

The Servant



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The purpose of this newsletter is to pass along information and ideas to help the Lord's servants as they minister to others. Feel free to use any of it in your ministry

Perfect

Perfectionists are annoying and a little crazy. Looking for the perfect church makes you annoying and a little crazy as well. Nothing's perfect in this world, not even the "perfect storm." You will never find the "perfect" pair of shoes. The shoe-people know that. That is why there are so many. This shoe will not go with that, and that shoe would be inappropriate for this occasion. Nothing's perfect. If it is the perfect color, it might not be the perfect fit. It might be just a little too big, or too small, or too expensive. Then it would have to be broken in. You would have to break it in to fit your particular way of walking and it might give you a blister in the process. Then, just when you think it feels perfect, you notice that the heel is now worn a little, or it is scuffed here and there, and – you get it – it's not perfect.

Because nothing is perfect, we must make certain accommodations or trade-offs. We can spend only "so" much. We have to compromise on the color or the shape and settle for something a little less than perfect.

Then there is the search for the perfect church. A lot of shoe leather has been worn out on this journey through the wilderness. For some this is the holy grail. They are looking for the perfect church. They try this one and that one. This one has the right doctrine, but the wrong people. That one has the right music, but the wrong message. This one is too big, that one too small, and the one over there is too strange. There comes a time when we must choose.

We must buy a pair of shoes or go barefoot. We must sign the papers and close on the mortgage. And if your wife waited until you were perfect before she agreed to marry you, she might be an old maid by now. Sometimes we must accept that things are "perfect enough."

God however is absolutely perfect. And "the Law of the LORD is perfect," and God has a perfect will (Ps. 19:7; Rom.12:2). John chapter four talks about a "perfect love." We are being perfected. Perfect for the Christian, is a state of health. It is being whole, being healthy, and holy. Perfect is being where you should be

in your "growth spurt," your "learning-curve," or (as according to Romans 12) in the process of being "transformed."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2Tim. 3:17)

Perfection is a process, and we are in the middle of it. When we "present ourselves a living sacrifice unto God," then, no matter how hard or hot or hurtful things are, we know that we are being transformed into the likeness of God's Son. The word of the LORD is perfect as silver that is purified seven times (Ps. 12:6). We are not purchased with silver and gold, but sanctification involves getting the lead out. It is not until we climb upon a sacrificial altar that we are likely to find that which is the "good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." That's perfect. ☹

(Singing-continued from back page)

When coal miners went into the dangerous labyrinth of tunnels they often took a caged and singing canary. Should the little bird stop singing, take care. As long as the little creature was active and singing, all was well. Some foul air, poisoned gas, some evil breath could quickly overcome the strongest miner and take his life away. When a church or a Christian stops singing, something is awfully wrong. Get out of that place quickly. Find the fresher air of heaven. Find the breath of Pentecost. Sing again. ☹

Perfect Pitch

Concert A in England is 455 Hz
But here four-forty (440) is what it's supposed to be
Some would make it higher, four hundred sixty one
Seems perfect is not perfect, at least it seems for some

Only God is Perfect, in pitch, in light, in all
God alone can tune a heart, broken in the fall
He turns the key and tightens strings, stretched across
our hearts
And prepares in prayer the humble soul before the
worship starts
- id

Sometimes I Feel Like Dancing

II Sam. 6:14

There are those who like to find verses on their way to the vineyard to support what they call their “moderate drinking.” They can quickly turn up pages and make a path to certain “proof texts,” while they pour themselves a drink. There are those who would never think to imitate Jesus save in his wine drinking. “Jesus drank wine,” they say. But before we uncork the bottle in this godless world, and offer a toast or satisfy a taste, let us consider how easily our old human nature can become intoxicated with such a carnal thing. Many have taken Paul’s prescription for Timothy’s stomach ailments and made it their own medicine. Better, said Paul, that we drink of the Spirit than become drunk with wine.

“David danced.” This too has become a “proof text” and a mantra to those who love the matinee. David never danced like we dance. David never danced for anyone but God. That I sing in the shower does not make me a singer. There is a time to mourn, says the Bible, and a time to dance. This spiritual dancing is different. This was spiritual spontaneity, not a night at the ballet. The ballet had its birth in the passions of wealthy French decadence. It had a shameful nativity. Better had it been stillborn. It was an art of sensuality, not spirituality. It is more flesh than Spirit.

“and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee” (Mk. 6:22). With that John the Baptist lost his head to a dancing girl. He was not the first preacher to do so, nor will he be the last. Herod, choosing rather to lose his soul than lose his face, gave the awful order.

When the Prodigal came home, yes there was “music and dancing” (Lk. 15:25), but this was no American Bandstand; neither was it the beginning of the Shakers who built a faith around a feeling, nor was it entertainment and a “ministry to the lost.” If seeing Jesus die on the cross is not enough to save the world, all your dancing is in vain. No, the dancing of David and of the welcomed home prodigal was uncontained joy, nothing more,

nothing less. I am not suggesting that we publish a list of illegal activities or become Pharisees or the Taliban. Do what you will. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. Not too long ago, a weak church was asking if it was alright for a Christian to dance. Now we are asking if it is alright for a Christian to dance in Church.

There is a “first position” in most dances. People want to know, what is my position? I cannot say that I will never dance in the church. I may— should the Lord so ever move my heart as He did the lame man in Acts who set about to leaping and praising God. And then I would, no doubt, look more like a fool than David –or than some practiced professional –and I will say with David, “It was before the Lord.” If you must dance, go—go and dance before the Lord. Then come back when you are done. If we can pray in secret, surely we can dance as well. But please, do not dance for me. You may just block my view of God’s Glory.

We have come a long way from the days of the early church when the “first position” was not the beginning of a dance, but rather the posture of a saint upon his knees in prayer. My position? It is one on bended knee praying for a holy heaven-sent revival. If one should come and sweep across my heart, my outward body may be still, but to God and for God alone to see, I would not be surprised if my soul and spirit should suddenly set about to dancing. 🍷

Sometimes I Feel Like Singing

He appointed singers. Jehoshaphat was about to go into battle against the Moabites and the Ammonites. When he first heard of the impending invasion and battle the Bible says that he was afraid. Then something happened. Faith replaced fear and now Jehoshaphat assigns singers and sets them in array like Wellington’s horse cavalry. Singers out front, this is a strange strategy for an army. They don’t teach this at West Point. 2Chron. 20:21. Here I can learn a lesson for life- sing. Make sure you are close enough to God to hear the music and then sing. Nothing evil can penetrate the song. No battering ram, no fiery dart, no frontal or flanking movement can break a faith that sings. (cont. pg1)

A Free Singing Lesson

1. The Why-

- A. Ps. 13:6 - Because he hath dealt bountifully with me
- B. Ps. 92:1 – it is good for you

2. The How

- A. Ps. 47:7 with understanding (1Cor. 14:6-15)
- B. Ps. 81:1 aloud, joyfully
- C. Ps. 101:1- balanced, “mercy and judgment”
- D. Ps. 105:2 – Sing psalms unto him
- E. Ps. 147:7 with Thanks giving

3. The Where-

- A. Ps. 108:3 Among the nations
- B. Ps. 137:4 – even in a strange land and in captivity
- C. Ps. 149:1 in the congregation of His saints
- D. Ps. 149:5 Upon their beds (of affliction?)

4. The What

- A. Ps. 20:13 – we will sing and praise thy power
- B. Ps. 30:4 – give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness
- C. Ps. 51:14 sing of thy righteousness
- D. Ps. 57:7-11 mercy and truth
- E. Ps. 66:5 - of the works of God
- F. Ps. 67:4 – Thou wilt judge the people righteously
- G. Ps. 68:4 – of his name JAH
- H. Ps. 96:8- Give unto the LORD the glory that is due Him
- I. Ps. 138:5- “of the ways of the LORD” NAS
- J. Ps. 144:9 a new song— prayers (of faithful optimism, hope and expectation)

5. The When

- Ps. 59:16 – in the morning
- Ps. 104:33- as long as I live
- Ps. 61:8 – forever



Editor and Author- Ingimar DeRidder
5523 Newberry Dr. Raleigh, NC 27609
ingimar@att.net www.ingimar.com