

Give it all you got...

1 Chronicles 15:28 - 16:3

“So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouts, with the sounding of rams' horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps. As the ark of the covenant of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him in her heart. They brought the ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and they presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before God. After David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each Israelite man and woman” (NIV).

This picture of the King is nearly whimsical. When the ark, a symbol of the presence of God, is brought into the city David seems nearly giddy. This type of display of emotion seems rare in our day. I cannot remember the last time something so joyful happened that the only response I had was to dance. We dance at weddings but it certainly is not spontaneous. This story of David, though unique, should not be surprising.

David is a man of strong emotions. The Psalms are the Bible book of poetry and David wrote many of the lyrics. In the Psalms he wails loudly at defeats and screams that God has abandoned him. He pens violent hopes for his enemies that would not be considered right for public discourse in our day. He exuberantly sings when God helps him. David seems to be a person who wears his heart on his sleeve. It is not surprising when you get to know the Biblical character of King David to think of him dancing in the streets and eating with the common people in celebration.

In our culture we seem offended by strong emotion. We tend to see it as a sign of emotional imbalance or instability. We are expected to mourn, but return to work; have joy, but not let the partying get too loud to keep the neighbors up. We tend to shy away from the person at work or in class who seems either to always be in crisis or always having the best day of their lives. Within myself I feel like I have been enculturated against strong emotions; either to have them or show them. Something in me is like Michal in the window embarrassed at such a spectacle.

Strong emotions need to come out. David's life teaches us that God can handle our most raw and real selves.

JLB

Point for Prayer:

Is there dancing or wailing that needs to happen in your life? Have you expressed your joy or grief before the Lord?