



the
Glorious

E X C H A N G E

*Finding your place in the
presence of God*

GEORGE CHADWICK

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I N T R O D U C T I O N



I WILL NEVER FORGET the first time that Krissy and I prayed together. It was a perfect evening in Arizona and the skies were lit up with an incredible sunset. We were getting ready to go out to dinner and my heart was pounding in my chest as I looked into her beautiful brown eyes. It had taken me about six months to stir up enough courage to ask her out and since I was a young guy that wanted to put God first in everything that I did, I invited her to pray with me before we set out on our date. We held hands and I broke into a generic sort of prayer.

I was probably on the third sentence of a four-sentence prayer when I noticed that she was also talking to God, but she wasn't talking to God like I was talking to God. I thought to myself, "Hold your horses there sweet thang. Where I come from, only one person talks at a time when we pray." (Don't get the wrong idea, I'm not from the south and I'm not a cowboy, that's just how my thoughts sounded). But then I cracked my eyes open for a second and looked at her.

She was on a completely different wavelength. Her eyes were closed, her face had a rapturous sort of tilt towards heaven, and she seemed lost in a wonderful place of which I didn't even know existed. She was whispering, "Praise you, Jesus. I love you, Jesus. Praise you, Jesus. I love you..." over and over again. She wasn't just with me, *she was literally with Him* and I didn't even know what that meant. The way she was praying was so foreign to my experience and had so completely thrown me off my game that I only managed to mumble

a few more words and say, “In Jesus’ name, Amen.” The prayer ended with a thud and I was left completely dazed and confused. Somehow, I still managed to open the car door and we jumped in and headed off to dinner, and eventually into our dream-come-true marriage.

This simple moment of prayer with Krissy became a marker in my life. It demonstrated with perfect clarity that every relationship with God is not equal and that, at least in this case, mine was the one that was deficient. This experience became the impetus for my journey into a more meaningful and dynamic relationship with God.

I soon realized that Krissy was totally unashamed to openly and freely express her love for Jesus. She was an extravagant worshiper and she loved environments where people shouted praises, raised their hands, danced, and did all sorts of things I wouldn’t be caught doing in a million years. In fact, I couldn’t stand that stuff. I thought, “Anyone who jumps and shouts and raises their hands in church must be emotionally unstable, or foolish, or worse.” However, the problem was that this beautiful girl, who knew how to pray and seemed to know who she was praying to a whole lot better than I, had stolen my heart—and she was one of *those* people.

I, on the other hand, was quietly doing everything I could to earn God’s approval. I was serving as a Young Life Leader and reaching students for Christ. I was playing in three different Christian bands, with either a practice or a concert nearly every night of the week. I was trying not to sin, trying to be good, trying to pray more, and I was doing everything that I could to please God.

After all, that’s what He wants, isn’t it?

I soon realized that my attempts to gain the approval of God were entirely misplaced, inadequate, and ridiculous. In fact, the relentless sense of need I felt in my heart to gain the approval of God was coming from a place of brokenness—not righteousness.

Krissy's simple, graceful, and dynamic relationship with God became an invitation for me to discover the same thing. And my harsh judgment over people who freely expressed their love for God suddenly developed a crack in its structure. Perhaps all of these people were actually not out of their minds or desperately trying to show off their spirituality to the rest of us. Maybe some of them were like Krissy. Maybe they knew something about God that I didn't or had experienced something from God that I had not yet experienced. It now occurred to me that there might be something to their bizarre and unrestrained expressions of praise after all.

Finally, after months of internal struggle, I decided to visit one of *those* churches where people do more than sit with their hands in their pockets, looking bored out of their minds. I sucked up my pride and went solo to a large church where I knew there would be some tangible expressions of praise. I entered the auditorium and found a seat in the middle of the room, anxious and ready for anything. I was determined to at least raise my hands during worship and somehow try to find out what this was all about.

As the sound of the band came to life and hundreds of voices began singing all around me, I found myself joining in with the flow of the simple praise chorus. Then I decided it was time. This was the big moment. I would bravely and courageously raise my right hand up above my head.

I buried my fear, and with concentration and determination, I thrust my right hand into the air.

I admit it felt strange. My hand felt heavy and I suspected that I was lifting it all wrong. I was convinced that everyone in the room was staring at me. In fact, it felt like my right hand was the only thing in the room, and I knew it must have been glowing like a beacon of light. Certainly, every single person in the place must have been transfixed by this incredible act of boldness on my part. After a few

more agonizing seconds, I decided that I had to look, so I turned my head and twisted my face under my right armpit to sneak a peek around the room.

To my complete surprise, the whole room *wasn't* staring at me. In fact, I couldn't find a single person that was even glancing my way. Instead, everyone in the room seemed to be experiencing their own personal exchange with Jesus. Their hands were lifted in the air and they were singing with all their hearts to God. Many of them had tears flowing and all of them seemed to radiate joy, just like the kind I had seen on Krissy's face.

Then it occurred to me—*I was the one in the room that was focused on other people while everyone else was focused on Jesus.*

The story about Simon the Pharisee and the woman who came into his house with a vial of costly perfume suddenly came to mind. She poured out this expensive perfume on Jesus's feet in an extravagant display of worship, washing his feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. At the other end of the table sat Simon, whose heart was filled with contempt for this woman. She was focused on Jesus and Simon was fixated on her. Her heart was filled with worship and adoration for Jesus and Simon's darkened heart was weighed down with self-righteous judgment.

What a bitter realization. *I was Simon the Pharisee.*

I made a decision right then and there; I would never again be the one in the room making presumptions and placing judgment on people. By God's grace, I decided that I would be one of those who are solely focused on Jesus, not other people.

Since that day my life has been transformed by the awesome, tender, and gracious presence of God. I have been overwhelmed by His love and found the freedom in my soul to express my love back to Him. And, I have been privileged for the last 25 years of my life to lead worship services for thousands and thousands of people.

Over that course of time, I have seen people from all walks of life giving everything they have in praise and worship. Their hands are raised, their eyes are closed, their voices are lifted to heaven with praise to Jesus. Sometimes they are jumping, sometimes they are shouting, and sometimes they are humbly kneeling, but regardless of the form of their expression, God faithfully impacts their lives in return. Just like the woman with the vial of perfume, and just like Krissy, there is a heavenly transaction taking place every time.

However, in a strange sort of way, it has also been very captivating over the years to see another large segment of people who are *not* giving their all to Jesus. Thousands of people just like my previous self—people who have no idea what is happening in the room, people who are standing with arms crossed and a look of confusion or complete indifference on their faces.

From a worship leader's point of view, the disparity between these two groups of people in the same room, hearing the same music, and experiencing the same flow of God's presence can be perplexing. One person can be experiencing a life-changing supernatural transformation while standing right next to someone who is completely indifferent and apparently untouched by God's presence. It is a weekly experience for worship leaders to see one person jumping and shouting, with tears streaming down their face and hands raised to heaven, standing right next to someone who is seemingly untouched by the moment, with their hands in their pockets and a blank look on their face.

While it is possible that God is doing things in a person's heart that may not reach their face or be expressed through their body, it is also very likely that the indifferent are in fact, indifferent.

In many cases, I know these people personally and can verify that they have a relationship with Jesus. How can people who know Jesus and have come to faith in the Savior of their soul not find a place of connection in worship? Certainly, there are other areas in their life

that bring an emotional response, why are they not able to express themselves in the presence of God? Is there something that they do not know, do not see, or do not like? What is restricting their freedom when it comes to being in God's presence?

Meanwhile, it is clear that no one has impacted the world for God without having *first* been impacted intimately and personally by the presence of God. The Bible is filled with examples of men and women who have been touched by God's presence and who in turn went on to change the world for Him. Paul was knocked off his donkey by the presence of God and then he knocked a good portion of the world off theirs. David first found God *personally in the fields by himself* as he defeated the lion and the bear, then he demonstrated the strength of his relationship with God when he slew the giant publicly, right in front of both the armies of Israel and the armies of the Philistines. Joshua spent more time in the Tent of Meeting than Moses, soaking in the presence of God, before he led Israel into the Promised Land.

God impacted the first disciples in an extravagant way when the Holy Spirit fell on all of them in the upper room at Pentecost. They were transformed by His presence and the result was immediate as they went out and turned Jerusalem on its head with the power of His love. Of course, it does not stop there. Every generation since the birth of the Church has produced those who dared to seek God and were met by His life-changing presence. They each went on to change their world with the same power and grace they had experienced when God first touched them.

Billy Graham, at the age of 16, met God on the dirt floor of a revival tent and consequently became one of the greatest soul-winners of all time. His conviction of belief could only come from a life-altering encounter with God.

Charles Finney, the great revivalist of the 19th century describes his encounter with God like this: "The Holy Spirit seemed to go

through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves of liquid love, for I could not express it in any other way.” The next morning Finney returned to his law office to meet with a client whose case he was about to argue. He told the man, “I have a retainer from the Lord Jesus Christ to plead His cause and cannot plead yours.”

Every world shaker has a similar story of meeting God in extraordinary ways and consequently being moved by God to reach out to those around them with His great love.

Incredibly, we have the same opportunity. We can impact this generation with His love, *but He must first impact us.*

People find God in nature, during contemplative moments, and in various other impactful ways. However, there is something unique and intentional about the gathering of God’s people with the intent to sing and make music in order to glorify His name. These kinds of gatherings are prescribed by God and found throughout the Bible, both in the Old and New Testament. God calls us to worship Him with song and He promises that when we do, He will meet us there. This is what I call the *Glorious Exchange*. And, this glorious exchange is meant to be shared in community with others. He calls us to praise and glorify His name *together*, with other people in this life and in the life to come. This kind of experience can be uncomfortable for some people who find it difficult to express themselves in song, but since it will go on for eternity I would suggest that we all learn how to jump in now.

It has become my mission to help people experience the *Glorious Exchange*. I want people to come into a deeper experience in the presence of God. I want others to realize, as I did with Krissy’s help, that passion for Jesus is a deep well and there is an everlasting flow available to us.

If you have had some of the same misgivings that I had about expressive worship, please read on. You may find some reasons to take your worship experience to another level. On the other hand, if you already love to worship God, I believe that you will find encouragement to dive deeper into His presence as you continue reading.

The first part of the book, *The Power of Music*, examines the transformative effect of music on the soul. Since time began, music has shaped cultures, defined movements, and brought human beings to the heights of otherwise inexpressible emotions. God is in music as He rides the wings of its sound in the heavens and around the earth. He created it, He perfected it, and He has given it to us as a gift so that we would also create melodies, harmonies, and symphonies of sound. His people have been charged with keeping music sacred, used as a powerful catalyst to bring His presence into our midst. From the Levitical Priesthood of ancient Israel to the flood of modern worship music in the twenty-first century, music remains integral to God's Kingdom design.

The second part of the book, *The Power of God's Presence*, explores some of the actual and real effects that drawing near to Him will produce in our life. His presence shakes our natural reality as the qualities of heaven invade our earth. His presence is a fire, consuming everything, even our good intentions. In His presence, we can always expect to hear His voice, and we know that whenever He is near, the kingdom of darkness is rendered impotent. His presence is the great equalizer, removing the human measurements of worth and value and replacing them with His overwhelming love and grace. Also, when we enter His presence time slows down, and sometimes almost seems to stop, as His peace washes our souls clean of every anxiety.

The third part of the book, *the Power of Your Choice*, is the unexpected component in the Glorious Exchange. God has granted us the ability to choose life over death, joy over pain, and Jesus over

ourselves. Even with the staggering power of His presence, and the accompanying force of beautiful music, it remains within our personal jurisdiction whether or not we will enter His presence. It still comes down to the simple choice in a human heart. He will never force Himself upon anyone, but He has offered Himself to us—graciously, completely, and without any reservations. Will we do the same for Him? He has given us His strength, His honor, His devotion, and His voice. Let's give ours to Him in return. It is the expression of our worship, whether we are with other people or not, that speaks volumes about the convictions of our belief. So, in this final section, we will talk about the blockages of the human heart that inhibit us from expressing our love and adoration for God.

My prayer is that you will be encouraged to find a place of freedom in your worship. My hope is that you will do what comes perfectly natural to every human being upon receiving a priceless gift; that your heart, your voice, and even your body would respond with freedom in His presence. I hope to remove any barriers that keep you from lifting your voice in praise and lifting your hands in adoration. I want to see you find the freedom to jump and shout with JOY. And, my desire is to see all of creation do so together. This is the essence of heaven. This is the essence of worship. This is the *Glorious Exchange!*

PART ONE

The POWER of MUSIC

CHAPTER 1



Divinity Revealed

“Art tears back the veil between this world and the world to come, where God dwells.”

—CASS LANGTON,

Global Creative Pastor of Hillsong Church

I N THE BEGINNING, God said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.” (Gen 1:26 NKJV) This statement written on the very first page of the Bible carries many powerful dynamics with it. The realization that God made us in His image presupposes that He has built us with the same qualities that exist in Himself—reasoning, personality, intellect, the capacity to relate, to hear, to see, and to speak. In other words, our ability to express ourselves, nuanced by our own distinct and unique personality traits, and employing higher attributes that separate us from the animal kingdom like empathy, compassion, and mercy, was found first in God. Of course, God’s expressions of these things are complete, perfect, and untainted by sin. He sees, hears, and speaks flawlessly, and He relates perfectly with His creation. Unlike the brokenness of

our own lives, God doesn't make any mistakes or miscalculations, and the things that He feels are totally accurate.

It stands to reason, therefore, that since music is such a meaningful part of our existence, it must first have existed for and been equally meaningful to God. Furthermore, it follows that God must have the innate ability to make music, for we certainly cannot create anything that God is unable to create, and we can know that He is also moved, as we are, by its sound. If one of the hallmarks of man's creative genius is his ability to create music, think of how incredible the music that God creates must be. In fact, scripture tells us, "The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, **He will rejoice over you with singing.**" (Zephaniah 3:17)

Let that idea sink in for a moment. God sings! And not only that, *God sings over you!*

Can you imagine hearing God sing? What does His voice sound like? Surely any song that God has written, performed, sang, or orchestrated must be utterly breathtaking. What do you think the lyrics of His song over you would be? Is it an upbeat pop song, or a deep and dramatic orchestral masterpiece? I hope God's soundtrack over my life would be something like the theme of *The Gladiator*, or *Inception* (in reality it is probably more like the theme of *The Little Princess*).

If the songs that have come from our hearts have been able to bring us to the heights of human emotions or brought us humbly to our knees in adoration of God, think of the effect that God's music would have upon our soul.

One day we will find out.

THE FIVE SENSES

The beauty of God's creation is displayed in all kinds of wondrous and awe-inspiring ways and that beauty is made manifestly real as it flows into and through the five senses of the human body—sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. Sight is often given the most credit for divine inspiration as multi-colored sunsets, snow-capped mountains, or any number of majestic scenes of nature seem to be most frequently perceived as an evidence of God's existence. Yet, the other senses are equally capable of transporting our minds and hearts into another dimension, one in which an appreciation of the transcendent can be felt at a foundational level in our being.

For me, smell works pretty well, even though the sense of smell isn't often equated with divine inspiration. The mouth-watering aroma of Krissy's homemade chocolate chip cookies wafting into my nostrils ushers me into euphoria every time, but it is the first bite that proves there is a God in heaven. Surprisingly, God's sense of smell is referred to repeatedly in the Old Testament. The "sweet aroma" of the sacrifices of Israel, which were reverential to God, indicated His acceptance of their repentance for their sins. Similarly, in the New Testament, we are a perpetual 'aroma' to God in Christ Jesus. "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life." (2 Corinthians 2:14-16 ESV)

The sense of touch is also powerful evidence for the existence of God. The touch of one person's skin upon another is startling in its effect as the slightest contact can send shivers throughout the human body. Think about the wonder we feel when we hold the perfectly

formed hand of our first child or receive a compassionate embrace in a time of sorrow. I will never forget the first time that I held hands with Krissy. It felt like my hand was on fire, literally. These kinds of experiences have the potential to thin the separation between God and man. After all, it is the “laying on of hands” that releases the power to heal, imparts the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and brings deliverance from all kinds of oppression.

All of the five senses are capable of transporting us into profound and even divine places, but perhaps the most powerful sense that we have is our ability to hear. The conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim wrote, “The ear has a head start over the eye, which doesn’t see anything until it comes out at birth. The eye is also something that one can control more fully. If you don’t like the way I look, and you don’t want to see me, you close your eyes and I disappear. But if you don’t like my voice and you’re in the same room, then you cannot shut your ears in a natural way. Sound literally penetrates the human body.”

Life in our world today is accentuated by a non-stop barrage of sights and sounds that have been digitally enhanced, amplified, and produced for our consumption. We live in a culture that is dominated by visual cues—our eyes are continuously bombarded by high definition images which appear to be more real than life itself. But, almost going unnoticed is the fact that we also live in a culture that is bursting with magnified sound. Simply turning our screens off or covering our eyes can shut down the images available to us, but attempting to shut out the sound is much more difficult and even impossible to stop. It enters our ears, cascades over our eardrums, is channeled into our mind and marches straight into our hearts with significant force.

Music is a dynamic and magnificent invasion into our soul. Plus, subwoofers provide a good punch in the chest as well. And all the Grandma’s and Grandpa’s said “Yes!”