volume

Building a Theme

Amplifying the Truths of Scripture

Growing more experienced

Getting Started

Learning to lead a watch

The best way to learn to lead is to first participate in watches if they are already happening in your area.

How do I start?

Start with a worship song. Listen to the words and see what the main point of the song is (for example, God's love). Select one or two Scriptures that confirm the truth of the song. Put them up when the words of the song come to natural break (instrumental or many repetitions of the chorus). As this song draws to a close, select another song (usually from the same CD) which seems to fit in with the main thought of the last song and the Scriptures you have used. Continue on in this way through the watch. You can also use one simple background throughout the time. Use the words of the songs and the scriptures to speak back to the Lord in your heart and minister to Him.

Remember that the main purpose is for you to be able to worship so don't get flustered with the equipment or what needs to come next. Keep it simple. This is stage one. Get comfortable with this



Building a Theme

As you begin to do this over many weeks, you will find yourself becoming more familiar with the equipment, the music, backgrounds and scriptures. Now you can begin to be more intentional about what aspect or attribute of the Lord that you wish to 'gaze at' during your time together.

As you play similar songs with their related Scriptures, a theme will begin to emerge such as God's Faithfulness or Christ's sacrifice for us on the Cross. Begin to be even more intentional with the songs that you select and the Scriptures that you choose. You can also put up a background that relates to that theme.

Continue selecting songs from the same CD until you have exhausted the possibilities for that theme. At this point you can either build on the theme by going to another CD to find songs that relate or you can begin to change the theme, using the same CD.

You can stay on the same theme for quite a long time. Using the Scriptures you used in the previous songs helps bring continuity. Keeping continuous meditation on a certain aspect of the Lord's character is helpful and effective in carrying the truths of God into a person's heart. As these truths settle in our heart, we are able to use them to worship and minister back to Jesus.

Using different artists and different tempos while on the same subject matter is also good so that people don't lose focus. You are basically using the same set of Scriptures, but the songs, artist, and the tempo are different, thus bringing in new thoughts and sounds to help truths enter in.

If you are changing from a fast song to slow song or vice versa you can also use a small period of silence and a scripture to be a bridge for the next song. It is also good to use silence any time during watches to ponder longer on the truths displayed.

How do we worship and minister to Him?

We are learning to play music and display the words and Scriptures along with backgrounds. How does all this help us to worship?

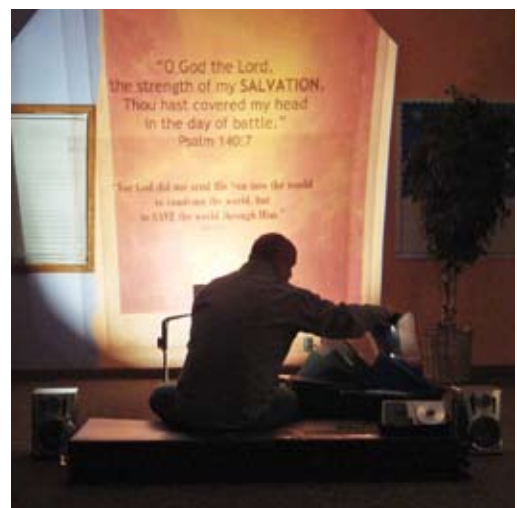
- * First we listen to the music
- * Then we start to use the words of the songs as our own words, to speak them (silently) back to the Lord in our hearts as we are listening.
eg . Tim Hugues : Here I am to Worship: " here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say . 'you are my God'. You're altogether lovely, altogether worthy.I'll never know how much it costs to see my sin upon the cross..." although we are not singing or speaking, we are using his words very actively to enter into worship.
- As Scriptures begin to be displayed, we begin to meditate on the truths of the words we have heard in the song that begin to be deeply enriched by His Word. Through the time of the worship watch, we experience new levels of revelation as the words and scriptures follow a theme, giving us new understanding and awe of who He is, leading us deeper into worship.
- Through using the words in worship and beginning to meditate on the riches of his Word, our hearts begin to engage fully with the Lord, free from the distractions that we walked into the watch with.

Example of a watch using themes

(This plan would take you through about 30 minutes of M2J worship):

Theme: Grace & Mercy in the Cross

1. **CD:** Where Angels fear to Tread
Artist: Matt Redman
Song: Amazing
Scriptures: Psalm 5:7, 2 Corinthians 8:9
Background: A scene with a Cross
2. **CD:** Same
Song: The Promise of the Cross
Scriptures: Same as above, plus Ephesians 1:7-8
Background: same
3. **CD:** Same
Song: Where Angels Fear to Tread
Scriptures: same
Background: same



Slight change in theme: God's Grace & Mercy towards us

4. **CD:** Same
Song: Befriended
Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 8:9 (same as above), plus Ephesians 2:7
Background: drawing of a heart

Slight change in theme: God's Grace & Mercy towards us in our need

5. **CD:** Same
Song: When My Heart Runs Dry
Scriptures: Ephesians 1:7-8, plus Ephesians 2:7 (as above)
Background: same as last song (drawing of a heart)
6. **CD:** (new) Facedown
Artist: Matt Redman
Song: Facedown
Scriptures: Psalm 5:7, Ephesians 2:7
Background: same as last song (drawing of a heart)

Amplifying the Truths of Scripture

In order to amplify a certain truth, you will need to put the same scripture up often. For example, you might want to look at Christ's death on the Cross. Select your song about the Cross and then one passage of scripture you want to amplify. Put up the words first. Then select a good time to display your chosen scripture. Then go back to the words (maybe when they start the next verse.). Then at a convenient point, go back to your scripture. In this way, keep interchanging the words to the song and the passage of scripture to make your point about the theme.

Be sure you are looking, meditating and worshiping yourself. This is how you know if you are going too fast. You want the people in the room to follow where you are going. People are worshiping the Lord through what is being put before them. If you are putting too much, too fast, up on the screen, they will close their eyes and disengage.

Many times you will want to emphasize the same point as in the previous song. Select the next song with the same theme as your last song. Use the same scripture as you were using before, but this time, add another scripture that carries the same idea. (similar to cross- referencing).

Additional Help as you begin

Different approaches: selecting songs for a worship watch:

• Choose one CD and play it through.

Benefits: When beginning to lead M2J watches, if not familiar with all the CDs and songs available it's easier for new leaders to use only one CD they're familiar with. Also, it can be less dis-

tracting for worshippers as there are no pauses or noises caused by changing CDs (this isn't a problem if you use iTunes or an iPod). That's also a benefit for the watch leader because they can then focus more on getting the song words and Scriptures projected rather than having to manage all of it, particularly the first couple of times they lead a watch. As you begin to focus on a theme, picks tracks within that CD that relate to it if possible.

Drawbacks. Few CDs exist where every song keeps the focus on the Lord. Also, there can be a large variance in tempo and volume from one song to the next. It can be distracting to suddenly change from a period of quiet worship to loud celebration.

- **Play songs from many CDs.**

Benefit: You can more easily follow your theme to focus on a particular attribute of the Lord.

Drawbacks: Until leaders are familiar with the CDs and sound system and can move easily from one to the other, they may be very distracted from ministering to the Lord themselves as they're searching for songs that fit a specific theme. Also, changing CDs often creates pauses and mechanical noise which can be very distracting to other worshippers (unless using iTunes or an iPod). Another drawback is that the theme of the songs may all remain the same but the tempo and sound level vary greatly, as may the different musical styles of the singer/band.

- **Pre-prepare the whole worship watch.**

Some of our leaders choose to prepare the worship watch ahead of time – they come early and select all their music and Scriptures before the worship watch begins.

Benefits: It's easier for newer watch leader to focus on ministering to the Lord when they don't have to think about what song to play next.

Drawbacks: As watch leaders grow more familiar with the process of switching music and song words, they appreciate the flexibility of being able to respond to the Holy Spirit's promptings during watches. The more dependent leaders are on pre-prepared watches, the longer it takes for them to develop that ability to be flexible about what music they play or what theme they focus on during the watch.

Displaying song words and Scriptures.

Whenever possible, we display the words of the songs on the screen or wall. This helps people to focus on the Lord, using the words to meditate on Him, especially song words that are full of scriptural content. This also helps people who are not familiar with the songs understand what they're singing about, so they're not distracted by trying to understand the words.

Having Scriptures for worshipers to meditate on is essential to the Ministering To Jesus model of worship. The Word of God is a powerful aid to worship, keeping us rooted and grounded in the Truth. As we soak ourselves in the Scriptures that we put on the screen, our lives are washed in the Word. We worship the words back to Him.

Sometimes the words of songs are very simple and repetitive, so supplementing them with Scripture brings our worship to a greater depth. If the words are very rich and full of scriptural content, we may not need anything else. Scriptures also help highlight a theme the watch leader has chosen to focus on.

When to use Scriptures. We often put up Scriptures if the words of songs are very simple and repetitive, or during instrumental interludes within songs. It's best to let the whole song play through once or twice before putting up any Scripture. It is very effective to use a scripture that ties in with the lyrics of the song in some way. The words of the song and a scripture can often be used interchangeably or even together on the screen (if you're using an overhead projector).

Using Scriptures also helps to highlight a single theme if you have one for the whole watch. Sometimes we only use a couple of Scriptures through the whole worship watch. Caution! Don't put up too many Scriptures at one time. When people are listening to the words of the song, especially if they are complex and rich, they cannot always absorb visually too many Scriptures on the screen. Other times you may choose to use an instrumental only song so worshipers can fully focus on key Scriptures you've chosen for that watch. Relevant Scriptures can also be used if the song words are not available.

A word of caution: Don't overload Scriptures in one song. One or two Scriptures may be enough. Watch leaders themselves need to minister to the Lord throughout the watch. They need to allow enough time both for them and others to read and meditate on each Scripture that is projected. Sometimes leaders use only a couple of Scriptures through the whole worship watch.

Using backgrounds.

We typically put beautiful backgrounds behind all song words and Scriptures. Usually only one background is used throughout a whole song, both for the words and Scriptures. Often leaders choose backgrounds that relate to the words of the song being played. For instance, for the song "How Great is Our God" by Chris Tomlin, you might use a picture of a galaxy or space as a background, to highlight the song words "You spread out the stars...".

There may be occasions, when a different background can be used for emphasis of a particular theme or Truth the leader wants people to focus on. So using the example above, if the watch leader was using the theme of God's greatness, but wanted to juxtapose the concept of his servant heart, when projecting a scripture about Jesus laying down his life for us the watch leader might switch to a background picture of a Cross, and then go back to the universe background when going back to the song words.



Pakistan 2004

There might even be times when a picture or graphic can be used alone for a short time to highlight a Truth, or help worshipers focus on a particular theme. The message should be very clear, however, so worshipers aren't distracted by trying to figure out why an image has been projected.

Volume.

The main concern is the possibility of distracting worshipers by extremes in volume. If the music is

too quiet, people at the back of the room may not be able to understand the words and be distracted. If the volume is too loud, people may be overwhelmed by it and again be distracted from the Lord. Be aware that the sound level of various CDs can vary greatly.

If you're not sure the volume is loud enough for the whole room, you can always check it by getting up and going to the back of the room during the song to check. Over time you'll learn the best volume for the room you regularly worship in.

Finding the Right Balance.

As the leader, you are helping others in the room to enter into worship and engage their hearts with the Lord. Some of them will be using the words of the songs to worship back to the Lord. Others will want to meditate more deeply on the Scriptures that you put up. Be conscious of these different needs. But remember also, that you are not just a DJ for others in the room, you are there to minister to the Lord yourself. If you are not in any way entering into worship yourself, you will probably hinder the flow of worship around you.

Above all, keep in mind as you lead watches that it is not a performance, it is pure worship. So even if things don't go the way you want them to (and they sometimes don't!), remember that what ministers to Jesus is our heart of worship, not how perfectly we change CDs or put up scriptures. He is our focus. He is the one that we want to minister to.

"Forms of worship should provide two things: channels for the mind to apprehend the truth of God's reality, and channels for the heart to respond to the beauty of that truth- that is, **forms to ignite the affections with biblical truth and forms to express the affection with biblical passion.**"

- John Piper

We believe we find both these channels in the practice of Ministering to Jesus.



Getting Started with M2J

Section 4

Frequently asked questions.

Growing your M2J watches

M2J Testimonies



Getting Started

Frequently asked questions

Why don't you sing during worship watches?

This is probably one of the most frequently asked questions! This is also one of the biggest initial adjustments when people begin to do M2J. There are several reasons we don't sing during watches. In Matt Redman's song, 'The Heart of Worship, he says to the Lord, "It's all about You," not about the music or the singing. As we are learning to minister to Him from the heart, we are discovering that we sometimes need to shut our mouths!

As we discipline ourselves in this way, we are discovering a new depth of love. Free from as many distractions as possible, we focus on the words and on Him. It is as if we are sitting with others in a theatre, with all our attention on the stage of Heaven. Generally the audience doesn't break into song. There are also some practical reasons. In our many regular worship watches in different places around our city and around the world, our teams are sometimes quite small. If one person in their small group sang out of tune, it would be very distracting and take our focus off the Lord. In addition, we regularly minister to Jesus over long periods of time- through the night or sometimes for several days. We would not be able to sustain this if we were singing. But without singing, the ability to focus and discipline our hearts actually becomes easier during these extended times.

Are there other forms of M2J?

Regular watches.

We encourage everyone who is new to M2J to begin in one of our regular watches. Many people need to take time to learn to sit comfortably in the Lord's presence without distractions, and without temptation to perform either to Him or to others. Our culture does not sit easily with wasting time on Him. We have to train our hearts to love Him first. After we have begun to do this, we may discover some other expressions of ministering our love to Him. We cannot emphasize this point too much. People need time to learn to sit in His presence. If we begin to mix this with some of the other forms below too quickly, we lose the heart of what 'ministering to Jesus' is.

Live music watches.

Some of our worshippers are skilled musicians. It is very natural to them to use their instruments to express their love to the Lord. But again we believe it is important for them to begin by laying down their instruments and learning to minister to Him in our regular watches first. Only after they have learned that discipline, do we encourage them to set up specific live music worship watches. These live music watches can be led by one or more musicians. They are not performing to the people in the worship watch, they are ministering to Jesus. For this reason, they usually sit at the side or back of the room, facing forward with their focus on Him. Often, another person in the room helps by their live music/singing by putting up appropriate Scriptures on the screen. In all of this, we seek to avoid distracting the focus away from Jesus. The musicians are not 'performing'. Together with everyone else, we are all ministering to Him.

Children's watches.

One exciting thing that we've learned about M2J is that children can and do enjoy it! Their particular enthusiasm is very refreshing. The children honor Him in a way that inspires and encourages adults.

Children seem to have a natural desire to worship. It's not so much about teaching children "how to worship" but guiding them to the true object of worship: Jesus, and providing an environment for their hearts to be nurtured and expressed. A toddler twirls, laughs, jumps, runs, and plays without inhibition. However, by mid-elementary years this natural expression can be suppressed or even lost. David kept his childlike heart of worship as he danced into Jerusalem in front of the Ark of the Covenant. Imagine what it would be like to raise a generation of children with the "heart of David"; hearts that worship extravagantly.

The children's M2J worship watches use the adult M2J model with some adaptations. The emphasis is on allowing children to express their worship in a variety of ways without being a distraction to others. There is a watch leader coordinating the music, words, backgrounds and Scriptures. Watch leaders can be adult or children. There are activity stations that give the children many ways to worship. Children's attention spans tend to be shorter than adults' and they enjoy being active in their worship. One area is set up for drawing pictures with paper and markers. Some children choose to draw on transparencies and give their drawings to the watch leader to put up during the watches. (if an overhead projector is being used.) There are percussion instruments for the children to play along with flags and banners to wave. Children are free to dance and twirl in the open areas. It's a time of engaged activity, very similar to a family living room.

Children often long for and are drawn to be in the Lord's presence. They enter an atmosphere filled with the Lord's joy and experience His anticipation for time with His children. May we His children, young and old, continue to do what we were created to do – give extravagant worship to our King.

M2J mixed with intercession.

From time to time, we have special worship watches mixing 'pure' ministering to Jesus worship with intercession. Generally, the majority of the group are those who practice ministering to Jesus regularly week in and week out. They understand the need to spend sufficient time gazing at the Lord in focused worship before interceding for the needs of the world. Typically these are longer periods of time, sometimes several days. We usually worship for a couple of hours, and then go into intercession (usually focusing on something specific, like a particular country or a topical / local issue such as gambling or abortion.) for half an hour or an hour. Then we will take a short break and repeat this cycle of M2J. Often these times of M2J mixed with intercession are in significant locations. (E.g. Some years ago we spent a period of 24 hours in a room in a Casino Hotel to worship and pray over the issue of gambling being introduced to that local area.)

M2J mixed with silent meditation.

Similar form and guidelines as M2J with intercession.

M2J worship watches at special times in the church calendar (e.g. Easter, Christmas and Pentecost).

We have not done too much of this but would like to develop it further. We have sometimes introduced appropriate seasonal music into our watches. For some years we have had a worship watch in one of our church locations which went from 9am-9pm on Good Friday with appropriate music and Scriptures and backgrounds. Individuals came and went as they were able through the day. More of this could be developed and put into regular worship watches in an intentional way.

Dance worship watches.

We have had dance teams coming into a worship watch, ministering in dance, both individually and corporately to the Lord. Again our preference would be that each individual would have already learned what it means to minister to Jesus by attending regular watches.

Growing your M2J watches

Find opportunities to introduce M2J to a wider group in the church or prayer center.

- We have found one very effective way to introduce others to Ministering To Jesus is to hold a Friday evening/Saturday morning study retreat on a topic related to M2J (for instance: worship, specific attributes of God, or a study of a particular book of the Bible). Through the retreat time, we incorporate worship watches so people can experience the joy of ministering to Jesus.
- Meet with the pastor or Christian leader of your location to share about Ministering to Jesus, and ask that they promote the worship watches through the church bulletin and website.
- If there is a fellowship hall or area in your location where information is exchanged, you can set up a table and have M2J materials there for people to take. It's helpful if a watch leader is present to answer questions and personally invite people to attend a worship watch.

M2J Testimonies

"Ministering to Jesus has been such a time of providing for me each time I have gone. After just an hour's meditation, loving and praising Jesus, I am energized and I do not need any other batteries. I work better, love better, sleep better, pray, minister and live better than ever before. The Lord is so good."
- **Swarma – Librarian, Minnesota**

"I know that being involved with Ministering to Jesus has matured me more spiritually and changed my life radically in just a few years. I have grown more spiritually in the past four years than in the previous 14 years."
- **Alexis – Omaha**

"Ministering to Jesus is a wonderful 'new thing' the Lord is doing here. Slowing our busy lives down, one learns to just take time to sit in his presence and adore him. It brings restoration to my soul."
- **Carol F. – faculty Professor, Minnesota**