

by Mike O'Brien

God is very kind to build seasons into our lives. Every new season is an excellent time to recalibrate and make new what has become tattered and worn.

For many, our worship ministries and personal leadership have plateaued. Sure, we get the weekly worship set out and go through the motions, but there is something deep inside that says there could be more. The non-stop voice in our head says, "I wish….". For years I wanted a better voice but I was too embarrassed, broke or distracted to take a voice lesson. I also wanted a real Hammond B3 Organ. I wanted to get high quality counseling… and the list went on and on. All these dreams (and more) connected with my calling went nowhere year after year.

In 2002 I started making a list and a plan of action for everything I could dream in the area of worship leadership and our team.

That year, by March – EVERYTHING had already been accomplished! Needless to say every year since I have continued to pray, dream and designing goals for that next year.

We so easily discount these goal making sessions as **RESOLUTION PLANS** that will only fail. But let me say this: **You will inevitably begin and restart cycles of sin this year without a list or a plan. I promise.** Knowing that the one who comes to steal and destroy is always working, we need to take the time to listen to what God has for us. There are more tools today to help us succeed than ever before.

Heads Up. It's important that the goals for your family and home take precedence for growth BEFORE your ministry. Use these ministry examples to inspire the same discipline for your home life as well.

To get you thinking, here are some ideas for a personal growth in the area of worship leadership that are **specific and measurable**.

PERSONAL GROWTH EXAMPLES

- Read 5 books on Worship and/or Theology and 2 Books on Songwriting (ask others for good titles)
- Ask worship leaders that you respect for a one hour Skype session for wisdom and prayer
- Reserve two nights at the local monastery and listen to Jesus without distraction (in April – book today)
- Plan a 3 month sabbatical (Aug-Oct), complete with 6 spiritual direction sessions, fasting on Mondays – and spend a week of it with your family

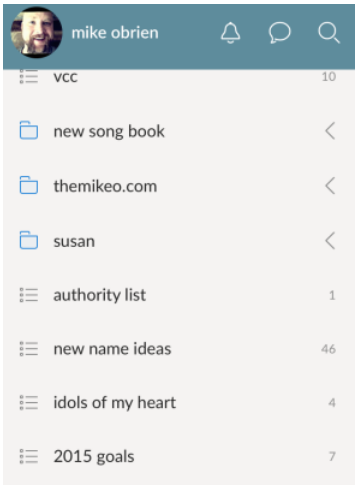
- Take a $200 vocal lesson with that lady who teaches Adele
  Lead ONE song this year from the piano

Spend some time with the Lord in prayer and ask Him – "What do you want to do to in me and through me this year?" Every time I ask this question, He answers. Often times the goals He gives me are life-giving and exciting. Sometimes they are goals that will cost me.

WORSHIP TEAM EXAMPLES

- Play two new venues in 2016 that will expand our heart for justice (prisons, adoption event, nursing homes etc…).

- Release 2 female main stage worship leaders to lead the team solo by years end



I use Wunderlist to keep track of my goals

•Book two nights in a cabin with all the songwriters to share songs and vision

•Bring in a pro electric guitarist for Saturday training session before EASTER

•Attend a black gospel church together as a worship team and go to dinner to discuss it AFTER easter

•Host an instrumental "petting zoo" day where anyone (kids included) can come and play the instruments (identify new musicians/have fun). SUMMER

- *Think BIG. Think small. It's cool. Dream with your staff team. If you are a small church, get lunch with your pastor*

and share vision. Once you have had some time to pray and process your goals, WRITE THEM DOWN and share them.

For over 15 years, I have taken a few weeks in to get with Jesus and tell Him about my dreams and ask Him what He wants from me. Whether you are in a volunteer or paid position, take some time to listen to God and ask where He is taking you and your team this year? The yearly goal setting process has been one of the most important tools for keeping worship ministry vibrant and life-giving for me as a leader.

My name is Mike O'Brien and I am passionate about teaching and mentoring worship leaders and teams. My calling is to use my experience as producer, worship leader, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist to come alongside musicians, helping them more fully worship God with their instrument and lives. Contact me to talk about how we can raise the bar through virtual or on-site training for your worship ministry.