

Worship Team Expedition Weekly Devotional



Week 1: What's Most Important

What is worship anyway?

Here we are, launching into a worship team experience, getting ready to dive deeper into worship leading, musicianship, technical stuff, and the like, to learn and grow and get better and become more effective...

I thought it might be good to come back to some basics as we start.

I heard that the famous football coach Vince Lombardi held up a ball on the first day of training and said to his players "This is a football..." He emphasized foundational rudiments of the game repeatedly with his players to great success (his teams won a bunch of championships and now the Super Bowl trophy is named after him). So, let's talk about something very basic...what is worship?

This definition by Pastor Louie Giglio (Passion City Church in Atlanta) has been very clarifying for me:

Worship is our response to what we value most.

Now, quick— before you read any further— true or false...everyone worships.

True? False? Does everyone worship?

Think about it.

You may say false because plenty of people don't worship God, don't go to church, etc. I might have said that too at first. But ponder this for a minute— people pour their time, their focus, energy, money, *heart* into those things they value....most. They worship. We worship. Everyone worships. You may or may not worship God, but you worship something or someone. You worship.

Check out what Louie has to say and see if it doesn't ring true:

"All day long we give our time, energy and affection to something or someone. Day by day, we declare our allegiance. In other words, we worship. Worship is about what we value most. Not just for the religious within church walls, **worship is the core activity of the human soul**. Created with a massive capacity to exalt the Creator, we have hearts that are genetically bent on worship. What is essential is that we choose wisely, worshipping what is ultimately worthy of our lives both now and forever."*

Did you catch that at the end? The part about choosing wisely? I don't know about you, but I want to choose wisely. There is lots of competition for my worship- wealth, fame, power, relationships, success- they all call to me. And those things can each be good in the right context. But where will I end up if I *worship* those things? Will those things ultimately fulfill me? Will they ultimately fulfill you? Really, deeply, forever fulfill you?

Or maybe, just maybe, is it possible (Christ followers would say it IS) that...

The great God of the universe, who created you and knows what will fulfill you, loves you deeply, who made a way for you to be with Him forever and invites you to say yes to Him- has built into you a strong magnet to Himself, has pre-wired you to long for Him, knows that all those other things are just substitutes for the real thing which is to worship...HIM.

You were born to worship. You (and I) were born to worship GOD.

This is probably not news to someone starting into worship team training(!), but it's an important foundation to visit because who or what we *really* worship affects the decisions we make and the ways we live out life and ministry.

The way we practice.

How we plan worship sets.

What we do when we're on stage.

What we do when we're off stage (and no one is looking).

Where our focus and attention and passion are spent each and every day.

There's no getting around it- worship heavily affects our choices.

Check out what Jesus says in Mark 12:29-30 when an important religious leader asked Him what was *most* important:

³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Jesus talked about worship lived out in all of our being- heart, soul, mind, strength. And he talked about the people around us, the ones we worship alongside.

Let's think for a minute about the people we are leading. They are worshiping. They may not be worshiping God, but they absolutely are worshiping. The amazing opportunity we have is to *focus* that worship on what's most important, to say "Hey, come over here and let's look at Jesus and think about Him and walk with Him and listen to what His Holy Spirit has to say to us today. Let's do it right now." What a privilege! And for many of us, we get to do this week in and week out. We invite, prompt, nudge, call people to worship Jesus. Amazing.

And if that wasn't enough, we get to use the gifts God has uniquely infused into each of us to point people to Him. How 'bout that? That's right, God has put talents, abilities, spiritual gifts, passions, a certain kind of personality into...YOU.

Don't miss that.

Not only were you born to worship God, you were born to point people to Him by doing what you are uniquely good at and thoroughly enjoy! We'll get into this more next week, but this is a big deal. You are good at some things by design. Our heart through this experience is to help draw out those things in you, to help you strengthen your abilities, to help nurture those aspects of who God made you to be towards great impact for His kingdom.

So there you go. As you think about what is *most important*, consider:

- worship is your response to what you value most
 - you were born to worship God (love Him heart, soul, mind, strength)
 - you can use your unique wiring to encourage others to worship God fully.
- Worship Team Expedition is all about helping you live that out.

Below is a scripture and some questions to set the stage for this experience. My encouragement is to take the time to really read and think through them this week. Be totally honest with yourself. Pray and ask God to prepare you for the next few weeks. Ready? Set. Go.

-Peter Neumann

Scripture: Mark 12: 28-31

Questions (Be really honest)

What do I really value most in life? What drives me?
Where will that take me ultimately?

Reality check: If I am leading people (few or many), I'm a worship leader.
What or who am I currently leading people to worship?

What unique talents do I have? What do others say I do well?

What passions do I have?

What dreams do I have?

If I could do anything for God and succeed, what would that be?

What is one step I can take this week towards worshiping God more fully?