

Is it ok to 'love to play'?

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Musicians innately love to play. It's a natural and God-given desire. We're exhorted to be good stewards of our talents, and excellent in all things - and both are important as leaders in worship. Yet is it ok to enjoy playing,? Or can it be mistaken for performing?

As a worshipper, my goal is to go there myself, honestly and purely, focusing my heart and attention on God, giving glory and thanks for who He is and all He's done. As a worship leader my goal is to do all of the above, plus to facilitate others engaging with Him. So how and what I play is different somewhat when I'm playing in congregational worship times than when I'm worshipping alone. I'm aware that others are following my lead both on the team, and in the congregation. I still enjoy it and don't feel it wrong or self indulgent to play my best, but I am aware and considerate of others. I'm also aware that God enjoys our praise!

Band-wise, I aim to respect and prefer each player by making room for their contribution to the team effort. The more unified it is the more God smiles and delights. As a professional musician I'm expected to be a team player in the studio, or on stage. It is standard that I be tasteful and mature with my contributions, always listening and complimenting the band or artist. It's also important that I know what is expected from the leader or artist and not attempt to override their wishes with my own ideas or wisdom. Since I want to be hired again I do my best to have a great attitude! When it comes to congregational worship, how much more then we should prefer one another, build up each other, and not detract from a unified expression as a team. Being creative and inspired is part of God's design, and each of our particular colors will add to the overall picture when accompanied by humility and servitude.

My advice is to aim for excellence - to be the very best you possibly can - at the same time keeping your heart in constant check. Test your motives to make sure they are pure, honest, good and true. Don't seek to be noticed and identified by your talent. More than anything, seek to please God with every expression, and to serve those around you. We are all responsible for the attitudes of our own hearts before God.