

Worship leader connects young worshippers to timeless truths

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For the past 20 years, worship leader Joshua Bryan has been connecting with audiences of all ages and walks of life as he shares the message behind his music.



Joshua Bryan

“I’ve been fortunate to play a small part at a variety of events, and I’ve played at pretty much any church event you could think of,” Bryan said. “My favorite events are summer camps and multi-day events. Not only are they a blast to be part of, but it gives a chance to develop a relationship with the audience. I truly believe that leads to deeper times of worship when you can get to know the audience and connect with them.

“Most of the events I’m a part of are evangelistic in nature, so my hope is to see people put their faith in Christ. I pray something very similar to this over each event: ‘Lord, we ask that your Holy Spirit fall upon this place. We pray for conviction, repentance, healing, freedom and salvation. Lord, make yourself known in this place.’”

When Bryan leads worship at student events, he wants young people to do

more than enjoy the experience. He wants them to learn about the meaning of worship and embrace worship as a lifestyle.

Student ministry is especially important to Bryan, who began leading worship with the youth praise team at First Baptist Church in Sour Lake when he was 16 years old.

“I actually started out playing drums and percussion in the concert band at my middle school,” Bryan said. “I didn’t start playing guitar, my primary instrument, until my 16th birthday.

Around the same time, I had started attending and playing drums for the youth services at First Baptist Church in Sour Lake. Eventually I picked up an acoustic guitar, borrowed the youth pastor’s songbook, and taught myself how to play those songs.”

Enjoys interaction with students

While leading worship for events, Bryan and his band enjoy interacting with students off stage—playing games with them, joining at meals and praying for them when the opportunity arises.

“Fun fact, the band has led worship at preteen camps more than any other event to date. We love the energy when you have over a thousand kids screaming at the top of their lungs. There is nothing else like it,” he said. “We also love leading at student events. So much healing takes place, and I’m always amazed by it.”

Many times, Bryan receives notes of encouragement and personal testimonies that allow him to follow up with the people he meets at events.

“Every year I end up with a dozen or so handwritten notes letting me know about salvation or some type of freedom that happened during the event, which is so special to receive those notes following the event,” Bryan said.

“One summer, there was a young man named Hunter, who really left an impression on me. Hunter utilized a powered wheelchair, and he let me know on day one that the only reason he came to camp was because he was promised a trip to another camp with attractions that could accommodate his chair.

“Fast-forward two days, Hunter is raising his hands in worship and loving every minute of it. At the end of that camp, he told me how amazing the experience was for him.”

Connect audience to Christ’s love

By sharing songs about his own life experiences, Bryan hopes to relate to audiences and connect them to Christ’s unfailing love.

“My songwriting process really depends on my season of life,” Bryan noted. “Sometimes I dig deep into the word [of God] and put the Scripture to music. Other times I just sing out whatever is on my heart repeatedly, and then try to refine it. Right now, writing has been reflective of my family. I’ve been jotting down melodies that my wife and I sing over our children. I love trying to make them smile with a song.”

During his travels, Bryan has led worship for Disciple Now Weekends, church services, retreats, youth and preteen camps around the state. Next summer, his band will lead worship at preteen camp at Mount Lebanon Baptist Camp in Cedar Hill, June 13-17.

Over the next year, Bryan hopes to create an album filled with his original songs and possibly release an EP geared towards children’s ministry.

“At each event, we try to break down barriers quickly so ministry can happen. We try to take every opportunity to get to know students. We want to know what they are learning and what their lives are like. We want to

show them love, whether we are on or off the platform,” he said.

“The goal of the Joshua Bryan Band is to build relationships and take the students to a deeper level in their worship with the Lord. It’s a privilege to provide a vehicle to help these students reach new places in their relationship with Jesus.”