

Worship Team Training - Archives



About the Author: Branon Dempsey is the Clinic Director and founder of [Worship Team Training](http://www.worshipteamtraining.com) – For His Music Clinics: a ministry for local church worship ministries. Branon is a Worship Leader, Clinician and CCLI, BMI Singer/Song Writer in Cypress, TX. He is also a Managing Editor and Contributing writer in the Praise and Worship Arena involving national music and publication companies. Visit Branon and Sign-up for a Newsletter on www.worshipteamtraining.com or email him at branon@worshipteamtraining.com

All Website and Archived Material Copyright 2008 Worship Team Training - Branon Dempsey, Administered by For His Music. All Rights Reserved. Printed in the United States of America. www.worshipteamtraining.com

April ARCHIVED ARTICLES

4.24.08

Back from San Antonio

Hey guys, hope your week is going great! Missed you much. I just got back from doing a clinic in San Antonio with University Baptist Church. The weather was outstanding and the people were even better!

We had around 45 people in attendance on the weekend, those in choir, band and A/V. I must say: this clinic was definitely inspiring. The worship team ministry graciously went out of its way in their hospitality and kindness – I thank them all for the rich time we had together!

Here is the biggest take-away that I learned from my trip, this is alot - hope you can handle-it:

(if you prefer to read this on a larger screen, visit the article on PraiseCharts Live.)

Skeels or Skills:

not to be confused with "nunchuk skills, bow hunting skills, computer hacking skills..."

I'm talking about skills, ability and knowledge to use in ministry. No matter our task, we each have a set of essentials that guide our process. What about our responsibility to our tools and devices that enable us to serve in worship ministry? More importantly, what is our responsibility to God in how we serve: our purpose, intension and fruit?

The call of serving thought the arts comes with much responsibility. Each of us has a calling, whether if you are a singer, musician or artist. God calls us to serve in His work for His honor and for the sake of the Gospel. The tools we use in our ministries are not a means to an end; no matter how great the technology, how cool the instrument or even how wonderful our created art looks or sounds. Times will come and go and so will our innovations; but there are four must-have primary essentials. As God provides resources to aid us in our tasks, our intension and purpose behind our tools will determine the fruit we bear.

Read with me in Exodus 31. we see two men summoned by God to work under the command of Moses in building the Tent of Meeting.

1 Then the Lord said to Moses, 2 "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, 3 and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts-- 4 to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, 5 to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship. 6 Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you: 7 the Tent of Meeting, the ark of the Testimony with the atonement cover on it, and all the other furnishings of the tent-- 8 the table and its articles, the pure gold lampstand and all its accessories, the altar of incense, 9 the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, the basin with its stand-- 10 and also the woven garments, both the sacred garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests, 11 and the anointing oil and fragrant incense for the Holy Place. They are to make them just as I commanded you." – Ex. 31:1-11

God hand picked these guys to build and furnish the Tent of Meeting for the dwelling and worship of God. The four primary essentials that God provided to these men (and still today) is His Spirit, skill, ability and knowledge.

Holy Spirit – we see God empowering man for service in the Holy Spirit: Jud. 3:10; Ex. 31:3; 1Sam. 10:6-7; 2 Sam 23:2; Isa. 61:1; Mt.12:18; Lk. 4:18 and Jn.14:17.

Skill – Scripture indicates the uses and importance of skills: 1 Ch. 5:18; 2 Ch. 2:13; 2 Ch. 34:12; Ezk. 28:5; Ps. 33:3; Ps. 144:1.

Ability – is not the same as willingness; ability defines one who is able (equipped) to complete the work set before him: Dan 1:4; Neh. 5:8, Mt. 25:15; 2Cor. 8:3; 2Cor. 8:11.

Knowledge – the fact or condition of knowing something through the gained experience and learning of His Word in order to discern and perform good works in Christ. Nu.24:16; 1Ch. 1:11; Ne. 10:28; Jb. 42:1-6; Ps. 119:66; Pr. 2:5-6; Rm. 11:33, 1Cor. 1:5; 2Cor. 8:7; Col. 1:10; 2Pt. 2:8; 2Pt. 3:18; Js. 1:5.

We see through Scripture a harmony of how God employs His spirit, skill, ability and knowledge within a person to perform His work. Each of us in our ministries are blessed in countless forms that enable us to do the work and will of God – it is undeniable. God gave each person His guidance and tools not for our own works but for His - to “be” and “do” the works of God. So why is it, that we assume ownership over a ministry, possession or task that is rightly God’s? I guess this also explains why the same person expects something in return for themselves (not talking about merely compensation). A motivation to serve based on selfishness, will ultimately yield a worthless return and not the very true and good fruit that is fit for the King and for the Kingdom. The obedience and art of service begins when we deny ourselves and take up our cross to serve Christ alone (Mk. 8:34) for His glory alone.

Eph. 1 says that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. In 2:10, Paul tells us that we are the workmanship of Christ, created for good works in Christ Jesus. This means that God has equipped us for the very purpose to be crafted into his design for his using. Our actions in serving our ministries need to be rooted in a belief that says: all is for His will to be done - we are His workmanship – and not for ourselves. It is easy to get caught-up in the motions of “serving,” when we focus too much on our tools or the technique. When we become out-of-touch from the essence of service, even when we get in our “ruts,” our ministry can grow faint – our zeal for ministry can grow faint. However, we have help. As we have seen in the first primary essential, we are given the Holy Spirit. He comes besides us and guides us.

Scriptural Insight on The Holy Spirit

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” – Jn. 14:26. KJV.

In John 14, Jesus shares with his beloved that he is sending the Holy Spirit, the Great Counselor to aid, comfort and abide in them, as the disciples go about the work of God. Check this out about the term “Holy Spirit.” In the NASB and NKJV translations, the word “Helper,” is chosen to describe the Holy Spirit, which appears in Jn 14:26, Another term used to describe the Spirit is “Comforter” which is found in the KJV. “Counselor,” is found in the NIV and RSV. The word “Advocate,” is also seen in the NRSV. For this article I am making a personal choice to study the term Comforter as it resonates with my heart and mind in reading the Scriptures.

The Greek root word for Comforter is paraklētōs: par-ak'-lay-tos. The prefix of “para” is the primary meaning of “near,” it also has an action verb meaning of “from,” or “out from,” (found in John 6:19 and 46). It expresses motion or a coming besides. The suffix “kletos,” means called, invited, welcomed or appointed (the meaning of called “one who is called - to an office,” is found in Rom. 1:1 and 1 Cor. 1:1). When we align the prefix and suffix together we get: parakletos or “The Paraclete,” the One who comes besides.

As the Spirit comes besides us, we are empowered to achieve greatness in Christ. We begin to experience what Galatians 5:22 implores about the fruit of the Spirit which is “...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...” Because our service is rooted in His Spirit we are guided as we use our skills, abilities and knowledge.

In your ministry, there’s no need to use nunchucks, bow hunting and computer hacking (you may get arrested); but rather our essentials are the Holy Spirit, skills, abilities and knowledge to do His work for his glory. Serve with gladness in His purposes as you yield fruit that is worthy of the King and the Kingdom.

Seeing God's Glory in Miracles

Greetings everyone! Hope your day is going great! Taxes anyone, anyone... Yes it's that dreaded time of the year. Hopefully, you're in the clear and if not, God will be clearing your way. After having a busy weekend myself, I am now trying to refocus and stay refreshed in the Word.

Yesterday, I played golf with some friends. In fact, it was the best day of golf I've ever had – and it was not how I hit d'ball. The day was so beautiful: blue skies, green, cool and clear. The course was pastoral and serene. I began to think of God's miracles and the miracles performed by Jesus.

Jesus took what was broken brought forth healing, what was empty or dying, he filled and restored life. How wonderful it is to have God, to take our brokenness and death to be renewed in his power, moved by his love for man! God's character is love. I think of the story of Lazarus in how Jesus restored the brother of Martha. What I found interesting was what happened before the miracle was made. Jesus, in speaking to Martha's worry, He said: "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" Jn 11:40.

He was asking Martha not to just believe in the miracle itself, but to ask her if she is willing to see God's glory in the miracle – to see Almighty God as the Giver of life, the Author over life and death. Then I thought, wow, if we believe and see the miracles of God, we are truly witnessing his glory. We are seeing the work of the Sovereign and Holy God, who has the authority over life and the victory over death. We see God as perfect and Divine.

He clearly separates what is holy and what is not. Upon faith, God has performed his miracle within our souls. He has separated us from the old life and placed on us the "new man," clothed in his righteousness and sealed by the power of the Holy Spirit (Col. 3:10; eph. 4:30). Like the beautiful nature and serene landscapes we see: it is He who lives in us and we are not alone. He restores and makes all complete. I pray for you this day that God is working and restoring your life, so you can see the fullness of his glory, beauty and power – all to give Him praise.

4.9.08, 8:37am

PraiseCharts New Site and New RSS

Hey friends I am excited to announce some new news! As of a month ago, I have accepted a new position at PraiseCharts as Managing Editor. We have developed a new blogosphere and resource site called PraiseCharts Live! This is your special invitation to preview our beta site as we go public this summer 2008. Articles from Dennis Jernigan, Paul Baloche, many others and yours truly are featured on the site. Stop by today, learn more about the site, read the articles/blogs and leave a comment today! Visit PraiseCharts Live. Branon's articles are now available on RSS too!

4.9.08, 7:55am

Hope in God in a Hurting World

Today, I begin with saying that I am a bit disturbed. Bothered. Even Angry. In viewing the current news around us, we see the repercussions of humanity's imperfections. As you may know, we have a plethora of news that has hit the airwaves and internet. Everything from the Tibetan protests of the Olympics, polygamy raids, troop withdraw, Iraq, gas prices, market instability (not new), government and authority disarray and the lack of leadership and integrity needed to steer this country in the right direction: it is enough to make a person's head spin. Isn't there more we can list?

On a global scale, the problems we face today have not been experienced to this degree in any other time period. On the other hand, we also see much good, contribution and freedom that counters some of the world's depravity. We are more educated and are better provided with multiple resources and aid than ever before. Nonetheless, we encounter needs and complications on an ever growing daily basis. How do we resolve and make sense of these events? How does it shape our perception of God's love when we see our world and people in hurt? How do we counter the challenging views that question and/or undervalue the Bible and God's compassion and mercy?

Most people do believe in God, but like the early Israelites, because we cannot see Him, it's harder to reconcile the peace of God in a world of hate. Therefore, the world rejects God and defaults to finding hope in man through temporary solutions. On the contrary, faith is the evidence unseen. We do witness God's love and compassion through the Word and see his effects through people, events and prayers. This world is definitely in pain and we see horrible events around our country and world. But as a people, where is our hope? Who is more constant and unchanging? What is the power that saves us? When does our fear turn into faith? How do we find hope, peace and love in a world of chaos? These are some of the questions I was asked by an atheist's friend. Yes, a friend. If we are true disciples we are lovers of both our neighbors and strangers. My friend was bombarded by the evil and destruction seen in this world. He actually told me he wanted to shut out the world, move on an island and build a bomb shelter.

His whole point was to not to be saved by others, but to save yourself. I was stunned by his emotion. I was not stunned by his reasoning. He is right; the destruction of our world is horrible and does appear void of hope – especially trying to find that hope in man. I shared with him how I understand why he feels the way he does. I mentioned that sometimes, I want to build a shelter away from the world myself. This friend was dreadfully hurting and was trying to resolve the matters in his terms, by running away and to hide. He was shutting off the world by cutting-off himself. But there was a bigger thing that bothered me. He was really running away from God – not the world. True, if we take the world at face value, it offers us nothing eternal. All the turmoil we see on the earth is enough to hide our eyes and turn away. It is impossible in our own attempts to save the world from its problems. People for eons have been trying to “save the world,” but no human ever has – ever! When trying to resolve one problem, we move to another only to find that our previous repair has been breached. This is like going through one

broken band-aid after another, until our supply is empty. I could (still can) see why this man felt so strongly in his reasoning and emotion.

A curious thing happened. A change in the air was experienced. You could feel the winds of fury dying. A clearing was taking place, like a beacon in the stormy night to a stranded sailor. I listened to this man; his voice began to change. He quieted his tone. The sails of his anger were coming down. He whispered to me in a still small voice that said: "thank you." I was stunned again. I asked him why. He explained by saying that he just needed someone to listen. He needed someone to validate his feelings, rather than to disagree and argue. He was afraid that he might appear "ungodly" or "crazy," through his anger. His experience and anticipated fears only reinforced his anxiety and reactions. Here's the fact: this man was only reflecting how others were treating him. I mentioned to him that people can be very cruel. Another truth is: God is very angry over sin and the ways of the world – shutting Him out, casting him aside. See, I began to understand that the more we truly listen to people, we are truly loving them as God is truly revealing himself. Isn't this what Jesus meant, when he said "they will know us by our love?" (Jn. 13:35).

Where, how and why do we find hope in God?

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.

Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God, the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them-- the Lord, who remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord. – Psalm 146

Our Hope in Christ:

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Jn. 16:23

4.2.08

Significance of Corporate Worship

The assembly of worship consists of those drawn to Christ, who in response, come together according to God's call for worship. Unchurched and Pre-Christians also come to the gathering to find God and seek fellowship among believers. The individual worship begins upon the recognition of God's presence and being, while working through the responder. The worshipper is moved to acknowledge, confess and to answer God based on His attributes, acts of righteousness and sovereignty of His lordship. In a cooperate

setting, the worshipper is among a congregation of other worshippers, who together respond to God in a united chorus. The congregation as one body celebrates, confesses and gives thanks to God by a community of praise. The individual and communal worship of God is discovered in the gathering of hearts and minds through the connection of His word, prayer, praise and brotherhood. The worshipful response from a person is an outflow of what God has revealed and invested into the heart of the worshipper.

A Biblical understanding of worship in the gathering and edification among the congregation is vital for communal worship unto God; how do you see this reflected in your own worship experience and growth in the Church?

4.1.08

Creating Spaces

Our hearts is where God begins and we end. The Psalms teach that He is near to those who have a contrite heart and spirit (Ps. 34.18). As said earlier, when we cast off all weights and hindrances from the heart – then we see God clearly. Moreover, we hear God when he speaks. Remember the fascinating video game of the early 80's? You have a ray gun and are shielded by a wall of defense – it moves wherever you move. On-coming alien ships are trying to land on your territory as you strive to pick them off one by one. The game intensifies when more alien ships are descending as your armory and ammunition dwindles. Sometimes the life of a leader experiences situations like this game. We tend to take on a huge amount of responsibilities as we fend off obstacles and distractions.

Space Invaders: interruptions, multi-tasks, noise, schedules and the like. In the heart, we can feel like a one-man-army against a legion of these “space invaders.” You know these guys, they are the ones that deplete your time and energy and show no mercy. Everyone has space invaders; what everyone does not have is a good defense system.

The Holy Spirit is the counter of each one of our invaders. He is our Meeting (Ex. 25.31), Residence (Ps. 51.11), Creator (Gen. 1.26-27 & Job 33.4) Beauty and Joy (Isa. 61.3), Comforter & Abider (Jn. 14.6), Helper & Teacher (Jn. 14.26), Truth (Jn. 15.26), Righteousness, Peace and Joy (Rm. 14.17). He is also our Healer (Rm.8.26), Instructor (1Cor. 2:13), Imparter of Love (Rom. 5.5), Imparter of Hope (Rom. 15:13); He dwells in us and is known by us (Jn. 14:17). The Spirit is Holy because He is the Holiness of God – the Third Person of the Trinity.

The same Spirit found in the Word is also the same Spirit who dwells in the hearts of His people. The power of the Helper aids us in the battle of space invaders and the Evil one. As each invader is picked off, another sector of available space is gained. When our spaces are abundant and wide open, we can move freely in the Spirit, or the Spirit moves freely in us – this is referred as “Space Creation.” When I think about space creation, I am moved to a peace where I can listen, see, think, feel and taste. As found in Lk. 12:27, I'd rather be filled with God's splendor of creation and provision rather than my own necessities. The Word calls us to come near and to experience His place of beauty:

“Come closer and listen. I have always told you plainly what would happen so you would have no trouble understanding.” (Isa. 48.16a, NLT).

Dear Lord, create the space in us that you desire, as we ask you to help us cast off every weight and evil, so we may hold onto the peace of Christ.