8 Tips to Making Your Team Portable

By Warren Anderson

So you’ve got your portable sound system. You’ve got your ministry CDs in their portable cases. You’ve got your stage clothes in your portable garment bags. And you’ve got your toothbrush in one of those cute little portable plastic do-hickeys that keep the rest of your personal items from getting wet. (Ever used a damp cotton swab? Not fun.)

Now about a little portable sociological theology for traveling worship leaders to round out your portability?

Pray. Pray again. Pray some more. The enemy would like nothing better than to thwart your efforts, whether through a flat tire, team turmoil, miscommunication on the part of those who invited you to minister, or a host of other things. The old gospel song seems almost to speak specifically to the needs of traveling worship ministries: “I’m prayed up, packed up, and ready to go.” That order is important (cf. 1 Thess. 5:17).

Organize the traveling. If structure isn’t your strong suit, put a first lieutenant in charge of the details. Nothing makes traveling ministry more difficult than a sense of constantly flying (or driving) by the seat of your pants (cf. Prov. 21:5).

Research your audience. The ancient Greeks knew that an understanding of your audience (pathos) is as important to the successful communication of your message as your credibility as a communicator (ethos) and your message (logos). As you have the time and ability, glean some insights about those who will likely be in your audience—to help you structure your service to meet their unique needs (cf. 1 Cor. 9:22).

Take a little time for yourself. Even extroverts need time alone, especially in the midst of traveling with others. Grab a good book. Plug in your iPod. Take a nap. You will be a more effective minister to others if you minister to yourself now and again (cf. Mark 6:45-46).

Adjust. Adapt. Be flexible. There’s a time for everything. This might be it (cf. Eccl. 3:1-8).

Bless the local authorities by submitting to their leadership. Whether your invitation to minister comes from a pastor, a worship committee, or any other governing body, remember that you are a guest on his/her/his side turf. (cf. Acts 10:24-26).

Love on your team. Traveling is tough on everyone, and a few thoughtful gestures from you will reap great dividends for your team and its ministry. Spring for a nicer-than-usual meal on occasion. Write a three-sentence personal note to each team member. Praise them in the presence of others (cf. Ps. 37:25-26).

Enjoy it. Not everyone gets the privilege and fun of doing what you’re doing. Recognize the experience for the blessing that it is, and be grateful that God is allowing you to serve Him and others with your worship ministry (cf. Ps. 100:4).