

# Team Devotions

in Worship and Drama Rehearsals



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In the busyness of Worship and Creative Arts, we must never forget the importance of staying in tune with He who is the reason for the performances. Making devotions a standard component in every rehearsal and meeting brings a visible reminder of the fact that the Worship or Creative Arts ministry is just that, a ministry, and that ministry is, and must be, grounded in worshipping God.

Back in 2000 we felt the need for a comprehensive devotional program for use in Worship and Creative Arts rehearsals, and as we discussed it with DramaShare members and others the need was verified. We created this collection with contributions from DramaShare members and it was very successful. More recently we have had requests for an updated version and we are proud to present Team Devotions2

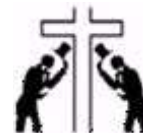
Each devotion is set up with:

- Opening Up – opening prayer
- Powering Up – Scripture passage
- Thinking Up – brief lesson
- Lifting Up – closing prayer
- Discussion Starter – questions to probe the devotion content

This program gives the leader great flexibility, as it can be used as a very brief 10 minute devotion period, or it can be extended as much as is deemed best. Discussion Starters may be photocopied and handed out to each participant for individual or team consideration, you may hand these out at the end of the rehearsal, in preparation for discussion at the next rehearsal. All scripture passages and Discussion Starters are installed on your computer for easier, more professional group leadership. It is important that the time of devotion be looked on as one of the important activities necessary for a smooth, productive worthwhile ministry experience. To ignore a time of devotion is to leave participants without a clear understanding of their reason for involvement in ministry.

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## Bible References

Throughout this collection several sources for scripture are used:

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The devotion “No One Else” uses information from the song by the same name, from the CD of the same name, sung by Kurt Carr Singers, written by Kurt Carr, copyright 1997 K Cartunes/Lilly Mack Music (DMI)

Devotions in this collection have been written by DramaShare unless otherwise noted. Those devotions written by other authors are published with their permission.

We are presently working on a follow-up collection of devotions, if you have an original devotion which you wish to contribute please contact us.

For almost 40 years DramaShare has worked around the world, offering royalty-free scripts, How-to manuals and also specialized manuals for youth and other ministries. All scripts on our website can be accessed, downloaded, reproduced and staged without charge by purchasing a DramaShare membership. For membership details see: <https://dramashare.org/dramashare-membership/>

The following is a partial list of DramaShare Manuals available:

- **DramaShare Organizational Manual** Volume 3.0 for information on organizing or reorganizing your drama ministry
- **DramaClub Training Manual** 2.0 for training actors, director, writers and all off-stage personnel
- **Improving Through Improv-ing Manual** an excellent and fun resource for training and motivating actors of all ages.
- **Joy In The Camp Continues! Manual** for children and youth camps and VBS
- **Countdown to CurtainUp Manual**, a step by step process from script collection through casting, training and rehearsing, right through to post-production.

Contact DramaShare for full information about these and other resources for your ministry.

## Being What We Were Made To Be

### Opening Up:

Father God, we ask that you be with us as we come together to make the best use of our gifts and talents. Help us remember that these talents, whatever they may be, have not been accidentally “planted” in us, but that you, the Giver of all Gifts, have chosen and equipped us for this cause. Bring our hearts and minds into oneness of spirit as we work to bring honour to your name.

Amen.

### Powering Up:

Let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.

If you preach, just preach God's Message, nothing else; if you help, just help, don't take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don't get bossy; if you're put in charge, don't manipulate; if you're called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with the disadvantaged, don't let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

*Romans 12:6-8 MSG*

### Thinking Up:

I find that viewing familiar Bible passages in alternative Bible translations can be very useful, often bringing out thoughts and perspectives previously never considered. And that can be a good thing. Mostly.

The handling given to this familiar passage from Romans in The Message is very different from all other translations, and brings on many reactions to mind.

- I am impressed in the manner in which sound teaching and responsiveness is recommended.
- I can't help chuckling over the warning regarding “taking over” and being bossy and manipulative.
- I squirm just a little with the memories of the times when I have become irritated or depressed when those around me haven't reacted as I would have them react.
- My heart saddens when I recall times when I haven't been “what I was made to be,” and when I have wrongly compared my abilities to my fellow ministers in this ministry.
- But likely the biggest shock comes from the instruction and the challenge that I am to smile my way through all this.

I can't help thinking of the many times in Worship and Creative Arts ministry when my ministering has fallen far short of the lofty ideals in this scripture lesson.

### Lifting Up:

Forgive me Lord for the un-Christlike humanness in my ministry. Help me to remember that it is you who called us together to worship and to minister with, through and to your children. Amen.

## **Discussion Starter:**

1. What does being “what we were made to be” mean in this ministry?
2. Explain dangers in artistic ministry in terms of envy, pride and comparisons.
3. In what ways could we be trying to be “something we are not”?
4. Explain “just preach God’s Message, nothing else”.
5. Think of times in your ministry when “helping” has evolved into “taking over”.
6. How do we recognize the fine line between giving guidance and being bossy?
7. In what ways can we in ministry be manipulative?
8. How might we see those “in distress” in the team or the congregation, and how might we quickly respond?
9. How does irritation manifest itself in ministry? Depression?
10. What is a “smiley face” ministry, is it a good thing, and if so how do we attain it?

## No One Else

### Opening Up:

Father God, help us to focus our hearts and minds on ministry, on bringing Your Word to a needy world. Let us realize just how wonderful and amazing are the gifts which you have given to each of us. Help us to move forward confidently in ministry, with thankfulness for the gifts you have given.

Amen.

### Powering Up:

This is the Message I've been set apart to proclaim as preacher, emissary, and teacher.

*2 Timothy 1:11 MSG*

### Thinking Up:

In an African-American church in San Francisco we were treated to a stirring Interpretive Movement piece performed by two young ladies. The song, "No One Else" by Kurt Carr Singers, spoke to our hearts and continues to do so, (we recommend you buy it).

"Every man must use the gift he's given,  
Every man must do the will of God.  
You were created for a reason and chosen for a season  
So never feel your gift is just too small.  
Never feel that what you have is least of all."

The words evoke many responses in my mind: that what I have is not only a gift, it is God's personal gift, that I have been both created and chosen, that when I downplay my giftedness it is really not modesty but minimizing what God has done in my life.

The song goes on to say:

"For no one else can preach your sermon,  
No one else can sing your song,  
No one else could ever do what God has chosen you to do.  
Your gift was given from above,  
A blessing from the Father's love.  
So use your gift to the glory of God,  
No one God created is quite like you.  
No one on this earth is quite the same  
In the body of Christ, there's a need for your life,  
There's a purpose for that gift that lies in you.  
There's an assignment and a work for you to do."

Amazing, isn't it? That song you are singing, playing, dancing to; that role in the drama, the art you have contributed. No one else can do it.

### Lifting Up:

Father forgive me when I minimize the gifts you have given. Help me be bold in using these gifts to your glory. Amen.

## **Discussion Starter:**

1. Explain the comments “must use the gift” and “must do the will of God”.
2. What are some of the ministry gifts God has given?
3. Explain “chosen for a season.” Speculate on the “ending” of the season.
4. Why do we sometimes feel that our gifts are “small” and “least” when they are from God?
5. How can we rationalize that no one else can preach or sing or perform what God has set us aside to do?
6. We may refer to our gifts as “from God” but do we truly see them as “blessings” reflecting God’s great love for us?
7. Explain your “uniqueness”.
8. What do you believe to be your purpose, assignment, work in ministry?

## **It Is Enough**

*contributed by Karl E. Wagner*

### Opening Up:

Father God, we offer to You, all the praise and all honor and all glory for what we are attempting to do with this drama. Lord, we offer this to You, dedicating it to serve You, and to help light the path and show the way to others, who need to find You, but do not know, or are unsure of the way. Guide us, and direct us in Your way and in Your plan. In Jesus' holy name we pray, Amen.

### Powering Up:

I would like you to think on two scriptures from the Gospel of John.

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

*John 20:30-31 NKJV*

### Thinking Up:

All too often, we try to add to what is written in the Bible. A case in point is extra insights into what Judas may have been trying to do. Or trying to determine, often to suit ourselves, what the questions were that Paul answered in many of the Epistles. You see, Paul has shared with us his answers, but we have to guess about the exact questions asked of him, or what he was trying to address.

Yet here in these short verses are some answers. We have been given the information we need to believe Jesus is the Christ. This is definitely not all the information, but it is sufficient. Just as God's grace is sufficient.

It is enough, and hard enough, to live according to God's Word. We don't need to try and improve on it. These stories in the Bible are enough. It is imperative that we share it accurately, and honestly, and with heartfelt conviction. We are communicating God's Word to others.

So ask yourselves these few questions:

1. Have I checked my ego at the door?
2. Is what I am doing faithful to the scriptures?
3. Am I doing this for me or for God?
4. Am I using God's Word, to do God's Will, in God's way, and in God's time?

### Lifting Up:

Father God, we thank You for all that You have shown us, and all that Your Son did for us. We can never comprehend it all in depth. So Lord, we declare that we believe it, and we will do as we were told. We will declare it to the world. We will share it with those who have never heard. And we will do it all in Jesus' name, Amen.



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## The Heart of the Matter

### Opening Up:

Thank you, Father, for the opportunity to minister, to proclaim your word to those in our church and our community. We are thankful for our fellow ministers, we are grateful for their uniqueness, from which, and through which, we can learn and grow.  
Amen.

### Powering Up:

It's not going to be that way with you. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant. *Matthew 20:26 MSG*

### Thinking Up:

In our contacts with churches all over the world we are treated to the widest range of questions and requests for advice. Certainly there are questions of a technical nature, but the fact is that the most common questions and concerns have to do with people issues, with relationships. Some of the most common comments are:

- how do I develop unity among those in my ministry team?
- how do I deal with “bad attitudes”?
- what do I do when my people throw a temper tantrum?
- how can I keep my people liking each other?
- how do I justify one person getting a role over someone else?

Years ago we used to talk a lot about people having a “servant heart,” being servant minded. As I look around our modern day world I see fewer indications of people wanting to be “servants” and in this, unfortunately, I can not say the church is entirely exempt. The fact is that servanthood appears to have become antiquated and passé. One of the things we need to understand and recognize is that artistic ministry is populated by, well, artistic kind of people. And furthermore, artistic ministry is, and should be, attractive, entertaining and engaging in the eyes of our congregations. This means that artistic ministers will surely receive their fair share of positive feedback. And this too is good, until and unless the feedback becomes the motivation for involvement. “Whoever wants to become great . . .” Doesn’t this include all of us in artistic ministry? Not only do we “want” to be great, but we should “aim” for greatness, for only through our best efforts can we display, however dimly, the beauty and majesty of our Saviour. But artistic ministry, unlike “the secular arts,” requires that we, the ministers, must be servantlike in our ministry, becoming transparent and working harmoniously together in order that all that can be seen is the power of the risen Saviour.

The song goes, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Likely nowhere in the church is there a greater need for a “new, clean servant heart,” and for a “right spirit,” than in artistic ministry. In the same way that we all must work to improve our “craft,” so must we work on “The Heart of the Matter.”

### Lifting Up:

Father, bind us as fellow ministers together in a ministry where it is you, and not accolades which are important. Make us aware of the temptations that can tear apart our ministry and our friendships. Be with each of us and our families.  
Amen.

## **Discussion Starter:**

1. Reconcile servanthood and artistic ministry.
2. Describe evidence of a “servant-hearted” artist.
3. How can friendships suffer in artistic ministry? What can be done to avoid this happening?
4. Why might bad attitudes and harsh words happen in artistic ministry?
5. What should be done to avoid hard feelings where one person gets a role over another?

## Providing An Insight

### Opening Up:

Father we need the awareness that in many cases what the unchurched will see in artistic ministry may well be their first view of you. Some who may have set up barriers to traditional preaching and teaching in the church may be more receptive to non-traditional forms of ministry. May we be showing them your truth and love, as you would have them see it.

Amen

### Powering Up:

If you come together as a congregation and some unbelieving outsiders walk in on you as you're all praying in tongues, unintelligible to each other and to them, won't they assume you've taken leave of your senses and get out of there as fast as they can? But if some unbelieving outsiders walk in on a service where people are speaking out God's truth, the plain words will bring them up against the truth and probe their hearts. Before you know it, they're going to be on their faces before God, recognizing that God is among you. So here's what I want you to do. When you gather for worship, each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, provide an insight. *1 Corinthians 14:23-26 MSG*

### Thinking Up:

There is some truth, but also great danger in the modern belief that the "unchurched" are staying away from our churches because of a multitude of "traditional" practices and situations in the church. Some of the reasons given why people are avoiding church are: old and outdated hymns, being "preached at" in sermons, antiquated language, and let's not forget the ever popular, "would you believe they still play a pipe organ in that church!" I have some trouble with these easy answers, and although I have some problems with the theology of some of the old hymns, I have to admit that I am left quite unmoved some of the current jingoistic worship songs, and I seriously doubt that repeating a single line 36 times is particularly stretching the barriers of theology. So what then are we in the modern church to do to keep our current congregations happy while at the same time spreading God's word to those outside the church walls? What shall be our practices, programs, ministries if we are to be a beacon to those who enter our church, perhaps for the first time in years? The advice given to the church in Corinth seems to indicate it's a fairly straightforward guideline. ". . . each one of you be prepared with something that will be useful for all: Sing a hymn, teach a lesson, tell a story, lead a prayer, provide an insight."

Translation: regardless if it is preaching, music, drama or dance, make sure that what you are offering is "steak, not just sizzle." People come to church to be fed, and that's been the case for 2,000 years now. Regardless of your ministry, "provide an insight!"

### Lifting Up:

Help us remember that people may have many reasons for coming to our church, but we have only one message to offer, that being the message of salvation through Christ Jesus. Amen.