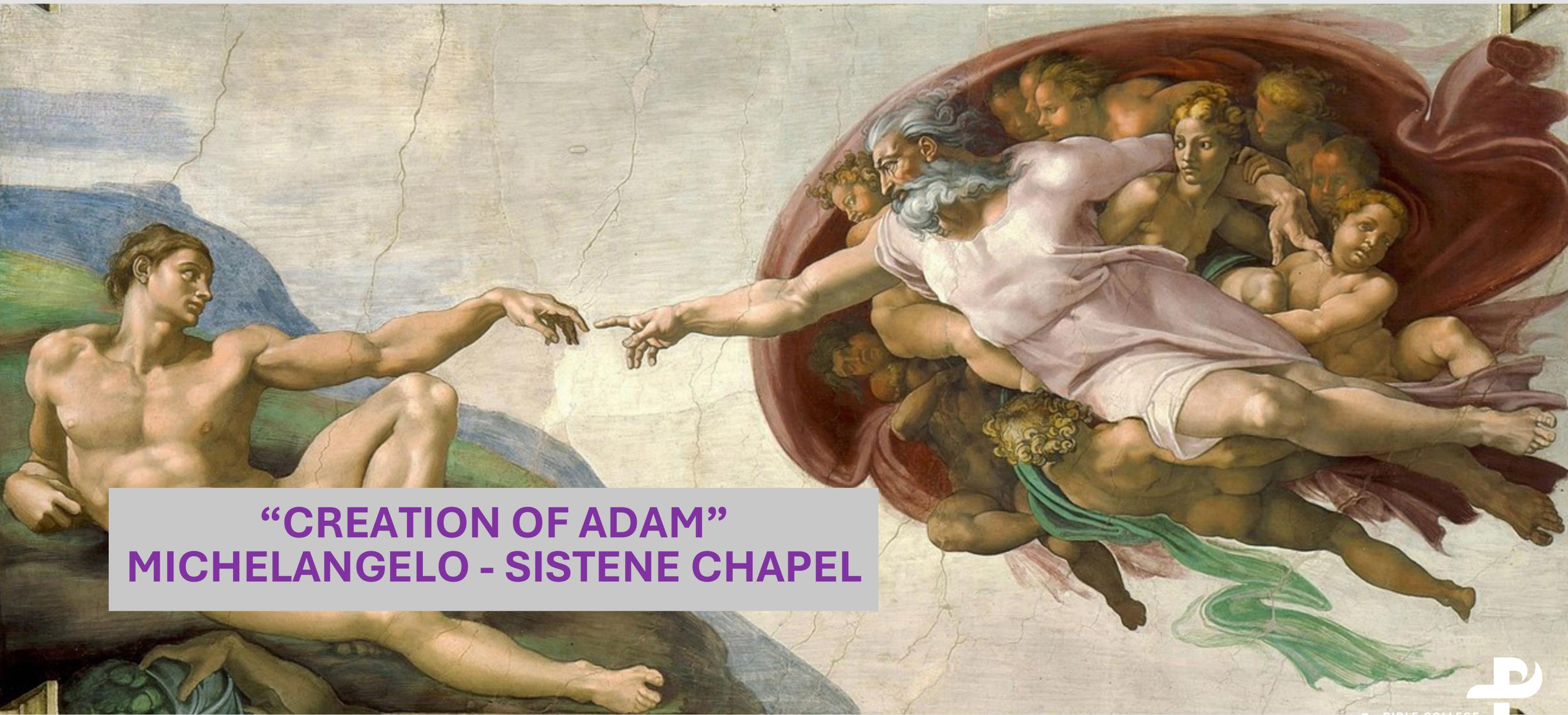


SONG THEOLOGY:  
WORSHIP SONG SELECTION THAT CULTIVATES  
PARTICIPATION AND THEOLOGICAL DEPTH





**“CREATION OF ADAM”  
MICHELANGELO - SISTENE CHAPEL**



**GOD'S CALL TO WORSHIP**  
**JOHN 4:24, EXODUS 8:1, ROMANS 12:1**

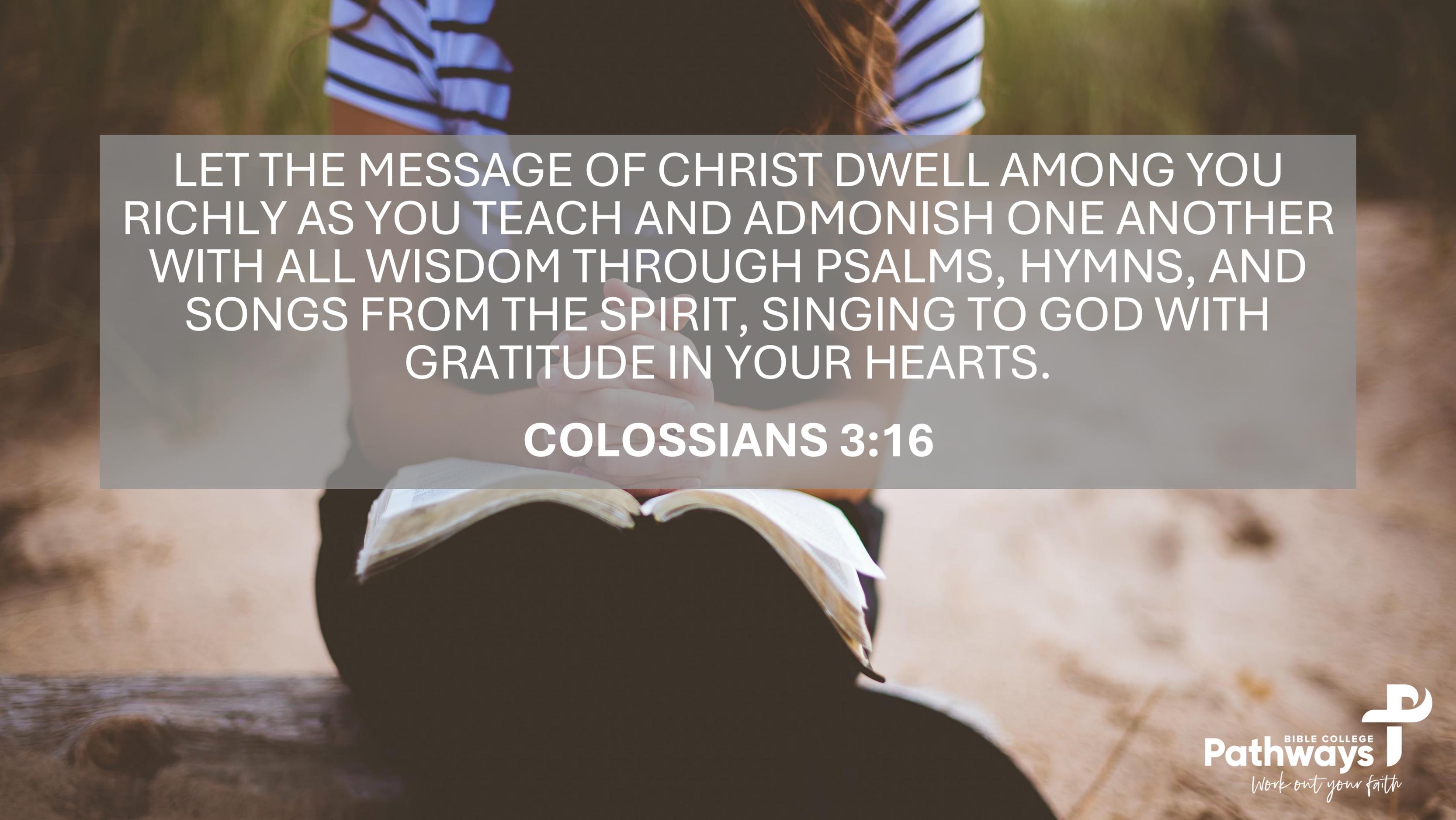


WHEN WE SAY 'WORSHIP'  
WHAT ARE WE TALKING  
ABOUT?



1. ZOOMING IN:  
THE SERMON  
WITHIN THE SONG  
(THINKING  
THEOLOGICALLY)

2. ZOOMING OUT:  
THE SONGS WE  
ARE CHOOSING  
(CULTIVATING  
PARTICIPATION)



LET THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST DWELL AMONG YOU  
RICHLY AS YOU TEACH AND ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER  
WITH ALL WISDOM THROUGH PSALMS, HYMNS, AND  
SONGS FROM THE SPIRIT, SINGING TO GOD WITH  
GRATITUDE IN YOUR HEARTS.

**COLOSSIANS 3:16**



“EACH TIME WE SING A SONG, THAT SONG IS TRYING TO, AS E.Y. HARBURG SAYS OF SONGS, “HELP US FEEL A THOUGHT.” OUR WORSHIP SONGS CONTAIN IDEAS OF GOD AND THESE IDEAS ARE ALL THEOLOGICAL, AND WE HAVE THE CREATIVE PLEASURE OF USING MUSIC TO CONVEY THESE IDEAS AND TRUTHS...

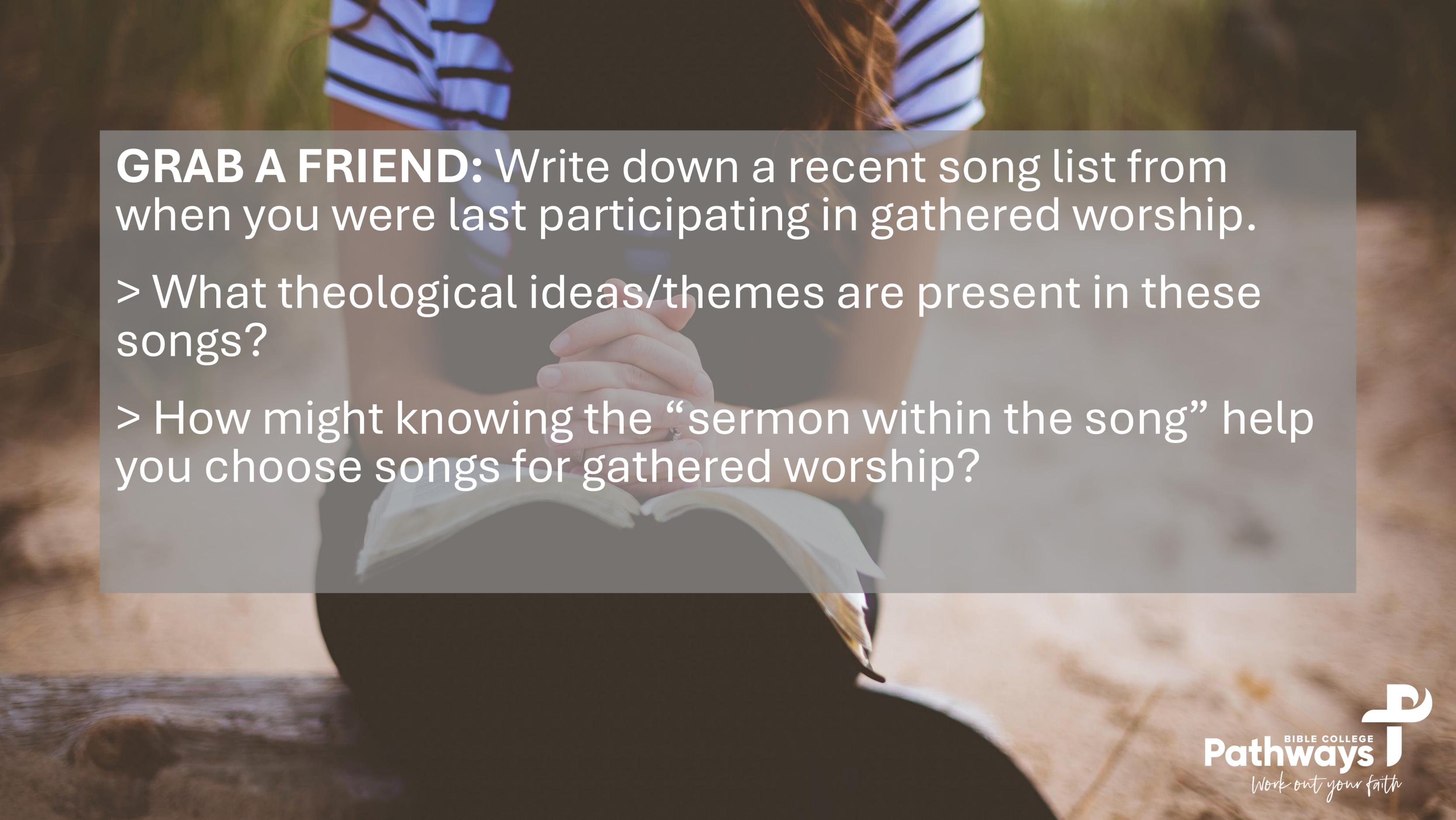
“EACH SONG HAS A THEOLOGICAL EMPHASIS AND IF WE LOOK CAREFULLY AT EACH SONG, WE WILL FIND A SERMON THAT THE SONG IS “PREACHING”...WE MUST CHOOSE SONGS BECAUSE WE WANT TO SING THE SERMON THEY ARE SAYING WITHIN.”

**DAN SHEED – SONG THEOLOGY**

*(PATHWAYS' WORSHIP WORKBOOK)*

## **ACTION:**

- SONGSELECT BY CCLI: SEARCH BY THEME
- GRAB AN OLD HYMNAL: GRID YOUR SONGS TO THEIR THEMES AND SEE WHERE ANY GAPING HOLES ARE



**GRAB A FRIEND:** Write down a recent song list from when you were last participating in gathered worship.

> What theological ideas/themes are present in these songs?

> How might knowing the “sermon within the song” help you choose songs for gathered worship?

## FRAMEWORK FOR THEOLOGICAL INTEGRITY:

**GREEN FLAG** – Clear, understandable, biblically sound theological ideas, generally singable

> go for it!

**ORANGE FLAG** – Has a lyric or idea in it that could be misunderstood, or less accessible to those in your context  
> potential teaching opportunity?

**RED FLAG** – Has a lyric or idea or inference that is unsound or unhelpful for worship in your context  
> avoid or medley/tag



1. ZOOMING IN:  
THE SERMON  
WITHIN THE SONG  
(THINKING  
THEOLOGICALLY)

2. ZOOMING OUT:  
THE SONGS WE  
ARE CHOOSING  
(CULTIVATING  
PARTICIPATION)

BUT YOU ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE, A ROYAL  
PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, GOD'S SPECIAL  
POSSESSION, THAT YOU MAY DECLARE THE PRAISES OF  
HIM WHO CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS  
WONDERFUL LIGHT.

**1 PETER 2:9**

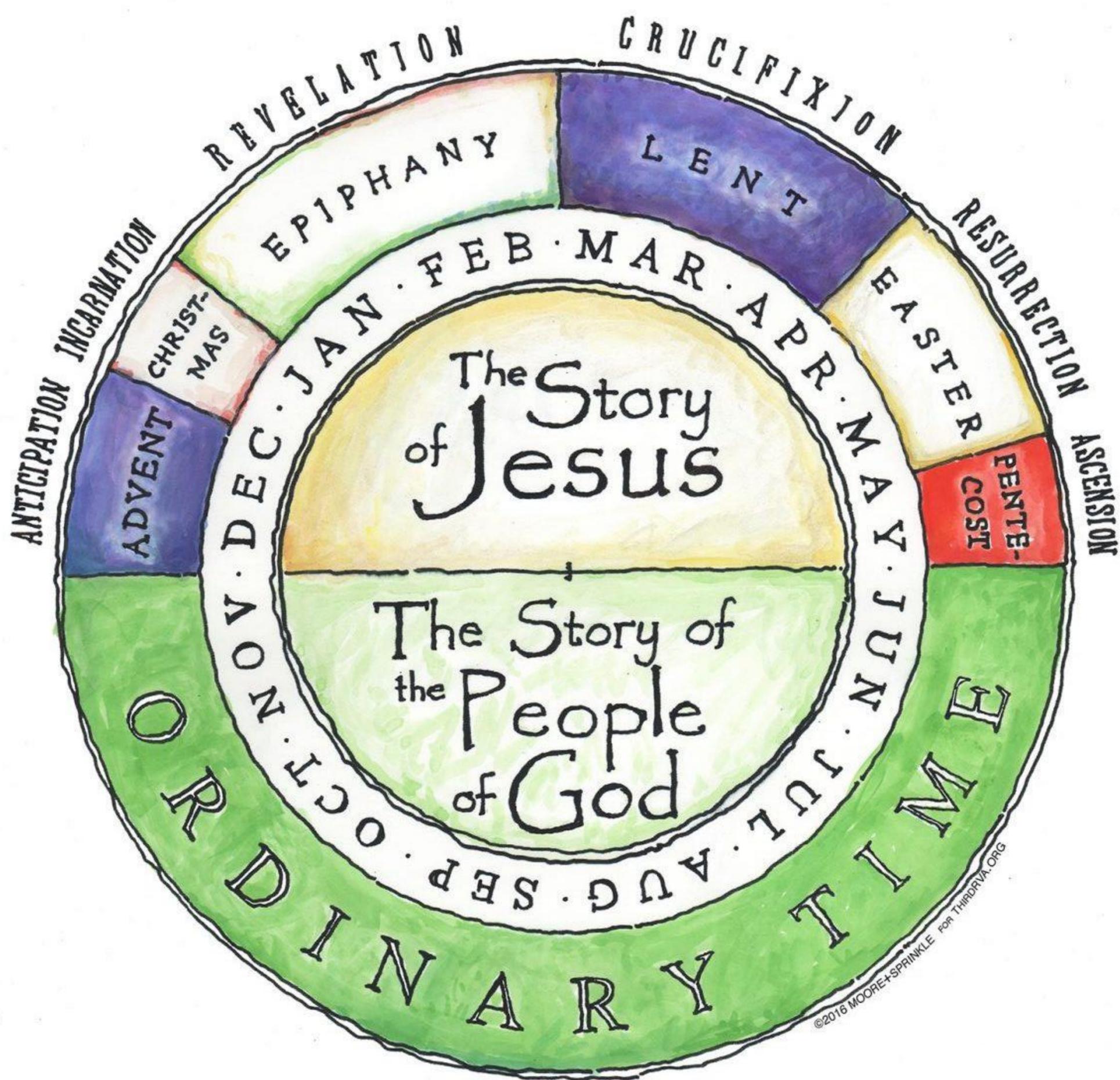
# THE GOAL IS THAT EVERYONE MINISTERS TO GOD TOGETHER

As worship leaders, we can choose songs that

- help nurture participation
- help us sing the whole story

**GRAB A FRIEND:** How would you describe the kind of music and songs that best engages the people in your church to participate in worship? Is there a song you can identify where people seemed to really sing!? Why do you think that was? Consider:

- Style
- Lyrics / theme (sermon within the song)
- Who the song is sung to (God/each other/ourselves?)
- Who the song is about (God/each other/ourselves?)
- What came before or after this song?
- Where was the song in the service?



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## ACTION:

- KNOW YOUR CONGREGATION – WHAT DO THEY LOVE TO SING?
- GET FAMILIAR WITH THE CHURCH CALENDAR

FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE  
I WILL ALWAYS PRAISE YOU  
IN THE PRESENCE OF YOUR FAITHFUL PEOPLE.  
AND I WILL HOPE IN YOUR NAME,  
FOR YOUR NAME IS GOOD.

**PSALM 52:9**