The Place Of



The worship leader begins his God-inspired set. He strums the first chord. His eyes are closed. What is he thinking? Is he seeing the heavenlies open up before him – perhaps, the very throne room of God? If it happens to be me in the position of worship leader on that occasion, I am probably thinking any of the following thoughts: "Who's here? Anyone of significance? I wonder who's watching me play this morning? I'd better make sure I do some cool things on the guitar." Sadly, these types of thoughts can run through all of our minds as worship leaders, even as we endeavor to bring people into the presence of God.

The Place Of Pride

Pride is an issue for us all, and especially for those who have a visible role leading others. Pride comes in many forms, and shines through in countless ways. I struggle with pride when I lead worship, I struggle with pride when I play guitar for another worship leader and I struggle with pride when I am not involved at all – but am simply listening to another leader!

When I started attending the Vineyard back in 1989, I enjoyed playing electric guitar in the band. Yet I was not accustomed to involving lead solos in worship. Being on the stage for the sole purpose of pointing all to Jesus and then playing lead solos (which in my mind pulled all the attention onto me) seemed to be a contradiction. It was an awkward adjustment, but my eyes began to open to a new way of thinking. People would share how they were deeply touched by God as a result of certain solos. Some even felt the power of God driving away darkness when I would play. I still could not lose that sense of all eyes being on me as I played, but I knew that I needed to express my heart through my instrument anyway – and allow God to use it to get past people's defenses. I needed to learn how to keep pride in

Pride

BRIAN THIESSEN

is a worship leader/songwriter at the North Langley Vineyard in British Columbia, Canada. He and his wife, Loralee, live in Cloverdale, BC with their three beautiful children Tyus, Brendan and Makenna.



BY BRIAN THIESSEN

check as I played, instead of running away from this spiritual battleground. I knew without a doubt that I would be destroyed if I allowed pride to stay, and to grow.

Dealing With Pride As A Worship Leader

Here are some thoughts on how I deal with pride as a worship leader/musician:

Make A Choice To Walk In Humility

First of all, pride is like a disease, and must be treated relentlessly. While I am only in my early thirties, I know that as long as I am alive I am going to have pride courting me. I must consciously choose to point people to the Bridegroom – and avoid stealing glimpses from the Bride to myself.

Confess Your Motives And Attitudes To Others

Secondly, one of the greatest helps for me in keeping my heart in its place is to confess my motives and attitudes to others. It is a great blessing for me to have friends with whom I can relentlessly "tell on myself." In doing this, I am winning over pride. Tell on yourself regularly. Even though you might feel like you are portraying yourself as a worse person than you actually are, confessing your sin feels great afterward.

Keep Your Leadership In Perspective

Keeping a proper perspective on what you are doing as a worship leader is an important step in overcoming pride. I remember an analogy that suggested that leading people in worship was comparable to being the best man at a wedding. As the analogy went, the best man is present for the sole purpose of bringing everyone's attention to the Groom, a role not unlike that of John the Baptist. Could you imagine a wedding where the best man tried to steal the affections of the Bride for himself? Losing our perspective can cause us to do that very thing when we are leading people in worship.

When I feel myself pulled to think of how I am performing, how my new song is going over with the crowd or how my last guitar lick sounded, I think of the wedding. I am struck with the fear of God, as I never want to steal the affections of the Bride from Him. I make it my business to always point to Jesus, no matter what nagging thoughts may pester me.

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