

The Parable of the One-Man-Band

By George Davis

Anxiety is the fruit of assuming responsibilities that are not your own. Exhaustion is the fruit of doing work that is not your own. Even the Apostles knew to do their own work. Paul finished his course, not Peter's. Exhaustion and anxiety are cousins. Only God's shoulders are big enough to carry the church.

Most "ministers" see their job as a lifelong vocation. Therefore they are always, constantly, continually, without ceasing, and forever in the forefront, and the body gathers and sits in rows to watch the show, wishing that somehow they might participate. But no, once again, they came, they sat, they listened, they left, and nothing really happened.

The ministry of the body of Christ by comparison, makes the traditional three point platonic sermon seem as silly as a one man band opening for the philharmonic orchestra.

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With cymbals strapped to his knees, and a harness slung harmonica, guitar in hand, and a rubbing-board played with one foot, he hoped, kicked, strummed and blew. The crowd becomes silent at the prospect of him falling, his balance being impaired by the introduction of all those unnatural movements. And as he oscillated around on the stage the crowd broke into applause, for after all, that can't be easy!



When he was reaching the point of exhaustion, the crowd began to cheer him on. This seemed to bring a renewed look of determination to his sweat covered face. The music sounded OK. Some were shaking their heads as if to say, "Is there anything this man can't do?" The applause was deafening, and even the orchestra waiting in the wings laid down their instruments to applaud him.

On and on he went, and the look of wonder on the faces of the crowd slowly began to turn to indifference. The praise turned to yawns, and the faint sound of snoring could be heard from the back row. Some were looking at their watches; others got up, went out and stood in the foyer. Finally the boredom was interrupted by a loud thud on the stage, and to everyone's disbelief this marathon performer had collapsed from sheer exhaustion. What began as a whisper rose in intensity, to a mild roar, the sound of a thousand whispering voices asking: "Is he okay? What happened?" But no one went up to see. Someone cried out, "Play it again." Someone else shouted, "Yeah, come on, play it again," but still he lay lifeless on the stage floor.

One by one the crowd filed out, supposing the show was over, and the orchestra waiting in the wings with their instruments on the floor, had all fallen asleep in their chairs. Alone on the stage lay the one who once stole the show.

There are thousands of one-man-bands out there, and this is no attempt to add to their burden. God forbid that I should add one ounce to the already overwhelming burden they have placed on their own shoulders. Many of them have a heart to serve God's people, and think this is how it is done. And so they burn out doing something they were never intended to do--**everything**. And the orchestra (the body of Christ) sits and listens and Christ is hidden from the watching world.

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No one is called to do it all!