

INSPIRING AND JOYFUL WORSHIP!

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Introduction

Inspiring worship is a personal and corporate encounter with the living God. Both personal and corporate worship must be infused with the presence of God resulting in times of joyous exultation and time of quiet reverence. Inspiring worship is not driven by a particular style or ministry focus group - but rather the shared experience of God's awesome presence.

Worship as a lifestyle

1. The essence of worship is acknowledging the Lordship of Christ in our lives.

- A. "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." - Matthew 22:37-38
- B. Worship is first and foremost a heart condition. If this is true, the biggest deterrent to worship is personal kingdoms that you refuse to give over to Christ.

2. The work and person of God must be the source of life-giving inspiration in worship.

- A. Worship can be experienced in a corporate service or in personal quiet time, but our whole lived should reflect worship (Romans 12:1-2)
- B. Techniques and structures can aid in the transmission of inspiration, but they can not be a substitute for it.

3. Worship must happen on the individual level before it can happen on the corporate level

- A. Corporate worship must be an overflow of your personal worship.
- B. When God is glorified in worship, the result is unity, vision, maturity, blessing and empowerment for ministry.

4. The style of worship used should match the focus group, but the process of bringing people into the presence of God is the essence of worship.

- A. True worship is not a static activity, but a dynamic process of celebration and reflection.
- B. Inspiring worship is celebrative and relevant worship which adores the creator and ministers to the every day needs of those who participate.

5. Cultivate your personal worship.

- A. Set aside time for personal worship.
- B. Invite God to transform you.
- C. Include times for repentance, forgiveness, praise, thanksgiving and intercession.
- D. spend time in listening prayer.
- E. Experiment to discover what will be meaningful to you as you come to worship God.

Worshiping in small groups

1. The worship time in small groups may be musical; however there are other ways to worship.
2. Train and resource worship leaders for small groups.

Reflection Questions

1. What is your expectation of worship in small groups?
2. How does the worship team resource small group worship?
3. What feedback channels are available for worship leaders in small groups? To whom?

The Corporate Worship Experience

1. Clarify the purpose of your worship service.

- A. Each ministry of the church should have a primary purpose even though it may serve several purposes.
- B. Define what is critical for you and allow other aspects to act in a supporting role.
- C. Determine how you will measure your effectiveness.

2. Define your primary ministry focus group and appropriate style.

- A. Your ministry should be intentionally designed with your target group in mind.
- B. Each generation has set of values. For example:
 - a. the builder generation values sincerity
 - b. the boomer generation values excellence
 - c. generation x values authenticity
 - d. the millennial generation values meaningful involvement
- C. Consider how your theological stream will effect your style. Common threads of Worship in theological streams:
 - a. vital connection with the spirit of God
 - b. ability to lead people into the presence of God
 - c. expectation of meeting God
 - d. elements of celebration and reflection
 - e. growth of a common vision, ethos
- D. Determine appropriate seeker sensitivity.

3. Determine frequency of services.

- A. Will you repeat a given service several times on a weekend, or will you offer various styles of worship at different times?
- B. Part of your decision will depend on the intended focus of the worship service. It will also depend on the gifts, passions and abilities of the people involved in leadership.

4. Develop a worship team.

- A. Team members must be team players.
- B. Team members must have a humble heart and a teachable mind.
- C. Team members need to have a faith full spirit.
- D. Team members should have some musical ability.
- E. The worship team leader needs to be able to lead people in worship.

5. Release creativity through the arts.

- A. Help people see, feel, hear, know and respond to God.
- B. Appropriate use of the arts assists in the journey towards intimacy with God, which is the goal.
- C. Use multiple types of media as a way to bring people into an encounter with God. For example
 - a. pictures
 - b. banners
 - c. music
 - d. poetry
- D. Consider how you can create pathways that help people worship. The tabernacle provides an example:
 - a. gates - thanksgiving
 - b. the outer courts - praise for what God has done
 - c. altar of sacrifice - surrender
 - d. the laver - repentance, cleansing
 - e. the holy place - worship God for who he is
 - f. the holy of Holies - songs/prayer to the Lord/listening, waiting in his presence

6. Evaluate worship service for effectiveness.

Consistently review your worship services from a variety of perspectives

- A. Evaluate from a newcomer's perspective
- B. Evaluate levels of participation
- C. Videotapes your worship services for evaluations purposes.
- D. Submit each service to the critique of your team for affirmation, instruction and improvement.
- E. Action points

- ✓ schedule regular rehearsals for the worship team
- ✓ involve the worship team in planning for services.
- ✓ involve the worship team in evaluating worship services
- ✓ train the team and worship leader in skills
- ✓ provide mentoring for the worship leader

Facilitating inspiring worship

1. Plan the service prayerfully and carefully.

- A. In planning a worship service, the various aspects of the service should enhance the primary purpose of the service.
- B. Be mindful of your target group's need for structure some prefer more structure, others less.
- C. Clear plans can provide flexibility without confusion.
- D. People involved in leading need to know ahead of time what is expected of them in terms of function and length of time .
- E. Pre-service prayer for those involved in " up front" ministry, including worship team, drama team, etc. will provide a place for hearts to be united. Last minute checks and question can also be addressed.

2. Celebrative and reflective worship requires a team effort.

- A. Use many people in a service (preparing, leading, supporting).
- B. Involve people in the congregation (active, not passive).

3. Leaders need to model being a worshiper.

- A. If your own personal worship lacks depth and significance in your life, you will be unable to lead others into the presence of God.
- B. Consistently respond to the lordship of Christ in your own life.
- C. Cultivate a heart of worship personally.

4. The worship team plays three important leadership roles in the service:

- A. Promoting
- B. Modeling
- C. Facilitating

5. The worship leader will need to provide appropriate transitions between the components of the service.

6. Sermons need to be biblically based and relevant to your target group.

The sermon portion of the worship service should:

- a. Inspire
- b. Involve
- c. Influence
- d. Integrate
- e. Illuminate
- f. Inform
- g. Implement