

emmanuelworship
WORSHIP FILE
'It's All About Who?'
by Bec Crouch

I love music. I love going to see live bands. I love watching a great guitar lick or a big drum solo. An awesome brass section will leave me speechless and a beautiful harmony can bring me to tears. Music is a such a powerful medium that has the ability to move and stir the human spirit in a unique way.

But I want to talk about more than music; I want to talk about the **ministry of music** - people who use their musical gifts in Church. I have a question for you: how would you categorise yourself? Are you a singer or a worshipper? Are you a musician or a minister? Today I want to explore one major difference between **a musician and a minister**, and that's the motto; *"It's not about me."*

It's Not About Me? Are You Sure?

I think maybe I have a little problem with this – *what do you mean it's not about me?* It's my life and so surely it is about me...right? Me Me Me! (sounds like a vocal warm-up) Certainly in the eyes of the world this is a pretty logical and natural assumption – I AM the most important person in the world – right??

In the complicated creative world of music and temperamental musos (& I can say that 'cos I am one!) this 'ME focus' is a huge temptation. It's SOOOO easy for us to take our identity in what we do, and **become** what we do: 'I am Rebecca THE SINGER' and aren't I fabulous!! Don't laugh – we've all done exactly that sometime; I know I certainly have, and I suspect I'm not alone!!! When what we do is so public and visible it's almost inevitable that we become identified in that way - and begin to *identify ourselves in that way* as well. But somehow I think God, whose ways are not our ways, has other intentions for us. He certainly had other intentions for me.

The Year The Penny Dropped

I've always known I could sing. Ever since I sang my first solo at church when I was 9 years old (and got great accolades might I add!) I was confident in my ability. The older I got the bigger this 'identity thing' became in me. And do you know what? In one way it was great because through getting affirmation for my singing I grew in personal confidence. And at the same time I began to work on some pretty huge self image issues that had grown in me through the years.

So there I was, Sunday after Sunday for years on end singing at our local Parish Youth Mass, and it was all about me and the great music our team played. We got feedback like *"I love this Mass! You guys are SO GREAT....I won't come to any other Mass...I love it when you sing Bec..."* and on and on. I gotta say, we felt pretty good about ourselves!

This went on for a number of years until I left my hometown to serve on a Catholic youth team called NET Ministries. There I learned one of the most important life lessons I have ever learned.... the lesson of WORSHIP. I learned what it means to be a worshipper and to live a life of worship. I learned that worship is much more than 'singing a few songs' and, amazingly, what it means to use the gifts I have *for someone other than me...* *'Maybe it's not all about me?'*...

Now, this wasn't exactly a 'wow' revelation that I discovered in one life-altering dramatic moment. It was more like a gradual awakening to a truth that had always existed but I had never been able to see...and things began to change for me.

First of all, I began to WORSHIP instead of sing. What does this mean? It means that the focus became **WHO I was singing about: not how good I was singing!** I began to offer my singing to God and began to care less about what people thought. As I focused upon Jesus, on lifting HIM up and exalting HIM, I began to experience the Holy Spirit more and drew closer and closer to Jesus.

What a great trade off! **I give God the best I have, and He gives me the best He has.** I learned that year that it was impossible to out-give God as He blessed me through His Spirit in a way I had never imagined. As I continued to grow and allow the Lord to challenge me and stretch me, God began to use my worship to touch others. Instead of hearing (like I'd heard my whole life) "Bec you're such a great singer, I love it when you sing" I started to hear something different; "Bec when you sing *I experience Jesus.*"

Do you know how good that is? For a musician, to hear how great *you are* is an awesome thing. **But for a worshipper, to hear that the Creator of the Universe has just used you to draw someone closer to Him is the ultimate!** There is nothing better than being able to play a small part in someone's journey closer to the Father - nothing!

When I think of all those years 'doing music' in my parish I wonder why no one ever told me it was meant to be about *more than music?* I wish I'd known...my Parish had 8 years of experiencing 'Rebecca' when they could have been experiencing **JESUS!** (and that's a pretty poor substitute, let me tell you) So now when I sing, *it's for Him – it's to Him – it's about Him –* and every time I get up to lead worship the prayer of my heart is that God will use my small offering to bring others closer to Him.

Who's moment is this anyway??

Sorry to break it to you, but it's not ours! For a singer or musician who serves Jesus, worship is not and never should be '*our moment to shine*'. We absolutely should do our best; we need to strive to give the best offering possible because God always deserves the best we have. But in the midst of our excellence **it should always be HIS moment.** It's about HIM - not us! It's about His glory - not ours! *We live and serve and sing and play to lift Him up, to exalt His name, to make Him famous and to lead others to Him!* This is our duty and our honour.

Take Your Place

I am amazed that the Lord can use our small offering of music to bring others into His Kingdom. That other people experience Jesus through our worship is an awesome and holy thing - and it's something we should never take for granted or grow complacent about.

The world needs to know Jesus. The people we serve need to experience the abundant life that Jesus promised; the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. *You can be part of that!* You can be part of bringing new life and a new song into our Church – to draw the ones you serve deeper into a living relationship with Jesus. How awesome is that!!

My prayer is that the next time you pick up your instrument to minister, your eyes would be fixed upon *Jesus*. I pray that He would USE you – that through your service hearts will be touched and lives will be changed by the power of the Holy Spirit. And I pray most of all that as you *look to Him* and use your gifts for Him, that He will draw you closer to His heart.