

# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Scientists say that roughly 7/8ths of an iceberg is below the water. When sailors see an iceberg sitting above the water line, they can assume that approximately 87% remains unseen under the water.

In a 2009 study conducted at Virginia Tech, analysts Susan Day and Eric Wiseman discovered that the natural ratio of root radius to tree trunk was about 38 to 1. In plain terms, this means that a 6-inch tree could have roots out from the trunk as far as 19 feet. The 6-inch tree that is seen is only a very small portion of the tree, itself!

What is true in the natural world often leads us to a supernatural truth, as well.

As Worship Leaders and Worship Team members, we are on the stage, visible to the congregation, for roughly thirty minutes per week (or maybe sixty minutes if you have two services). Is this the entirety of our worship? I hope not!

Now, I understand that worship is so much more than music. Amen! But that is a different conversation. For the purpose of this conversation, I am speaking to Worship Leaders and Worship Team members of musical worship. If the iceberg does not have roughly 87% of its actual mass underwater, it will quickly melt away and cease to exist. If the tree does not have an elaborate root system underground, it will shrivel up and die. If the worshiper does not intentionally and passionately pursue the secret times of worship, they will spiritually dry up and wither away.

I have heard way too many Worship Leaders and Worship Team members express that they are feeling “burned out”. I don’t believe in burn out. I don’t think Jesus believes in burn out, either.

While Jesus was passing through a town of Samaria, he met a woman at a well. He asked her for a physical drink, but then went on to talk about how he actually possessed “living water”. He went on to share with her about how God is looking for people to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Later, his disciples returned with physical food and encouraged Jesus to eat.

*But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” (John 4:32, ESV)*

The disciples were confused. They thought Jesus was referring to physical food, and they wondered if someone had brought food to him while they were away.

*Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” (John 4:34, ESV)*

Worship Leader, Worship Team member, your food is to do the will of him who sent you. Yes, your role is to physically be in front of the congregation, faithfully leading them to worship God in spirit and in truth. But that is only the visible part of what he has sent you to do.

Jesus found his “food” in doing the will of God. He found his strength in the lonely places he often withdrew to in order to spend private time alone with the Father (see Luke 5:16).



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Leading worship should not drain us. It should be our food. But as with the iceberg and the tree, if our public leading of worship is the fullness of the substance, the substance will not last. Thankfully, Jesus modeled the secret for us, and gave us the secret recipe to an effective and fruitful life of ministry. I call it the prayer closet, and it is the unseen place where the vast majority of our worship should occur.

*But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:6, ESV)*