

Our Talent Is For God **By Keith Banks**

We tend to think that our destiny is wrapped up in our talent. But our destiny doesn't hinge entirely on what we do as musicians; it hinges on who we are as people. Some of us try to hide behind our talents and we neglect, to develop who we are on the inside. Many musicians often define their identity through their talent, only to discover that the truth of who they are can only be seen by the character of their heart. God's Word reveals that talent alone can only take you so far, but the character of heart is what determines and sustains one's true success in life.

Our talent should be used for God and not to promote ourselves. We must always remember to be humble with our talent and when we are, God will promote us. People tend to look to man for promotion instead of God. We should never put man before God as our provider or promoter. The Bible speaks of this in **Psalms 75:6-7(KJV)** *For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge; he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* Humility is the key to one's true favor in being promoted by God. For a long time I was ignorant of the principle of humility until God's Word started changing me from the inside out.

I believe pride is a struggle for many musicians who are full of talent but lack character of heart with being humble. We should never be prideful with our talent regardless of what success we may have obtained. The Bible speaks of being clothed with humility; *“for God resisted the proud, and gives grace to the humble. You must humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time.”* **I Peter 5:5-6(KJV)** No matter how skillful you think you are in your world, you are not skillful enough to be prideful. Understand that your talent was something given to you by God. Yes, you were born with a talent, but it was first given to you. You didn't create your talent, for God is the creator of all good things.

The motivation and attitude of one's heart reveals the position of their heart before God. We as Musicians tend to have a selfish motivation and arrogant attitude with our talent. We do this by having the desire of wanting to bring recognition to ourselves instead of giving all glory and honor to God the talent giver. God gave us our talent to show forth His glory in our life and the lives of others. Instead we tend to show forth the glory of ourselves by honoring our talent more than honoring God. We should never put our talent before God because such error will always lead our hearts away from God. We see this example in today's society in the lives of many musician's hearts being lead down the road of lascivious and unclean lifestyles.

When a musician puts their talent before God, they will soon begin a lifestyle of idol worship. Signs of idol worship can be seen by one's selfish attitude or comments such as, “I am the best” or “I want to be the world's greatest” and “I am better than that person.” This same prideful heart was the downfall with Lucifer. *“How are thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How are thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou has said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north; clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”* **Isaiah 14:12-15(KJV)** When we have a

prideful heart we usually end up hurting ourselves as well as damaging the lives of others.

A prideful heart of bringing recognition to one's self will never leave a positive effect on another's life. But rather wanting to recognize God in humility will make one more effective and powerful and will allow you to have greater influence in the lives of others. When we honor God and put Him first, your attitude will be, "Don't look at me, but instead look at God working in me!" Our talent needs to be used as a tool to lead people's heart toward God.

We are stewards over the talent that God has given us. A steward is one who manages or cultivates another's property or investment. Our talent is God's investment into our lives. God has entrusted us with the stewardship of our talent. God didn't give us our talent to keep for ourselves. We are held accountable by the measures in which we use God's investment. When we use our talent for God we will always inspire, encourage, uplift, and edify people.

In my personal life I have seen the fruits of using my talent for God and not for myself. The benefits of putting God first with my talent has given me greater influence and effectiveness in the lives of others. The testimonies are endless of how God has used the talent He gave me to be a blessing to thousands and thousands of people. And the greatest joy for me is seeing God receive all of the glory for the many things He has done in and through me. I would like to encourage you to let your talent be a reflection of the glory of God. Until next time, I pray that you will allow God to use you in a greater and mightier way in leading people's hearts back to Him in worship.

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