

Musical Preparation

I. The Lesson

If you have ever taken formal musical lessons of any kind, one of the most dreaded words to hear is “practice.” Practice takes diligence. Practice is rarely fun. However, practice is absolutely necessary in our pursuit of bringing God an excellent offering (see “Excellence”). Lucky for you, this entire lesson is NOT about practice. It is, however, about preparation.

Have you ever watched really high-level musicians perform? There is a seeming ease in their playing or singing. They seem effortless. Although there is an inherent amount of natural gift resident in them, great musicians and singers have learned that preparation is key to successful performances.

Although we are not performing for an audience when we are in worship services, we *are* performing for an “audience of One.” How much more important is it that we practice and prepare for our performance/ministry before Him? While many secular musicians and singers perform for money and selfish motives, we get to minister to Him, minister to His people, and see God do amazing things through His church!

Let’s look at one of the clearest examples in the Bible of how preparation led to an amazing move of God!

Second Chronicles chapters two through four detail the preparation put into the building of Solomon’s Temple. The best materials were used by the best craftsmen in its construction. Solomon stopped at no length to build the house of God. After construction was complete, we see an account of the dedication of the temple – what a day it was.

2 Chr. 5:11-14 ¹¹And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who *were* present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions), ¹²and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets— ¹³indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers *were* as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: ‘For He is good, For His mercy endures forever,’ that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God."

What an amazing event to be a part of. We all want God to move in our church in this powerful way, right? This passage (and countless others) show the direct relationship between preparation and the power of God being released in a given environment. **God anoints preparation!**

Preparation in the local church goes way beyond the preparation required of the worship team, but we will focus there for the purpose of this lesson.

Areas of Preparation for Worship Ministry Members

- 1) _____
Our “continuing education” as musicians and singers happens through private lessons, musical classes at a local community college/junior college, or other venue. Professional musicians will tell you that they **never stop learning**.
- 2) _____
This is not referring to attending worship rehearsals **only**, but also rehearsing specific parts on your own time. This rehearsal time promotes excellence among the team, and has the natural and supernatural result of drawing people into worship.
- 3) _____
What good is it to work on a part for eight hours and come to service and have a broken string on your guitar or broken drum sticks? Whatever the case may be, you have to prepare your instrument for use as well as you prepare for your own musical performance.
- 4) _____
It is vitally important that we, as worship ministry members, keep our physical bodies healthy and in-shape. Lack of sleep, bad diet, and an overall lack of physical preparation can hinder your ability to minister. We need to be ready to minister and not be hindered by illness and the like. Vocalists, it is important to warm up your voice so you do not cause long-term damage by abusing your voice. It is even necessary at times for musicians to stretch their hands, arms, etc. so as to not cause long-term damage (carpal-tunnel syndrome or other repetitive-motion injuries, etc.)

II. Discussion

- 1) What are some of the reasons that you personally do not prepare more for the times of worship?
- 2) What are some simple ways that we can begin to take steps toward increasing our musical/vocal ability?
- 3) During a worship service, what are the results of a worship team that has not prepared adequately?

- 4) How is the congregation affected when there has been a lack of preparation by the ministry team (worship team, pastors, ushers, etc.) as a whole?
- 5) Why does God anoint preparation? Why can't we just make up for a lack of preparation by praying before the service?

III. Prayer Points

- 1) Pray that God would give us a fresh revelation of what our role is as a worship team.
- 2) Pray that God would help us to see how we can re-prioritize our time to help prepare, musically and spiritually, for when we minister (both personally and as a team).
- 3) Pray that this heart of honoring the Lord through preparation would be on every member of the worship team and ministry team.
- 4) Pray that we would see an increasing level of the manifest presence of God in our services as we increasingly focus on preparing a place for His presence.