

STRENGTHENING YOUR PRAISE TEAM
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I. Becoming a Team of Lead Worshipers

A. Spiritual Matters

1. Sanctify Yourselves

2 Chron. 5:11-12a

¹¹ When the priests came forth from the holy place (for **all the priests who were present had sanctified (HCSB – consecrated) themselves**, without regard to divisions), ¹² **and all the Levitical singers**, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and kinsmen, clothed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps and lyres . . .

- a. Spiritual preparation is a prerequisite for authenticity in worship leadership
- b. Physical preparation is critical to the quality of worship leadership

2. Unify Your Voices

2 Chron. 5:13-14

¹³ **The trumpeters and singers joined together to praise and thank the Lord with one voice.** They raised [their] voices, accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and musical instruments, in praise to the Lord: “For He is good; His faithful love endures forever; the temple, the Lord’s temple, was filled with a cloud. ¹⁴ And because of the cloud, the priests were not able to continue ministering, for the glory of the Lord filled God’s temple.^[9] (HCSB)

- a. Earnestly strive for unity of heart and mind among worship leaders
- b. Encourage anonymity among instrumentalists and vocalists

3. Delight in His Majestic Ones

Psalm 16:3

³ As for **the saints** who are in the earth, they are **the majestic ones** in whom is all my delight.

- a. Be mindful of the majesty that has been conveyed upon you as a saint of God
- b. Consider it a glorious privilege to lead the Lord’s majestic ones in worship

4. Minister with Gladness and Joy

Psalm 16:7-11

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⁷ I will praise the Lord who counsels me— even at night my conscience instructs me.
⁸ I keep the LORD in mind always. Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ⁹ Therefore **my heart is glad, and my spirit rejoices**; my body also rests securely. ¹⁰ For You will not abandon me to Sheol; You will not allow Your Faithful One to see the Pit. ¹¹ You reveal the path of life to me . . .
in Your presence is abundant (NASB - fullness of) joy; in Your right hand are eternal pleasures.^[9] (HCSB)

²⁵ For David says of Him: I saw the Lord ever before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ²⁶ **Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced (NASB - exulted)**. Moreover my flesh will rest in hope, ²⁷ because You will not leave my soul in Hades, or allow Your Holy One to see decay. ²⁸ You have revealed the paths of life to me; **You will fill me with gladness in Your presence.**
Acts 2:25-28 (HCSB)

- a. Commit to come into his presence with joy
- b. Minister with obvious exuberance

1. Come we that love the Lord and let our joys be known.
 Join in a song with sweet accord
 And thus surround the throne.
2. [The sorrows of the mind be banish'd from the place
 Religion never was design'd to make our pleasures less.]
3. Let those refuse to sing that never knew our God
 But children of the heav'nly King,
 (orig., but *fav'rites* of the heav'nly King)
 May speak their joys abroad.

Isaac Watts, *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707)

5. Make His Praise Glorious

Psalms 66:1-3

- ¹ Shout joyfully to God, all the earth!
- ² Sing the glory of His name; make **His praise glorious**.
- ³ Say to God, “How awe-inspiring are Your works!”

- a. Consider the implications of Ps. 48:10
 “As your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth . . .”
- b. Consider the implications of 1 Chr. 16:29-31
 “Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name . . .”

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6. Minister Harmoniously

Romans 15:5-6

⁵ May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you **live in complete harmony with each other**—each with the attitude of Christ Jesus toward the other. ⁶ **Then all of you can join together with one voice**, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NLT)

- a. Leadership without true team unity is inauthentic and will ultimately fail
- b. Harmonious singing and performance in unison necessitates godly deference

7. Minister Continuously

Col. 3:12-16a

¹² So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. ¹⁴ **Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.** ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶ **Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs . . .**

- a. Contemplate the didactic and spiritual significance of every song
- b. Personally employ scriptures/songs in edification, inspiration and instruction

8. Minister from the Heart

Col. 3:16b-17

. . . **singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.** ¹⁷ Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks through Him to God** the Father.

- a. Worship out of your overflowing gratitude
- b. Make your gratitude apparent to everyone

9. Perform as the Royal Priesthood

1 Peter 2:9a

⁹ **But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION . . .**

- a. Take seriously your priestly leadership and your purpose in the body of Christ
- b. Attention to presentation and the desire “to perform” with excellence is not fake

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10. Declare His Excellencies

1 Peter 2:9b

. . . so that you may **proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;** ¹⁰ for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.

- a. Contemplate His excellencies as you lead His royal priesthood in praise
- b. Lead/Sing/Speak with the authority of an ambassador and the awe of a child

B. Practical Matters

1. Basic Musicianship

- a. Consider private vocal instruction with a “professional” teacher
- b. Conduct sectional vocal lessons – basic breath support, diction, placement
- c. Study basic musicianship – aural skills, music theory, part-writing, sight-singing
- d. Teach your team elementary musicianship – sight-singing & theory by numbers

2. Basic Vocal Technique

- a. The Importance of Posture
 - Just Hanging Around
 - Reach for the Sky
 - Sing to the Cheap Seats
- b. The Basis Is Breath-support
 - Are you on “the Level?”
 - Bellies up boys!
 - Dive, dive, dive!
- c. The Power’s in Placement
 - Bite the Apple
 - Bright-eyed and Bushy
 - Sing Upstairs
- d. Don’t Forget to “Phoenate”
 - Just spit it out man!
 - Say It Like You Mean It!
 - Words are the way to wake

. . . a wistful world from waywardness

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3. Maximizing Rehearsal Time

- a. Monthly listening CDs
- b. Monthly set list in lieu of actual orders
- c. Music distribution the week prior to worship
- d. Practice prior to/subsequent to choral rehearsal

4. Rehearsal Techniques

- a. Learn the music in an *a cappella* environment
- b. Learn to balance without sound reinforcement
- c. Look to one another for balance and blend
- d. Listen and look for unified vowels
- e. Regularly rehearse on stage with sound
- f. Train singers to self-diagnose their sound

5. Suggested Schedule

- a. Begin with prayer
- b. Warm-up with known songs
- c. Work on basic technique / blend / balance / unison
- d. Work through problematic passages of particular songs
- e. Invest in discipleship – devotional / scriptural / textual study
- f. Run songs and/or sets for the coming Sunday service(s)

II. Resources for Praise Teams

A. Audio Resources

Foundations for Worship (Bob Kauflin)

This MP3 download set combines the eight messages from *Theological Foundations for Worship and Practical Foundations for Worship* and makes them available in one MP3. Message titles and speakers include:

- Worship: What Really Matters (Bob Kauflin)
- Building a Worshiping Community (Bob Kauflin)
- The Worship Leader's Role (Bob Kauflin)
- Why Do We Sing? (Bob Kauflin)
- Leading and Feeding Your Team (Bob Kauflin)

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Heart Attitudes for the Worship Team (Bob Kauflin)
 Worship Leading and the Prophetic Gifts (Bob Kauflin)
 Closing the Gap: Pastors and Worship Leaders (Bob Kauflin)

www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Worship/TrainingResources/Vocalists.aspx

Singing as a Team (Vikki Cook)

Singing together is not just a musical endeavor; it is also a spiritual one. The very fact that we can sing is owed back to our Father, who made singing possible. It is vital for vocalists on the worship team to be committed to serving in humility, with Christ as the example.

Vikki Cook--singer, songwriter, and vocal coach--illustrates what team-playing looks like for worship teams. She offers suggestions on coming to rehearsals prepared, how to approach unfamiliar music, breathing, pronunciation, tone, stylizing, and more. This session includes information on recording and the place of practice.

www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Worship/TrainingResources/Vocalists.aspx

What Your Worship Leader Wants You to Know (Todd Twining)

In this 2004 Worship GOD conference session Todd Twining takes a look at characteristics that are desirable in musicians: Servanthood, Expressiveness, Initiative, Encouragement, Team-Mentality.

www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Worship/TrainingResources/Vocalists.aspx

Will the Real Worship Leader Please Stand Up? (Bob Kauflin)

In this message from the Worship GOD conference in 2004 Bob Kauflin asks two questions: How do we define worship? Who is the real worship leader?

www.sovereigngraceministries.org/Worship/TrainingResources/Vocalists.aspx

B. Musical Resources

The Vocal Workout DVD

By Chris & Carole Beatty

The Vocal Workout DVD will systematically teach you how to use good posture, breath control, warm up techniques and more to help you discover and fine tune your voice. These principles and exercises are fun, interactive, and proven to help any level of singer.

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Vocal Coach Series Pack CDs

By Chris & Carole Beatty

Known as the "Vocal Coaches" to many top Christian artists, the Beattys have also conducted workshops for choir members and taught hundreds of individualized lessons for adults and children. Now you and your family can benefit from their expertise! This acclaimed series will help you train and maintain your voice using practical, easy-to-follow instructions. An enjoyable way to maximize your vocal potential!

C. Praise Team Articles

Praise Team or Worship Team? (Paul Ryan)

How the Name of Our Teams Impacts the Understanding of What We Do

www.calvin.edu/worship/resources/docs/praise_or_worship.php

The Role of the Worship Singer (Kate Simmonds)

As God's people, [the Scriptures] remind us we are all instructed to sing out our worship to God. As musicians, it is such a privilege to sing in worship - whether as a worship leader or backing vocalist - and to help lead people into God's presence and even encourage or inspire others to worship. As both a worship leader and a singer, I'd like to share a few things I've learned over the years about musicianship and character.

www.pwarchive.com/resources/article.aspx?ArticleID=20

Thinking about Being on the Praise Team? Think Again . . . (Donna Patrick)

One of the reasons King David is my favorite Biblical figure is because he knew how to construct a praise team. David did not say "Come one, come all." The scripture tells us that David appointed individuals to minister music in the Temple. . . .

www.experiencingworship.com/articles/general/2007-12-Thinking-About-Being.html

D. Praise Team Texts

Great and Precious Promises for Singers & Musicians: Discovering God's Purpose and Releasing Your Potential as a Singer

By Stan Moser, published by JSM, Inc.

Discovering God's purpose and releasing your full potential as a singer and musician. *Great And Precious Promises* contains nearly 500 Scripture verses carefully selected and organized to meet the unique needs and issues that singers, musicians, and worship leaders encounter.

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You will also learn about the four steps to releasing your potential as a singer and musician. This easy-to-remember message will help you become a more powerful and convincing voice for God. As you combine your God-given talent and carefully developed skill with a full understanding of your purpose in God's kingdom, you can release your full potential and fulfill God's purpose for singers and musicians.

Playing Together As a Worship Band

By Maranatha Praise Band

Published by Zondervan © 2003

Playing Together as a Worship Band may be used by itself, or with the Maranatha! Worship Leader Workshop video of the same title for a dynamic combination of print and audio-visual instruction and demonstration. This book covers: What a worship team is all about? What's unique about a worship band? The role of team members, worship leader, music director, musicians, singers, and sound technicians. Why rehearsal is so important and how to get the most from it? The "100 Percent Rule," Opening the worship team's toolbox: dynamics, vamps, breakdowns, the big payoff, and diamonds, continuity, mirroring, final preparations, "real world" service models, and the variables. Here's what it takes to produce a tight sound and service-oriented approach that help others experience God's presence through music.

Praise and Worship Team Instant Tune-Up

By Doug & Tami Flather

Published by Zondervan © 2002

An easy-to-understand resource that provides straightforward, practical advice on ways to upgrade a music team's sound and ministry, written for both volunteer and staff worship leaders and musicians who use contemporary Christian music.

This timely resource addresses the whole array of concerns that can hang up a worship team and takes you beyond them to the next level. Whether you're building a team from the ground up or need to fine-tune a given area, *The Praise and Worship Team Instant Tune-Up* gives you spot-on insights and troubleshooting tips that will help you excel in your mission of leading others in worship through music.

The Complete Worship Leader

By Kevin J. Navarro

Published by Baker © 2001

In this concise and clearly written handbook, worship leaders from every denomination and musical style will find a wealth of information on how to develop their leadership skills and improve the effectiveness of corporate worship. Kevin J. Navarro explains the four basic elements that are crucial to becoming an effective worship leader:

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theology, discipleship, artistry, and leadership. *The Complete Worship Leader* provides a holistic, biblical view of worship leadership as drawing people into God's presence through more than song leading. It shows worship leaders how to: appropriately use the technology available today; become a theologian, a disciple, an artist, and a leader; build and lead a worship team; engage the five senses in worship; model worship and rally others to participate and much more! Pastors, worship planners, lay readers, and college and seminary students from a cross section of denominations will benefit from the simple yet thorough discussion of what it means to lead the body of Christ into a genuine experience of worshipping God.

The Heart of the Artist

By Rory Noland

Published by Zondervan © 1999

Christian musicians are often valued more for what they do than for who they are---until questions of character arise. Examining topics like servanthood vs. stardom, teamwork vs. solitary confinement, and excellence vs. perfectionism, Noland provides a discipleship model to help your ministry team overcome challenges and joyfully serve in the body of Christ.

The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Worship

By Rory Noland, published by Zondervan © 2007

Whether you're a singer, instrumentalist, dancer, technician, or all of the above, seasoned arts-ministry leader Noland can show you and your team the key to effective worship! Discussing the importance of both individual and spiritual preparation, he demonstrates how to be equipped to lead others in true celebration of God.

E. Web Resources

www.biblicalworship.com

www.ccli.com (songselect.com)

www.gettydirect.com

www.igracemusic.com

www.lifewayworship.com

www.musictheory.net

www.nethymnal.org

www.sbts.edu/icw

www.sovereigngracemusic.org

www.tommywalker.net

www.worshipmatters.com

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