

5 WORDS OF ADVICE FOR A WORSHIP PASTOR'S FIRST DAY ON THE JOB

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So much of what's written as a resource for a worship leaders is related (and rightly so) to the part of the job that happens on Sunday morning or leads up to it. How to choose songs, how to run rehearsal, how to lead people more effectively - all of these are crucial and we need to make sure that worship leaders are equipped to do these very well.

Yet those hours are generally at the end of the week for paid worship pastors and there's not much out there to help worship pastors think about how they're going to invest the first hours of their week to help make sure that Sunday is as effective as possible.

If you're a worship pastor starting a new position or you're transitioning from a volunteer to a paid role or perhaps you're a senior pastor and you'd like to resource a new staff member in a worship role my hope with this resource is to give you five things to focus on as you begin this new job.

Although I'm nowhere near an expert, I've been in full time worship ministry since 2005 and have had the incredible opportunity to have great working and personal relationships with my pastors I've served alongside.

Hopefully some of what I've learned can help you start great in your new role so that you can serve your church and lead them as effectively as possible!

Always available for more conversation on this!

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Congratulations! Moving from volunteer worship leader to paid worship pastor is a big jump and an incredible opportunity. I'm always cheering on people as they step into a new role and I'm often asked for advice as someone starts working at a church in their role as worship pastor.

Starting well will help you set a good course for many years of successful ministry and will allow you to thrive in your role. Stumbling out of the blocks won't completely derail you but if I can help you avoid some early missteps then everyone wins!

Every church, job description, set of expectations and co-worker dynamic will be different based on location, size of church, history, tenure of the senior pastor (to only name a few factors!) but here are five words of advice I give to worship pastors who are just starting out in their new job at a church for the first time.

ONE: Don't neglect your soul.

TWO: Your pastor trusts you.

THREE: Your pastor is your boss is your pastor.

FOUR: Love people before leading them.

FIVE: Go to the funeral.

Along the way you'll see a few spots with twitter and facebook icons. Click them to share a quote from this resource through your social media accounts.

ONE: Don’t Neglect Your Soul

I’ve been in full time worship ministry since 2005. Long enough to see too many worship pastors leave their church job, leave the church and some leave the faith altogether. Don’t neglect your soul.

Success in ministry at the expense of your relationship with Jesus is a terrible trade.

Personal worship outside of rehearsal and Sunday morning is crucial. Prioritize time in prayer away from the office. Read scripture for more than choosing songs that match your pastor’s message. Celebrate the work of Jesus in your family and your community.

“Success in ministry at the expense of your relationship with Jesus is a terrible trade.”





Your identity as a follower of Jesus is so much more than what you do as a worship pastor and your ability as a worship pastor will flow out of your own relationship with Jesus. Don’t neglect it.

TWO: Your Pastor Trusts You

By inviting you to lead the flock under their care, your pastor has already expressed great trust in you.

If you're starting out at a new church you may not be BFF's yet with your pastor and even if you're going on staff at a church where you've already been attending and serving it will take time to develop a relationship.

Great relationship with your pastor is worth it and it will take work just like any other. Don't question that the foundation of the relationship is trust and go from there. Take time to learn how you can serve them, encourage them and be part of shepherding people the way God has called you to do together.

Your pastor loses sleep over the people in your church and trust me when I say that they care very much about who is leading their church in worship.

By hiring you and giving you this opportunity they have already shown you how much trust they have in you.

THREE: Your Pastor Is Your Boss Is Your Pastor

People who work for their church have, by nature, a very strange relationship with their boss.

There are as many staffing structures as there are churches but at some point your pastor is going to be your boss is going to be your pastor. And that can be weird.

Your job security is dependant partly on your spiritual wellness but your spiritual vitality should never be dependant on your job performance. It can be very difficult to separate those two things but the sooner you can build a pastoral relationship with your boss, the better.

> **"Your spiritual vitality should never be dependant on your job performance."**
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Your boss is your pastor and they want you to thrive both as a follower of Jesus AND as a worship pastor. If they're priorities are in the right place they will be in that order.

FOUR: Love People Before Leading Them

Once you are hired as a professional worship leader that means you are on staff at a larger than average church. This doesn't mean the church is better or worse at any specific things it just means there are enough people attending and supporting the ministry that there are financial resources available to pay your salary.

Your church can afford to pay you and also has certain expectations of what will be delivered on Sunday morning. It's easy to fall into the trap and believe that you are there to perform for the crowd and help them check off the worship box.

Spend time every Sunday walking through the seats just talking with people and asking them how they're doing. Get out to the lobby or the parking lot and say hi to people as they come in to the building. Get down and high five some kids as they're walking through the halls.

It's important for people to know that you see them and care for them as people before you lead them.

Of course the unintended benefit of doing this is that your leadership will be better because it's rooted in love for the people and not in your own ability to impress them.

Love people before leading them.

FIVE: Go To The Funeral

Someone gave me this advice almost 15 years ago and it has served me well:

Go to the funeral.

When you hear of a tough thing in someone's life, show up. If someone on your team has a death in the family and you're able, go to the funeral. You may even have the terrible experience of someone on your team passing away. It goes without saying but I'll say it again.. go to the funeral.

If it's the funeral of a family member, the person on your team won't think it's weird or out of place. You won't be overstepping your bounds and you aren't setting a bad precedent. Just show up.

Your presence during tough times will speak volumes to the people who are serving alongside you and will help grow the pastoral shepherding heart that God has already placed inside you.

Go to the funeral.

While this isn't the full extent of advice that you may receive as you start your new role I do believe that if you can put some of these things in place early in your time as worship pastor you will find a new effectiveness in your ministry.

I'm cheering you on! Let me know if I can ever be a help for you or encourage you along the way.

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