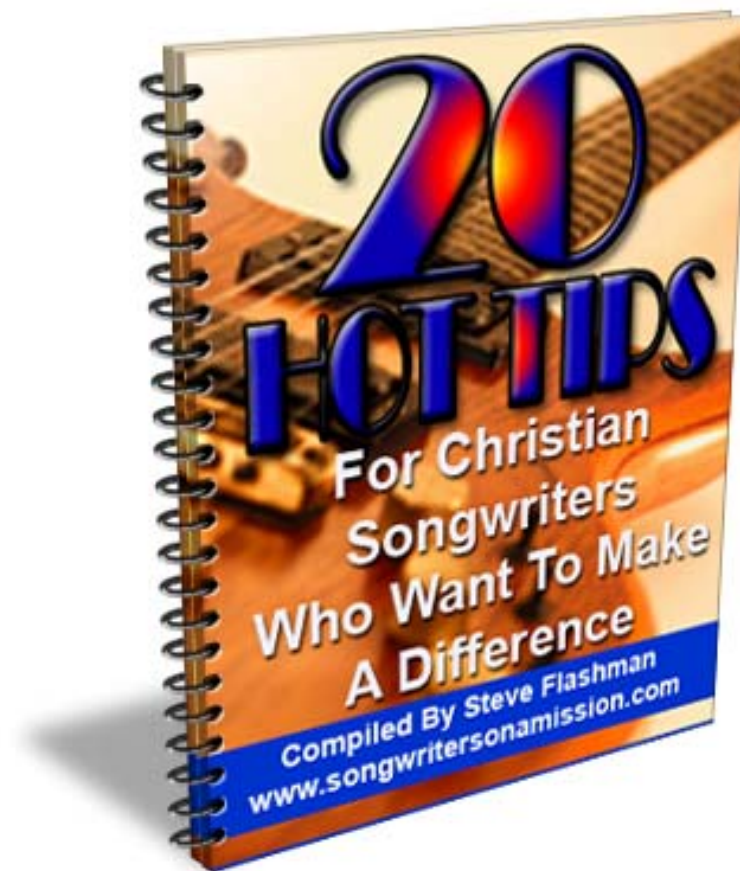


Welcome to "20 Hot Tips For Christian Songwriters Who Want To Make A Difference" by Steve Flashman

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<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

Introduction: "20 Hot Tips For Christian Songwriters Who Want To Make A Difference" is a Free Report written by one of the UK's most prolific Christian Songwriters and is an extract from Steve's book, "101 Essentials For Christian Songwriters." For the first time in his long career in Gospel Music Ministry, Steve has compiled a unique resource for Christian songwriters who want to make a difference for God in a world of need. "Essentials" covers everything from how to generate creative ideas, to 'how to get out there' - recording, publishing and performing your material. If you like "20 Hot Tips..." then "Essentials..." is a MUST to add to your arsenal of songwriting resources. More information on "Essentials..." at the end of this report.



Steve Flashman has been around for a few years! His songwriting and recording career was launched way back in 1979 with his first album on the Kingsway Music label, "Freefall". He has subsequently written and recorded Nine Albums the last one "Fighting Back!" was released in 1997. Steve's "grass roots" music ministry has taken him into prisons, colleges, schools, theatres, concert halls and churches all over the world. He played the biggest UK Christian Music Festival, Geenbelt and has performed in the Marquee Club, Soho where many top artists have taken the stage, including: David Bowie, Phil Collins, Bob Geldof, Alvin Lee, Eric Clapton, Steve Winwood, Jon Anderson, George Harrison and Mark Knopfler. Steve also took part in music festivals in the Royal Albert Hall, London and Wembley Arena. As a musician "on the road", Steve worked in many countries worldwide and performed in major cities around Europe, South East Asia, India, Africa, Canada, South America and the USA.

After four years Theological Training at Spurgeon's College in London, UK, Steve was Ordained into the Baptist Ministry and was released from pastoral charge to take up his itinerant music ministry. Over the last few years he has been heavily involved in taking Short Term Teams from the UK and the USA to do practical work and mission in the developing world and is currently Pastoring a Church in the UK. He has been involved in the business of communicating the Gospel all his life and has experience as a TV presenter, broadcaster and author.

Steve is still writing contemporary songs with an unusual edge! You can download many of his songs as MP3 files from our Members Site.

In this eBook, he passes on songwriting tips and ideas based on his vast experience over the years.

Over to Steve:

Welcome to "20 Hot Tips For Christian Songwriters Who Want To Make a Difference".

I have compiled this Report as a quick trigger to enable Christian songwriters to remember key principles during the creative process of songwriting. Of course, there is

an added dimension for us because we believe in a creative God who wants to express His creativity through us. It's a fallacy that to be a songwriter you need to be "spaced out", un-shaven, unhooked from reality, slightly inebriated, unkempt and on drugs! None of the above is necessary, desirable, cool or even right in order to produce cutting edge music that gets to the heart of the matter and connects with people where they are.

The vital ingredient, of course, is having a "sparky" and creative relationship with God. After all, He is THE creative Being in the Universe and as we are made in His image, we are able to be in the incredible position of being invited by God to express His creativity in the world! This is where we begin.

Now, I have to come clean right from the start!

I have a passion for God, a passion to know Him through Jesus Christ and a passion to demonstrate His love and power in a world of need. I know that is our mission. The way I want to live that out in my songwriting is to stay away from Christian clichés. Maybe I should restate that – what I mean is that I RUN AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE from Christian clichés! Help! You see, the difficulty we face is this: we want to communicate God's love and power to people where they are – we want to connect with people. But the regular "person on the street" does not have a "Christian" vocabulary. They don't understand what we are talking about a lot of the time! So THEY end up putting us in a BOX of our own making and sticking a label on the outside: "Irrelevant Religious Freak".

Don't get me wrong.

There is a HUGE need for songwriters to write worship songs that bring God's people into the presence of God – and there are some superb worship leaders and songwriters around today. However, the emphasis of this eBook is to help you write cutting edge songs with lyrical content that "hooks" the listener, creates word pictures, builds word associations and makes the right connections in order to help people with no "God framework" to make the journey into relationship with God.

Now that IS exciting! And I hope you will stay with me on the journey.

By the way, if gos has called you to write worship songs, the principles in this Report still apply – in fact you will be interested in my “101 Essentials...” because this book goes into far more depth about crucial aspects of getting your music out there for God.

For your information, “101 Essentials For Christian Songwriters,” the book, is divided into seven sections:

QUICK TIP:

To make the most of this Report For Christian Songwriters, you need to join the family! Our Membership Site for Christian Songwriters is a unique and growing resource which will enable you to receive ongoing support from a creative community of like minded Christian Artists who want to glorify God through their songs.

Why not sign up today and start benefiting from the vast array of resources:

www.songwritersonamission.com

1. “God Talk”
2. “Turning On The Light”
3. “Techniques & Tips”
4. “Finding Space”
5. “Using Frameworks”
6. “The Right Gear”
7. “Getting Out There!”

If you find this Report helpful, you can also download “101 Essentials” from our Website. There is a small charge for this eBook which helps to support our Christian ministry.

So let’s get started on our 20 Hot Tips For Christian Songwriters Who Want To Make A Difference.

Hot Tip # 1:

Write with the mind of an artist. Successful songwriters that connect with people at a deep level, know how to create pictures with words. Great songs tell stories with pictures that stay with people.

Hot Tip # 2:

Discover what makes your heart beat faster! Writing good music comes out of a passionate spirit that God has placed in us. What is it that makes your heart beat faster – that triggers your emotions and brings life into focus for you? That is the key to discovering your creative well.

Hot Tip # 3:

Writing songs 'incarnationally'. God entered human history in the Person of Jesus Christ. He came to where we are. By the way, this is what makes Christianity unique. Our songwriting must achieve the same thing. Know your audience, write with them in mind – become one with them. Then you will write songs that connect with people where they are.

Hot Tip # 4:

Use Local, National and International media. I draw loads of ideas from newspaper headlines, current news stories, current affairs and feature articles in the press and on TV. These are excellent sources for ideas that will connect with people because the songs will deal with current issues that are impacting the lives of your audience.

Hot Tip # 5:

Lyric Explosion. Try this. Get a blank piece of paper and “brainstorm”. Look around you, what can you see? Your environment will speak to you. Write down any creative word describing objects, people, scenery, colours, artefacts, possessions, books, magazines, TV pictures, conversations – write words all over your piece of paper THEN circle the interesting ones, the ones that grab you. Pull them out and create a Mind Map (explained later).

Hot Tip # 6:

You need a key lyrical message: Hook lines. A 'hook line' in a song is exactly what it says, ' a hook!' A word or phrase the repeats at intervals during the song that gives the song its key idea and is memorable. A listener should be able to remember the hook line long after the song is finished. Great hook lines not only make memorable songs, they also make hit singles!

Hot Tip # 7:

Use a Mind Map. Some songwriters use this method to great effect and it's borrowed from college teaching methods – how to get your brain to remember things. Write your concept theme/title in the middle of a blank A4 sheet of paper. Draw a box around it then draw lines out from the box in a star shape. At the end of each line write words that describe the key concept.

Hot Tip # 8:

Give your songs "structure". A lot of contemporary songs are written with a familiar structure: Intro, Verse, Verse, Refrain, Verse, Refrain, Middle Eight, (Lead Break) Verse, Refrain, Refrain, End. This is the starting point. If you find a winning formula that works for you, stay with it for a while – but don't get stuck. Experiment, explore, break out. Many modern worship songs follow the above pattern. Unlike the traditional hymns which are generally made up of a series of verses with a possible refrain at the end of each verse.

Hot Tip # 9:

The essential Notebook. These days we use a lot of hi-tec equipment to assist us in our songwriting. But by far the most important piece of equipment for any songwriter is a simple notebook! Carry it with you everywhere. Any ideas that come to you – newspaper headlines, ideas that pop into your head, interesting conversations, things you observe – keep notes. Then use the Mind Map idea mentioned earlier to pull out a key theme and visualize the ideas and words. This is how you plant the seeds of a new song.

Hot Tip # 10:

Use melodies you know as a starting point. If you are just starting out as a songwriter, or if you want to write songs but you are not a musician, here's a great idea. Write lyrics to songs you know. Once you 'get in the groove' replace the music with your own. Worth trying out, even if just to experiment with new ideas.

Hot Tip # 11:

Ideas from keyboard workstations and/or computer programs. Many contemporary songwriters, including myself, find inspiration from exploring pre-set sounds, loops, samples and MP3 soundbites that you can find on most modern keyboards and music software programs. Don't just copy what others have done however! Use the ideas to create your own, original song.

Hot Tip # 12:

Write A Great Middle Eight! You may not be familiar with the term but you would have heard a middle eight almost every time you listened to a contemporary song. If you break a song structure down into four quarters, the middle eight will be the third quarter representing eight bars of music designed to lift the song by introducing new elements. A good middle eight can make a good song great.

Hot Tip # 13:

Use A Digital hand recorder. For me, this is an essential part of my songwriters gear. I carry my small hand held digital recorder with me everywhere and record ideas on the run. I use a Zoom H4 – a 4 track digital recorder with a 512MB SD Memory Card. This records up to 3 hours of music which I then transfer to my Adobe Audition studio on my laptop.

QUICK TIP:

If you use piano/keyboards to write or would like to learn to play in the most effective way possible, I would recommend you take a look at the resource on my webpage: Learn To Play Piano! 200 Videos, 500 Audios, 10 Manuals

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

Hot Tip # 14:

Intros & Endings. This is especially important in live performance. A well rehearsed intro and ending makes for a professional performance – and obviously we want to give our very best for God. A song needs to ‘build’, so think carefully how you will move into the song from the intro which may be a chord sequence, or may bring in a lead vocal from the beginning, although this is rare. Usually at the end of your song you would repeat the chorus (refrain) two or three times and in recording would often fade out over the chorus. Your ‘hook line’ is most likely to appear in your chorus, so this needs to be strong and memorable.



Songwriters On A Mission Resources

We are committed to providing resources for Christian Songwriters who want to make a difference. So we have launched our Gold Members Club to give ongoing support. Packed with ideas, videos, audio interviews with

Top Songwriters, MP3 Downloads, Reviews, Talks for the Songwriting soul, Tip-offs: How and Where to place your music with information on who is looking for what material – and much more. Our Gold Members Club is also the place where you can expose your music to the critique of the world of Christian Music. Why not join today? You won't find anything quite like it anywhere else. Follow the links on our site:

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

QUICK TIP:

If you are a songwriter, it is likely you play keyboards or guitar. You need to hone your skills, learn new techniques and get some inspiration. I have found Guitar Tricks to be the best, with hundreds of video tutorials and much more:

<http://www.guitartricks.com/ap/gt.php?id=312>

Hot Tip # 15:

Get Your Song On iTunes. If you want to get your song “out there” it needs ‘exposure’. You may already have an outlet to perform your songs. Perhaps the local church, youth club, convention, rally etc. These can be great opportunities to share your music with others. Don’t keep it to yourself! You may want to take further steps however. And there are loads of ways to promote your music. Did you know that you can promote your songs on iTunes? Click the link on my home page at <http://www.songwritersonamission.com> to find out more. Thousands of artists and labels have been putting their music up for digital sale quickly and easily on this site. It’s time for Christians to get out there with their music!

Hot Tip # 16:

Build your own website. This is not difficult and can be a real PLUS when telling others about your music. You don’t need to spend a lot of money putting a website together and a program like Microsoft Frontpage is simple to use and ideal for developing your site. [Our Songwriters On A Mission Gold Members Club has loads of resources added every month including Training Videos on how to put together a website as a showcase for your music – check our website for details].

Hot Tip # 17:

Make Sure You Get The Copyright Sorted. Sign and Date all your material. In the UK I am a Member of the Performing Rights Society. I register my songs with them so I have a third party record that I am the writer of that work. Another way of establishing proof that you are the writer, would be to put your song in a sealed envelop having signed and dated it, then post it to yourself – keep it sealed of course. The postmark will establish time and date the song was written. However, this is an unreliable method and if you are concerned to establish copyright for your material, you should register with the PRS (in the UK) <http://www.prsformusic.com> or the US Copyright Office: <http://www.copyright.gov/> . Writers Organisations like the International Songwriters Association, also have helpful advice about Copyright.

Hot Tip # 18:

What About Royalties? As a Member of the Performing Rights Society, I get Royalties every time one of my songs is played on the radio. A royalty is a fee paid to the songwriter or performer to acknowledge that the work they are performing is their own. I can also claim royalties when my songs are performed in public places. In the UK, every concert hall or venue where music is performed, should have a PRS License that they pay for on an annual basis. This fund pays out to the songwriters and performers. You don't earn massive amounts of money, unless you right a hit song or a TV theme – but every little bit helps!

Hot Tip # 19:

Making Money From songwriting. The bottom line is that the music industry is a highly competitive marketplace and very few musicians and songwriters make it big. However, there are so many ways to get your music out there these days with the advent of the Internet, My Space, Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, iTunes and any number of independent distributors – so the possibility of getting your music heard is much greater than for many years. If you are fortunate enough to get a publishing deal, make sure you read the small print in the contract. More on "101 Essentials".

Hot Tip # 20:

Join the Songwriters On A Mission Forum. In addition to our Gold Members Club which contains exclusive information, eBooks, reports, Lyric Explosion, Audio Interviews and a host of resources that will get your creative juices running, we also have a free Forum for Christian Songwriters who want to make a difference. A great place to network and share ideas. More details on our website:

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

The journey begins!

Are you serious about writing songs that make a difference for God in a world of need?

Songwriters On A Mission exists to give Christian Songwriters ongoing support not just in terms of creative songwriting ideas, advice and resources, but also to provide the spiritual support, back-up and prayer that is vital if we are to take on the world and claim back the world of creative arts for God. If you are serious about writing songs that make a difference for God in a world of need, why not join us and make your voice heard!

Songwriters On A Mission Resources:



#1 Gold Members Club

Ideas, resources, reviews, videos, interviews, MP3's, Hot Tips from some of the top songwriters in the world.
Updated monthly – Join for next to nothing!

#2 Forum For Christian Songwriters

Share your ideas, views and comments with others in the Christian music business
See the links here: <http://www.songwritersonamission.com>



#3 "101 Recording Tips For Christian Songwriters:

Based on Steve's experience in recording studios around the UK and 'down to earth' hot tips on the techniques of high quality home recording. Including production, promotion and distributing your music worldwide.

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

#4 "Rock Music – An Informed View"

This book was originally published by Steve in the 80's at the heart of the controversy about Christian Rock. Steve has now completely revised this edition to incorporate latest developments in the Christian Music business and is a helpful guide for anyone still wondering about the effects of Rock Music in Christian culture.



#5 "101 Essentials For Christian Songwriters"

This eBook is the complete, expanded and unabridged "101 Essentials" and is a MUST for any serious Christian songwriter.

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

More Resources & Links:

"Songwriters On A Mission"

<http://www.songwritersonamission.com>

Guitar Tricks:

<http://www.guitartricks.com/ap/gt.php?id=312>

Steve's Records and Books:

<http://www.ontheboxmedia.com>

Short Term Mission Trips:

<http://www.ontheboxmission.com>

Final Note:

All proceeds from the work and ministry of Songwriters On A Mission is used to support Steve's work as a communicator of the Christian Gospel.

If you would like to contact Steve personally, please feel free to email him at:

steve@songwritersonamission.com