

Inspired

versus

Dispired

(Yes, I know that "dispired" is not a word, but maybe it should be. Why? Because we need an opposite of "inspired". Don't you think so?)

Why are some inspired while others are dispired (dispirited or discouraged) as the result of the same event? Have you ever witnessed this? I have...

Recently, my wife and I attended a concert, where the main performer is considered by many to be the G.O.A.T. (Greatest Of All Time) of acoustical guitar players. His name is Tommy Emmanuel. His age is 68 and he has been playing guitar for 64 years! Yep, he started playing when he was 4 and started playing professionally at about 7. What he does with the guitar is so amazing it is beyond my ability to describe. You'd have to see it to even imagine how good he is. And you can... on YouTube...

If you know my wife at all, you probably know that she is likely to strike up a conversation with just about anyone that she comes in contact with. This is neither bad nor good. It is just the way she is. Me? Not so much.

Now, you may know something about theater seats. They aren't very big and you're gonna get cozy with your neighbor, whether you want to or not. We got to our seats right when the doors were opened and nobody else was near us. Then a couple sat down in front of us. When the another couple sat down beside us about 5 minutes later, they were pretty sure that us and the couple in front of us were long-time friends even though we had never met before. This, of course, was my wife's doing. Before long, all six of us were acquainted while anxiously the performance.

Before the show began, one of the other men was talking about some of his friends who had previously been to one of Tommy's concerts. He said that after that show, his friends went home and burned their guitars. At first I was confused as to why they would do such a thing. I didn't say anything about it because I didn't want to sound stupid in my ignorance.

At the end of the concert, while we were walking out of auditorium, I was chatting with the other man about how amazing the show was. He said that he was thinking to go home and burn his guitar also. I was somewhat stunned by this and didn't respond.

As for me, I felt greatly inspired by what I had seen and heard. I could see that Tommy was loving what he was doing and always has... I don't think his primary motive was the money. I think his motive was that he loves playing guitar and sharing this joy with others. Because of this, I also

had plans for my guitar. I was anxious to go home and practice my guitar more and more. I felt inspired by Tommy and his joy of playing guitars.

Though I didn't ask those other men about why they wanted to give up their guitars to the fire, by the context of those conversations, I'm pretty sure that their attitude was something like this: "I can't compete with Tommy! There is no way I can ever be that good, so I'm just going to give up the guitar." In other words, I think they were dispired.

So, why did I feel so inspired, while they felt so dispired? After thinking a lot about this, it seems to me that there might be a simple explanation:

I think they have the attitude of working hard, while probably not enjoying it, for an expected end where they will finally find the joy that they crave as a result of their great accomplishments. And, when they later discovered that "expected end" to be unreachable, they gave up their guitars for the fire.

In contrast to that that way of thinking, I want to enjoy the process of learning the guitar, with no expectations of how good I might become.

I see the same difference in attitude regarding life occupations choices. Many choose their occupations based on how much money they can make. And, some make these choices as the result of pressure from others -- often parents. They choose to endure jobs they hate for an "expected end" of retirement with plenty money to fulfill their dreams. Sadly, for many, that doesn't work out well at all.

I was weird that way. When I didn't like a job, I quit -- sometimes not having any prospects of other employment. So, I never made the "big bucks", but I may have enjoyed life more than many who do... There were other times when the focus of my efforts was more on those I served rather than on my bosses wishes. That didn't work out well, but I enjoyed my work -- while it lasted :-).

What about the spiritual realm? Do these contrasting attitudes apply there also? I think so.

In my early years, even though I loved the God of my understanding as best as I knew how, I was not enjoying the process. I was looking for an "expected end" of overcoming those sins that most easily beset me. However, no matter how hard I tried, my "expected end" was far from being achievable. So, at some point, I gave up trying, like those men who burned their guitars.

Sadly, I didn't know how to enjoy the process of sanctification. I was trying to do it myself. I didn't know the joy of letting go of my plans and "leaning on Jesus, leaning on the everlasting arms." This because I can do nothing without deferring to Jesus(John15), but I can do all things through Christ who strengths me(Philippians 4:13). This is the inspired process -- where the joy comes from -- death to self and life to Messiah. More of my story here => <http://sidnash.org/willpower>

If you find "Joy in The Journey", as do I, you may also enjoy this song from Michael Card => <https://youtu.be/1jfSmrCsqD4>