

Radical Worship

My friend Mike Bickle did something strange last fall. He resigned from pastoring his successful, 2,500-member Metro Fellowship in Kansas City and turned the church over to a trusted colleague. Then he started a worship and prayer service that has been running 24 hours a day without a break since September 1999.

Mike has no plans to end this unusual gathering, which involves two dozen full-time musicians along with at least 20 singers and intercessors who raise their own financial support so they can pray full-time. It costs a minimum of \$45,000 a month to keep this project going.

Musicians take shifts so they can eat, rest and spend time with their families, but at any given moment a team of prayer warriors, singers and instrumentalists are ministering to God just like the Levite priests did in the Tabernacle of David. Mike believes this kind of continuous worship will soon be the norm—and he says it will be a key to releasing a spiritual revival on a global scale.

“This thing is big,” Mike told me last month. “Already, leaders of major ministries in Europe, Asia and Latin America have announced that they too plan to establish prayer centers where musicians will minister to the Lord around the clock.”

It’s a radical concept, and religious naysayers will probably argue that all this money spent on worship should be used to feed the poor. As I recall, similar critics rebuked Jesus after a woman poured expensive perfume on the Lord. Her “wasteful” act of worship—which some Bible scholars say cost the equivalent of \$12,000—reminds us that we can’t be stingy when it comes to lavishing our praise on the One who paid the ultimate price for us.

But Jesus is worth it. That’s why there’s a huge audience

gathered around the throne of the resurrected Son of God in heaven, singing night and day, “You are worthy! You are worthy!” (Rev. 5:12).

We’re called to echo their chorus on this side of eternity.

You may never join a 24-hour intercessory team, but the Holy Spirit is calling all of us to a deeper level of worship and prayer in this special hour. All the worship leaders we interviewed in this issue of Charisma—from Michael W. Smith (see page 52) to Fred Hammond (page 63) to Sonic Flood’s lead singer Jeff Deyo (page 68)—believe the church is being wooed to a deeper place of devotion. How should you respond?

I dare you to take a risk by pouring out your most “expensive” worship on the Lord. It might require you to do something extravagant—like getting out of bed an hour earlier each day for time alone with God.

Buy some worship CDs, then go in a room by yourself, lock the door and demonstrate your love for God in passionate ways. Remember, the Bible clearly sanctions exuberant worship. It calls us to sing, shout, clap, raise our hands, dance, kneel and lie prostrate on the floor to show our appreciation for Jesus—God’s most priceless gift.

So break open the alabaster box of your heart and let every drop of your heart’s devotion flow onto the feet of Jesus. Then the most amazing miracle will take place: His fragrance will fill your life, and people around you will notice that you smell like the Savior.