

The Studio

EPISODE // TRANSITIONS IN WORSHIP

I'm a worship pastor and I have been part of ministry in the local church for all of my adult life. I have worked with outside ministries on a national scale, teaching at conferences across the United States over the years, but really at the heart and my life is to lead worship, bringing generations together in the local church. That is what the Kingdom looks like: old and young, outsiders and insiders, well-dressed and poorly dressed, rich and poor, and very, very needy. That is the common denominator of all of us.

I am here to talk about how to get from song to the next on the platform in worship. One of the great things, I call road blocks to worship, are the stops and starts. What makes it work when you go to one direction to the other, and only you know where you are heading, to get from point A to point D, which might be the opening of the word or the sermon. In your heart and in your mind you know what direction you are going, but it's really important for you to know, that the audience understand that path as well. As few road blocks you can build, the better off you are going to be. Cut the interruptions, cut the distractions and just start on a path of worship.

My philosophy of worship, which is not my philosophy its the bibles, is that we set out a feast, a table full of wonderful food, and that food is upon the invitation of those coming to take of it. We know that some are going to like what we out on the table. Sometimes that broccoli salad isn't for you, but you are going to love the banana pudding at the end if the table, especially being from the south. But the objective is for everyone who comes to be fed and have something to give to God.

So I'm going to show you a few places that you can practically taper your repertoire so that the audience doesn't have those speed bumps.

- ✦ **Applauding.** The first thing we are going to is talk about is the simplest segue, and that simple segue is called an applause at the end of the song. The audience has made a segue way for you, and you can reorder and hit the reset button so that the next song has a cold start. For example you finish "How Great Thou Art" and we finish the song and everyone is applauding together. If your church isn't the clapping church I would encourage you trying a simple trick, turn around to your worship team or choir and conduct the ending. Your congregation who is not the applauding type will consider that a performance and they will applaud. Then, turn back around to them and now we are clapping of the Lord, but remind them that God has given them two musical instruments, they are called hands, put them together and rejoice to the Lord. That is the easiest transition.
- ✦ **Tag.** Another way of transitioning is called a tag. Say we are singing the end of "How Great Thou Art," have your instruments keep going and slow the train down. In studios we have what is called *diamonds*, just an empty space through the measure creating room for another element to be entered into that space. This is an easy transition, because you have slowed the train down from a high tempo to a new click, moving into the new song. I have kept the key common, the instruments don't stop playing, if you have a pianist, have them use their left hand playing the pedal tone, keeping your hands on the key. This keeps the music in the room and it keeps the tone center moving in some direction, which could be the first pitch for the next key.

Another example is if tie a new song like “Hallelujah, We Will Sing” by Tommy Walker, which sings about heaven, and tie it to another heaven song that is more familiar in the worship environment. Often times when I have a song that is new to the church, I often insert a familiar song to keep them interested. Such as a new Matt Redman song called “Your Grace Finds Me” my pianist or guitarist or bass player can hammer a new one chord, that puts you in a new key like “Amazing Grace.” Going to the end of song and that final chord can take you back to the former song.

These segues are so important. I encourage you, if you go rhythm, key, or theme: try find a common element, and your speed bumps will decrease, as you forge a trail in your worship.