

THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART

Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. – Psalm 37:4

Les Von Losberg, Sky View's ombudsman who is also my friend, came to visit me early in May, 2016. I had been eager to see him, for at the end of April, here at Sky View, I had attended a concert given by a percussion ensemble of which Les is a member. I was eager to give him my report, and he was just as eager to receive it. Before I could begin, though, Les told me a remarkable story:

Les had always wanted to drum. As a schoolboy, he tried to sign up for drum lessons, only to be told the school had enough drummers. "Would you like to play the tuba?" the teacher asked. "That's what our band really needs." So Les put aside his desire to drum and became his school's tuba player. Then at age 60 he and his wife went to a concert where a style of Japanese drumming was being performed. Suddenly Les said to his wife, "I can do that!" And he did! After 10 years or so of lessons and practice, a drumming ensemble, consisting of three Japanese women and Les, gave the concert I attended, playing drums unlike any I had ever seen.

As Les's story unfolded, my similar story resurfaced and begged to be told. Eagerly I told Les that I, too, had always loved drumming. To me, the best part of a parade was the time between band numbers when only drums could be heard. They filled my heart with longing and joy! Then one day I remember going home from school with the exciting news that a snare drum class was being formed and all I needed to become a member was my parents' signatures! But alas, Mother wouldn't sign the form. "You might become sick from having to march in the rain," she explained. I couldn't argue with her, as I HAD been sickly as a child. So I put aside my thoughts of becoming a drummer, and pursued music in other ways, as did Les.

The other point where our stories were surprisingly similar concerned what happened at age 60. I told you Les's story; now hear mine. In the days leading up to my 60th birthday in 1993, I received a phone call from my friend Robert Rayow, who, with his wife Yvonne, owned a nearby dance studio. Both of them had been students in the Bible seminars I was giving at the time, and now, at this special birthday, they wanted to say thank you with a special gift – free tap dancing lessons with Robert as my teacher! I was delighted, for tap dancing is another thing I had enjoyed since childhood. "Tap dancing is drumming with your feet," Les interjected, suddenly clarifying the story for me. What a thrilling moment!

Let me explain. For about 25 years, beginning in 1977, God would sometimes start a tune in my head to match the words I was reading in the Bible. When this happened, I would go to the piano, complete the song, and write it down, knowing these were verses on which God wanted me to meditate. Eventually I had more than 500 Bible passages tucked into my memory by this method. Now, when God wants me to recall a specific verse, he often starts the tune of that verse in my mind. When I figure out the words, I have received the message!

That's how I received the Bible verse that opened this essay. I repeat: *"Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart."* My thrilling moment included a great sense of God's presence and his smile of approval. Does God smile? Oh, yes he does! There are a number of verses that picture God as taking delight in his people. I

think one source of this two-way delight occurs when God's people "catch" him at work in their lives, as in the story I am telling.

In meditating on Psalm 37:4, I quickly discarded the interpretation that says: If you truly delight in the Lord, God will give you anything you want. Rather, I like the idea that God delights so much in his children who delight in him that he gives them special desires, which (of course!) he intends to fulfill in due time, either on this earth or in Heaven. My desire to drum was God-given, I now understand, and as such, was bound to be fulfilled. Partial fulfillment came vicariously when my youngest son Paul got a drum set when he was in the 7th grade, and filled our house with his wonderfully rhythmic sounds as long as he lived at home.

The delightful thought that my tap dancing lessons, which went on for over a year, were part of God's plan for me concerning drumming, brought a question to my mind: Is this the end of the story or is there more to come? Certainly my physical body will never again be able to keep a beat, but what about in Heaven? Before you discard this as mere speculation, consider the following Bible passage from 1 Corinthians 2:

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him – but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."

To me this passage says: "No matter how vivid our imaginations, and how keen our senses, we human beings cannot figure out God or his doings. But God WANTS his loving children to think about where they are going at the end of their lives on this earth." I am so glad that the Holy Spirit reveals to us what we cannot figure out on our own. I call these revelations GLIMPSES OF ETERNITY, grateful that God STILL interacts with people, as he did in Bible times. Listen to this verse from Psalms:

"The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them."

God's friend Abraham, long before Jesus was born, was one of those who feared the Lord, that is, he worshiped God reverently and with awe that led to obedience. As such Abraham was the recipient of many glimpses of eternity, including the birth, death, and resurrection of God's Son Jesus. The story is amazing!

Equally fascinating is the Bible record of a man named Saul, from Tarsus. In the years following the ascension of Jesus, Saul was on his way to Damascus one day when, about noon, he suddenly saw the resurrected Jesus in a light SO bright that it blinded him for a period of time! There was no doubt that the vision was meant for Saul, for Jesus called him by name, and forever changed the mission to which he would devote his life. Never again would Saul believe that Jesus, who had been crucified, was still dead! Later on, after his name was changed to Paul, the apostle wrote, *"We believe that Jesus died AND ROSE AGAIN!"* Death is not the end for us either! I am positively SURE of that!

Les sat there, smiling with me while my mind absorbed the impact of his tap dancing and drumming connection, which became the inspiration for this essay, and THEN I gave him my concert report. "I really liked your concert," I said. "In fact, several times it made me cry!" "I'm glad you liked it," he said, "but why was it sad?" "NOT sad," I replied, "but it was SO beautiful, SO loud, SO unexpected that my human senses were not able to take

it all in.” Les nodded at my explanation.

Yes indeed, I could add the drumming concert to my own list of glimpses of eternity. Do you have a list? I can well imagine drums in Heaven, different from the ones on earth, producing sounds and rhythms that will delight our transformed ears, but would have shocked our human senses. Will I PLAY a drum in Heaven? That’s up to God our Father, who does all things well! My speculation, for now, ends here! Amen.

© September, 2016
Verna Kwiatkowski

www.vernakwiatkowski.com