



## SYNTH GOALS

1. Sensitive to the Holy Spirit
2. Synth is NOT piano! Synth is a "frosting instrument"\*
3. Working knowledge of the scales and chord families of A,C,D,E,F,G,Em,Am,Dm
4. Understands 1-4-5 method
5. Able to solo in major or minor keys
6. A **firm** understanding of the 100% rule
7. Can play in time with the metronome
8. Attentive to song leader during praise
9. Understands "piano driven" songs versus "guitar driven" songs
10. Understands E.Q., volume
11. Understands terminology "pad" "strings" "horns" "lead" "organ" "ethereal" "arpeggio"

\*A meal has meat and potatoes. A really good meal also has dessert. The dessert isn't really part of the food; it is for taste and pleasure. A frosting instrument is a dessert instrument. Synth parts are not usually essential to the song (except in the 80's) but they can add some of the most beautiful flavors to a song. A good use of pads, strings or horns can make a song much more personal or intimate. The %100 rule is very important with this instrument! The Synth can be as subtle as a soft whispering pad sound to as big as a stabbing horn section, so be aware of the dynamic range and know where you fit in the %100 rule for the sound your on.

Let's continue on with some more ideas about the synth.

1. The synth would seldom be played all the way through any given song. That's more of a piano thing. The synth is based on a part, or a phrase, or a hook.
2. It is considered somewhat unusual to use a sustain pedal for true synth sounds.
3. Sound selection is crucial for synth parts. The point of a synth is that it can be made to sound like almost any instrument. This means it needs to be played with the same mannerisms as the instrument you've selected. Let's break down some of the instruments:
  - A. Strings: A string section would either play one note (many violins of course, but the synth does that for you) or a few notes, but never big moving chords. Violins play in a high register, so play them up where violins play. When you think of strings, don't think of classical music where the strings are doing intricate, difficult passages, think of soft pop music where they stay on the same note for a long time only moving when the chord won't allow them to stay any longer.

- B. Horns: a horn section for a pop band usually means stabs. (short blows of one, two, or three note tight tri-chords.) It could be a single note staccato scale of some kind. Very seldom would you not stab the note in a combo band.
- C. Pad: A pad is an invention of the synth. A very soft sound used in a still, peaceful way to add ambience behind other instruments. A pad is always held out long, chords are held and changed legato so the "pad" never goes away. It can be either the chords or a single note, usually matching the chord name. ( same as the bass) A pad can be experimented with up very high or down low. The term ethereal refers to the use of a pad sound to make an environment that is, "heavenly" "spacious"
- D. Organ: The gospel organ ( like a Hammond B-3) and the church organ are played very differently. The gospel organ is played for rock and roll or blues, and can be used as a solo instrument or for accompaniment. There are probably many books written on what it is to play gospel organ so, good luck. The church organ is usually considered an instrument that stands on its own.
- E. Lead: A lead is any instrument you choose to use as a solo instrument, i.e. flute, horns, organ, "sawtooth" etc. The rules are easy, play one note at a time, in high enough volume so that it's obviously a solo, play your solo, and that's it.