

A WORSHIP LEADER JOB DESCRIPTION

Is There Life After Picking Songs?

- Bob Kauflin -

I. Introduction

- A. Worship leaders are part of a long line of musical leadership in the church. Growing influence in recent decades.

“For many young people choosing a church, worship leaders have become a more important factor than preachers. Mediocre preaching may be tolerated, but an inept worship leader can sink things fast.” (Gordon MacDonald, *To Find a Worship Leader*, Leadership Journal, Spring 2002)

- B. Many churches have exaggerated the significance of this role.

1. No clear model in the New Testament of a prominent musical leader.
2. Jesus is our primary worship leader (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 10:19-22).
3. The church can worship God without a “worship leader.”

- C. But every week those who lead congregational worship have significant opportunities to teach, train, and encourage God's people in praising him rightly and living for his glory.

II. Goals of the Worship Leader

*A faithful worship leader
magnifies the greatness of God in Jesus Christ
through the power of the Holy Spirit
by skillfully combining God's Word with music,
thereby motivating the gathered church
to proclaim the gospel,
to cherish God's presence,
and to live for God's glory.*

III. **A faithful worship leader**

- A. God calls leaders to be faithful. (1 Cor. 4:1-2)
 - 1. Success, popularity, and creativity aren't our primary goals.
 - 2. God defines our ministry – not us.

- B. We're to lead with "zeal." (Rom. 12:8)

- C. Faithfulness isn't always appreciated.
 - 1. Make sure you're not being dumb, like radically changing the form or style without explanation.
 - 2. Our ultimate goal is to hear "well done, good and faithful servant."

IV. **Magnifies the Greatness of God in Jesus Christ**

"Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable" (Psalm 145:3).

- A. The appropriate starting place for worship is magnifying the unsearchable greatness of God. (Ps. 29:1)

We must not allow ourselves to be satisfied with vague ideas of the love of Christ which present nothing of his glory to our minds. (John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*, pg. 54)

"All true worship is a response to the self-revelation of God in Christ and Scripture, and arises from our reflection on who He is and what He has done....The worship of God is evoked, informed, and inspired by the vision of God....The true knowledge of God will always lead us to worship. (John Stott, *Authentic Christianity*, pg. 250)

- 1. Includes making his works big in the eyes of those we lead.
- 2. He is our Creator, Sustainer, Provider, Protector, and Redeemer

B. In Jesus Christ

1. The greatest "work" of God is presenting His only Son as a sacrifice of atonement for our sins, so that we might enjoy forgiveness and fellowship with Him forever. (Rom. 3:23-26)

"There can be no doubt that for the New Testament writers as a whole it was the cross that was at the heart of the faith. In the literal sense of the term it was 'crucial.' We are saved, not by some fine theory and not by some blinding revelation and certainly not by our own best effort, but by Christ's atoning death." (Leon Morris, *The Atonement, It's Meaning and Significance*, 12).

2. Why the cross is crucial to worship
 - a. For our access to God (Heb. 10:19-22)
 - b. For acceptable worship (1 Pet. 2:4-5)
 - c. For God's glory (2 Cor. 4:6)

In Christ we behold the wisdom, goodness, love, grace, mercy and power of God all working together for the great work of our redemption and salvation. The wisdom and love of God are in themselves infinitely glorious. But we cannot see how glorious they are except in the redemption and salvation of the church which is achieved only in and by Christ. (John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*, pg. 25)

V. *Through the Power of the Holy Spirit*

- A. All worship is impossible apart from the activity of the Holy Spirit. (Phil. 3:3)
- B. Involves listening for the direction of the Holy Spirit before, during and at the close of the meeting.

"For Paul the gathered church was first of all a worshiping community; and the key to their worship was the presence of the Holy Spirit." (Gordon Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, pg. 884)

VI. By Skillfully Combining God's Word

- A. Worship is always a response to God's revelation of himself in his Word.
- B. Many ways we can skillfully highlight God's Word

VII. With Music

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

- A. Music helps us remember God's Word
- B. Music helps us respond emotionally to God's Word

The duty of singing praises to God seems to be given wholly to excite and express religious affections. There is no other reason why we should express ourselves to God in verse rather than in prose and with music, except that these things have a tendency to move our affections. (Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections*, 44).

- C. Music helps us display God's glory.
 - 1. Through excellence.
 - 2. Through variety.

VIII. Thereby motivating the gathered church

- A. Not demanding, manipulating, or projecting guilt on the gathered church.
- B. Motivating by grace.

IX. To Proclaim the Gospel

Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. (Ps. 96:2)

- A. Biblical worship involves and leads to proclamation.

- B. We need to help people see the connection between their lives and the Gospel.
 - a. The Gospel and our sin (Eph. 1:7)
 - b. The Gospel and our sanctification (Rom. 6:10-11; 1 Pet. 2:24)
 - c. The Gospel and our suffering (Rom. 5:1-5)
 - d. The Gospel and our unbelief (Rom. 8:32)

X. To Cherish God's Presence

- A. We want to cherish God's presence in all its manifestations.

- B. Enjoy God's promised presence.

- C. Pursue God's active presence.

- D. Anticipate God's unveiled presence.

XI. And to live for God's Glory.

- A. Worship doesn't end when the singing stops.

- B. Biblically speaking, there is no sacred/secular distinction in our lives. All of life is meant to be lived in the presence of God, for the glory of God.

Fundamentally...worship in the New Testament means believing the gospel and responding with one's whole life and being to the person and work of God's Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. (David Peterson, *Engaging With God*, pg. 286)