

Five Qualities of an Effective Worship Leader

By LaMar Boschman

Worship is a spiritual activity before it is an artistic one. If the focus of a worship leader is to bring people to an awareness of God, then the Bible is the ruler by which we should measure our effectiveness as worship leaders. Here are the five most important qualities of a worship leader who is effective in the biblical paradigm of worship. Listed in order of importance, they will help any worship minister excel in leading spiritual worship.

1. Knowledge of God

A. W. Tozer said in *The Knowledge of the Holy*, “The low view of God...with our loss of the sense of majesty has become the further loss of religious awe and consciousness of the divine presence. We have lost our spirit of worship.”

It is imperative that a worship leader have a large view of God. When we lead worship we are leading people to the Lord – to who and what He is. It is a journey upward. A worship leader should know the theology of God and be able to convey in song, prayer and exhortation the attributes of the Divine.

2. A Worshipful Heart

Worship begins in the heart of the believer, not on the platform or a guitar. Only then can it be expressed outwardly. A worship leader should have a lifestyle of worship before God, since worship is private before it is public. It is impossible for us to lead others in worship if we are not ourselves worshipers. If we don't know God's presence in our daily lives, we are less effective in finding His presence, much less leading others to it.

3. Intuitiveness

The ability to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading, both prior to and during a worship service, is critical. Without the ability to discern what the Holy Spirit wants at any moment, a worship leader is handicapped. Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and to those we lead is essential.

4. A Pastoral Heart

The worship leader is a priest before God and the people. He must have the concern of those he leads at heart. He does not primarily lead songs but people, people who may be dysfunctional, hurt, discouraged, faithless and lethargic. A performer cannot lead them to the presence of God as well as someone who has a pastoral heart.

It is important to be relational, friendly, caring and concerned about the spiritual welfare and growth of others. One worship leader told me that he makes it a point to invite a family from his congregation to his home for a meal every Sunday. He said it has greatly increased his ability to lead worship. They trust him and will follow him because they know him.

5. Musicality

Notice that we have not come to music until now? Though we come into His presence with singing (Psalms 100:2), we worship in spirit, not music (John 4:23).

Yet music is a powerful tool in expressing our worship. It colors, flavors and gives language to the worship that takes place in the heart. Musical skill helps facilitate the worship expressions of others and minimize distractions.

These qualities will make a worship leader a catalyst for touching the Lord – a valuable resource to any local church family.

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