

A Vision for Our Church

II Samuel 6:12-23

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[Choir Offertory Special: “This Is the Day.” During the song, Peter begins dancing on stage and taking off his clothes.]

This has been a hard spring for me. Giving was under budget, attendance wasn't what we projected, we've had some painful staff transitions . . . so people say, “Peter, we need a vision. Tell us the Lord's vision for our church.” Well, that was it.

II Samuel 6:12-23:

Now King David was told, “The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.” So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing.

When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD.

After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”

David said to Michal, “It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel--I will celebrate before the LORD. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

A few minutes ago perhaps you were thinking, “Please stop. Peter, you’re humiliating yourself and embarrassing us. That’s entirely undignified and even feels sinful — disrobing in church.”

And now you have a bit of a problem, don't you? For those are the words of Queen Michal, and dancing David is the man after God's own heart, even a picture of Christ. And David didn't just disrobe down to his undershirt and Dockers, David went down to a linen ephod and appears to have flashed the crowd.

I was thinking about stripping down to my boxer shorts, but my wife and Sydney convinced me otherwise. (There's some culture shock any time you have a choir exchange, let alone if the senior pastor dances in his underwear. I didn't know if they did that down at the Baptist church or not . . .) But you know, even if I danced in my boxers, I wouldn't be in David's league: He was the King.

Most scholars think the linen ephod was like a loin cloth. And David says, "I'll become more undignified than this." That's a problem.

The late, great, Bible teacher J. Vernon McGee wrote this in his commentary on II Samuel:

I know there are going to be many arched eyebrows at the fact that David danced, but God is the One who put it in His Word. David danced by himself. It had nothing in the world to do with sex. Any kind of dance today (and I do not care how you try to cover it up with culture and refinement) is a sex dance. David's dance was one of worship. Now if you could have a worshipful dance, I would be all for it, but I don't think you can, my friend.

Well, who's your authority? J. Vernon McGee or Scripture? Psalm 150:4 in imperative tense says, "Praise the Lord with timbrel and dance."

“Any kind of dance today is a sex dance. . . . Now if you could have a worshipful dance, I would be all for it, but I don't think you can, my friend.”

Well, I *know* you can. I used to see one every day when I came home from work. I'd stick my key in the lock, and one of my kids (a sentry posted at the door) would yell, “Daddy's home!” Four little kids would come running, jumping on me. And they'd do a little dance. (Now they're older, and it's not so cool . . . but at least the dog still dances for me.)

When my kids used to do the Daddy's Home Dance, I'd look at them, and do you know what I'd do? I'd smack 'em upside the head and say, “Stop that sex dancing, you little trollops!” Actually, I really enjoyed the dance.

David was dancing because the Father was coming home. In II Samuel 6:2, we find that the Lord Almighty was enthroned between the cherubim on the ark — the Ark of the Covenant. Daddy was home, and King David danced like a child.

On October 30, 1981, around 11:00 PM, I got down on one knee in front of Susan Coleman and held out a ring, the sign of a covenant. I asked, “Susan, will you marry me?” And she screamed. She jumped up (knocking me back on my can) and did a little dance.

It really wasn't a sex dance (although I wasn't opposed to that in the future); it was a *worship* dance — a “thank you, I accept” dance. It was uncontrolled and undignified, and it meant more than the world to me. For I had been romancing her for four years, and now I was asking her to enter into an unconditional covenant with me. I was offering her my body and blood, and that little dance of joy told me she believed my word, and to her it was good news, that is, gospel.

David was the King, and he was acting as High Priest. He represented Israel, and God referred to Israel as His covenant Bride. The Bridegroom was coming home. (In the next chapter, David longs to build Him a house—a home.)

Hey, did you remember that *you're* a house, *you're* a city—a New Jerusalem? You're a Bride, you're the children, and hey . . . here's a covenant: body broken and blood shed . . . waiting on a table.

Well, maybe you're thinking, "OK. I don't have a problem with David dancing. But I have a problem with *you* dancing. David danced before the Lord as an act of worship, but I think you danced before us as a sermon illustration."

If you think that, you're really on to something about me and worship. Our worship is to be to the Lord, and I was pretty self-conscious while dancing. I don't know if I'll do exactly that again, because I get *self-conscious* rather than *Lord-conscious*. And our worship is to be *Lord-conscious*.

Sometimes I'll look around in our worship services and see people like staff and elders, and they're not singing or praying. They're reading the bulletin or whispering . . . They're not Lord-conscious. I'll stare at them and think, "Come on, guys. We're here to serve God with our worship. It's a *worship* service." I'll be staring at them, and then it will hit me: I'm *staring* at them! I'm not Lord-conscious—not worshipping—but judging their worship.

And that brings up an interesting question: Did you come here to judge other people's worship? When you leave, will you evaluate the program and the leaders, or will you evaluate the worshipper: *you*. Will you ask, "How did *I* do?"

Jesus didn't say to the Samaritan woman, "The Father seeks worship service critics." He said, "The Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth." If you're a worshiper, you can worship your Father anywhere, in any style of service.

People will say, "I'm sorry . . . I just couldn't worship to that music." I want to say, "Gosh, you must be kind of a wussy worshiper." You know, when I'm on top of my game, I can romance my bride at Burger King or Qdoba. I don't *need* the Brown Palace.

As worship leaders, our job is to make this place as conducive to worship as possible. But it's *your* job to worship. So worry about yourself.

And like I was saying, it's pretty hard to judge another person's worship. You can't see their heart. And *so what* if their motives are mixed!

- Have you ever worshipped with pure motives?
- Have you ever sung a song with pure motives?
- Have you ever prayed with pure motives?

If I waited for pure motives, I'd never do anything. And I'd end up with no motives at all.

But take a step, and God can clean us up while we're dancing . . . while we're worshipping.

You learn to dance by dancing.

Remember, we preached on it in February: "Discipline to Dance." You learn to dance by taking some disciplined steps while listening to music. At first you're very self-conscious of every step. But then you surrender to the music and forget

yourself as the rhythm bypasses your conscious brain and animates your body, which is constrained, motivated, and compelled by the music.

Paul wrote, “The love of Christ compels us.” It compels us, controls us, coordinates us in perfect freedom and joy. The love of Christ makes us dance.

But maybe that’s our problem. Maybe we don’t hear the music. We know the score, read the score, see the score, but won’t listen to the music; won’t surrender our heart.

Imagine if I came home from work, walked inside, and it was utterly silent. Then from the back, very dignified, somber, and correct, my family processed in.

John stepped forward and said, “Let us now join in joyful adoration of Dad.”

Elizabeth led a chorus — “This Is My Father’s House.”

Then Becky read the Word of Dad. “Behold, Dad didst kneel before Mom and say, ‘Wilst thou marry me?’”

Then Susan gave a message. “The Bridegroom is 6’1” and weighs 190 lbs. Every two weeks he bringeth unto us the sacred check. Oooh, he is my hot hunk of man. Amen.”

Maybe they would take an offering. Then Coleman would say, “Go now in the knowledge of Dad.” Then they all would leave.

Imagine . . . all the right words, but no heart.

Well, I think I'd miss the Daddy's Home Dance. I might say, "I don't even *know* you people! What did you do with my family? Depart from me, you workers of iniquity. Behold, I never knew you."

Sometimes people will say, "I want expository preaching," which always baffles me, because I think that's what I usually do . . . maybe not well, but it's what I set out to do. Sometimes I think people mean, "Preacher, just give me the facts: verb tenses, sentence structure, historical and contextual setting, along with the three things each passage is telling me to do. Just the *facts* . . . give me the *facts* . . . no stories, just facts."

And I want to say, "Go to the bookstore and get a commentary." But what makes you think facts are the truth any more than the notes are the music? Facts may be true, but they're not the truth. The truth is more like a story or song—the music (not just the notes).

The truth is alive.

The truth is a Spirit.

The truth is a living presence.

The truth is a person . . .

who offers you His body to eat

and His blood to drink.

His name is Jesus.

I preach because I'd like you to know Him. And He longs to dance with you.

You can *know* a car or a frog or a subject by dissecting it and taking it apart. But the best way to know person is to dance with them.

So maybe we have a problem with dancing, because we only see the notes and don't listen to the music.

You know, Queen Michal went to worship. (She was Queen of Israel.) So she knew all the notes. She publicly practiced the dance steps: sacrifices, rituals, prayers . . . practiced the steps but not to music. She didn't hear the music, so she never danced.

Maybe you see and hear, but you're afraid — afraid you'll be exposed as a bad dancer. The Dance is unrestrained love, and you think, "I can't dance like that. I don't know how, and I'm not *able*. So I won't even try."

And this is the sickest part: We call that humility. But it's arrogant pride. It's *you* choosing to stop the Great Dance with fear about *you*. Humility is you surrendered to the music, like David. *A dance*.

Actually, none of us can dance. But come to the table in faith, and the music and the Dancer are in you. Stop telling the Dancer what He can and cannot do in you. The Dance is not dependent on your ability or your knowledge, but the Dancer does wait for your surrender.

You may remember how Robin Gunn describes watching a Downs Syndrome girl dancing in the autumn leaves:

With each twist and hop she sang deep, earthy grunts—a canticle of praise meant only for the One whose breath causes the leaves to tremble from the trees. . . .

In the rearview mirror I study her one more time through misty eyes. And then the tears come. Not tears of pity for her. The tears are for me. For I am far too sophisticated to publicly shout praises to my Creator.

I am whole and intelligent and normal, and so I weep because I will never know the severe mercy that frees such a child and bids her come dance in the autumn leaves.

That's beautiful. But the last line is untrue. Jesus *is* the Severe Mercy that "frees us and bids us come dance in the autumn leaves." He came that we might die to ourselves (crucified) and live as children of God.

This spring I told you how my friend had a vision in worship of Jesus dancing through the sanctuary taking people down off crosses. What I didn't take the time to share was that in the vision there was one person who wasn't crucified. I guess that's because she was already alive. She was a mentally handicapped young woman, and Jesus came to her first and said something like this: "Sweetheart, let's take them down." And together they danced through our sanctuary taking us down off crosses and teaching us to dance.

The week I preached on the dance (in February), my friend had another vision: Lines of people filed into the sanctuary, drab and somber like medieval monks. As each one entered the door, a huge sword (the Word of God is a sword) cut their heads off.

There were angels in the sanctuary waiting to teach the headless people to dance. They began to dance (in what now looked like a ballroom) to music coming through the roof from the mouth of God. As they danced in this ballroom with Jesus in the center, their heads grew back better than before. And they were transformed as they danced.

You see, the dance wasn't dependent on their knowledge. But they received knowledge by surrendering to the dance.

That's interesting . . . because we *did* stop dancing when we took the fruit from the tree of knowledge long ago. And the Dancer *did* come that we'd die to ourselves and live to Him. And in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And He gives them to us in grace.

In the words of Gregory of Nyssa and Aram Haroutunian, "Concepts make idols. Only wonder understands." That is, only worshippers know.

Now, many of you are afraid. You're afraid that I'm gonna ask you to actually dance. You're thinking, "Peter, what is the Dance? Is it a physical dance?"

In February, we talked about the idea that the Trinity (the Godhead) is like a dance, as each member glorifies and serves the other. And the Trinity is love, God is love, and love is life.

The Dance is love and life.

Remember what C. S. Lewis wrote:

The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made.

The Dance is love and life, and when we love God, it's called *worship*.

All of our life is to be worship.
All of our life is to be a dance . . .
to the music of God's love in Christ Jesus.

And now some of you are thinking, “Oh good. The Dance is love and life and God and some philosophical gas . . . For a minute there I thought I might actually have to dance!”

You know, there comes a point when my wife needs to turn to me and say, “It’s great how you pontificate on the deep, philosophical mysteries of our covenant of love. But if you really believed it, you’d pick up your stinkin’ socks and put them in the hamper! You’d buy me some flowers! You’d take me for dinner and dancing. We’d go on a *date!*”

A worship service is like a date with Jesus.

Perhaps He’d say, “It’s great how you pontificate on the wonders of my covenant love and the Great Dance, but if you believe it, once in a while I’d expect you to sing, to laugh, to cry. I’d expect you to move something in harmony to the rhythm of my music.”

So yeah . . . maybe He does want some of us to actually sort of *dance* sometimes, as a physical expression of our love. You know, He was actually crucified as a physical expression of His love. That cross was not just some idea or philosophical gas floating in space. There was a real body hanging there. This is real bread and wine . . . body and blood. Maybe He *would* like a real dance.

But I can’t script your dance, judge your dance, or prescribe your dance.

Nowhere in the New Testament is it recorded that anyone danced a worship dance, as such. However, Jesus did teach that He piped, and the religious people wouldn’t dance. They wouldn’t move to His music.

So I can't script your dance, and I don't know what it will look like.

- At times it may look like kneeling. This is how I danced the night I proposed to Susan.
- At times it may look like hands in the air. This is how I worship at Broncos games.
- At times it may look just like David's dance.
- At times it may be tears or laughter or smiles or a song.
- At times you may be perfectly still, stunned into silence like disciples at the foot of the cross.

Whatever the case, the dance is believing God's love for you deep in your heart. And your heart is connected to your body.

I don't know what your dance will look like, but whatever it is, it won't look like distraction. It will be *communion*.

J. Vernon said, "David danced alone." That's not true. He danced with the Lord — a communion.

Sometimes Jesus weeps with you.

Sometimes He laughs with you.

Sometimes He wrestles with you.

Sometimes He just holds you.

It's all dance.

I don't know what your dance will look like, and you may not know either, even when you're dancing, for you won't be thinking of yourself; you'll be thinking of Him.

J. Vernon also said, "It wasn't a sex dance." That's true. Yet in a way, it's *not* true. David danced as priest and king for Israel,

the Israel the Lord called to be His Bride. And Scripture is clear that we're grafted in. We are "the Israel of God," we're the Bride of Christ, and we're called to bear fruit. We bear fruit when we surrender to the love of Jesus in the new and eternal covenant of His grace, communing with Him, body and blood.

A year and a half after I proposed, Susan and I entered into a covenant. We did a little dancing, and Susan bore fruit . . . *four* fruits: Jon, Beth, Becky, and Coleman.

Michal wouldn't dance.
And she was barren all her days.

In Christ, "the children of the desolate one are many more than her that is married." That is, some of the most fruitful women never have physical children . . . just like some of the very best dancers are people in wheelchairs . . . people like my dad who can barely walk.

Well, Queen Michal was barren in each way. Queen Michal wouldn't surrender to dancing with her husband and king. But David danced with *the* Husband and *the* King, and he was fruitful.

We worry about giving,
 we worry about fruit,
We worry about building the house of the Lord, and
 we need to *dance*, that is, worship.

David danced, and he started giving everything away . . . blessings, dates, raisins . . . David danced, and in the next chapter God tells David that he will bear fruit — actually a seed—a son—and of His kingdom there will be no end, and this Son will build God a house.

We are that house, the temple of the Living God, built by Jesus the Christ, Son of David, according to the covenant in His body and blood. And He is here. *Daddy's home!* The Bridegroom is present. I say that because He said He'd be here, and I believe His Word.

People like me worry about giving and bearing enough fruit and building the Lord's house. And so people like me say to the pastor, "Peter, give us the vision. What's the Lord's vision for Lookout Mountain Community Church?" I think to myself, "I don't know. I can cook up a four-year plan and some catchy slogans. That's good . . . I can do that. But I'm not sure I'd call it a *vision*."

Well, this is a vision: Two weeks ago at the start of the Saturday night service, before anybody got worked into anything that was remotely close to a frenzy, my wife, who I've grown to trust as much as anybody alive; my wife, who is not normally real articulate; my wife, who hates public shows of emotion and dancing in front of anybody including me; my wife leaned over with tears in her eyes, visibly moved, and said, "Peter, I just saw Jesus. He was dancing on our stage. Then He stopped and spoke. He said:

'Some people see me dancing, but they can't hear the music (my music). They won't dance.

'Others hear the music but they are afraid because they can't dance. They won't dance.

'Others, can hear the music and they are not afraid to dance. So they dance to my music. I seek those who hear and dance.

'Lookout Mountain Church, dance to my music.'"

How's this for music? —

On the night our Lord was betrayed, He took bread, and having given thanks He broke it saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper He took the cup and said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you drink of this cup, do it in remembrance of me. I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until I drink it with you in my Father's kingdom."

I think they do a lot of dancing in that kingdom. And Jesus said, "The kingdom is at hand."

Worship Him. I can't judge that, I can't script that, I don't know exactly what it is, but I do know it is your heart believing His Gospel, receiving Him into yourself. And if your body moves, cool!

So, Lookout Mountain Church, *dance* to His music. Amen.

[Song: "Lord of the Dance"]

Words by Sydney Carter

I danced in the morning when the world was begun
 I danced in the stars & the Moon & the Sun
 I came down from Heaven & I danced on Earth
 At Bethlehem I had my birth:

*Dance then, wherever you may be
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
 And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be*

*And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!
 (...lead you all in the Dance, said He!)*

I danced for the scribe & the pharisee
 They would not dance & they wouldn't follow me
 I danced for Peter & for James & John
 They followed me & the Dance went on:

*Dance then, wherever you may be
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
 And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be
 And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!
 (...lead you all in the Dance, said He!)*

I danced on the Sabbath & I healed the lame
 The holy people said it was a shame!
 They whipped me & stripped me & hung me high
 And left me there on a cross to die!

*Dance then, wherever you may be
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
 And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be
 And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!
 (...lead you all in the Dance, said He!)*

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black
 It's hard to dance with the devil on your back
 They buried my body & they thought I'd gone
 But I am the Dance & I still go on!

*Dance then, wherever you may be
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
 And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be
 And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!
 (...lead you all in the Dance, said He!)*

They cut me down but I leap up high
 I am the Life that will never never die!
 I'll live in you if you'll live in Me
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!

*Dance then, wherever you may be
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said He!
 And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be
 And I'll lead you all in the Dance, said He!*

This sermon is entitled, “A Vision for Our Church.” It’s not just because my wife saw some stuff a couple weeks ago. If you look on the back of your bulletin, you’ll see that’s been our vision all along. God put it in His Word. In Ephesians Paul said, “You were destined and appointed to live for the praise of His glory.”

We studied the Revelation, and there is a whole lot of singing going on there, and it doesn’t stop. That’s what you are made for. It’s also the Westminster Confession of Faith: What’s the chief end of man? — To enjoy God and glorify Him forever. Years ago we decided to put this on the back of the bulletin as the first thing we’re called to do. We’ve called it Romance of God: “In worship we respond to God’s romantic advances”

This is the kind of sermon people walk away from and do weird things with. So don’t make an idol out of one dance step.

This is a dance step [kneeling], and people make an idol out of it. Sometimes they call themselves Episcopalians.

This is a dance step [hands raised], and people make an idol out of it. Sometimes they call themselves Assembly of God or Pentecostal or Full Gospel.

This is a dance step [sitting, hands folded, scrunched up face], and people make an idol out of it. Sometimes they call themselves Presbyterians.

It's all a dance, as long as you're listening to the music. So may you surrender your heart, listen to His music, and move. In Jesus' name, amen.

Further Reading

Where there is no vision, the people perish

Proverbs 29:18a

Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful! Let Israel be glad in his Maker, let the sons of Zion rejoice in their King! Let them praise his name with dancing

Psalm 149:1-3a

Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his exceeding greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with timbrel and dance

Psalm 150:1-4a

Thus says the LORD: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the LORD appeared to him from afar. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with timbrels, and shall go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.”

Jeremiah 31:2-4

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing

Psalm 30:11a

“But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places and calling to their playmates, ‘We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; the Son of man came eating and

drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”

Matthew 11:16-19

No greater ecstasy exists outside of bowing down my soul to my Precious Abba God, My Only Father, The One who knows me fully and perfectly. Worshipping in pure unity with my Creator is how I find refuge in my only safe place. No one has ever understood my peculiar intensities and transcendent depth of being a ‘leper of sorts,’ but my Yeshua sees me as just the opposite; He sees me as I am: as a flower, as a kaleidoscope of many colors that becomes brighter in the Shekinah Glory of His presence. His unconditional acceptance inflames me to dance in a delectable freedom where I feel totally adored. Every part of my Being is enjoyed by My Creator, I am warmed by His delight as I utter groans too deep for human language unto my Yahweh. Being with Him gives me a breathtaking, unutterable Knowing and Security of my Identity. I receive an impenetrable Joy which only He transforms out of the core of my bewildered Gethsemane life. I place my pent up questions into my Papa’s Throne – as chords from the bowels of bittersweet sorrow convert into billowing hope. My Jesus meets me with a piercing simplicity to quiet me – He never takes me out of my sorrow – He touches me with His absolute purity & engulfing Holy Love. I am filled with gratitude for worship the way God intended. It isn’t simply singing a song, but a posture of life. Selah.

Carol Essa, “Worship: The Dance of Life”

The galaxies were like curtains around Him. His robe was composed of millions and millions of living stars. *Everything* in His presence was living—His throne, His crown, His scepter. I knew that I could dwell before Him forever and never cease to marvel; there was no higher purpose in the universe than to worship Him. Then the Father became intent on one thing. All

of heaven seemed to stop and watch. He was beholding the cross. The Son's love for His Father which He continued to express through all of the pain and darkness then coming upon Him touched the Father so deeply that He began to quake. When He did, heaven and earth quaked. . . . Then I was in a different place, beholding a worship service in a little church building. As sometimes happens in a prophetic experience, I just seemed to know everything about everyone in the battered little room. All were experiencing severe trials in their lives, but they were not even thinking of them here. They were not praying about their needs. They were all trying to compose songs of thanksgiving to the Lord. They were happy, and their joy was sincere. I saw heaven, and all of heaven was weeping. I then saw the Father again and knew why heaven was weeping. They were weeping because of the tears in the eyes of the Father. This little group of seemingly beaten down, struggling people had moved God so deeply that He wept. They were not tears of pain, but of joy. When I saw the love that He felt for these few worshipers, I could not contain my own tears. Nothing I had experienced gripped me more than this scene. Worshiping the Lord on earth was now more desirable to me than dwelling in all of the glory of heaven.

Rick Joyner, The Call

All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that “God is love.” But they seem not to notice that the words “God is love” have no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love. . . . And that, by the way, is perhaps the most important difference between Christianity and all other religions: that in Christianity God is not a static thing—not even a person—but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance. . . . And now, what does it all matter? It matters

more than anything else in the world. The whole dance, or drama, or pattern of this three-Personal life is to be played out in each one of us: or (putting it the other way round) each one of us has got to enter that pattern, take his place in that dance. There is no other way to the happiness for which we were made. *[These are ideas that we preached about on 2-15-03 in "Discipline to Dance."]*

C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

All pains and pleasures we have known on earth are early initiations in the movements of that dance: but the dance itself is strictly incomparable with the sufferings of this present time. As we draw nearer to its uncreated rhythm, pain and pleasure sink almost out of sight. There is joy in the dance, but it does not exist for the sake of joy. It does not even exist for the sake of good, or of love. It is Love Himself, and Good Himself, and therefore happy.

C. S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain

Some people see me dancing, but they can't hear the music (my music). They won't dance.

Others hear the music but they are afraid because they can't dance. They won't dance.

Others, can hear the music and they are not afraid to dance. So they dance to my music. I seek those who hear and dance.

Lookout Mountain Church, dance to my music.

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