

Worship Team Expedition Weekly Devotional



Week 3: Relational Worship Leading

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

-1 Corinthians 12:27

My friends in real estate use a phrase you’ve probably heard when describing the 3 most important factors in valuing a property: location, location, location! In other words, where that property sits is more important than most other factors.

You could use a variation on this phrase when talking about worship leading: relationship, relationship, relationship!

At it’s core, leading worship is about relationship. Sure, we use the tools of songs, instruments, technology, systems, and so forth in the regular practice of musical worship in our ministry settings. Nothing wrong with that stuff- but all those things support the main thing: relationship.

Relationship...between you and God. Between God and His Church. Within the worship/tech team. Between the worship team and congregation. Within the larger congregation. It’s all about those relationships growing and thriving.

Remember, when Christ boiled it down to the two *most important* things, both were relational: love God, love people. Relationship is a big deal.

When you or I step into a group of musicians or in front of a group of people to lead worship, we are entering into relationship with them in some way. It’s an amazing opportunity to build connection, to let them know that their hearts (not just their skills or contribution) are important, that we want to know and be known, that we desire...relationship.

We talk about “leading worship”, but really we lead people. What are we leading them to? Hopefully a closer *relationship* with God and with others (the natural results of really worshiping God).

Think of the people who have most touched your life (ministry or otherwise), who have believed in you, invested in you, made an impact on your life? Relationship was a key component of that, wasn’t it?

I don't know about you, but I want to be the kind of person that has a positive impact on the hearts, the thinking, the skills of the people in our ministry and that means prioritizing relational ministry. Sometimes I don't get this right. There are times (if I'm honest) where I get pretty wrapped up in the tasks, the projects, the details that just *have* to get done right now and I (sadly) miss the people that are right in front of me. Do you ever do this too? I'm not the only one, right?

My encouragement to you (and myself) this week is to think about the *people* in your ministry setting, to be a little more aware of those around you. There are lots of ways we can do this...

- Memorize a song so you're more connected to the congregation and musicians
- Reach out to that team member who's experienced loss or difficulty recently
- Ask your sound person how you can be helpful this weekend at church
- Send a little note to someone who has touched your heart
- Grab a hot beverage with a team member and just listen to them for awhile
- Say- out loud- that encouraging thing you've been thinking to a teammate
- Show up a little earlier or prepare just a touch more for the next service
- Apologize to that person you wronged (you know who I'm talking about!)
- Plan a team get-together to hang out and enjoy one another's company

And here's a little secret- as you make relational awareness a priority, as you do little and big things to communicate to people that their hearts matter to you, you will wind up making someone's day, perhaps even being the answer to someone's prayer (unspoken prayers too!).

A singer who's new to the team and nervous is affirmed with "Nice solo today!" A sound tech will realize the worship leader really values him when musicians that are noodling get shushed during sound check. A shy keyboardist will stretch and try that new lick that was applauded during rehearsal. A drummer shocks the worship leader speechless by saying "I'm going to rehearse with a metronome from now on and eliminate distracting fills."

Can we go deeper? That musician whose father was very discouraging gains a new sense of confidence as a pastor affirms a ministry calling. A tech person who feels unseen and unappreciated in many areas of life feels loved by a caring ministry team. A worship leader is surprised by a kind word from someone previously seen as a detractor. That drummer who was kicked out of their band in high school (and hasn't played since) starts drum lessons and courageously talks to the worship leader about joining the worship team.

You never fully know where people are at and the power your actions and words have. But know this- there is power when you recognize the central nature of relationship. We are part of the Body of Christ, we are connected, and we have a tremendous opportunity to build up the other parts- the other people- in the body as we love them.

God has gifted YOU in a unique way– specific talents and aptitudes and abilities that others on your team don't have and when you leverage those in a relational way, Christ's Body is built up and great things happen. You are a critically important person on the team, you are a gift to Christ's Body- the skills AND heart you bring to your role are vital. You can have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of the people on your team- how cool is that?! Don't miss that opportunity by getting buried in tasks and ignoring people!

By the way, all those important tasks that we fret about tend to work out much better when we are relational anyway. A healthy body where all the parts are connected and functioning well is way more effective at accomplishing ministry.

So, this week, remember...

It's all about relationship.

We want relational ministries where people are encouraged in their walk with God. Where the people of God are engaged as our teams lead worship. Where we are connected to the hearts and minds of the people around us. Where the team is nimble and responsive to the movement of God's Holy Spirit.

Let's ask God what He wants us to do this week to make that kind of relational atmosphere happen in our setting. How about doing that right now? Go ahead, ask Him.

Questions For Thought

Is there any idea in this week's devotional that caught your attention or challenged you?

How does a strong emphasis on relationship make you feel?

How connected relationally are you to the other people on your ministry team?

What gets in the way of relationships for you? Anything holding you back in this area?

What are some gifts or abilities God has given you that could be used in ministry?