

Creating a Culture of Joy

I. The Lesson

Let's not be naive; sometimes we really don't feel like ministering on any particular weekend. There are times when we are physically tired, exhausted, or sick; we're dealing with issues in our lives that contend for our focus and attention; we are discouraged; or perhaps, for whatever reason, we feel spiritually empty (can come from a lack of spending time in the secret place).

As worship ministers, it is important to understand that it is *vitaly important that we minister from a place of joy*. Consider the following scriptures:

Psalm 16:11 "*In Your presence is fullness of joy*"

Psalm 100:2 "Worship the LORD with gladness. ***Come before Him, singing with joy.***"

→ Joy is a _____ for coming before the Lord

Isaiah 35:10 "And the ransomed of the LORD will return. ***They will enter Zion with singing***; everlasting joy will crown their heads. ***Gladness and joy will overtake them***, and sorrow and sighing will flee away."

Isaiah 56:7 "I will bring them to my holy mountain of Jerusalem and ***will fill them with joy in my house*** of prayer."

John 15:10-11 "When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, ***your joy will overflow!***"

→ Remaining in His _____ and doing His _____ results in JOY.

Neh. 8:10 "Don't be dejected and sad, for ***the joy of the LORD is your strength!***"

It is God's design that our times of corporate worship are times that are full of joy! These are times of celebration of what the Lord has done in and through us as believers and as a Body. As we worship, His promise is that we will be "overtaken" by gladness and joy. It is this joy that is the source of our strength as the people of God.

It should not come as a great surprise to us, then, that one of the main areas the enemy tries to attack is our joy.

No _____ = no _____

As worship ministers, it is vitally important that we guard our joy, come to minister full of joy, and minister out of joy to intentionally create a culture of joy in our congregation. When you really think about it, how many people in any given service are coming in sad, dejected, depressed, maybe even suicidal? - pretty much anything but joyful. It is a reality we need to face.

Another reality is the fact that there are those who come to church and aren't happy about it, whether they had a bad experience in the past or have never really understood that church is a JOYFUL experience. We get to model the reality of the fullness of JOY in the presence of the Lord.

There is a great exchange that happens in the presence of the Lord (see Isaiah 61:3):

God Gives

In Exchange For

Ashes

Mourning

Heaviness

Our joy, as worship ministers, also springs from the revelation that we're a part of God's plan to minister to His people and extend His Kingdom in the earth.

1 Cor. 12:20 "For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of." (MSG)

We are a part of something great. Let's go after joy with a new fervency!

"There is nothing like the local church... its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breathtaking. Its potential is unlimited. It comforts the grieving and heals the broken in the context of community. It builds bridges to seekers and offers truth to the confused. It provides resources for those in need and opens its arms to the forgotten, the downtrodden, the disillusioned. It breaks the chains of addictions, frees the oppressed, and offers belonging to the marginalized of this world. Whatever the capacity for human suffering, the church has a greater capacity for healing and wholeness."¹

¹ Hybels, Bill. Courageous Leadership. Pg. 23, 2002. Zondervan. Grand Rapids, Michigan

II. Discussion

- 1) What can we do as individuals to increase our joy?
- 2) What are some of the main ways our joy is attacked as worship ministers?
- 3) What are the byproducts in the congregation when a worship team is not joyful on stage?
- 4) How can we, as a worship team, encourage each other in the area of our “joy level?”

III. Prayer Points

- 1) Pray for an increase of the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of each member of the worship team (one fruit is **joy** – Gal. 5:22).
- 2) Pray for an increase of the presence of the Lord in your services... In His presence is “fullness of joy.”
- 3) Pray that the joy of the Lord would be on His people; that depression, anxiety, fear, disappointment, and every other thing that suppresses joy in them would be suffocated in joy.