



God is spirit, and those who
worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

John 4:24

On Worship

with Pastor Steve

JustWorship.com: From Idea to International

It was in the early 1980s that I was first introduced to contemporary Christian music. With increasing exposure to the music market I became troubled at, what seemed to me to be, the "peddling of the gospel." It wasn't that I was necessarily opposed to artists or authors selling their albums or books, but it appeared that Christianity had become so commercialized that the message was lost in the price tag.

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In a conversation with my wife I expressed a desire to record my music, write some books and acquire the resources to give them away. At the time it seemed like a ridiculous proposition. Where would I ever come up with the kind of

capital needed to finance such an adventure? We were living on \$150 a week that our church was paying me to be a "full time" youth pastor. Though our house was furnished, actually I bartered work for the rent, \$150 (\$135 after we tithed) didn't stretch far with two children. So, I put that idea on a shelf in my dream closet.

Let's fast forward to the early 1990s. By now I am a part time paid worship leader for a two church merger. Sometime around 1992 a prophet by the name of Sydney Smith came to minister at our church. Sydney had ministered at our church previously, but during this particular visit he and I spent quite a bit of time together. He "summoned" me to one of our pastor's home on one occasion and on another occasion requested that he and I spend an afternoon together at my home. In addition to these sessions, I was in all of the

meetings Sydney held with our church leaders, worship team and congregation.

Sydney not only instructed me about the heart of God for worship, but he also spoke prophetically into my life. A couple of the things he prophesied were that I would have an international ministry and that my music would be sung in countries outside of the United States.

My first thoughts were that there was no way this would ever happen. I figured that to have an international ministry I would have to get on an airplane and I hate to fly! Besides, it takes a lot of money to run an international ministry. Now, I knew that God was big enough to supply what we needed if it was his will, but I just couldn't get past the thoughts of getting on an airplane.

Somewhere around this time Nike began their "Just do it" commercials. I expressed to one of my friends that I thought we should begin a "just worship" ministry. It was one of those "off the top of your head" thoughts. Basically I just thought it was a cool phrase. Even though my friend put together a mock brochure for Just Worship Ministries nothing ever came of it until...

Around 1999-2000 our family moved into the internet era when we went "on line" for the first time. Honestly I knew a little about computers but had no idea of the enormity of the World Wide Web. I guess I was behind the times, but the term "World Wide Web" was not even in my vocabulary.

My son Matthew loves computers and began experimenting with HTML and web design. One evening he was sitting at our computer pondering over a name for his web site. He asked me what I thought would be a good name and without really thinking I blurted JustWorship.com. When he submitted the information to register the domain name we were both amazed that it was available. We discussed what we would put on the site and in

a few days JustWorship.com was on line.

In just a few months we began receiving e-mails from all over the world. I was amazed. People were thanking me for the articles on worship and asking for advice on worship related subjects. One night while answering an e-mail from Australia a light went off in my head; I have an international ministry! I began to laugh as the thought crossed my mind that I didn't even have to get on an airplane. Not only that, but my international ministry had no budget other than the \$25 we paid to register our domain name.

It has been more than 22 years since that initial conversation with my wife. It has been 15 or more years since the prophet told me of an international ministry. A few years ago I recorded some of the worship songs I have written and posted them on our web site. Since that time not only have some of the songs been used in churches in the United States but also in Russia, New Zealand, Azerbaijan and Norway. In Azerbaijan my songs have been translated into the native language.

Some of the articles I have written have been translated into German and appear on a German web site called Worshipgalaxy. Still others appear on web sites originating in the United States and

Australia. Not to mention countless more that have appeared in church bulletins, used for Sunday school lessons, personal devotions, online newsletters, worship team training and quoted in college dissertations. JustWorship.com has now received over 2,500,000 visits and my four books on worship have been downloaded in 158 countries and territories.

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I am amazed at how much God can do with so little; so little money, so little talent and so little fame. I'm not that great of a writer nor am I even close to being a good guitarist or singer, but God has used me to touch hundreds of thousands of lives. If he can do this through me, he can do the same with the vision or dream he has given you. He takes the little we offer to him, breaks it and feeds multitudes.

It's been a great ride and I have made some wonderful friends along the way. Thank you for being a part of the JustWorship.com family. I look forward to the day when we will "just worship" together in the presence of our beautiful Savior. God bless!

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Contact Steve at lovnjesus@cablone.net