



Are You Creating Room for the Holy Spirit?

This article is from Church Leaders.com by David Santistevan.

When it comes to worship, we are obsessive about the atmosphere, but are we creating room for the Holy Spirit in our worship?

The pad creates an atmosphere. The guitar swells create an atmosphere. Every intro, transition, and altar call is about the atmosphere it provides.

But the tension happens when the planning of the atmosphere doesn't leave space for what the Holy Spirit wants to do. Of course God can [and does] work through Spirit-led, intentional, well-researched, well thought-out planning. The time and energy you invest in staying ahead and well planned is never in vain. However, how do we plan and create an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can operate? I don't know about you, but I want more than man-made plans. I'm hungry for more than just being awed by incredible talent on stage. I'm not interested in just being moved by a charismatic speaker. I want the Holy Spirit. I need the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit.



I definitely don't want to be in the business of getting in the Spirit's way or drawing too much attention to myself. I don't want to create a fan club of churchgoers while the Spirit watches from a distance.

What about you?

You've heard the saying, "Plan like it all depends on you and pray like it all depends on God." Well, I believe we should pray and plan like it all depends on God. Because for anything supernatural to happen, we need the Holy Spirit. So our planning should be prayer.



Encounter Jesus:

Pause to yield in a fresh way to the fullness of His Spirit. Listen as the Spirit whispers about a needed, deepened work that you might more clearly manifest His fruit.

Might you need a fresh work of:

- His love, joy, or peace?
- His patience, kindness, or goodness?
- His faithfulness, gentleness, or self-control?

Listen to His invitation and yield to its promise: “Come unto me, and out of your innermost being will flow rivers of living water.”

Ask for the Spirit to empower this deepened work in and through you. Claim the promise of 1 John 5:14–15, “If you ask anything according to His will (confident that you’re expressing the Spirit’s fruit is His will)...He will HEAR... and you will HAVE!”

“Lord Jesus I need a deepened work of _____ (love, joy, peace, patience, etc.) in order that I might more clearly reveal the Spirit’s fruit in my life. Fill and empower me Holy Spirit as I give witness of You.”

But that doesn’t condone lazy planning. It should inspire a wide-eyed, expectant, edge-of-your-seat adventure of a plan where the Holy Spirit is at the center.

The Comforter, the Counselor, is here. The One who can make all the difference. Let’s stand at attention.

Three Ways to Give God Room in a Service

So how do we plan in a way that allows unplanned encounters? I can think of three simple strategies:

1. Be Patient. I’m always frustrated by worship teams that rush through songs. But there’s the opposite team that seems to constantly linger in no-man’s land. Sometimes you just need to sing a song and move on. Knowing how to balance songs and spontaneous, patient flow is an important skill for any worship team.

Here’s what I advise—be patient. Don’t be in a hurry to finish. It’s like being at the Grand Canyon. When you’re there, you don’t want to hurry up so you can get back to playing Super Mario Run on your phone. You wait. You linger. You stare. You drink it in. We need more of this in our worship.

2. Spotlight the WORD. The Holy Spirit doesn’t speak apart from the Word of God. Many of us squint our eyes, linger for hours, and strive for days to hear the voice of God on an issue. I’m not here to debate the audible voice of God and whether it’s legitimate. That’s another discussion. I will say this—God HAS spoken in His Word. Our obedience to His Word should keep us busy enough, rather than stressing about things that may not matter. In your service, spotlight the Word. The closer you are to the Word, the closer you are to the Spirit.

3. Create Space for Engagement. Many churches plan services where worship leaders and pastors are the performers and the church is the audience. It’s more like *America’s Got Talent* than church. But for people to experience the moving of the Holy Spirit, they need to enter in—sing, worship, declare, engage. In your planning and in your spontaneity, give your congregation some responsibility. Challenge them to step out.

