



Come Dance with Me

Brian Johnson

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Preface

Ballroom dancing has made me realise I have a great skill for treading on peoples toes for which I apologise. However, it has also taught me that not all occasions are necessarily my fault. In ballroom dancing if the follower has their toes trodden on it is because their feet were in the wrong place! If in this book I tread on a few toes please check how you are walking and where your feet are before shouting!

I must quickly add that I do not deliberately tread on peoples toes. My desire is to lead people into a deeper walk with God and for you to know His love and intimacy more and more.

This leads me to thank the many (including Richard, my dance teacher) who have danced patiently with me as I have learnt. Also Lindsey Thompson for thoroughly checking and proof reading the book, and my wife, Gill for her support, encouragement and helpful discussions.

Without the input of all the above I'm sure there would have been little opportunity for the Lord to say, "Come, dance with me".

Comments

In a simple and very entertaining way, Brian has demonstrated throughout this book how to know God and have a closer walk with Him.

Through the analogy of 'dancing' Brian shows that in order to know God we must be like a dancing partner who is led. We need to submit to His leading, letting Him guide our steps without struggling to do our own thing.

In order to go deeper into God we need to 'dance close together', meaning we need to develop our relationship with Him through prayer and knowing His word, so we become more sensitive to His moves. We must trust Him to lead us so we can help to bring His plans to fruition in ourselves and others.

This is a delightful little book, easy to read and with a wealth of teaching for new and mature Christians alike.

Lindsey Thompson. Lighthouse and Teenage Group Co-ordinator Coton Green Church.

Thank you Brian for allowing me to read this book. I never really liked the Christian song 'Lord of the dance' before but now this line especially makes perfect sense to me. *"Dance, dance, wherever you may be. I am the Lord of the dance, said He. I'll live in you if you'll live in me. I'll lead you all in the dance, said He"*.

Most people talk about their walk with God but dancing with Him is a much better analogy. If you walk with someone there is not necessarily much interaction but dancing with someone is different. If we let God lead us in the dance and guide our steps, it becomes beautiful. If we move the way He moves and go the way He goes other people will admire the beauty and want to dance with God too.

Thank you again Brian. I shall not refer to 'my walk with the Lord' any more. From now on I am going to try to 'dance' with Him.

Thelma Cameron

Hi Brian,

It was good to hear from you and to discuss your latest booklet: Come Dance With Me.

It has an intriguing theme and it makes you want to read on, especially in a Christian context. The development of the analogies with the Christian life will make for good group discussion and no doubt some smiles occasionally!

Although you tend to stress the idea of dancing with a single partner especially when 'dancing with God', you could also raise the challenge of dancing with other partners in terms of Christians joining with those from other churches in mission or prayer - this can prove quite stimulating as well as challenging.

In chapter 3 concerning 'awe and wonder' you might like to note how many scientists who are also Christian find their explorations/investigations create a sense of awe and wonder which invigorates their belief in a Creator and underlies their worship.

We discussed your ongoing endeavours to publish more widely your booklets or to bring some of them together in a book suitable for home/cell groups or individual Quiet Times. I would encourage you in this direction.

Every blessing and prayer for your ongoing writing ministry.

Dr Richard Massey, Former Principal of Birmingham Christian College.

Brian Johnson paints a beautiful picture through well-chosen words and humorous illustrations of our relationship with Jesus. Likening this to the dance with the goal to stay in step as we respond sensitively and remain connected to the lead given by our dancing partner - in this case, the Lord Jesus. Brian's experiences of learning to ballroom dance provide a light hearted back cloth to a deep spiritual truth for our Journey of Life.

A most readable book which I commend to dancers and non-dancers alike.

Jan Dyer

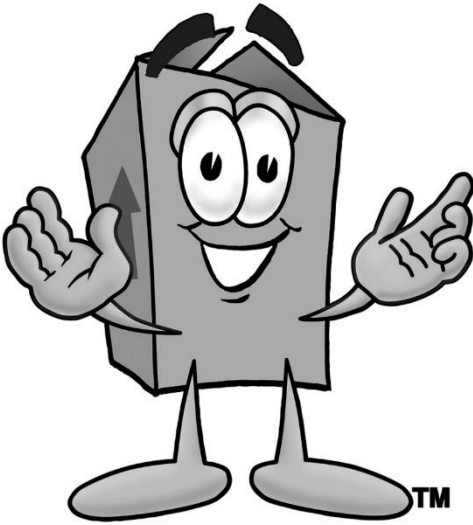
International Christian Dance Fellowship

Joint-Coordinator

When we had dance lessons a few years ago our instructor would glide around the village hall proclaiming, '*It helps if you smile.*' In response I would pretend to lead my wife whilst listening to her whispered instructions, all the time my face set with a fixed, demented smile. Comparing my competence to Judith's I am reminded of the old aphorism said of Ginger Rogers, she who danced with Fred Astaire; '*She did it backwards AND in high heels.*' Unlike Brian, my waltzing career never quite blossomed. But it is wonderful to read here of God's invitation to us. And more so, that it comes not dependent on our sense of rhythm or dance floor skill set. However far back we look historically and seemingly in all cultures found around the world, dance appears to have been and to be a key aspect of humanity's expressiveness. Brian's analogy of God's invitation for us to dance with Him draws on many diverse examples, from personal experience on the dancefloor to genetics, navigation and astronomy. Whether you are a '*Strictly Come Dancing*' fan or not, there is plenty here to engage.

Bruce Ackers, Elder at Coton Green Church

Introduction



Shall I reveal my deepest feelings and fears, as I went through the process of learning to dance at different times in my life? Well, alright, I suppose confession is good for the soul. Where to begin? Probably around the age of twelve to thirteen. A new maths teacher from Scotland started an after school Scottish dance club.

Bear in mind I was an only child living in remote farming areas with no-one to play with... ahh. At that point I had been to about eight schools because my parents were continually moving. I did not relate easily to others in a group but was fine one to one. I joined the dance group and in the early days it was terrible, constantly being the classroom clown. "No, Johno! Not like that!" was an oft repeated phrase. Rather than shrivel with humiliation, I put on a bold act which frustrated the teacher even more. But then one day things clicked and my dancing went from strength to strength. The rhythm and movements flowed and I, the loner, became part of the team that went and gave public demos in the town. I think this light bulb experience did puzzle me, but I was so glad that I just accepted it without too much thought as to how it could possibly have happened.

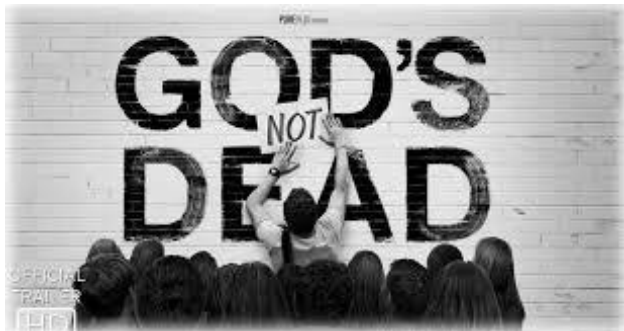
So roll forward three or four years to the Friday night youth club. Bill Haley and the Comets had a hit song "Rock around the clock".

Some of the teenagers were jiving like the people in the film named after the song. I tried a few times with different girls, none of whom would dance with me a second time (I really don't know why!). Finally I found a girl who was happy to dance with me, probably because no-one else would dance with her either, as she was rather shy. We developed our own style of jive that some thought was good, but others thought stupid because it was not as they danced in the film.

Apart from a "thank God for a good dinner" after a meal which my parents taught me to say, I had absolutely no concept of God. As a family we seldom went to church. Now the girl I was dancing with was a church-goer. I tagged along and took interest but was very sceptical. My scepticism led me to visit other churches, none of which inspired me.

Finally, in my teenage arrogance I worked it all out. The concept of God was a crutch for the weak-minded. Science could explain how things worked and developed, so the fact that we hadn't figured out how it all began was just another puzzle that would eventually be discovered, but it wasn't God.

At school I shared my belief with others and a classmate "reported" me. "Please, sir, Johnson does not believe in God." I was asked to



come out to the front of the class and explain my beliefs. This was my first experience of public speaking. At the end, Mr Davis said in his

Welsh accent, “Well, Johnno, you’ve obviously given it some thought. Maybe one day, you’ll be an evangelist!”

After a number of years I mellowed from an atheist to an agnostic. A lot of time was spent at sea on board ship; no girls, therefore no dancing! I had a girlfriend at one point but we never went to dances apart from the occasional Village Hall barn dance. Then I joined a ship for a three week trip that turned into a two year voyage. I came home at the age of twenty three, having spent part of that time in Cuba ninety miles from the US coast picking up their radio stations. That’s how I heard of the assassination of JFK, one of the more notable events of the early 60s.

The world had changed in my two year absence and I, not fully realising that, decided to go to a dance. After half an hour I thought I was on the wrong planet. As well as the world, music had also changed dramatically. Some group called the Beatles wearing suits had replaced the old rock ‘n’ roll groups. The dancing was more disconnected, hardly even holding hands, but there were still defined steps. I tried for a few minutes and failed to pick up what others had been doing for years, so gave up and walked away. Later in life I realised that the dancing reflected society. Rather than moving together, people were a law unto themselves doing their own thing. Communication and coordination were lost or not needed. Both were dancing their own thing, rather like two people talking at each other at the same time, neither listening to the other.

A few more years rolled by and having reached the stage of disillusionment I reluctantly went with a friend and his girlfriend on a blind date. I met a girl, and within ten minutes, I knew she was the one for me! Ten months later, we were engaged; ten months

more and we were married, and after another ten months came the first of seven children, including the twins who died at birth. Between our first child and the twins, I became a Christian. This is described more fully in my first book, 'What! Speak through me?' Life as a family man was quite full. From then on, it was only at the odd wedding where my wife and I attempted to dance, but we just ended up treading on each other's toes. It did, however, stir in me a desire to one day learn ballroom dancing.



Finally that day arrived, sadly, not during the lifetime of my first wife. More years had rolled by and finally Ronnie died of cancer and then I remarried, to Gill. One day I mentioned how it would be nice to learn ballroom dancing and Gill, noting the size of my waist, agreed. A little later, Gill saw an ad for a Groupon voucher for ballroom dancing; the offer was irresistible. At last, now in my seventies, the time had come for me to learn to dance with my wife!

The first night arrived. We discovered that the whole group had come with their Groupon vouchers. So at least we were all at the same level. We started with a waltz, doing a box step. Forward, side, together. Back, side, together. We did this for a few minutes then the bomb dropped. Richard, our teacher, said, "Change partners". My head was

panicking! “What? I’ve got to dance with someone else?” The whole point, in my mind, was to go somewhere WITH MY WIFE and learn to dance WITH MY WIFE! I didn’t want to stumble round the floor with a lady I didn’t know!

So how did it go? Forward, hop, stumble; back, stumble, hop. I struggled with an unknown lady in my arms for a few minutes. Then just as I was beginning to get it right, Richard shouted out, “Change partners!” The saga started again. Each lady was a different challenge; some timidly struggling, others boldly stepping where this man had never stepped before. This continued for the rest of the hour; a different lady in my arms every few minutes. Some I danced with two or three times, but not Gill. Where was she? The end came. At this point, it was free for all to dance with whoever they chose before going home. Now at last, I would get the chance to dance with Gill ... but not before someone else got in first!!

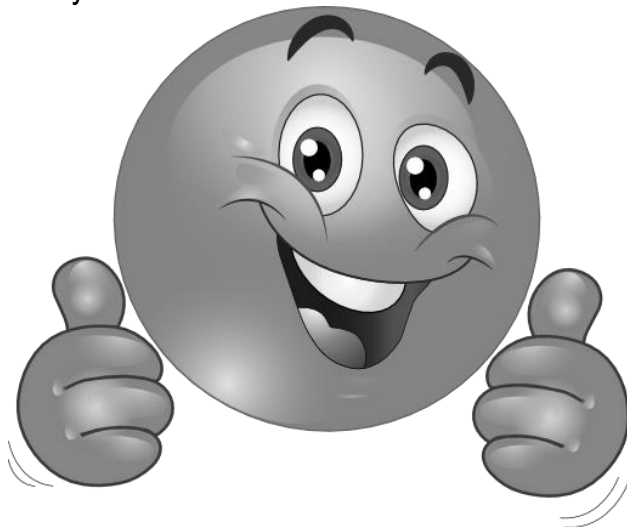
So that was the first night, going home with a very mixed bag of feelings. I was apprehensive about dancing with others because for all my desire and interest, somehow I did not learn easily. I felt embarrassed about this and every wrong step made me think that my partner must be inwardly groaning. That is why I preferred to dance with Gill, because at least she understood and helped me, and others would be spared the agony of dancing with me.

We continued going every week, and later in the year we started to have private lessons as well, which was very good - mainly because I could go at my own pace repeating the difficult moves. Also, as a bonus, I got to dance with Gill ALL THE TIME. Every week, during the drive there, we would pray for the ability to learn and memorise the steps and be able to move in time with the

music. Gill was concerned for me, thinking I would want to give up altogether. In fact, on one occasion she struggled, having had very little sleep the night before, and a bad day at work. She kept making mistakes and said if she had felt like that every week, as I did, she would have given up long ago.

Strangely I did not want to give up; (there is a thin line between determination and stubbornness) but my hope was in God. He had done so many amazing things in my life, that to give me the ability to do ballroom dancing as He had done with Scottish-dancing, was nothing too difficult or impossible for God. I also knew that nothing is lost in God's economy. I knew that even in my weakness or inability, He could show His strength and at this stage I certainly needed it! *2Cor 12:9 But He said to me, "my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."* (NIV)

I did, however, realise that I was relying on Gill too much. She was leading me, trying to prevent me fouling up. This was wrong. I should lead and she should follow. We continued to pray about it. Every week I had a mixture of fear and concern that I wouldn't be



able to retain the moves in my memory and would end up spoiling it for others who wanted to enjoy the dancing.

Over time, some couples dropped out, but now the remaining couples

were becoming friends, helping and supporting each other. Richard's plan was working. He always maintained that dancing with other partners was helpful during the learning process. Grudgingly I agreed and now after a couple of years I feel I'm on the first rung of the ladder. We did spend weeks at first learning the foxtrot because I was so slow. One of the things that frustrated me was when Richard showed a number of ways not to do it before showing the one right way to do it. I know for some that was helpful; for me all I wanted to focus on was the one right way. However, at my son's wedding we had the pleasure of teaching some of the young people the Cha-cha. When my granddaughter saw us dancing the quick step and said, "Nice moves granddad", it made it all worthwhile!

Gill and I get the odd occasion to do a few "nice moves" publicly which we thoroughly enjoy. It has not totally clicked yet like the Scottish dancing did but I'm getting there. Although it is obviously a physical and social activity, I am beginning to see a number of spiritual connections, especially since praying about it and after a 'wow' moment I had one day which made me see dancing in another light ... but more of that later.

Chapter 1

“Come, dance with Me”



If you have ever watched “Strictly”, I would say I am on a par with the competitors that go out in the early weeks; Gill, however, is quite competent. As previously mentioned, before every group class and private lesson, Gill and I find ourselves praying for divine help that I will understand, retain and be able to execute what I am being taught without looking like one of the three stooges!

One thing that has been impressed upon me is the need to be sensitive or connected with your partner. This is so that you both can anticipate what the other is going to do. From each position there are only certain moves that are possible, and by default other moves that are not. If a follower gets their toes trodden on, it is not the leader’s fault; it’s the follower’s mistake because they were doing their own thing instead of following the leader.

Our teacher demonstrated this one day. He told me to do a series of figures with him and it went brilliantly. I even found myself doing figures I didn’t think I could do. Then he asked me to do the same again but this time he was not going to guide or lead but just respond to my moves. It was terrible! The whole thing fell to pieces

within a few steps. For me it was like dancing with a dead fish. There was absolutely no connection between us, I had been relying too much on my partner to guide me which was not right. I felt completely lost.

Immediately after experiencing that, the most amazing 'wow' thing happened! From deep, deep down inside me, I felt God say, "Come, dance with Me. I'll be your partner. I'll guide you." "What! Dance with You Lord?" "Yes, dance with Me. Let My Spirit guide your every step." Then various scriptures from the Bible came to mind (they often do when the Holy Spirit wants to show me something) *Ps 37:23 -24 The steps of a man are established by the Lord, And He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the Lord is the One who holds his hand.*

I soon realised He was not referring just to ballroom dancing, but something on a spiritual parallel. I was still dancing in a very ritualistic manner, by which I mean a limited repetitive style, excluding any move that was not part of a pre-set list of moves. For instance, there are certain moves that follow each other because I know they connect and fit the music. I also needed a clear floor so as not to crash into others!

However, if you watch a skilled couple, the leader glides effortlessly around the floor guiding his partner amongst the other dancers without colliding into them, and executing the steps perfectly as well as choosing figures that can readily follow on from each other. The follower trusts the leader because they know, from experience, that he will make all the right moves, keep time with the music and flow from one move to another seamlessly - like poetry in motion.

Sadly some Christians act and live like I danced. They follow a ritualistic style; keeping to a rigid structure of code and conduct. They constantly force themselves to do what they think is the “right thing” and if someone gets in their way, they come to a grinding halt, smile and seethe beneath the surface with self-righteous indignation.

From the little dancing I have grasped, there is a great satisfaction when the two of you are moving smoothly round the floor together, connected and coordinated, each knowing what the other is doing and responding accordingly. The sense of togetherness, of being in harmony, is deeply gratifying.

This is totally different to going round the floor with someone shouting out the moves as in a barn dance. God wants to swing you round and doe-si-doe with you rather than shout it out from the



other side of the universe. He wants to hold you in His arms, look into your eyes and say, “Come, dance with Me, I will guide your every move. With Me, you will not trip up or fall because I *AM the One who holds your hand* and if you lose focus or do tread on My toes, I promise to forgive you even as you are saying sorry.”

“So what is the first move?”

“Where did John the Baptist begin? Remember when the crowds went out to hear him preach, what was his message?”

“Oh no, that was harsh, I thought this was going to be fun, just you and me dancing together.”

“So what did John teach them” “*Matt 3:2 Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” “And what does repent mean?”

“Well it means you’re going in completely the wrong way; you need to do a 180 degree turn and go in the opposite direction. But I don’t think everything I do is bad; most of what I do is good. So why do I need to repent?”

“Because you only see repentance in one context; that is turning from what you see as bad, to good, rather than from wrong to right.”

“What’s the difference?”

“If I told you to go to London to teach the people about Me and you got on the train to Scotland to teach them, you are going in the wrong direction to supposedly do a good thing, (rather like Jonah). You need to get off the train and repent, (turn around) and go in the opposite direction. John said to repent because *the kingdom of heaven is at hand*. You piously pray (*Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*). Do you want to come under the protection of My kingdom and My rule or are you going to struggle with life on your own? *John 10:10 I came that they (you included) may have life, and have it abundantly*. So, do you want My life and the freedom that can be found under My rule, or not? The choice is yours; you have freewill. *Deut 30:19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live,*”

“OK Lord, I’m sorry. So where do we start?” “I AM the leader, you are the follower. Step back with your right foot as I come

forward with My left foot. Now you go back another step this time landing on your left heel as I go around you with my right foot. This will allow you to effortlessly spin anti-clockwise 180 degrees on your left heel with My support. Continue with a right then left stepping forward following Me.”

“I know that movement. It’s called the “reverse turn check.” (Or 1 to 4 of a reverse wave.) “Yes, and see, with my support, how easy it was to repent or do the 180 degree turn. The more you dance with Me and learn the moves, although I AM leading, you will be sensitive and aware, ahead of time, of the options available. Just don’t get ahead of me - you may get your toes trodden on!”

“Yes Lord, I understand. You are never wrong, so it would be my fault. I will trust you to guide me and try not do my own thing because... *Heb13:5 “I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.* I will always be there for you. Sometimes like in the above, you have to go backwards before you can go forwards, but with me, even when you go backwards you are still going in the right direction.

“As you dance with Me, you will get to know Me better: My strengths, My skills, My power, My wisdom and knowledge but most of all My great love that I have for you. The closer you focus on Me, the more I will share My abundant riches with you. Come, dance with me; the whole of creation is My ballroom and even the stars dance in time to my command.”

Chapter 2

Who are you dancing with?

We have just seen how I went from physical dancing with someone to the recognition of “dancing” in a spiritual context. Before accepting God as my “spiritual dance partner”, I had tried other “dance partners”: atheism, agnosticism, study advancement, finance ... the list goes on. But ultimately, none brought the satisfaction that God did.

Dancing together with someone requires co-ordination. This comes in a number of ways. One way is to know how to dance a certain set of steps and you both follow those set steps. The other way is to know your partner and follow them because, if they are good, their movement guides you step by step. When I followed Richard, it felt like I knew the steps even when I didn't. To dance with God is a combination of the two.



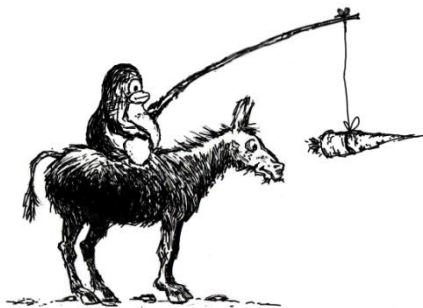
The standard steps can be learnt from the Bible, *Deut 5:16-21* 'Honour your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the Lord your God gives you.' 'You shall not murder.' 'You

shall not commit adultery. 'You shall not steal.' 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.' 'You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, and you shall not desire your neighbour's house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his

donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbour. ' These are just a few basic steps; but the more familiar you become with the basic steps, the better you are when He takes you into some unknown steps. You have a framework to move within.

So moving onto a more spiritual level, are you satisfied with your “dance partner”? In fact, who *are* you “dancing” with? Dancing is a fairly intimate activity. Look at how “Strictly” has developed over the years. Some might say it has become uncomfortably or even unwisely intimate for a couple who are not man and wife. This also prompts another question: “How intimate do you *want* to be with the partner you choose”? Do you want your partner at arm’s length or very close?

Drawing a parallel to dancing, most of us have lifestyles and attitudes where we have “danced” with different or even multiple partners throughout our lives, changing back and forth from time to time. We have involved ourselves in various activities: business, finance, family, work, adventure, charities etc. Some “partners” or activities bring fulfilment, others bring frustration, so we eventually disconnect, if that is possible. Sometimes we become prisoner to



the partners we unwisely chose. At first they seemed very attractive but then, as we get involved, we see the other side and realise we’ve made a mistake. Some activities promise great satisfaction but you end up feeling like the

donkey who has a carrot on a stick about a foot away from its mouth.

Sadly every mistake leaves a mark or injury. This doesn't always manifest itself straightaway, but later, when you choose another partner, you find history keeps blocking progress because of fear of making the same mistake again. Some of us know that what we are experiencing does not bring total fulfilment but is better than some of the partners we've had, so we stick with what we've got.

Also there is our inner inheritance that is passed down to us from our parents and grandparents - *Deut 5:9 visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, and on the third and the fourth generations*. You may say, "I'm my own person; what they were has nothing to do with me". Sorry, but it does; if your grandfather died at the age of three you wouldn't exist.

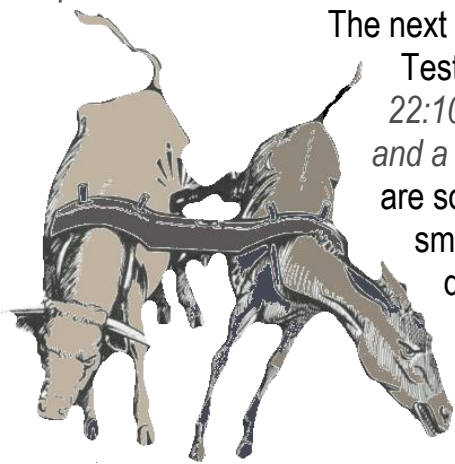
Not only do we inherit our ancestors' looks, there is also a whole host of personality traits. DNA can physically trace our ancestry, our physical make-up, but there is also a spiritual DNA that is passed down which we will look at later. For now, let us focus on who we are dancing with and why.

How we dance depends upon at least two things: what kind of dance it is and how we relate to our partner. A couple who enjoy each other's company may dance well together in an open dance but feel uncomfortable in a slower more intimate movement, unless they both want a more intimate relationship. It can be the same with God. There may be activities which we dance with but only to a certain level of intimacy or involvement. For instance work: it can be gratifying for thirty-five hours a week because it still gives time to "dance" with the family. However, the person who does not have a family can happily put in seventy hours a week and reap the rewards. Another partner is religion: one hour on a Sunday is fine;

it gives a sense of connecting and recognising God without being too involved and interrupting our personal lives.

Very few of us are absolute loners. We tend to want human contact and relationship, but two people with contrasting “dance partners” or involvements are unlikely to dance well together. The Bible wisely advises Christians not to marry unbelievers. It gives examples of unequal yoking.

ESV 2Cor 6:14-16 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial (Satan or a worthless person)? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God;



The next section is taken from the Old Testament where it states in *Deut 22:10 You shall not plough with an ox and a donkey (yoked) together*. They are so different. The donkey, being smaller, takes shorter steps so doesn't pull together as an equal with the ox. Because of the different type of food the donkey eats, the ox can't stand the smell of the donkey's breath and so

tries to pull away making it difficult to control their direction. I remember being on the control bridge of a ship in the Arctic Circle when the watch changed and a seaman came to replace the man at the wheel (helm). Within minutes the whole wheelhouse area stank of garlic! He must have eaten loads of it in his dinner before coming on watch. I ended up going outside in the freezing cold on

the wing of the bridge for the rest of my watch because I couldn't stand the smell!

Why voluntarily be joined intimately with something or someone you are in constant conflict with? The donkey's breath is not just offensive to the ox but actually poisonous; if kept together for prolonged periods, it leads to illness then to death. Maybe now the seemingly harsh scripture in Deuteronomy is not so harsh but wise and helpful. *Deut 30:19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live,"*

We need to recognise the choice between life and death. It is rather like the ox breathing the poisonous breath of the donkey: if prolonged, illness leads to death. But take note, it doesn't happen instantly. Adam and Eve made bad choices and eventually, many years later, they died. God's plan was, that being created in His image, they would live forever. Bad choices can have a devastating effect on our lives, but we don't have to check every option by trial and error!



Beyond the mind and the intellect, we have a spirit which can guide us in our choices; if we submit our spirit to God, He, by His Spirit, will reveal the right promptings. His Spirit can partner with our spirit. As that relationship grows stronger, other (not so beneficial) "dance partners" begin to take a back seat and eventually fade away. We still have freedom of

choice but God in His love makes a way of escape.

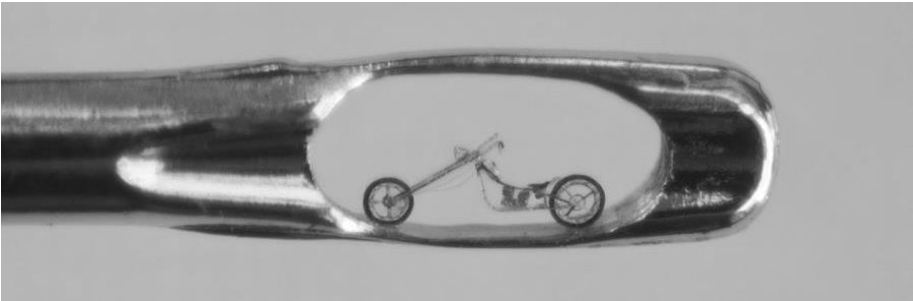
So who are you dancing with? Is the relationship just convenient? Do you find total fulfilment with your partner or is it OK to a limited level of intimacy? You know that the more you submit to something, the more you can gain from it, but are you fearful of losing control? Do you want the satisfaction of total intimacy but are cautious for fear of being trapped in a situation you believe you can't escape from? There are a number of "dance" activities that I am involved with, including ballroom dancing, but my main "dance partner" is God and He is showing me so many spiritual parallels to these other activities.

Chapter 3

Awesome moves

“Nice moves, Granddad!” Oh, it did feel so good to hear my granddaughter say that! The times stumbling round the floor trying to learn the steps and feeling stupid at every mistake just faded away. No longer were they stumbling steps but “nice moves”. Gill felt proud of her double left-footed husband as we showed the family our “nice moves”. But if you think you can make some ‘nice moves’, consider some of the truly awesome moves that God makes constantly and He is saying to you, “Come, dance, do some nice moves with Me. I’m an awesome creative mover!”

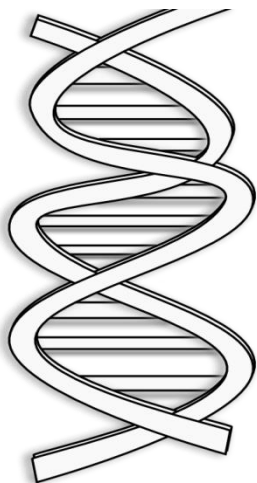
Willard Wigan creates some amazingly small sculptures that sit within the eye of a needle or some on the head of a pin. The only way you can see them is through a microscope. Our Father is a



creator and made us in His image. We all, like Willard, have something of His creativity whether we recognise Him or not.

God created bacterial cells which come in different shapes and sizes but are about ten times smaller than a human or eukaryotic cell. So are human cells big? Well, let's say we can get four and a half million in every cubic millimetre. So there are probably five to ten million in the eye of a needle, depending upon the size of the

needle. There are more cells in the human body than all the stars in the Milky Way galaxy.



The comparison of a flea on an elephant may come near to the comparison of a human cell on one of Willard's sculpture. If a human cell was an oxo cube, Willard's sculptures would be five cubic metres.

Some years ago I was doing a lot of technical drawings on a computer. The programme had the ability to scale selected parts of the drawing larger or smaller. Out of interest I scaled a copy of a whole A1 drawing down to the size of a full stop which I placed at the end of the title. Looking at the print-out, you would never have guessed how much data was reduced to the size of a full stop.

Yet compared to the data in two human cells, (that is two out of the five million in the eye of a small needle), it is nothing. A male and a female cell have all the data in the DNA needed to make a unique human being with a unique fingerprint design right down to the colour of the eyes and the hair.

Talking of DNA, each cell has coiled up within itself two metres of data containing three billion characters to describe the individual. It would take over a lifetime to read the whole stream of data. If the DNA of all the cells in the human body were uncoiled and laid end to end you would be able to reach the moon and back 6,000 times.

I find this totally awesome but it kind of confirms that behind the design is an amazing Designer and Engineer; which is a lot easier to accept than the idea that it all just “happened” randomly by accident. I believe that requires far more blind faith than to face up to the facts and accept that behind all of creation, there is a Creator. The first ten words of the bible say it all: *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*(Gen 1:1)

A simple statement, yet creation is complex, amazing, coordinated, balanced and stunning. Nice moves, Father! So we have looked at small; how about big?

Our Sun is a million times bigger than the Earth. If the Earth were a golf ball, the Sun would be a ball five metres in diameter. We orbit the Sun once every year. Our axis creates different seasons for us throughout the orbit. There are other planets orbiting our Sun with



their own moons similar to Earth, all like dancers on a dance floor. They gracefully spin and orbit without colliding. Again, nice moves, Father! Twinkle, twinkle, great big star, I wonder just how big you are. We look up at night and see the stars. Many formations we recognise and have given names to.

In the constellation of Orion, at the top left, is a slightly pink star (sun) called Betelgeuse. For us at our distance it looks

like a small speck, but it isn't. The radius alone is 820.7 million km or over two thousand times the distance from Earth to our moon.

Our Sun is like a very small dot on a very large orange by comparison. If the Earth were a golf ball on the New York pavement, Betelgeuse would be six times taller than the Empire State Building.

There are bigger ones, much bigger; Betelgeuse is only the ninth brightest star in the heavens. But let us pause for a minute. If you think that is big, how about this? *Ps 33:6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.* (The host being all the stars in the sky). He just breathed them out. Suns like Betelgeuse, planets, moons and whatever else. Imagine eating a dry biscuit, breathing in and one of the crumbs goes down the wrong way, so you cough! That's the nearest I can get to visualising the stars coming out of God's mouth. As they go out, they get into groups with moons orbiting planets and planets orbiting suns.

Then they reach their designated position with all their gravitational forces in balance with one another! Really awesome moves Father! Have another biscuit and think about it ... just don't cough until you've worked out where each crumb is going to end up!! Then decide if this could possibly have happened by accident.

You might be thinking; 'How can I possibly relate to intelligence so awesome?' He can breathe out massive Suns from His mouth like we might do with biscuit crumbs if we coughed. Not only did He breathe them out but He named them one by one, million by million. *Ps 147:4 He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them.* The angels knew the awesomeness of God

and His creation. *Heb 2:5-6 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. 6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, " What is man, that You remember him? What is man, the angel said, compared to the whole universe that you have such consideration for him? Man is just like one of Willard Wigan's sculptures compared to the rest of creation. We could easily think we are less than an ant or even a single bacterium compared to creation. Yet when He created us, the same Father who breathed out Betelgeuse, and a whole lot more, with one breath, said, Gen 1:26-27 "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

In His own image He created us. Wow! Did He have to say that three times? Well just to make it clear that He DID create us in His own image. But if He is that awesome and is everywhere and intelligent, how can we relate to Him when we struggle to relate to another human being who has advanced a few blocks ahead of us? Well He has an amazing plan which is coming together day by day within us. I can see Him, with a grin on His face, saying, "I love it when a plan comes together". So what is this plan? Does it involve all of us? Will we like it? Does He want us to move with Him? Oh yes! Our Father really plans to make some **awesome** moves with us and for us!

Chapter 4

"I love it when a plan comes together"

"I love it when a plan comes together!" This will either bring a smile to your face or a look of puzzlement depending on whether you remember the TV series and the film 'The "A" Team'. They so remind me of the Church! A real collection of dysfunctional



characters, yet with Hannibal in control, like Jesus, it all works out fine. Then Hannibal, with a big grin on his face and an even bigger cigar in the corner of his mouth, would say, "I love it when a plan comes together".

Looking at history unfolding, all according to His plan, even with the inevitable setbacks caused by human greed and selfishness, God is sat there, something like Hannibal, big grin (but probably no cigar!) looking at his disciples on Earth saying, "I LOVE IT WHEN A PLAN COMES TOGETHER!"

So what is this plan? We have looked at some of the diversities in the physical realm from micro to macro but we have hardly considered if there is a spiritual realm. This is generally more accepted outside the Western (or Developing) World. Here in the West, where we have spearheaded advances in knowledge of how the physical realm works, we are blind to, and often reject, spiritual concepts (see my book "The Flatland Escape").

The Bible frequently mentions the fact that we have a spirit, (actually some would say we are spirit beings with a body and soul), that there are spiritual beings (angels), also that God IS Spirit. There is also mention of a spiritual realm and, because we have a spirit or are spirit beings, we are part of that realm and can access it through our spirit. If I said to you, picture two mountains with a valley in between, then picture a river in the valley with trees on either side, most of us would be able to create some kind of picture in our minds. Most of us ... except, sadly, someone born blind. Many of us are blind in the area of spiritual things; we need to be spiritually born again.

Revelation is not academic learning, valuable as that can be. In academic learning, we need a starting point, something we can relate to and build up from. We say things like, "Well it is rather like..." or "Compare it to..." Then the teacher will build, drawing parallels to what the student already knows. However this can't be done without a base line, a starting point, just as you can't describe a picture to a person who has been blind all their life. We need a light bulb experience so we can see what we haven't 'seen' before. Jesus describes this to a puzzled scholar as being "born again". *John 3:3-8 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water (naturally) **and the Spirit** (spiritually) he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh (naturally) is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit (spiritually) is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind (wind and spirit is the same word in the original Bible languages) blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it*

comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."



So how are we "born again"? How do we turn the light bulb on? Simple, talk to God! "You mean talk to this Sun and planet-breathing fearful life form? No way! I'm too scared! If He just looked at me, I would shrivel up like an ant in the mouth of a furnace." Well, to start with, talk to His Son,

Jesus, who lived on Earth as a man. You can maybe relate to Him better. But the Father does love us and, because of Jesus, we can relate to Him as well. The conversation in John 3 with Nicodemus (which incidentally means "victory of the people") continues: verses:16-21 *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes (utterly trusts) in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be **saved** through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgement, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear*

that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practises the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

There is a lot in that passage. This "planet breathing fearful life form", who created us in His own image, actually loves us! He wants to have a relationship with us. He wants to save us and give us eternal life. "Well if He is God, He can do anything with us, right?" Wrong, He only acts within His own nature; He made us in His image. He has free will; so do we. The problem is, we suffer the consequences of acting wrongly with our free will... *and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.* "So what safeguards have we got?" We submit to Him and, although we lose our freedom, we gain His, which is a paradox - the more we submit the greater the freedom we experience.

Submitting to God is following His directions rather than our own or a list of rules. In sequence dancing both learn a set of steps and both just follow the rules without any real leading or following on either one's part. In ballroom dancing the follower "submits" to the leader. The follower can do certain steps because that is what they have done before, and it looks like the follower is following until the leader does a different move, then the follower's toes get trodden on if they are not sensitive to the leader's move and submit to the leader.

So how does the follower know what to do? Initially there has to be an understanding of the basic steps and options. Then the couple has to be sensitive with each other, be comfortable in close contact and learn the body language. When the leader leans forward the follower move backwards. Slight pulls or pushes of the hands and arms, upper body rotations; the rise and fall from heel to toes all

guide the follower's direction. When, in a more intimate hold, you become sensitive to the swell and release of the partner's breathing this, combined with subtle movements, can indicate starting and stopping. As a rotation slows the follower knows there will be a change of movement and direction.

God Answers



To hear God's voice we really need to talk to Him; preferably about something He is interested in. Like what? Is there a book, "How to know God"? Yes, it's called the Bible, it's His Book! Like in dancing we need to be aware of the basic steps, for example knowledge of scripture, but we also need to be intimate with the Holy Spirit. How do we do that? Same as with a person: talk to each other. He is with you always. If you were sat in a car, driving somewhere with a friend and never spoke for

two hours that would be weird, especially if your friend spoke to you and you never answered. Your friend would be rightfully grieved. The same applies with the Holy Spirit. He is very sensitive and easily grieved and we are warned not to grieve Him. *Eph 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

We need to invite the Holy Spirit as a person into our hearts. What kind of person is He? Or is He a "He"? We refer to Him as 'He' in

English because our language has no neuter gender. We have 'he', 'she' or 'it', but 'He' as in the Holy Spirit is not an 'It' nor 'He' nor 'She' but sort of both 'He and She' together. I realise there are occasions when the neuter gender is over-ridden in the Greek to emphasise the masculine nature of the Holy Spirit. Remember God made man in His own image then He took a rib or side (as in facet) out of man to create Eve. Later it was said of marriage that the man and woman became one flesh. There are things in the man's brain that are not in the woman's brain and vice versa. Neither are not complete without the other. Both "sides" are needed for mankind to exist. So the Holy Spirit expresses both the courage and strength of the male and the compassion and sensitivity of the female. Jesus, when referring to the Holy Spirit, does not always use He or She but the neuter gender nineteen times in the New Testament.

The female sensitivity is felt and shown by the Holy Spirit. When a child hurts himself, he usually runs to mummy not daddy because mummy is often more comforting. One of 'His' names is "The Comforter". We all need a 'mummy' figure in our lives as well the father 'daddy' figure. How many times have you heard a dad say, "Ask your mum" or in some circumstances mum say "Ask your dad". Sadly, among some this mother figure has been replaced by Mary, the mother of Jesus. In reaction to this some Christians do not give respect to how wonderful a person Mary was. *Luke 1:41-42* 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

The very presence of Mary caused Elizabeth to be filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesy! Often we can come into the close



proximity of someone who is intimate with the Holy Spirit and if we are open we get the overflow of the anointing. The Holy Spirit wants to be intimate with each one of us; one of the Bible symbols of 'Him' is that of a dove which is easily startled and flies away. Don't think that means 'He' is frightened and timid.

Far from it; Paul says. *2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power*

and love and discipline. When the soldiers came to arrest Jesus they fell down under the power of the Holy Spirit (John 18) until Jesus said He would go with them. The Holy Spirit is all powerful but "He" does not force "His" presence on those that do not want companionship with "Him". The KJV says *a spirit of fear* instead of *timidity* and perfect love casts out fear; God is love so God by His nature can never fear.

So surely that means when Jesus was arrested, God's plan was not coming together? Yes, it actually was. It followed that after He was arrested He went to the cross where He gave His life for us; all debts for our sins were paid. This made the way open to the presence of God. The kingdom of God and His light were spreading; darkness was being exposed as the light shone brighter. God is smiling and saying, "I love it when a plan comes together".

Like the choreography of a beautiful dance, the different ministries of God's dance partners in the church are working together to bring God's plan to fruition. God wants to dance with us. He wants sons and daughters to have fun with Him; He wants friends not slaves. He doesn't want robots. Robots are what Satan wants. Just like a mother proudly brings her children to their father to show daddy a new dance they have learnt, the Holy Spirit proudly brings us into the presence of our heavenly Father when our lives show the fruit of His Spirit. The fruit is not separate from the Spirit. It is the Spirit in us producing the fruit. No Spirit in us, then no fruit; we can't grow it or make it.

Shall we look deeper into how this choreography is coming together? Let's look at the rhythm, tempo and moves - intricate steps with moves that make you stare in wonder at the Master Designer who captures every aspect of our make-up. He created us in His own image; He knows all there is to know about us and He wants to share all the riches of His character and creation with us. Here are just a few of the dances He wants to dance with us.

Gal 5: 22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; And there is more! Each dance has its own expression and different steps.

Chapter 5

God has spoken

*Heb 1:1-2 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us **in His Son**.*

In this letter to the Hebrews, **in** the first thirty words the writer uses the preposition ‘**in**’ five times, referring to the statement, “God has spoken”. So how has God spoken?

***in** the prophets*

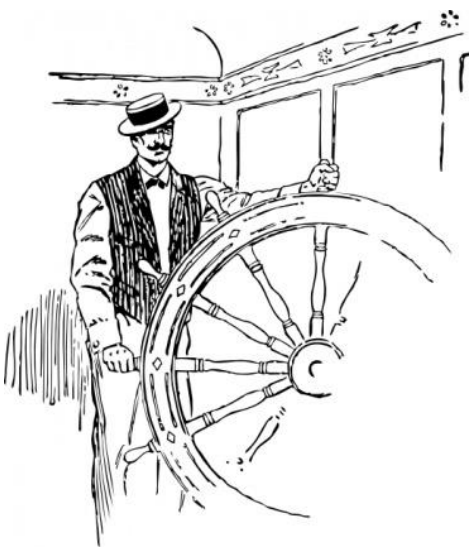
***in** many portions*

***in** many ways*

***in** these last days*

***in His Son**.*

The writer so wants his readers, who were mainly Hebrews, to get a hold of the fact that God has spoken! This star-breathing,



powerful person wants to communicate with us. He spoke through, or **in**, prophets: giving the people warnings that they ignored to their own detriment. He spoke **in** small and large messages. He spoke **in** poetry, **in** stories, **in** acting, **in** signs, **in** songs, **in** dancing, **in** wonders. Finally, **in** the last days, He has spoken **in His Son** who took the form of a man and lived among people

as one of us but claimed that *I and the Father are one*, (Jn10:30).

In Jn 14:9 He says, *He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?*

When Jesus, in human form, was tempted in the wilderness, He answered every question with, *'it is written'*, then quoted scripture. As a young navigator taking a watch on board ship, there was a book on the bridge called "Standing orders". The first page had a printed list of what to do in certain situations and, if in any doubt, CALL THE CAPTAIN. They were the general rules but then there would be newly handwritten orders that the captain had penned before you came on watch. These were usually telling you to keep a certain distance off a projecting land mass, or asking you to call the captain when approaching the port.

With the comment *"it is written"*, Jesus was following the same principal of applying "Standing orders" to be an example to us. In dancing, we are looking to the leader to indicate the next move but, if we are familiar with the moves, we are ready to go at the slightest indication. We might have a thought to do something else and not wait for the leader to indicate. You may be fortunate enough to have chosen what the leader was going to do. However, if you hadn't you're in toe-trodden-on territory!

The captain knew I was trained and qualified to navigate the ship from A to B; just the same as a trained dancer might know certain moves. The captain, however, would give the order for me to do so; but he was still the captain and reserved the right to tweak and adjust the course as necessary. He wanted to interact with me.

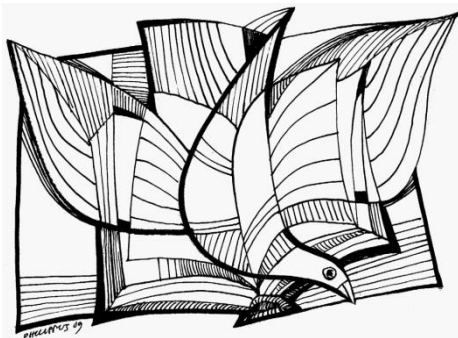
Once I was asked to lay in courses on the chart to travel to a certain place where for miles the land was very flat with no hills in

the distance. This was before the days of GPS; all navigation was visual, either celestial or terrestrial (sun, stars or land).

My last course line was coming into the harbour position at right angles to the shore line. The captain took one look at it and said to head for a position five miles to the left of the harbour, then when you reach land turn right and run down the coast until you see the harbour. That way if the wind and current threw us off course and we reached land and could not see anything we would know it was somewhere south of us. I learnt a lot from that captain, some of which is not in the text books. God can communicate to us in many ways but He can build up on scripture in far more detail. It is like learning a new language, or for a dance leader, finding a new partner who already knows the basic steps of *"it is written"* and who is also willing to be led.

King David was sensitive to hearing God speak. One time he was in a battle situation; he didn't lay out the map and say, "OK men, this is the route we'll take to come up against the enemy". He went to the Lord, *2 Sam 5:22-25 Now the Philistines came up once again and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim. When David inquired of the Lord, He said, "You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees. It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching (possibly the sound of wind) in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the Lord will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines."* Then David did so, just as the Lord had commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.

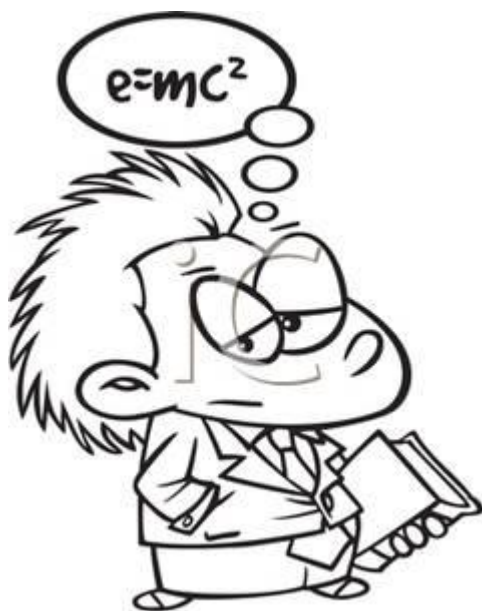
How did David know it was God speaking in his thoughts? When you first start dancing, you are unfamiliar with the subtle guidance your leader gives but gradually you begin to understand. There is also a saying, a picture is worth a thousand words. Sometimes God will give you a picture in your mind that you have to translate into a statement. Trust and ask His Holy Spirit to teach you; He is your teacher.



God's words are not empty or ineffective. *Heb 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared (created) by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.* When God speaks His power activates the creation of what was said from nothing. We might say to someone, "Create me a table". So they get the wood and make it. God says, *Gen 1:3 "Let there be light"; and there was light.* All made from nothing, no question about it. Why or how does this happen? Because, *Heb 4:12 the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* So the word of God is not only able to create but also able to discern and sort out the wheat from the chaff. Now you can see why Jesus used the term, "*it is written*" because what was written, Jesus quoted, from accounts of what God had spoken, and whatever God has spoken brings light and is effective.

Light is not static, it is active and travels at just over 186,000 miles per second. The very first thing God created was light when He said, *"Let there be light"*. He breathed out of His mouth light at 186 thousand miles per second. *Ps 33:6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.* God is light and Jesus came as the light of the world. *Mic 7:8-9 Though I dwell in darkness, the Lord is a light for me. ... He will bring me out to the light, and I will see His righteousness.*

God is light, and John understood this when he echoed the



creation account in his gospel: *John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men. The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not*

comprehend it. This is like a beautifully balanced algebraic equation. The Word not only was with God but was God. This Word that was God, created everything. He made the light to shine and a little further on John says, *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).* This Word that was with God and was God, who created everything,

became a man and lived amongst us. He who breathed out the stars of creation like we cough out biscuit crumbs, humbled Himself and became a man. He loved us so much He was willing to die for us.

Darkness always runs from the light. Enter a completely dark room, turn on the light and darkness disappears at 186,000 miles per second. Light can enter our minds and enable us to see and understand things we might never have seen before. We may have memorised something that we don't understand, but light will bring understanding. *Jn 1:5 The **Light** shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* Then comes the revelation of truth: *In Him was life, and the life was the **Light** of men:* bringing salvation and relationship so you can dance with Him.

When Jesus was crucified, darkness fell over the land. Why was that? Jesus was the light of the world but when He took our sin upon Himself even His Father, who said "let there be light", turned His back on Him at that point. The crowds mocked Him as He paid for their sin with His life: *Mark 15:33-34 When the sixth hour came, darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour. At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "MY God, MY God, why have You forsaken ME?"*



Jesus finally said, "It is finished" and gave up His Spirit. He chose the time to die but in that death He went in spirit to the place of the dead, shining His light and bringing life.

*John 19:28-30 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, *said, " I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, " It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.*

This was followed by more signs fulfilling what “God has spoken”.
Matt 27:51-54 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Yes “God has spoken” and *in these last days has spoken to us in His Son*. He is the resurrection and the life. He wants to resurrect you and be your dance partner in life. He wants us to know Him so well that we are sensitive to and respond to His every awesome move.

Chapter 6

Clap those hands and dance

There are times when it is right to recognise the awesomeness and power of God; to bow in stunned silence before Him. I have spoken about dancing with spiritual examples of relating to God. It is, however, possible to actually physically dance in an act of worship; an art form that links the dancer with the Creator.



I would like to introduce you to 'International Christian Dance Fellowship' - (www.ICDF.com). They are spreading the message of the Gospel through dance and movement using many different styles. They are also bringing Christians into a new experience of worship. Their website is well worth a visit where they, among other things, have a video showing clips of their different styles of dance.

Some may say, "Well, is it appropriate?" We can get so fixed and comfortable in our churchman-ship that we limit the amount God can use us. So what is our example? It is Scripture revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. Let us have a look at some examples here and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth as you read.

Ecc 3:4 A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance. Solomon, in his latter years, saw that there were different times or seasons for activities.

Moses led the people to freedom and after the Lord had given them a victory, his sister Miriam led the women in an act of worship before the Lord. *Ex15:20-21 Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's (and Moses') sister, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing. Miriam answered them " Sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea."*

David was rejoicing greatly as he brought the Ark of the Lord up to Jerusalem. *2Sam 6:14 -15 And David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.* The ephod has a number of meanings. One meaning is the dress of a humble priest, one who serves God. David humbled himself before the people as one who serves God and His people.



I am pasting below to the end of the chapter some extracts from the ICDF web site. They are passionate about their ministry and will welcome any enquiries. In places where they have mentioned scripture I have included the text as it is found in

the rest of this book to enhance their comments.

International Christian Dance Fellowship mobilising the movement arts in ministry and mission.

As an organisation of Christian dancers and movers.

- We desire to honour and represent God who has expressed his nature in this world through creating beauty, colour, movement,

variety and community God has communicated with us both through the written and verbal word and the non-verbal word of his creation, body action and symbol. Supremely he gave this in his son Jesus Messiah who both spoke and was the Word of God.

- We want to work together in the church to bring more freedom, healing and joy into the body of Christ through the experience of moving in worship, prayer, exercise and community.

- We are a visual and relating generation wanting to release the good news to those around us who have turned away from the church and need to encounter the message in a way that is relevant to them.

- We seek to engage and serve our global world where dance in all people groups is an important means of cultural expression, creativity and non-verbal language. We want to bring beauty, meaning, healing and fitness to those who are challenged and those who need a challenge.

- We aim to be a bridge from the church into the world where dance is enjoyed both as entertainment, therapy, exercise and spiritual exploration.

- To do this we need teamwork, resources and training for effectiveness and excellence, encouraging one another in love and truth.

WE SEEK TO BE GOD'S PEOPLE IMPACTING THE WORLD TOGETHER WITH THE LIFE OF JESUS, EXPERIENCING AND EXPRESSING THIS IN DANCE AND MOVEMENT INSPIRED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

From the ICDF constitution:

ICDF Vision & Beliefs

- To honour Jesus Christ in all its activities and to help build unity in the body of Christ.

- To support and guide the formation of Christian Dance Fellowships in countries that express an interest in having one.

- To provide international networking, vision and support for Christians involved in dance and movement, particularly in countries where there is no Christian Dance Fellowship.

- To encourage excellence, depth and leadership in dance and movement ministries.

- To exchange resource and other information with people and dance/arts organisations.
- 'A CALL TO THE CHRISTIAN DANCE FELLOWSHIP' - (Download pdf)

Statement of Beliefs

As part of the Church, the body of Christ/Messiah, ICDF acknowledges one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who has revealed Himself and the way of salvation through the Bible, and affirms:

- The sovereignty, grace and love of God the Father in Creation and Redemption.
- The atoning death, bodily resurrection and return of Jesus of Nazareth, Messiah, God the Son, Savior and Lord of all, acknowledging that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and that no one comes to the Father except through Him. (John 14:6) *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*
- The indwelling work of God the Holy Spirit in regenerating, sanctifying and empowering the believer.

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A CALL TO THE CHRISTIAN DANCE FELLOWSHIP

This is the mandate we have been given:

TOGETHER in the spirit of love and unity John 17:23 *I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.* from every tribe and nation Rev.5:9 *And they sang a new song, saying, " Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.* from every part of the church Eph.4:3-6 *being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.* redeeming our cultures exploring and using our creativity given to us who are made in the image of our creator God.

Gen.1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." refining and celebrating our different styles of dance, movement and the arts expressing the diverse giftings and ministries of the body of Christ Eph.4:7-16, But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, " When HE ascended on high, HE led captive A host of captives, And HE gave gifts to men."

(Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

Rom.12:3-8 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgement, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

WE ARE CALLED to help through prayer, art and action

TO PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD and *Is.40:3-5 A voice is calling, " Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. "Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

THE WAY FOR THE PEOPLE *Is.62:10 Go through, go through the gates, clear the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, remove the stones, lift up a standard over the peoples.*

Bringing the gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world as a testimony to all nations through repentance - restoration - reconciliation & release into freedom *Matt 24:14 This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

PREPARING THE BRIDE OF CHRIST FOR HER BRIDEGROOM

In purity, beauty, love and intimacy, glory and partnership, joy and freedom *Rev.19:7-8 Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

RISE UP, SHINE, THIS IS THE TIME (*Isa 60:1 Arise, shine; for your light has come,*

And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.) **to move in humble authority and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.** *Is 61:1-4 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;*

To proclaim the favourable year of the Lord And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness,

The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, They will raise up the former devastations; And they will repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations.

To call and disciple the nations the cultures, the poor and the rich, with word and deed, with creativity and art, for the King is coming, the bridegroom is near when he will reign on earth.

Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. *Phil. 1:9-11 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

IT'S A BIG VISION AND A BIG TASK BUT OUR GOD IS A BIG GOD

Who put the universe in place and holds everything together; *Col. 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.* who is all love, all power, all knowledge, all wisdom; who also created your inmost being, knitting you together in your mother's womb, (*Ps 139:13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb.*) who knows how many hairs you have on your head and has a good purpose for you to fulfil;

(Matt. 10:29-30 Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. Ps 138:8 The Lord will accomplish what concerns me; Your loving kindness, O Lord, is everlasting; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.)

who made every snowflake a different design, who clothes the lilies of the field and cares when every sparrow falls. *Matt. 6:28 And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,*

DON'T DESPISE THE DAY OF SMALL BEGINNINGS *Zech. 4:10 For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel— these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth."* Start now to find and walk in the part God is calling you to do so that together we will fulfil the mandate God has given us, as His works of art, to action the good works prepared in advance for us to do. *Eph. 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

Chapter 7

Spiritual DNA

Every human cell in our bodies contains our unique DNA. This dictates everything from hair colour to the shape of our big toe. Although unique, there are links which show similarities from our ancestors, characteristics we have inherited. You have heard people say, “Oh he’s got his daddy’s nose”. However, what about our spiritual DNA? What about when folk say: “Oh, he has a



temper, just like his dad”. Is this DNA? Is it nature or nurture? Is it physical or is it spiritual DNA?

Has the little boy got a temper because he has learnt it from living with his dad, or would he still have had it even if he had been adopted from birth by a

different family? I guess the answer could be ‘yes’ on both accounts; we have to recognise that both answers could be true in different circumstances. However, I believe we inherit personality characteristics from our family line; this is what I mean by spiritual DNA.

In order to gain a fuller understanding, we need to recognise the biblical teaching on this issue. Behind most, no, every activity, there is a spiritual input. Here are just a few items that most people see as mental or physical activities which the Bible describes as spiritual. *Isa 11:2-3 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.* This text is within a

prophecy about the coming Christ or Messiah and there are seven spirits mentioned.

Ex 35:30-33 Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, "See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in



wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship; to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze, and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. Bezalel, whose name means, "under the shade or protection of God", was anointed with the Spirit of

God which enabled him to operate skilfully in a number of different crafts. You may think a craft is a practical skill that has nothing to do with spiritual activities but you would be mistaken. Everything is spiritual.

Zch 12:10 "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication.

Only by God's grace can we be saved. Eph 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. and it is a gift freely given by God.

Rom 8:14-15 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, " Abba! (Daddy) Father!"

2Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. Can't argue with that!

Hos 5:4 Their deeds will not allow them to return to their God. For a spirit of harlotry is within them, and they do not know the Lord.

So by a spirit of grace we can come to know the Lord, but a spirit of harlotry will stand in the way to try and prevent a relationship with God forming. Does this mean that some will never be able to enter into a relationship with God because their spiritual DNA includes some blocking spiritual force? No, God is not willing that any should perish, He always makes a way of escape. Someone with fear blocking the way will, by grace, be shown a spirit of love. Perfect love casts out fear. Whatever 'god' stands in your way, seemingly all powerful, our heavenly Father will show His overriding power.



In the account of Moses bringing supernatural events before Pharaoh they demonstrated to him that he was not all powerful but the God of Moses was. One of the main gods of Egypt was the sun god which brought them light; but Moses brought thick black darkness over the land. *Ex 10:21-29 Then the Lord said to Moses, " Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over*

the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. They did not see

one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings. Then Pharaoh called to Moses, and said, "Go, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be detained. Even your little ones may go with you." But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice them to the Lord our God. Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve the Lord our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve the Lord." But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go. Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!" Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"

Eventually, after more help from the Lord, the people were released from the bondage of Egypt. Likewise we can be released from bondages that we may have in our spiritual DNA. They may have been passed down from our ancestors. The children of Israel were warned not to become involved with Spiritualism: *Deut 18:9-12* "When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, (to make a sacrifice of your son or daughter in fire) one who uses divination, one who practises witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you. The old KJV refers to 'familiar spirits' instead of mediums. This is understood to mean that a medium, who claims to be consulting the dead, is actually in contact with a spirit that was *familiar* with the dead person. Hence the widow is fooled

into thinking she is in actual contact with her dead husband because the familiar spirit will reveal something that only the two of them knew. All of this ungodly, spiritual activity is to be shunned; it is from the kingdom of darkness.

So if involvement with such activities is going against God, how do we deal with these problems? First recognise that it is not just wrong attitudes we are dealing with: *Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the*



powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. This is the starting place. Some attitudes are learnt; they are part of our culture. There are some attitudes that have a spiritual force behind them. Therefore we need the Holy Spirit to combat the negative ones. As we receive more of the Holy Spirit, our own cultural attitudes will be modified to come in line with the culture of the Kingdom of God. These new attitudes will create an

environment for the KOG to flourish, it goes hand in hand. Christ has transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into His Kingdom of light. But we have free will and can continue to choose; so when Satan calls with his thoughts and we chew on them, we can foolishly move right back into his kingdom ... but more of this later.

This attitude change will fulfil the creative power of the words of Jesus, "the Kingdom of God is near". If He says something it will happen because His Words are creative. This makes an option

available for us all to be cut free from ungodly ancestral 'ties'. They are called 'ties' because generational traits become connected to us and we need to be untied 'In the name of Jesus'.



"In the name of Jesus" means recognising He has the authority and it is His authority we are using, not our own. Rather like the small police woman who stands out in the road and puts up her hand to stop a big truck. She has no physical strength to stop that big truck but the uniform she wears says she has the power and authority of the nation behind her. As Christians,

we are like that police woman - with hearts submitted to God, we can say, "In the name of Jesus, I cut you ancestral tie; you no longer have authority here". This tie will try to hold on and pull you back but keep telling it to go and eventually, it will let go.

He told His disciples to do as He did: to heal the sick and expel (cast out) demons.

Mark 1:34 And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; Luke 10:17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." He came to establish the Kingdom of God and defeat the kingdom of darkness. One of the main teachings on prayer He taught His disciples included the words, "Thy kingdom come on Earth as it is in heaven". There is no sickness in heaven. Anger and bitterness are not 'managed' there but cast out and the empty space filled with God's Spirit of love. How can you dance

with God if there is anger or bitterness in your heart, or you are full of sickness?

To sit with God is for most of us the first step in coming closer to His presence. (See my book, “Come, sit with Me”.) Walking with God is the next step and is good. Walking together and holding hands is better, but dancing with God is intimate. Christ didn’t say, *Jn15:15 No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you ‘business associates’, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. No, He said but I have called you “**friends**”.* Friends are more intimate than business associates. However the intimacy does not stop at friends, it goes way deeper.

The next analogy is that of a bride and groom. In the book of Revelation the Church (all believers), are referred to as the ‘Bride of Christ’. Now for a bride and groom to dance together intimately, there are no moral issues like some of us might feel there are about ‘Strictly come dancing’.

Worship is more than standing with your hands in your pockets on Sunday morning singing hymns. It’s dancing with God in your heart. It’s getting intimate with God like husband and wife which should eventually bear fruit. When the Spirit of the most high God overshadows you, like Mary, you should give birth to the things of His Spirit.

Chapter 8

It's hard to dance with the devil on your back



Just as you can't do graceful ballroom dancing if you are wearing wellies and carrying a rucksack, neither can you dance with Jesus if the devil's on your back. There are only two kingdoms: the Kingdom of Darkness (KOD) and the Kingdom of God (KOG) - take your pick, you are either in one or the other. Your mind is linked

with your body. You are aware in the mind that it is hot or cold, light or dark, noisy or quiet, stimulating or boring. There are activities we enjoy and those we don't. Your mind is also linked with your spirit which connects you to the spiritual realm. We have thoughts and can visualise memories or even imagine and create thoughts. Or is it really us that creates them? How many times have you had a thought and wondered, "Where did that come from?" Some thoughts are good and wholesome, some are borderline, and others are blatantly bad. This often raises the question, "Is it me, is it God or is it Satan?"

When we are in fellowship with God, His Spirit will give us thoughts but so will Satan. Sometimes it is blatantly obvious where the thoughts are coming from. Spiritual maturity, experience, knowledge of the Bible and above all a heart yielded to the Holy Spirit will give you more and more discernment.

Jesus, right at the beginning of His ministry, before He had gathered any disciples together, was going around preaching that the Kingdom of God was at hand, (i.e. very near and available).

Mark 1:14-15 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus

came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." Again that means not only is the Kingdom of God very near but you don't even have to wait for some fictitious date in the future before you can enter into it *The time is fulfilled !*

All that is needed is an act of repentance and belief. Remember the first dance step we learnt? The 'Reverse turn check' (turn around and go the other way). I remember describing the principle of Parliament hinges (which were designed for doors in the Houses of Parliament), to a friend. The projection of the hinge enabled the door to swing through 180 degrees and park on the wall in line with the opening. My friend smiled and said, "How appropriate! They can swing, just like a politician, through 180 degrees." God wants us, in a good way, to change our minds and follow Him in the right, but opposite direction. That IS moving out of the kingdom of darkness into the KOG. This Kingdom is in the mind, no, actually your mind, plus your whole being (spirit, soul and body) is in the KOG ... or the KOD.

Col1:13-20. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. This is tremendous! He came to our rescue; we had very little part in the operation. All we did was turn (repent), cry out to Him and believe. He did the rest. No struggling in self-effort, just trusting in His promises. *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the*

firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

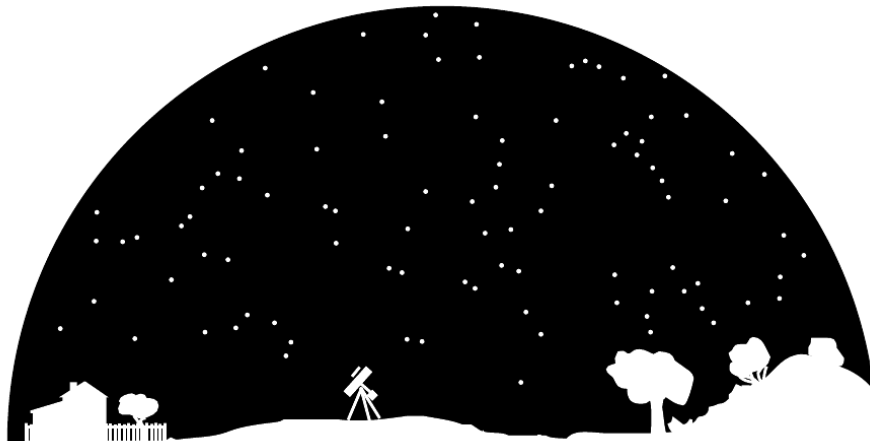
When a thought comes to us that you know is not of God, don't chew on it, reject it! Speak to the thought and tell it to go. If you don't, you will find yourself accepting it and more thoughts will come in support of the first one.



Before you know it you are trapped! You will realise that this is the enemy of your soul that has trapped you. Don't dance with the enemy. Or, like Samson, you will think, "*I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.*" (*Judges 16:20*), but find it impossible because you are overpowered. No use saying "Satan, in the name of Jesus, I command you to go". He will laugh

and say, "You should have said that before you accepted my thoughts. You are in my kingdom now." All you can do is shout out and say, "Jesus, I'm a Christian, get me out of here!" *Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.* You have moved from the KOG to the KOD and need to resubmit to God before the Devil will flee from you. So how do we stop this vicious circle? Reset your thinking by submitting to God: it's not a strain or a struggle, it is an act of submission. *Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is*

of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **dwell on these things**. There are eight points in that scripture, eight in biblical numerics stands for a new beginning. Go for it! That way you get the Devil off your back *and* dance with Jesus. He is an awesome mover! All of creation dances with Him, why don't you?



Col 1:13-17. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him. **He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.***