

# SHAWN THOMAS STUDIOS (STS)

www.shawnthomasstudios.com

RECORDING & PRODUCTION

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## **“SORRY I FORGOT THE WORDS. CAN I START OVER?”**

### **WHAT NOT TO SAY WHEN IT ALL GOES WRONG**

(by Shawn Thomas – www.shawnthomasonline.com)

It's going to happen. Mr. Murphy is going to deploy his twisted law of probability on you in the middle of the most important performance of your career. But wait! There's more! It's going to happen more than once. In fact if you think about it, the more times you perform, the more chances you have to experience one of the most embarrassing moments in your life. I know I'm being pretty pessimistic, but it's better to be prepared than caught in the middle of a "wardrobe malfunction". (Well, hopefully it won't be THAT bad!)

How do you prepare for the unexpected? Start with this question: "What's the worst that can happen?" Run through your worst case scenarios – all of them. The power goes out. You forget the words to your own song. The curtain fails to open. You trip and fall on your own mic cord. All of your guitar strings break at once. You lose your voice. No one arrives to let you in for sound check. The sound guy's a jerk. All your wireless hook ups are feeding back. Go ahead; add in your own worst nightmare...

Now come up with at least one plan of action for each of your scenarios. There's not a right or wrong answer as long as you do something besides stand there with a blank look on your face and apologize over and over. One sure way to make an uncomfortable performance situation even more uncomfortable for the audience is for the artist to start apologizing and then appear not to know what to do. Audiences can be very forgiving regarding the unexpected. What they tend to be a little more critical about is how you, the artist, react and handle the situation. Would you rather they leave your concert talking about how well you handled that woman who kept interrupting you with silly questions, or talking about how frustrating it was that you only sang two songs because you couldn't control a heckler?

At some point the worst case scenario is going to happen. You can't stop it or predict it, but you can plan for it. Don't apologize. Prepare and react. May the force be with you.

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SHAWN THOMAS is a contemporary Christian singer/songwriter and worship leader whose ministry includes an outreach to the GLBT community. He is also the owner/operator of "Shawn Thomas Studios" in West Palm Beach, FL providing audio recording, production, and mastering services to independent artists, songwriters, and bands and he is a member in good standing with the National Academy of Recording Arts, and Sciences (Grammy.com).