28 Things Pastors Should Say to Their Worship Leaders

by Rick Muchow

"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it, with an attitude of thanksgiving." (Col 4:2)

It makes sense that the bible offers great advice in the area of communication as the theme one another is such a priority to God: unity with one another, working with one another, loving one another, praying for one another, forgiving one another and pursuing what makes for the building up one another, etc. This theme is both a priority and a prerequisite for worship. The bible guides us in this verse saying, "be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." (James 1:19) When this order is violated, communication and relationships suffer. Healthy communication is very important between Pastor and Worship Leader and is often an area that is most in need of improvement.

Knowing what to say and what not to say makes a huge difference in successful leadership. It may be an understatement to say that many Worship Leaders think differently than many Lead Pastors: a natural communication barrier exists because of gifting. This is a generalization but often is the root of the communication problem. Although most Pastors know when the worship leader is being effective, many Pastors struggle with saying the right things when improvement is needed. Here are 28 things Pastors can say to their worship leader: for better or for worse. But first: Because busyness can undermine healthy communication, especially when correction is needed, make it a rule to pray before you speak (this will slow you down a bit and help you with perspective) and always remember to "speak the truth in love." (Eph 4:15) Love speaks louder than your words to a worship leader. Here is my list of things Pastors should say to their Worship Leaders regarding leading corporate worship:

1. I appreciate you.
2. Sing familiar songs.

3. Sing in the key of the congregation.
4. Sing your prayers.
5. Lead worship; don't drive it.
6. Match your sound to your target.
7. Choose songs that serve the Lead Pastor's philosophy of ministry.
8. Fast can be loud or soft; Slow can be soft or loud.
9. Before and after service spend time with attendees.
10. Worship is more than music and more than Art.
11. Artists are like a fire; Worship leaders light the fire.
12. People don't love changes but Love changes people.
13. Healthy musical or worship style transitions require trust.
14. Trust is earned.
15. Ask the congregation to sing.
16. Memorize your songs.
17. Use songs rich in scripture and biblical theology.
18. Excellence is a good value but is not the goal; Connection is the goal.
19. Sit in the worship center during the teaching for at least one service.
20. Love all the people: congregation, team and staff.
21. Set your teams bar for prayer, punctuality, preparation and love for people by your example.
22. Be thorough in preparation and rehearse everything: technical elements, congregational songs, speaking, prayer, transitions and music played to accompany prayer.
23. Keep learning.
24. Take care of your health.
25. Keep your commitments and follow through.
26. Serve the other team leaders.
27. Be fiducially responsible.
28. Be yourself; God uses leaders who are authentic.

Download Rick's worship songs from Praise Charts. Since Saddleback Church, Rick leads worship at different local churches each week and coaches Pastors, Worship Leaders and their teams. Check out Rick's ministry at
www.rickmuchow.com