

When was the last time...

So...when was the last time you dove in and really worshiped the Lord. I mean without leading anyone else. You weren't preparing for a rehearsal, at a rehearsal, or in a service. It was just you and the Lover of your soul?

You know how we wish that our church members would worship outside of Sunday mornings so that [among other things] there would be more life and engagement on Sunday mornings? So...what about me? Do I live that lifestyle?

I'm amazed at the consistent story worship leaders tell me as I coach them...

"I wish I would have more time to grow spiritually"

"I really need to work on my devotional life"

"I'm so frantic by the time I get to rehearsal"

"I feel like I'm leading on empty" ...

Really? I know. It's a real "Uh-Oh!" moment. We, as a team, lead the congregation in worship and help them grow in their relationship with God. But we, as worship leaders, lead our team. What would it look like if we showed up at rehearsal and said to our team "I'm your worship leader. I'm here to help you grow in your relationship with God. I'm here to shepherd you. I'm here to help you steward your artistic ability. Oh, and I'm also here to help us play together."

What would it take to be that kind of leader? I certainly must be marked with the Presence of God. So what if we took the first 30 minutes of our workday [if we're on staff, or our day if not] and gave it to the Lord as a first fruits offering, spending it with Him? I've been doing this for the past month as a way of asking myself, "What would happen if I actually spent extra time with the Lord instead of just wishing I would [or checking my email]?"

So today, I listened to IHOP's 24/7 Prayer Room feed as I prayed, then broke out my guitar and played along...pausing the feed to take off on my own song. Now it's back on as I type this.

Yesterday, I read some inspiring thoughts from Howard Schultz's book *Onward* and was prompted to sow into some younger leaders. He quotes "I want to pass on to others, to younger folk, the taste of..." and that was all it took for God to begin spinning specific thoughts of who and how to pour my heart into.

The day before, I read from *Gazelles, Baby Steps, And 37 Other Things Dave Ramsey Taught Me About Debt* by Jon Acuff where the Lord highlighted the phrase "I wouldn't begin a marathon five miles from the starting line" that really encouraged me to eat better in my quest to lose weight. And then as I continued to listen to God's voice as I read from the book "*Worldliness*" by C. J. Mahaney, and this really popped out: "Glorifying God is an intentional pursuit. We don't accidentally drift into holiness; rather, we mature gradually and purposefully, one choice at a time. In the Christian walk, we can't just step onto the right path and figure all is well. Christian discipleship is a lifelong journey consisting of a series of countless steps. Each step matters..."

The day before that, I listened and prayed while I drove before dawn [to a 6 AM meeting an hour from home]. Bill Johnson from Bethel Church was preaching about Hezekiah in a sermon from April 10th called "The Responsibility of Blessing" and he said "Hezekiah lost it when he stopped increasing the sacrifice [worship] to be more than the measure of the blessing. What was difficult yesterday has become normal today. And the challenge is when we become satisfied with what has become normal and we stop sacrificing and breaking into new ground. We stop giving that which costs me something."

Help us, Lord. We need You everyday. So let's do it. Everyday! Because we're sons and daughters. Because we're well pleasing to the Lord. [not to earn that status]

So here's an invitation to go along with the challenge above. I'd seriously love to connect with you sometime and worship. Break out a couple of guitars and go for it. Okay, we can do pianos too...they just require much heavier lifting. But seriously, over Skype or in person, I'm in. Don't think I'm kidding or speaking in hyperbole. Let's get it in the calendar.

We hope you're encouraged by the Worship Fertilizer,
a free resource from Ad Lib Music,
*"in simple love and pure devotion to Jesus,
we are eradicating isolation and burnout
so that leaders bear much fruit!"*

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Howard Schultz

with Joanne Gordon



Onward

How Starbucks Fought for Its Life
without Losing Its Soul

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