WORSHIP PASTOR > WORSHIP LEADER: THE DIFFERENCE IS CARING FOR PEOPLE

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There are **song** leaders and there are **worship** leaders. There are worship **leaders** and there are worship **pastors**. Regardless of your specific title, I want to zoom in a bit this month on some approaches we can think about in regards to pastoring our worship community better and better. Some of this will come very naturally; the work of a worship pastor is a never-ending work in progress. We do play a role in shepherding those from the church at large, but I want to speak to the team that is serving right alongside you.

*Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality (*Romans 12:10-13)

At this point in my ministry experience, **I see the worship stage as the center of the world**. It's not central for reasons of pride or music-centric ambitions, rather it's primary in my mind because this is where I naturally do the work of discipleship. Musicians and techs under our care are being formed and shaped through the hours, weeks, and years of serving together. When you pastor your team skillfully, you are making disciples, and this is the work of the Kingdom!

Here are some practical ways I encourage you to think about in your ministry:

People Over (and Before) Production

I love to produce awe-inspiring, over-the-top, pastor-pleasing weekend experiences. Ironically, for years I did this while stepping on the very people I was serving alongside. Over time I've learned to welcome and embrace every soul that enters into our rehearsal space. I try to take time before the music begins to give space for people to share and be present to one another. From that foundation of care, we make the music.

Seamless and Consistent Administration

To quote a friend and mentor, Randy McCoy, "BAD administration hurts people." One of the most loving things we can do for our teams is to have clean and consistent communication. Timely scheduling, song prep, emails, and texts all speak the language of care. Let people know what is expected of them and what they can expect from you. Over time these faithful structures will build trust, and your team will grow.

Never Stop Saying Thank You

Sending encouraging texts/emails/cards before, during, and after services can be the fuel for a life-giving worship team environment. Look for little and varied ways to say "thank you." A little post-it note on a

music stand/soundboard, a bottle of water, a backstage station for hot tea, or a social media shout-out can and will move mountains relationally and organizationally.

Never Stop Learning

A thriving worship community will be, at its core, a learning community. Both newbies and “pros” will always be exploring new ways to be enriched and challenged. Part of your job as a worship pastor is encouraging everyone to have opportunities for growth. If most of the people on your stage have a “been there, done that” mentality it will create a sense of entitlement and cynicism. We all have something we can be learning. Has it all become just a little too easy? How are you growing as [a] leader? Who are you encouraging to risk, stepping up and out? Who are [you] training to go even beyond you?