

Mind the Gaps: Making the Most of Transitions

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[0:00] Just, oh, this is just a great conversation to you all, and it is a joy to be together.! It is a joy to be together. As I have attended various conferences and gatherings at different churches,! I have noticed that sometimes a church can be saying the right things, doing the right things, studying the right things.

But it's all the stuff in between those things that's not so thought through. The transitions, the pieces that tie things together.

So I remember one time having a conference where this powerful message was preached on God's holiness, and someone came up right after work and said, okay, lunch is going to be over there, and we're going to sit down there.

You could have heard a pain drop at the end of that message. And there just seemed to be no awareness of what we had just done. Sometimes on a Sunday morning, you know, it's all at the end of ten seconds of just awkward silence, as no one's part of what's going on, and everybody's just kind of like, maybe it's the charplay, they just kind of get their cake rolling.

Or it could be a reflective prayer, so follow me. We do all the steps to the end of the name of Jesus.

[1:30] One, two, three, five, six, five! You could probably follow up on that just a little more carefully. Or sometimes, you know, it's the leader just trying to feel that awkwardness and just kind of gushing a prayer filled with a lot of fish and cliches and not really thinking about it.

Just kind of saying things that don't really serve anybody except to fill that space. And there's sometimes transitions take so long and you're thinking this isn't a transition, this is a sermon.

Maybe we move the sermon up to, you know, we didn't. No, it is a transition. It's just a 10-minute transition. So they're hard. Transitions are hard.

And, you know, I know we serve in different roles in the churches. So if you're a pastor or aspiring pastor, this would definitely be something you should be thinking about.

If you are a musician or a member of the congregation, this will be a topic that will award you the fact that things should be making sense.

[2:40] When we gather, things should be making sense. And the way they make sense is by giving attention to transitions.

Or what I've entitled this message is Minding the Gap. Which is from the UK. You know, that's what we're hearing. We're supposed to talk about the two. That's not here anymore. Minding the Gap.

Minding the Gap. And of course I'm hearing that. Gap, okay. This is the gap between the two of the platform. Just like, be careful. Watch. Watch out what you're doing right there.

So this is Minding the Gap. Making the most of transitions. So we're going to get to very practical things. But I hope at the end it will serve you as you think about how our meetings are put together.

If you Google transitions in worship services, by far the primary focus is on musical transitions. In fact, I gave a message to this talk about 18 years ago.

[3 : 46] And did Google exist? I think it did. I think it did. But there wasn't anything in terms of spoken transitions. It was all musical.

How to keep the emotional momentum of the being gone. How to keep from doing anything in charge of worship atmosphere. Which I always think is funny.

Worship atmosphere. What are we looking for? How to create a cohesive musical experience in our church. Last night, if you weren't here, we looked at an overview of things that God values in our gatherings.

And in this session, we want to develop our thoughts on how to connect those different desires. How to connect those different parts of our being. Here's the question we're going to take the answer.

How can we connect the elements of our gatherings in ways that serve God's people and edify the church?

[4 : 48] How can we connect the elements of our gatherings in ways that serve God's people, purpose, sorry, and edify the church? How can we connect the church?

How can we connect the transitions important? We'll give you three reasons. First, God prioritizes understanding and edification in our gatherings. Understanding and edification.

So in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul says, So with yourselves, since you are eating for manifestations of the spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. And he says that, remember, after he uses the illustration of a trumpet making a sound that's not clear.

And no one getting ready for battle because they don't understand it. So we want people to understand what's taking place in our meetings. We're not responsible simply to see that things happen.

That's one part of it. You want to pay attention to that part. But we're also responsible to make sure that those things build up the church. And for that to take place, they need to be understood.

[6 : 23] And sometimes we assume people know more than we do. We assume they're taking in more than they know they say they're getting why we do what we do. And this especially applies to unbelief to guests, but they can apply to members of your church.

They just come week after week and they just do it. Why? Well, because you're leading it that way. You just do it. But they're not really understanding why you're doing it.

And worse than that, sometimes you don't understand why you're doing it. You know, you've inherited this church and you've moved a church. And again, we've just always done it that way. That's just a horrible way to do things.

But that's the only reason. We've just done it. We've been doing that work for like, God, two years now. Two years. Like, the church is like 2,000 years old. And so it's okay.

Like, we've been doing it. We've been doing it. Sometimes we put things together. But we just don't give a lot of thought to it. And God wants people to understand it.

[7 : 24] We have fun. Another reason transitions are important is intentional transitions increase people's participation and engagement. You could just say they increase people's engagement.

We don't gather the church to watch a show or to watch a concert. We're God's people gathering in God's presence to receive God's word, to revel in the gospel of Christ, and to respond in the power of the Spirit.

That's something we're all doing together. Everyone's involved. At least everyone's supposed to be involved. And Paul is often making references to that. You know, he writes to the leaders as well as the churches.

He's aware that everybody has a part to play. So when he's talking about the church in Ephesians 4, verse 15, he says, And then three, our services aren't actually random events, but a retelling of the story of God and what he's done for us in Christ Jesus.

There is a story that we gather to hear. And for centuries, liturgies have helped God's people understand the story of God's glory, the fall, the redemption in Christ that we've received, how to live in response to that, and our future hope.

[9 : 23] Now, whatever liturgy you choose to do, how to be formal or informal, strict, loose, historically good in the modern, we're responsible to help people understand how the different parts fit together.

It's kind of the difference between focusing on the containers in our meeting and the content of those containers. So our pantry has new plastic containers sitting next to each other on the shelves.

And we arrange them not so much by order of what they contain as size and do they fit together. And, you know, that's, that's, so we can move them around and make things fit.

But if I am making something and following a recipe, it would be really important what's in those containers. And it would be really important what order I use them in.

Well, in a similar way, when we gather as God's people, you don't just stick a bunch of containers next to each other. Here's a prayer. Here's a song.

[10 : 32] Now, sometimes we use templates for reading them. Here's a prayer. Here's a call to worship. Who's due in the call to worship? And we use that prayer to help. Who's due in that call to worship? Do you know what a call to worship is?

Like, do we, do we help people occasionally understand? Like, this isn't just, well, this is what we've been doing. This is what this church does to start a program. It's, it's the eternal God calling these people gathered in these presence to glory in Christ, to be here from them, to be experienced the gifts of the Spirit in all the beauty and diversity, to be strengthened, edified, built into each other, built into Christ.

That's what we're calling people to. You don't just do the call to worship. You call people to gather worship. That's what you're doing. That's a different way of looking at it.

Well, that's throwing attention to the content and not just putting a continuum out there. So our liturgies aren't so much a performance for God and each other as a witness to God's Word and the grace they've shown us in Christ.

And when we think about what we do and say between parts of the meeting, it can help people grasp the meaning of the story. It can help them understand.

[11 : 49] This stuff really fits together. It's not just a prayer. What's a prayer? We did the prayer. Who did the prayer? Who did the singing?

Well, that helps a little bit, but it really doesn't communicate what we're actually doing. And these transitions, wisely met, they're an opportunity to shepherd people theologically through the elements of our government.

Even if it was. It's the difference between saying, let's sing this next song together. Or let's sing hymn number 123. Okay, that's a transition.

Not a great transition. But it is a transition. Versus something like this. You know, as we prepare to sing this song, let's rejoice in reality. At the end of the day, no political party, no amount of money, no educational degree, no technological marvel can sustain our hope like Jesus Christ can.

Because only he has died for our sins, risen from the dead, and is one day returning for those redeemed to live with them. What is our hope in life and death?

[13:08] I should have asked, do you know what song I'm introducing? Christ alone. Like, when, and not for every song, but when I introduce a song, when we introduce a song, we want to get people ready to sing that song.

We want to give them a springboard from which they can launch in that song and not expect the song to do all the work. I mean, we can, and that's fine, and the most great thing is that.

But are we missing out on something? Is there something we could do better? I think there is. And I see the effect of this as I visit churches, as we've grown in this in our own church.

Wow. When there's a helpful transition, it really makes what we're about to do so much more meaningful, so much more helpful.

Now, transitions won't make or break your meetings for going in and won't keep the Holy Spirit from moving. I mean, the Holy Spirit's been working in your church already, hopefully, for years.

[14:18] God doesn't need our explanations. He doesn't need our musical transitions to get his work done. But they can provide another means by which the Holy Spirit can open our hearts to the story and the meaning of the gospel.

In other words, minding the gaps can lead to a greater awareness of who God is and how he's at work and the lives of those people. So that's where it is important. So who's responsible?

Well, anyone who stands in front of a church and says something, they're responsible. They're doing a transition. They could do a transition. The pastor, the individual leading the music, someone who stands up to say something, some churches have an emissary or a host who runs like a thing, some churches are little, but we have eight elder pastors, and different ones of us will handle those traditions.

I'll plan the liturgy with some other guys, and we will try to use, you know, at least three or four of those pastors in every meeting. And we've talked about being aware of what comes before us and what comes after us.

So here's the thing. Here's one of the drawbacks of not getting attention to this. When you're not aware that you're a transition and not like the main thing, you'd be tempted to think, well, I've got to say anything.

[15:48] I'm going to include the hot, you know, the entire story of creation for all the things you can do. And, you know, I've got to apply, I've got to do applications, do applications for it.

And if there's an announcement that I might need to make in that, I need to do that too. It just becomes out of proportion to what it should be. So it's just giving thought to, you know, what is it just to be doing?

And what are we about to do? So we're going to talk about this in two sections. The first is spoken transitions. And then for, how many musicians do we have?

Okay, good. Then we're going to talk about musical transitions. When people talk about the flow of the meeting, again, not disrupting the flow, the seamless flow.

In most cases, people are talking about the meeting. They're saying, you know, we've just got to make sure that everything's okay. We've got to be used and clean. We've got to pass. We've got to sing.

[16:55] You know, whatever it is. It's time to get it. We'll get to some of that. Right now, I want to make the case that the flow of our words, is more important than the flow of our music. It is more important.

The flow of our words is more important than the flow of our music. Rather than creating a sense of the flow, words actually bring clarity.

They actually bring definition and cohesiveness to what we're doing and hearing. They connect the containers in a way that we're to see the country. So I want to give just a few guidelines that have been helpful to me over the years that I've learned from others, seeing others, and just experienced through my own failures.

So the first is that God spoke first, and his words outlast us. So if we're going to do a transition, just remember, God spoke first, his words outlast us.

Hebrews 4.12, for the word of God is living in the back of the shelf, as it is through a sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

[18:06] God's word gets its word done. So start your planning with God's word rather than just elements. Whether that be the message that's going to be preached, or as we do, we start with the call to worship built on the message from previous one.

That's how we begin our meeting. Just think, what was spoken last week that we want to respond to in some way with this call to worship? I, for years, planned the meeting just by planning five songs.

Just pick the songs. I think I shared this last night. Just five songs. It wasn't until 13 years ago when we started having the call to worship where I thought, you know what, we're going to get the word of God first, then we're going to get the song.

Because we don't even know what we want to sing until we hear that call to worship. God's calling us to worship for a specific reason. Well, let's sing about that reason. And I'm conscious now of including the word of God as we sing.

That it's not just, you know, something to find, well, we can sing these songs. Can we find a scripture to go in there somewhere? These things, they mean something. They're meant to feed off each other.

[19:18] It's scripture that anchors our affections, that provides doctrinal fuel for our emotional fire. It's not just singing a bunch of songs in a row. It's asking, why are we singing this again?

Oh yeah, because God has said this. One of the things that I've sought to, one of the ways to start to communicate the authority of God's word and the importance of God's word is just whenever I'm leading, I want to have a Bible on my piano.

So whether I actually use it or not, I just want people to know, this is not like, we're not making this up. We're sitting under the authority of God's word.

And if you have opportunity to read a scripture, read it from a Bible. I'm looking for you to read it from a Bible, not from a phone. Not a sin. It's not immoral. It's just, I didn't know, a pastor one time in the church where the senior pastor had fallen, he descended, he became a pastor and he said, he started reading the Bible from a real Bible because he thought it provided a sense of security and confidence and trust in people.

Because for years, the pastor and he had read the Bible from the phone. And I said to him, why, like, why do you have to wait for a crisis to do that?

[20:41] Like, don't we want always to build people's confidence in the word of God? In the truth of God? In, you know, this, this does a lot of things. This does one thing.

You know, it's, God speaks to us. All kinds of things speak to us here. So it's just a little thing, but over time it can have a big impact. Don't read a scripture casually or quickly.

It's okay. We have time. We can read slowly, purposefully. If you're going to make a point in what you're saying, make God's word the point and not what you're saying.

Sometimes people read a scripture and they'll say something that's like totally underlaid and do what they just read. Or they won't refer to what they just read. Repeat some of what you just read because I guarantee you, first time you read the scripture, half the people weren't ready.

So just remind them. We just read this. We're just so dull. Do you realize how dull we are? When I'm sitting on that side, I realize how dull I am.

[21:46] Like a scripture we read and then it's over. Oh my gosh. It's done. So I really appreciate what someone said. As we just read.

Yes, okay. Yes, what was it again? That's right. Amen. I'm with you. Just trying to help people. Okay. Remember Aristotle's rules.

Point number two. Remember Aristotle's rules of record. You probably didn't expect to hear that. Years ago, I learned that when Aristotle was communicating, how can we be an effective speaker?

Many of you would know that. Three things are needed. Logos, ethos, and pathos. That's what we're talking about. Logos, ethos, what happened. Logos is the truth of what you're saying.

You're saying, what I'm saying is true. That's the first part. Make sure what you're saying is true. It's based in God's word. It's not your opinion.

[22:43] It's not your feelings. It's not your perspective and your longings or irritations, your concerns. It's God's eternal, inerrant, sufficient word.

It's the truth. John 8, 31 and 32, Jesus said, if you abide in my word, you are truly my death. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

We're called to be stewards of God's word. We're not innovators, we're not comedians, we're not philosophers, we're not influencers, we're stewards. As Paul says in the first Corinthians 4, this is how one should be regarded not as amazing influencers, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, which is the gospel.

So that's log off. What I'm saying is true. Second, ethos, the character of the speaker, and this is saying you should believe me. What I'm saying is true.

You should believe me. Look at what Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 2, starting to verse 5, he says, we never came with words of flattery, as you know, or with a pretext to greed.

[24:01] God is wicked, nor did we seek glory from people. Oh, man, does that speak to our age? We didn't seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ, but we were gentle in the morning, like a nursing mother taking care of our women's children.

What a beautiful picture. He just calls it in. You should believe this. We're trustworthy. The qualities that can communicate that believability are naturalness, sincerity, a history, a relationship with who you're speaking with, transparency, and see, just looking out at people, all that communicates that is, yeah, you should believe me.

Looking at people versus your notes. So if I'm giving you this message like this, for we never came with words of flattery, qualities that can affect ethos are sincerity, naturalness, history of relationship, transparency, engagement, looking at people versus your notes, varying at people versus fine to me, relaxed versus stiff.

It's just not unbelievable. You know, it's all the same words, but I want you to believe me. So that's ethos. And then, that's just a thing about my ethos.

Sometimes we get a lot of thinking to reading us because we want to say it's true. Right? So you write out in advance, I'm sure this is true. But then you read it in a way that it's hard to believe that it's true.

[25 : 37] Because you just don't sound very sincere about it. So, what I'm saying is true, you should believe me, and then that's pathos, the effect on the listener. What I'm saying matters.

That's pathos. Acts 17, verses 2 and 3. Paul didn't decide the truth. He didn't just say it the way it was believable.

He sought to impress the relevance on his listeners. Acts 17, 2. And Paul went in, it was his custom, and on three Saturdays. He reasoned with them from the scripture, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead.

And saying, this Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ. He's not just reading from the document. He wanted them to believe it. When you stand up in front of people, in the gathering of the church, you want them to believe it, and believe that it matters.

D.A. Carson said, it's not arrogant to represent as forcefully as we can God's gospel. It is simply faithful stewardship. To present as forcefully as we can.

[26 : 54] Now, obviously, some of these are going to require more attention to this than others. If you're just making the announcement about the chili cook-off next Sunday, it may not be the time to kick in.

It doesn't matter! You must be at the chili cook-off! Okay, hold it back a while. If it's something more important, you want to say it in a way, the Greek is to be better.

This really does matter for your life. It really does. All right, number three. Behold the beauty of brevity. Number four. Number four.

Number four. Paul, that was David Powell in his book called Good and Anger. I didn't read that. Good and Anger.

Oh, it's so great. Chapter two. Do you have a serious problem with anger? Yes. Chapter three. It's one page and it comes in front of the back.

[27 : 59] I thought that it's brevity. I'm not good at that. Behold the beauty of brevity. It's a good name. I couldn't recommend that book highly long. It's everything is weird. All right, say what you need to say.

And here's what's helped me over the years and seen it in others. One thought, one contrast, one scripture, one application. One thought, one contrast, one scripture, one application.

this is the way the writer of Hebrews makes his case.

Hebrews 4, 14 through 16. It's just, it's so instructive. Since then, we have a great high priest who has passed from the heavens.

Now he's saying since then, because at the end of chapter two, he was talking about Jesus being a high priest. And then in chapter three, and the beginning of chapter four, he goes with a little bit of an explanation of that.

[29 : 21] Can we get it over there? Yep. Excellent. So he talks about the oath that God has made, the final salvation, Jesus being greater than Moses, how God's people have a rest, have a rest in Christ, and then he's continuing the thought.

Since then, we have a great high priest who's passed through the heavens, Jesus the son of God, so that's the thought. That's the thought. We know, we have a great high priest. We just talked about it.

He's just saying that's the fault. He's sealing the line to what he has said. Now then he says, let us hold fast our confession, which he's making an application right here, but we're going to skip over that for now.

What he does next is the highlight, the contrast, for we do great high priest who is unable to sympathize with our God.

Now isn't that helpful? So if he just left it at, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, so let us draw near to the throne of grace.

[30:27] He could have said that, but he did it. He inserted what we might be tempted to think about our great high priest. How could this great high priest, one who's unstate, innocent, undefined, how could he know that?

This is under reminding me. We do not have a high priest who's unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

That's the scripture part, and it is scripture, so he can't refer to scripture, he's writing scripture, so that's where scripture comes in. Then the application.

Let us then, with confidence, draw near to the throne of grace, and we will receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Oh, we can't come.

So we have this truth, you repeat it, you hide it in contrast with it, then you tell the scripture, it confirms what's really true, and then you say, this is what we should do in response.

[31:42] So, in our context, it could be after singing a song like, all who's our God and King, let all things that create are blessed, and worship him in humbleness.

We're finishing the song, and you want to make transition to the next song, which is, he who is mighty, oh, the mercy of God is strong, or could be his mercy is more, his mercy is more, let's do that.

So you go, we just say, love the things that create a blessed, and worship in a humbleness. You know, so often, we worship that not in humbleness, but in time, thinking we're somehow earning points for our devotion, or our passion, or even our attendance, hey, we showed up.

You know, but because we sinned against the holy God and need mercy, the only way that we really approach God is humbling. That's the only way we can come to heaven.

Listen to how Paul reminds Titus and us of that fact in Titus 3, verse 4. When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy.

[33:03] Isn't that amazing? Isn't that really easy? Doesn't that lift the burden of all of us? Let's rejoice in the abundance of mercy that God has provided for us in Christ as we sing it in that song.

Praise the Lord, his mercy is more. So I'm just tying those things together so it's not just like, here's a song, hey, here's something I'm talking about, hey, here's another song.

I just want to bring those together, but I want to do it briefly. So behold the beauty of liberty. If I don't think about that in advance, I'm going to take five sentences for the first part, ten sentences for the last part, look for the scripture somewhere, and then ten sentences for the advocate.

It's just going to get really wrong, but that just helps me just say, ah, here's what went. Get it. number four, don't underestimate the value of preparation. Yeah, kind of just what else we're thinking.

It can take, for two minutes of speaking, it can take an hour of preparations. I forget what the question it was, but they said, how long do you need to prepare to speak on this topic?

[34:14] And he said, well, if you want me to give a ten minute song read, it'll tell you about a week. If you want me to, I think it was two minutes, ten minutes somewhere you got in a couple day.

If you want to give me an hour, I can start talking right now. And that's how he can do it. Just let me go. I'll just say everything I know about this topic.

It's hard to say something that is true, that is believable, and that matters in a brief amount of time without thinking having to say it.

You should appreciate the fact that I've reviewed these notes. And we're not just talking off the cup. I do go off the cup at times, but I prepare the message in such a way that it's not like a whole message plus the extra stuff that I put in there.

It can be helpful right now when you play this thing. say, for years, I've worked with C.J. Mahaney, and he's taught me more than anyone about what I do, about how to do what I do, and that is a way that pleases the Lord and encourages God's people.

[35 : 33] But he said to me years ago, and then he said to me just a few years ago, I can tell the difference between when you plan to say something and when you don't. I didn't ask him for clarification.

I knew it. Because I knew it. I knew it. When I thought, oh, I'm going to make that transition here. Don't do this anymore. I'm going to make that transition. I knew it. And you get there, and you just start talking.

And either it's confusing, or it's wrong, or it's boring, or it doesn't make sense, or you say the same thing four times. There's all kinds of ways you could go wrong.

So what I found helpful is to do this on a page, you know, 24-point aerial, how to fit on that page. Now I use word count, because I use everything.

And it's generally about 100 words a minute. That's what I do. But I know that it's up. So testimony, 100-word testimony, it's going to take five minutes.

[36 : 35] So we, yeah, we're trying to end up according to that. So yeah, just know how long it takes your six-step, and what you're trying to go for.

Because we can so often give ourselves slack on this, and then the meetings just expand to this unwieldy amount of time, because we just haven't given the thought to a good dance. But don't read it.

If you write it, don't read it. I found it helpful just to use sentences, separate it, rather than paragraphs. If you use a paragraph to read something, a paragraph, you're trying to find where you are going to be better.

Sentences you can just go from one to the other. It makes your nose longer, but it's, I'm not, I'm not a lot of that. It doesn't, I'm not killing any trees. It helps me look up and look down, because I'm not going to find myself, find my perfect page.

don't assume the value of preparation. Number five, don't assume every space must be built. While there's no rule that says you can't say something between everything, it's really not a good idea.

[37 : 47] You only need a road sign on your turn. You only need signs saying it's not like Bucky's sign. Do you have Bucky's up here? Is Bucky's really up here? No. Some sort. When you get south, they put signs every few miles.

Hey, Bucky's 90 miles away, 80 miles away, 7 miles away. It's just unbelievable the money they put into that. It's just a glorified gas station stop.

But it is, it's huge. It is an experience in itself. That's one of those awful walls. I should have included. You only need a road sign when you turn.

Don't assume everything needs an introduction or transition, especially if someone else has spoken. So, for instance, after a message, generally what I'll say is, let's stand together.

And then we'll see this one. Occasionally they'll have a reason to say something, but if he's just talking for four or five minutes, we should have an idea of why we're going to sing a song.

[38 : 59] So, if it's the right song, we're just singing the song. Plans, you don't have to sing too much. You can think about the ending and beginning of songs and prayers and scriptures.

It's not always definitively helpful. So, if you're saying, how long time is my savior's love for me, here is love that dies the head.

The end of one song just goes beautifully in the beginning of the next song. Okay, number six, don't assume you have to play your instrument while you're speaking. you have to read the one instrument don't assume you just have to noodle aimlessly behind, you know, as you're talking to people and just kind of keep playing stuff because I don't know, actually, because it's just, you have to play stuff under your speaking.

but it's just kind of annoying actually. When you're just kind of noodle and it's just, I see people do it again and again and again, so that's why I'm saying that.

Don't feel like you have to play the minute. Number seven, consider the beginning and end to believe in these transitions. From daily life, from encounter God together, that's the call of worship.

[40 : 21] You do this life out there, and now you're worshipping God, scatter, now we're worshipping God together. So let's take that into account at the beginning, and then as a benediction at the end, we're going from the gathering worship of the church to the scattered worship of the church.

Let's talk about what we're sending people out. So I just want to take a few minutes here to, let's go for transitions, music transitions, talk about what should we say, what should we play, you don't want to spend a lot of time on this.

Let me just say that they can be helpful, they're not crucial. Here's some of the benefits. They can minimize distractions between elements, they can set the emotional tone of what you've just done, what was just said, at the end of our meeting, I'll definitely play whatever song we just finish with, just kind of like it's a buffer before you put music over the speakers.

It just keeps people remembering what we just did. It can kind of reflect like a sail-off. It can complement the emotional tone of what's being spoken.

so if we're, you know, if we're, if it's something reverent, you're praying, you play something that's reverent, not listening.

[41 : 51] It can amplify or complement the tone of what's being done. It can be changing speakers without being left awkward. So when someone's walking up to the platform, I, no, I just want to finish the song.

I, rather than just echo space, someone's coming up to pray. I'm not creating a song, I'm not making a melody, I mean, I'm not creating ongoing things, it's just, we're just here, we're just waiting, going to do it.

So that's how musical transitions can be helpful. They can be done with a synth pad, most commonly done. You can play the intro, the outro, a song you've just done.

You can play just a harmonic progression that's unrelated to what you've done, so just a one or four, just a D, and a D sub, just a D, and a D sub, and you're not, you're not going on a, It could be dross.

That will sometimes start. Sometimes will start a song with dross. Yeah, key or temporal saying, you don't need transition. Back in the 70s, we do all these songs.

[43 : 47] What am I to God we serve? What am I to God we serve? Our Lord God, God was made by heaven.

And He provided by great power. No hope and joy of God. I am higher. Grace is a picture for me. I am. I am.

It's really. I'm not heard of that. It's a very good. It's really good. It wasn't like we were really getting ready to sing songs.

It was just, hey, we can do all these songs together. So we'll just say, that could be really overrated. Hey, it's the same tempestate, you're keen. Sometimes we'll say, well, are the songs the same key?

It could be great if they're in the same key, but they don't have to be the same key. You know what? You can just finish a song and then start another song. Just start the song and then finish.

[44 : 49] It's really hard. Draw back a musical tribute. So, yeah, just don't give so much time to do rehearsal where you're practicing these transitions and thinking, oh, we've got to make this, you know, beautiful transition.

That people are more conscious of the transition. And everybody in the congregation, you know, they're in this cool transition. No, I'm saying not Jesus. No, I'm saying not what we're saying about.

It's just this transition. It's so cool. You know, just stop the song, you know, and then the drawbacks of music transitions.

They convince people to think that music is the same thing as the Holy Spirit. We're involved with years ago, folks. Why? A synthesizer isn't the Holy Spirit. It was the most read ballpost I ever heard.

Not because everyone's just jumping on the bandwagon and encouraging. Yeah. Because there's a lot of pushback on that. That was true from my point. It can lead people to think that God needs music to act or to speak or to show up.

[45 : 56] I know this quote from the whole best, music to the other day. Christian musicians must be particularly cautious. They can create impressions of God as more precious than you can be made and when it is not. It works as more possible with the music for the God.

Let God not possibly depend on the standards. We need to be cautious about that. It can create distractions.

You know, when someone's playing a song behind the speaker, you think about the song when you're listening to the speaker. Okay, sometimes it's too loud or too busy. Those good things. So guidelines. If you're in charge of a musical transition, be willing to evaluate what you do.

Encourage your musicians to pay attention to what's being said. We, every Sunday morning, we'll take our musicians after we've gathered and we'll talk through the whole meeting.

We do that here. Talk through the whole meeting. This is what we're saying. This is this scripture we're saying we're going through. This is why we're doing what we're doing. That's so that we're more mindful of the content that we're using.

[46 : 59] Think creatively. Rather than creating the simple, rather than creating the complex for transitions. Vary transitions. You know, like I said, you don't have to have the musical transition.

And then some other transitions that we can consider congregational. We've done this here where the transition from one song to another is he does.

It's just people singing. Isn't that a glorious thing? Again, not just because of the sound, but because of who sings. We, the Holy Spirit, is producing these sounds from our hearts that are magnifying hearts and encouraging each other.

That could be a way of getting one place to another. Clapping. Although you guys saw the gross stuff in that and you are. We're not clapping.

We don't clap in a meeting because, man, everything's just been so great up here. Clapping is a biblical form of expression. It's a form of celebration. It's a form of joy.

[48:03] It's also a form of trying. Or just being an enemy. So all those reasons, that time, when you sung, you know, here in the power of Christ I stand.

You know, no power of hell, no scheme of man can never pluck me from his hand. Till he returns and calls me home. Here in the power of Christ I stand. Yes, I do. Yes, we do stand in the power of Christ.

Yes, we are happy about that. We are so glad. And we give up clapping to things that are so worthless. So time-borne, so irrelevant and unimportant.

So I'm a big proponent of, at the appropriate time, a congregation being so amazed by the things we're singing. Sometimes, after the scripture reading, I'm just like, I love it.

You don't want to be like, hey, what are you doing? No, no affection, no, just show reverence, okay? You know, what's the verse that you hear?

[49:06] I thought I was consuming fine. I want to consume you. Can you hold the reverence? It is, there can be a reverence. Rejoice for a friend. So that's the time to that point.

All right. Spontaneous. You can do spontaneous transitions. We've done some of those here. C.J. said to the event, the Holy Spirit helps us plan, but our plans are not the Holy Spirit.

Just good to remember that. When we think the Holy Spirit helps us plan, but doesn't actually help us during the meeting, we're disregarding scriptural testimony found in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14.

We're not only that we're missing pastoral opportunities and potentially developing a liturgical part, which is, we are so proud that we're doing everything right.

We're not. We don't want to turn into a liturgical part. None of the dishes are racist. We don't want to do these racist. It's good to have a good energy.

[50:11] It's good to have a good energy. It's good to have a strong energy. But we don't want that to ever get in the way. You know, we might change things here because it seems that something's different. Silence can be a transition.

Just letting things, I read when your teacher said that complete silence can be jarring to the atmosphere of worship. I said, what's on the back of 220?

The Lord is in his holy temple that all the earth keeps silence before him. I'm just going to draw a worship atmosphere. Well, maybe. But I'm going to think so. When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

It's just a time of reflection. And then prayer can serve as a transition. Let me just say this. Don't let prayer become a filler.

And use longer prayers can use an introduction. Can benefit from an introduction. Something like this.

[51:17] You know, so we've just sung the song with the line about all the enemies were fighting those without it and those within them. It's a word that you feel the world's broken. So we just say this song.

You feel the world's broken. You know, it is broken. We know what's coming. But it's broken. So in the meantime, God has invited us to pray to bring a request to this song.

So we're going to do that. So just tie it together in a similar way. Root your prayers in God's promises, not simply our responses. So that's about it.

Each Sunday we have these opportunities to help people understand how all this is fitting together. So it's one thing to determine what we're going to do, but we can't really create that until we understand why it's fitting together.

So if you're the one who's planning, let's get attention to that. And if you're the one who's following, let's, the following is a message, let's try and figure out how all these things fit together.

[52 : 14] It will so encourage other people. It will so edify them. And it will bring glory to God. Father, we're going to go to lunch from here.

And we'll see what we want. Is this to make any sense? Yeah. This is an area, there's just not a lot out there on, but it's so, it can be so hot.

So Father, we pray, we ask that you would help us, as planners, give thought to how we put things together and why we put things together and how we explain that they're together, the word that they are.

And we pray that you'd help us to do that with humility, with diligence, with skill, in a way that truly encourages the churches who serve.

Lord Mayor, churches see a difference. They start to realize, not that we're just saying a lot more, but that things make a lot more sense. That's our prayer, that Jesus might be glorified, that we might be drawn to know Him better, love Him more, and pray Him, and follow us.

[53 : 28] And we thank you, we thank you for this food that we're about to receive. It is a gift from you, as is everything, every good and perfect gift. So we thank you for it, and we enjoy it for your glory.

And we've got our fine patients, in Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.