

Sermon: Miriam Took Her Timbrel and Danced.

Jesus was not being complimentary toward his generation.

'You are like Sulky Children that cry we've played our penny whistle and you never danced the jig and you've not been melancholy when we have sung sad songs for you.'

The children are sulky because they feel the people they are with are not playing the game! Come on, how often have you seen it yourself, religious leaders fed up because the population are not 'up to snuff'. The general folks are not playing the game, and its not right.

I know one bloke who thinks that God would really bless the church of England if only we got the worship right. So what is holding God's blessing back is that we are not following the rules in our services. Perhaps he is right. If so then I am a particular let down because I do not quite know the rules we are supposed to be following. I would like to apologise to you all now if that is the case!!

As Christians, how do we serve others? By expecting them to come round to our way of thinking? Or by just acting lovingly and letting God deal with the thinking?

But to get back to the subject of dance.

People dance. When was the last time you danced and why?

Why did Miriam dance? Was it to celebrate a victorious escape? As in: she felt like dancing? The case seems straight forward enough.

But the people who had crossed the red sea were living lives that had undergone great change. Their flight was very stressful and they were now on the edge of a desert. Was she somehow leading the Israelites into enthusiasm for their great adventure or expressing generally felt happiness?

In a song by The Eagles are the poignant words.

“Some dance to remember, some dance to forget.”

If you are dancing a kind of 'pick-me-up' or you are dancing because you are already glad, dancing is associated with good times. Good times now here, or good times shortly to arrive.

We have sung a song: Lord of the Dance. Dancing is about life, a celebration of life. Jesus wants to lead us into dancing. He does not want to coerce us into dancing but invites us to participate. The life the Lord Jesus imparts is one of abundance.

Accordance

As Christians we rely on and use the bible, its messages, its truths, to set general standards for our lives. The bible says love your neighbour, thou shalt not steal, turn the other cheek. Coming to engage with such standards, when we have previously ignored them, is one of the first signs that God is at His Salvation work. We live in accordance with God's word.

Guidance

One of the most important experiences of the Christian Life is guidance. The sense that you are doing what Jesus wants you to do. Yes we follow general rules, e.g. love your neighbour., thou shalt not steal. But as the

christian walk progresses we should get beyond general observance and reach a place where we have a specific calling, a sense that *this* is what Jesus wants me to do specifically. Jesus' Guidance is not always comfortable. It takes you out of your comfort zone. Yet, if followed, His way leads to a more abundant life. A richer life. Richer not in the sense of being better off, richer in the sense of being more fulfilled. If your Christian walk is one in which the emphasis is just on trying to be a good person, pray for God to take you further down His Godly road of nurture.

Dependance

Beware, oh Christian, of feeling self-sufficient. The dance Jesus has for us is one which involves a partner – Jesus himself. The further you go down Holiness Road the more you will sense your own inadequacy. This is perfectly natural and exactly what Jesus wants. You see it keeps your focus on Him.

When you feel fully equal to what you have before you, your mind moves away from Christ and His values. Knowing that you need him is wonderful in its effect of making your relationship with Jesus meaningful.

Conclusion

So, our Lord of Life wants to lead us to a place where we will feel like dancing. How do we get there?

Living in Accordance with His word.

Using the Holy Bible to show us standards to which we both aspire and live.

Following His Guidance

Allowing Jesus to speak to you personally. Setting aside time to give Him a chance to speak. Looking at what He is doing with you and Listening to what He is telling you. Living out your own calling.

Living in Dependance

Following your calling even when it leads out of your comfort zone. Living in a way which make you acutely aware of your need of Jesus' help.

Abundance

As we do these things, often as part of a process of gradual change, we are drawn into real abundance.

Jesus really is Lord of the Dance.