Making Room to Dance

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It was our wedding day…
…and I was so excited!

There was something I was really looking forward to on that day…
…something that I was never really allowed to do before
- my family had a rule against it
- my church even had a rule against it… though the world did not
- my brothers and I did not understand it

They told us it was—
Forbidden
Ungodly
Worldly
You can't handle it!

But I knew, one day I would be able to…
…one day it would happen…

And that day was today.
The day Amanda and I would enter into a sacred covenant with each other before God and the witnesses present, and I was really looking forward to doing this one thing…

…I thought—
The people of God did it in the Bible
King David got away with it!
The world has done it for millennia
What's the BIG DEAL!

The Big Deal is that it is—
very special
extremely intimate
something that was meant to be sacred and holy
a righteous communion between lovers
But the world has—
twisted it
tainted it
made it an evil, what was originally intended for good
disgusting
reviling

But it is good!!

IT is = dancing.

David, as recorded in 2 Samuel, danced before the Lord while the ark of God (the very presence of the God of Israel) went into Jerusalem:

> **2 Samuel 6:13-15**
> *13 When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. 14 David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, 15 while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.*

David was dancing before the Lord

- a divine choreographed series of bodily movements which gave honor and glory and praise to the God of heaven and earth
- David danced with the Lord

His only care
His only gaze
His only desire
was to dance with God.

And yet the world,
the enemy,
the system of organized evil in the world
twists the dance

It takes the focus off of
the Designer of the Dance
the lead dance partner
the Creator
and
places it on the creation
something else
and
interrupts the divine dance

2 Samuel 6:16, 20-22

[16] 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.

[20] 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!"

[21] 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. [22] 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."

How is your divine dance before the Lord?
We all have one…
And it's personal…
Just between lovers
You… & the Lord

1) You may be absolutely free and uninhibited to dance with the Lord
   Your eyes are focused and unswerving.
   Nothing interrupts or distracts your gaze.

   — On the other hand—

2) You may be absolutely terrified and fully inhibited to dance naked and unashamed with the Lord
   Your eyes are not focused and everything interrupts and distracts
   Or you have no desire to dance at all…

   — Or —

3) You may be in between…
   You are focused
   but not focused
   uninhibited
   but inhibited
   free
   but not free

   You try so hard with all you have to dance with the Lord, but you always fail… BECAUSE MICHAL, the daughter of Saul, YELLS AT YOU!!

WHY ARE YOU DANCING?!!
NAKED?!!

DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT PEOPLE CAN SEE YOU?!!

DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT GOD CAN SEE YOU?!!

WHY ARE YOU GOING TO CHURCH?!!
IT'S SO STUPID!!
GOD DOES NOT CARE!!

I DESPISE YOU!!

So often in our lives we trade rhythm and order…
…the dance
For chaos.
And then we complain that our lives are chaotic
Or we wear it as a badge of honor

We stay busy with stuff (chaos) to prevent rhythm and order in our lives (dancing) because we are afraid of the dance…
…we are afraid of being naked and free.

Adam and Eve were naked and free. They enjoyed uninhibited, direct communion with God.
It was beautiful…
It was God's creation…
And it was good.

Genesis 1:1
In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

= rhythm / order / the dance

Genesis 1:2
Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep…

= chaos

Genesis 1:2
…and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters

= the dance is beginning… moving…

Genesis 1:3-5
3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Rhythm . Order . Dance…
Meets chaos
And God wins

Chaos becomes order…
creation…
and it is good.

Seven times it becomes "good" in the creation account

1. Light was … good
2. Land and seas … good
3. Trees and plants … good
4. Day & Night; seasons (spring, summer, fall, winter); the sun, moon, and the stars … good
5. fish in the sea and birds in the sky … good
6. land creatures and wild animals … good
7. God saw all that he had made, and it was … VERY GOOD

Seven times –
good,
good,
good,
good,
good,
good,
very good!!

Seven is the number of completion… perfection… GOD

God is rhythm / order / the divine dance
Had overcome the chaos

And Adam and Eve lived in perfect, uninhibited harmony with God and with creation.
They danced…
they were alive.

Then, another dance partner appeared on the dance floor → a serpent
The serpent wanted to "cut-in" on the divine dance.

Adam and Eve were confronted with a choice that hadn't been considered up to this point:

Who do we dance with?

Have you had to ask this question?

Who do we dance with?

Adam and Eve chose the serpent…
…and they fell into chaos

Their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked

And when their Original Dance partner came to them to dance…
they hid from HIM…

And we have been hiding from HIM ever since.

And so we enter into the predicament we find ourselves in…
We are all so busy…
We have filled our lives with stuff…

We choose quite regularly (though we are vaguely aware of it) to dance with the serpent.

And so we live in chaos.

This side of the fall of Adam & Eve, life is chaotic, hectic, "formless & empty"

And so you may be asking:

1) what are we supposed to do w/ the chaos?
2) how do we remove it from our lives?
3) does God still want to dance?
4) and if so, how do we dance amidst chaos?

Maybe there is a lack of divine dancing because we are not listening to the wisdom of the Father:

- finding order (the dance) in our lives is not removing the chaos we find ourselves in, but rather, living in harmony with the Lord amidst chaos / life

Are we dancing with circumstances (chaos)?
Or are we letting the Lord transform our circumstances?

[recap]
We been rummaging through the series "Making room for life" while Pastor Mark has been gone. Heath directed our attention to the "junk drawer" of our lives which was our clutter soul and recommended a return to rest, Sabbath. He further went on to explain the difference between hype and type. Loretta directed our posture toward stillness before the audience of One. Last week, Ben and Tim directed our bearings on simplicity over saturation.

This week we are looking at harmony with life.

Maybe, it's not about living in harmony with life,
but living in harmony with Jesus Christ.

> **Hebrews 12:1-2**
> *[1]Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. [2]Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Fix our eyes on Jesus.

Chaos reigned supreme…
Until Jesus
Formless & empty dominated people's hearts & souls…
Until Jesus

Jesus died for our chaos
Jesus conquered our emptiness
Jesus is rhythm, order, music…

The dance

1 Dancing works great… just you and the lover of your soul
that is, until someone, or something,
cuts in

Has your dance with Jesus ever been interrupted?
Have you taken your eyes off of Him?
your trust?
your faith?
your heart?

Three guys in the Bible know what this is about… but they held strong.

An idol was made, and all the people in the kingdom were commanded to bow down to it when the music was played… even those dancing with the Lord.

It was discovered that three young Yahweh followers from the renegade land of Israel, had refused to bow down to the idol. The king was furious and had the three protestors brought before him.

Daniel 3:14-15
14 and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? 15 Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

In my mind, I imagine this scene:
Three guys dancing with an unseen partner…
as the king threatens them with their lives…
without looking at the king…
but focused on their unseen dance partner…
they respond:

Daniel 3:16-18
16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. 18 But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

Their answer seems out-of-this-world, no?!!
Because it is!!
Their eyes, their gaze, are focused on Jesus!

"whether we live or die… is of no consequence… we are still going to dance with Jesus."

Furthermore, when these three courageous men were thrown in the fire, the observers on the outside took notice of a fourth man in the furnace:

Daniel 3:24-25
24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." 25 He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods."

Jesus was truly with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego.

So trust him…
Even when life tries to pull your eyes off of Jesus, that is when they need to be locked on Him the hardest.
When chaos tries to cut in—
Fix your eyes on Jesus

2 Dancing works great… just you and the lover of your soul
that is until
the song changes

Has the music of your life changed lately?
Have you tried to tune in to your favorite frequency, only to be divinely foiled by a tune-change?

Life or circumstances may change the tune because that is life—sometimes

—or maybe—

God has changed the tune… why?
I don't know…
maybe to change you

Harmony is not trying to get life back in order
But harmony is in choosing Jesus…
to dance with Him
even in spite of circumstances

[story]
Not too long ago I was back in my office working feverishly on multiple projects. I was behind the 8-ball on a couple of things… So I was focused… ordered… dancing to my own chosen song… But then the music changed…
Lois Drown came into my office and mentioned that the copier was jammed in the Main Office and both secretaries were out of the office… could I help?
"Sure" I responded with my mouth. But that was far from what my heart was saying:
"Don't they understand my situation?"
"This is interrupting my order?"
And as I was walking down the hallway to the main office, I realized that the song had changed,
…and that was okay
I remembered that I needed to consciously choose to dance with Jesus when the song changes.
And so, Deb Wald's copier problem in the Main Office became a divine dance appointment, rather than a divine dance disappointment.

But someone may cry: "That is a small example! What about the BIG ones, the ones that I am going through!"

Like:
…when a loved one dies unexpectedly?
…when a much needed raise or job is lost?
…when your health deteriorates radically?
…when your children are out-of-control and no one seems to care?

Life sets the mood… just like music does… it sets the season of life:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

[1] There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under heaven:

[2] a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,

[3] a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,

[4] a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,

[5] a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain,

[6] a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,

[7] a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,

[8] a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

[11] He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

There is a time for everything…
…and we will not always be able to understand it…

Ecclesiastes 7:14
[14] When times are good, be happy;
but when times are bad, consider:
God has made the one
as well as the other.

I think maybe this is true:

God is more concerned with my character than with my comfort; His goal is not to pamper us physically, but to perfect us spiritually. [repeat]

We try so hard to control our own circumstances, to order our own lives. We take God's role over because we believe we understand more and can handle things better. We try to take the lead in the dance… instead of being led. We force our dance moves in order to lead.

[story]

My wife and I were painting filing cabinets to go in our office in our soon-to-be-own-home (tomorrow!). We had seen this really neat design in a Pottery Barn magazine but did not want to pay $250 for a one two-drawer cabinet… so we bought $30 ones from Shopko with plans to make them like the Pottery Barn ones.
We used primer first as a base, then we painted with creamy white paint to achieve the desired effect… it worked!!
But we ran out of paint…
I ran back to Wal-Mart to pick up a couple more spray cans but I did not bring the original cap with me. I just grabbed a couple of cans that I thought were the right ones…
Yep… you figured it out… after spraying the top of one of the cabinets; we realized it was the wrong color…

I was so frustrated!

Why had I gotten the wrong ones?!
I don't make mistakes like this!
This is frustrating…
While we were driving back over to Wal-Mart, my wife Amanda is laughing at me saying this: "I love it when you make mistakes, Jeremy. It reminds you that you are not perfect."
Ouch.
That hurt.
But she was right.

I try so hard to control the music of my dance with Jesus and life.

This station is programmed #1 on my presets. Whenever the threat of a change or losing control, I try to push the #1 button…

I try to maintain my own perfection…
but I cannot do that…
and neither can you…

That is not the dance

We must follow… …He must lead.

No matter the song…
No matter the circumstances…
No matter who or what is trying to interrupt or cut-in…
No matter what chaos or rhythm is going on…

We must follow… …He must lead.

So how is your divine dance with Jesus?
Does it get crowded out with life… circumstances… chaos?
Are your eyes fixed on Jesus?

[back to story with wedding dance]
So there I was on my wedding day with my beautiful bride beside me who I loved dearly. We had already been announced in the reception hall and eaten dinner with friends and family.
It was time.
The stage was set, the lights lowered, the song began…
…and we danced.

It was electric! My eyes were fixed on hers. NO ONE, I repeat, NO ONE, was going to cut-in… and she let me lead☺

And we danced…
…the first of many since then and hopefully many more to come.

Do you know Jesus Christ?
Did you know that his Father (our Father) loved us so…?
that he led his one and only son, Jesus, to the cross, his death?
but then drank in Easter morning?
Jesus Christ was alive!

He conquered death…
So that we could have life in him name
So that we could dance

For those of you who do not know Jesus as your Savior…
believe in him and you will have life.
Dance with Jesus life the 1st time I danced with my bride.

For those of you who are *making room for life* amidst chaos & circumstances
Dance with Jesus always…
And remember (like I did) the 1st time you danced

For in the divine dance with Jesus we find harmony
because our eyes are fixed on him.

Let's pray.