

TRADITIONAL & CONTEMPORARY

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As worship leaders, we are privileged to plug into the traditions of the church. It lets us tap into a stream of worship that has been going on for millennia and allows us to add our voice to that worship. Honouring tradition can be a way of keeping us grounded in our faith. It helps us enjoy the richness of past experience, make it new and experience it in our own context.

All traditions were once considered contemporary. William Booth took tunes like *Champagne Charlie* and put Christian lyrics to them. He led people to Christ by taking contemporary tunes that were known and understood by an unchurched audience. A song such as *How Great Thou Art* was once considered a new song. Someone had to introduce it and it may have been regarded as new or different to songs that came before it.

We need to be open minded to what God is doing now in the new experiences we have with new worship music. At the same time, we need to remember and celebrate the interactions and lessons we have learned from the songs we already know and have used many, many times. We need to create a balance between familiar songs and new songs. The familiar shouldn't become stale or stagnant. The new should not be overwhelming or a barrier to engaging with God.

We need to cultivate an attitude amongst worship leaders that suggests we don't use songs because they are new. We don't use songs because they are old. Rather we use songs because they are a good tool to help us engage with God.

2 TIMOTHY 2 : 1-5 ESV

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.