



Do you dance, darling?

Matthew 11:12-17

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears, let him hear. ¹⁶ "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn."

The dancers of history

▲ The dance of the delivered women

Exodus 15:19 When Pharaoh's horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. ²⁰ Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea."

▲ The dance of David the warrior

² Samuel 6:12 Now King David was told, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might,

▲ The dance of devoted worshipers

Jeremiah 31:3 The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness. ⁴ I will build you up again and you will be rebuilt, O Virgin Israel. Again you will take up your tambourines and go out to dance with the joyful."

The dance in the hymnbook

▲ The dance performed by the comforted

Psalms 30:11 You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, ¹² that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever.

▲ The dance prescribed for the congregation

Psalms 149:1 Praise the LORD. Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints. ² Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King. ³ Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp.

The dances of the heathen

▲ They dance in their darkness

Exodus 32:19 When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ And he took the calf they had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

▲ They dance to the dead

¹ Kings 18:25 Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." ²⁶ So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon. "O Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

▲ They dance in their defiance

Mark 6:21 On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. ²² When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you." ²³ And he promised her with an oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom." ²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" "The head of John the Baptist," she answered. ²⁵ At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

The doldrums of the hardhearted

▲ They're not inclined to advance, despite the great gospel opportunity

Matthew 11:12 From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

▲ They're not inspired to dance, despite the glorious gospel overture

Matthew 11:16 "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn."

The dances of the happy heart

▲ The dance of lavish love

Mark 12:30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

▲ The dance of overflowing obedience

² John 6 And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands.

▲ The dance of sacrificial service

Colossians 3:23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

▲ The dance of passionate praise

Psalms 66:1 Shout with joy to God, all the earth! ² Sing the glory of his name; make his praise glorious!