

Saturday "Sermon"

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Guidance

It's Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season during which we prepare our hearts for Holy Week and Resurrection Sunday. More often than not, Lent is a somber time of reflection on our sin and God's forgiveness, but Lent doesn't have to be somber, and here's why.

Rick Warren's best-selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, continues to set publishing records because its sub-title, *What On Earth Am I Here For?* is a question each of our hearts yearns to answer. Whatever we do to prepare our hearts for Holy Week is really an effort to position ourselves to receive God's guidance about the eternal purposes for our lives.

Our Lenten observances are too short-sighted if all they look forward to is Holy Week. The Bible says that Jesus "*was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterward*" (Hebrews 12:2). Now what in all of heaven could be available to Jesus—Creator of all that exists—through the Cross that was not available to Him without it? Only one thing . . . the possibility of spending eternity in a joyful love relationship with you.

I got an email about "guidance" this week that has to do with that love relationship: "When I thought about 'guidance,' I kept seeing 'dance' at the end of the word. I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn't flow with the music, and everything is uncomfortable and jerky. But when one lets the other lead, both begin to flow beautifully with the music.

"Dancing takes attentiveness and surrender from one person and gentle guidance from the other. I looked again at the word 'guidance.' The 'G' reminded me of God, followed by 'u' and 'i.' 'God,' 'u' and 'i' 'dance.' And I became more willing to let God lead my life."

My favorite verse in the Bible is Zephaniah 3:17: "*The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you. He will comfort you with his love. He will rejoice over you with singing.*" My favorite anthem is based on that verse: "And the father will dance over you with joy! He will take delight in whom He loves! Is that a choir I hear, singing the praises of God? No! The Lord God Himself is exulting over you in song!" (Burns/Hayes).

This Lenten season, I hope you discover God's guidance. And I hope you dance!