

WORSHIP IN SONG

1. WORSHIP IN SONG – A METAPHOR FOR WORSHIP

The reason I love singing so much, is that it is such a metaphor for worship. **Everything we have spoken about this morning is applicable to singing.**

- **Singing is natural and we are reminded of the breath He has given.**
- **Singing is an exchange.**
- **We can sing as an extension of our relationship with God.**
- **We have the opportunity to participate in our own voice cultivation or development.**
- **It can be good for our entire being - mind, body, and soul.**

2. PREPARE THE BODY FOR SINGING

The preparation for singing is just as important as the actual singing itself.

- **Hydration** - Friction is what produces the sound, just like a cricket's legs. Therefore, we lose lubrication in our vocal cords quickly when we are doing much speaking or singing. That is why we must keep well hydrated, primarily with water, when we engage in extended vocal activity such as singing or speaking. Hydrate several hours ahead of singing to allow your cells to absorb the water.
- **Clear Your Mind** - Your body parts are not independent of each other. If you are nervous, stressed, or upset about something, you generally will experience more vocal constriction than normal. Therefore, when singing, relax! Believe it or not, singing should be relaxing.
- **Stretch** - Just as in preparing for any other exercise, you must get the blood flowing! Increased circulation gives your vocal cords more resources and improved performance!
- **Deep Breaths/Oxygenation** – Breathe slowly in through the nose and out through the mouth.
- **Proper Singing Position/Posture** - Overall, we must feel relaxed and stable, and not awkward when we sing.
 - **Shoulders relaxed**
 - **Bottom of neck parallel to the floor**
 - **Knees slightly bent**
 - **Feet slightly apart for stance**

3. VOCALIZING

- **Breath Support** – The diaphragm, lungs, ribs, intercostal muscles, all play a role in proper breath support. Always use the pressure from your diaphragm to generate your breath. When taking a breath in, the abdomen area should expand outwards, like a balloon filling up. Your shoulders should not rise as you are taking breath in. Push the air out using the diaphragm.
- **Warm Up the Voice** – Always start soft (yawn) and work your way toward more intense vocalizing.
- **Yawn Position** - Make a sound and yawn at the same time. The sound should come from the back of your throat. This position flexes your vocal cords, expands your throat, and lowers your voice box during vocal exercises.

- **Italian Vowels** – This is how we should approach our vowels when we sing, to accommodate the yawn position, for optimal flow of air as we sing. Another concept here is approaching every word with open jaw, as if there is an egg in your mouth.
 - A (father)
 - E (set)
 - I (eat)
 - O (boat)
 - U (boot)

4. DEVELOPING YOUR VOICE & TECHNIQUE

Singing is a multi-dimensional language to further communicate of our words and emotions. We create added dimension with volume, range, tone variation, dictation choices, timing choices, and even embellishments like runs. Every voice is from our Creator! Don't despise your voice! Love your voice! Every voice can be developed.

- **Your Voice as a Muscle** – Just like with any type of working out - regular, regulated, consistent tension creates opportunities to grow. You can develop your range, stamina, tone, and even power.
- **Volume & Resonance** – The bigger the space to resonate, the bigger the sound. The location of your resonance matters. Your posture determines much of resonance.
- **Vowels** – Your choice of vowel use on any give word can shape your sound. It is important when singing in groups for everyone to use the same approach on vowels in any particular word.
- **Diction** – Generally speaking, the more diction (how well you pronounce the consonants) used, the more energy your song and phrasing will carry.
- **Scales** – Practicing scales vocally over time can increase range. If you practice scales while laying on your back, over time you can increase your power. As you in increase the tempo of your scales, you will ultimately develop your control and agility, which is handy for riffs and runs.
- **Vocal Exercises** – You can find some great vocal exercises online. As a general rule of thumb, if your voice hurts, then something is not being done correctly and you should stop immediately.
- **Developing Your Ear/Sense of Pitch/Overall Technique** – You can further develop yourself by taking a music theory course, partnering with a vocal coach, joining a choir or praise team, learning an instrument, or even just regularly recording yourself. The recording apparatus does make a difference in sound quality.

5. VOCAL HEALTH

What you physically consume can impact your vocal cords.

- **Hydration** -The number one necessity for singing is water. Singers should drink at least 8 glasses a day! Room temperature or warm water is best for your voice. Ice water is a shock to the vocal cords because it is such a contrast to the temperature of the body. Also, cold water slows cord movement.
- **Unhelpful Foods** - Milk, cheese and other dairy products will produce mucus and phlegm that can deposit in your vocal cords and make your voice sound dull, thick, and congested. Avoid excessive digestion of these products before your vocal performance.

- **Processed Sugars** - Processed sugars can have a crystallization effect on the vocal cords, inhibiting movement.
- **Caffeine** - Caffeine is a dehydrant, and robs the body of fluids quickly. You need maximum fluids for your best vocalizing.
- **Citrus** - Citrus and other acidic fruit can wear on vocals. Of course, these fruits are generally very healthy, but avoid them before singing.
- **Chemicals That Impact the Voice** -
 - **Numbing Agents** can be unsafe. Even some vocal sprays with alcohol in it can cause damage if used regularly.
 - **Aspirin** is a blood thinner, and over time can cause vocal bleeding.
 - **Ibuprofen** can cause vocal hemorrhaging, which can result in loss of voice, and/or slow deterioration of vocal quality over time.
 - **Pesticides** and other inhaled toxins are also thought to be a vocal irritant, many of which take years to fully leave the body.
 - **Smoking/Tobacco** is a major irritant to the mouth, throat, and respiratory system, causing damage and inflammation. Can also greatly lower your voice range and hoarseness.
 - **Alcohol** dries out the vocal cords and makes it harder to sing.
 - **Certain drugs**, because of chemical components will diminish physical and mental sensations needed to monitor and control your vocal performance.

6. ROUTINES: PRACTICE & REST

If you set yourself up with good habits, you will have

- **Regular Exercise** - As we discussed, exercising your voice is a necessary part of your vocal development.
- **Practice Correctly** - Practice makes permanent, so make it right the first time.
- **Don't Over Do It** - Too much singing can also be a stress on the voice, a good guideline is no more than 30 minutes a day, 3x to 5x a week.
- **Vocal Rest** - If you find yourself sick or hoarse, rest your voice! Singing with a hoarse voice can cause lasting damage. Apple juice may help accelerate healing as well.
- **Care for You** - Your body is an organism with many parts that are linked together. If you are tired, sick, stressed, tense, or upset, your musical performance will be compromised.

In the end, have fun and enjoy!