

Plowing in Worship

I. The Lesson

As worship team members, we *live* for the worship services where the presence of God is so tangible that you barely have to do *anything* – God is taking care of the rest. That atmosphere is contagious and addicting.

But what about the times in worship where you feel as if you are as far away from God as you could ever possibly be? The congregation seems to be staring at the stage like deer in headlights. It feels as though the freedom you experienced the week before is a distant memory. In that moment you question your involvement in worship ministry. In that moment it is vitally important to embrace one of the most important roles of the worship team.

Hosea 10:11-12 “Judah shall plow... Break up your fallow ground...”

As a worship team, you must embrace your role in _____ in worship. The word “judah” in the Hebrew is “praise,” and so the tribe of Judah is the tribe of the “praisers.” Today’s application? Judah refers to the worshipers – specifically, the worship team. This verse in Hosea is showing us the important role of the worshipers to break up the fallow ground in the spirit, leading to a “fertile” atmosphere where people can freely meet with God. Let’s look at this principle further.

What is the “fallow ground?”

- 1) Hearts hardened as a result of _____, compromise, _____, past hurts, etc.
- 2) An unfertile environment of _____ and lack of _____ about the truth that God actually *wants* and *desires* to meet with us.
- 3) Can be the _____ of the enemy to our faith-filled advances as a church.

Purposes of plowing in agriculture¹:

- 1) Turning over the soil to bring fresh nutrients to the surface
- 2) Burying weeds and old crops, allowing them to break down
- 3) Aerating the soil, allowing it to retain moisture better

Subsequent meaning in the spiritual:

- 1) _____ up people’s _____ (and thus the spiritual atmosphere) in order to bring the things of the Spirit to the surface.
- 2) Burying and breaking down the things of the _____, _____, and _____ on human strength. All of these elements are blockades that prevent the people of God from meeting with Him freely.

¹ “Plough.” *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 20 May 2008, 22:08 UTC. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 28 May 2008 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Plough&oldid=213806399>>.

- 3) Tenderizing hearts, allowing them to receive the things of the Spirit of God easier (eg. revelation of God in worship, the preaching of the Word, etc.).

As we can see, plowing in worship is a faith-filled determination that *doesn't back down when hard ground is discovered*. Hard ground is simply an indication that its time to get out the "plow" as a worship team. In Biblical times (and throughout history across all civilizations), the vitality and existence of entire people groups was dependent upon someone who understood how to plow when they encountered hard, fallow ground. If when every time hard ground was discovered the farmers gave up and quit, an entire people group would die of starvation.

Get the picture? An entire group of people – men and women of God, desperate for the "food" of His presence – are depending on us as a worship team to not shrink back when hard ground is discovered. If we do shrink back, they die spiritually and as a church. Instead, they are relying on us to take up the "plow" and do what we know to do: praise God, declare His Name and His renown among His people, play and sing in faith and determination, and believe God for breakthrough for His people. We are the praisers (Judah). "Judah shall plow."

II. Discussion

- 1) When was a time recently when you felt like we, as the worship team, were "plowing"?
- 2) What can you do as a musician/singer to do *your* part in "plowing"?
- 3) What are the results (spiritually and naturally) of a worship team that does not "plow" when a worship time is hard/rough?
- 4) What are the results (spiritually and naturally) of a worship team that *does* "plow" when a worship time is hard/rough?

III. Prayer Points

- 1) Pray that God would infuse us with a new level of faith as a worship team.
- 2) Pray that God would break the bondages of sin, compromise, attitudes, and past hurts off of His people so they can experience freedom in worship.
- 3) Pray for your worship time this coming weekend, that it would be a time of freedom and liberty in the presence of the Lord! Make this a continual prayer focus in your personal times and as a worship team.