

October 2005 - The dangers of sauntering

As one for whom observation is not only a way of life but a source of income, I feel it is incumbent upon me to report an alarming, and I believe dangerous, trend growing in our society today.

I am convinced that sauntering is once again on the rise.

Historical note: As you'll no doubt remember, sauntering enjoyed its heyday back in the mid-twenties, when gambling, moonshine, and gangstering were all in vogue. Coincidence? I think not.

In fact, sauntering can now be directly linked to most of the world's major catastrophes, including rap music and Jessica Simpson's acting career.

As it turns out, the actual cause of the Great Depression was not the crash of the stock market in 1929 as was originally thought, but the culmination of a decade of folks sauntering around when they should have been at work. It is widely held in some circles that if it were not for sauntering, the Great Depression might have only been the Mildly Bummed Out.

Sauntering was virtually stamped out in the mid-1940s by the no-nonsense, tougher-than-nails WWII generation when they discovered that, in addition to his other atrocities, none other than Adolf Hitler was a known saunterer. Some prominent historians now believe that the goose step was merely a clumsy European imitation of sauntering.

So everywhere I go, it seems there is always someone sauntering right in front of me with seemingly all the time in the world, usually when I'm running way behind schedule. Without exception, these people haunt small corridors while carrying large packages, engaged in deep conversations with their slow-moving, sauntering friends. Meanwhile, I'm running back and forth behind them, looking for that elusive hole between them and the wall that will allow me to pass and get where I'm going.

But perhaps you think I'm being too harsh. What harm is there in a little sauntering, you wonder? The danger is that it won't stop there. First we accept sauntering as an allowable standard and then before you know it, people will start wanting to mosey. After that, rambling will become fashionable, and then strolling can't be far behind. Finally, the entire human race will meander to a halt, not unlike the ancient race known as the Meander-thals.

Additional historical note: The Meander-thals were a little-known offshoot of the much more popular and often show-offy Neanderthals. The Meander-thals ultimately failed to distinguish themselves as a race, though, meandering pointlessly through history and, quite literally, never really took off.

The Meander-thals' motto is thought by some scholars to have been, "Oom kooma ba jowie," which translates literally, "My shoelaces are untied."

The problem with most saunterers is they don't even know they're guilty of the crime. In order to find out whether you are indeed, um, rapid-movement challenged, just answer this simple questionnaire:

1] Do you frequently find yourself eyeing your grandma's walker, saying things like, "Hey, that's a nice walker. Does that come in different colors?"

2] Are the words "United States Government" or "State of ..." printed in the issuer portion of your paycheck?

3] Are you presently incarcerated?

4] Are you a citizen of any formerly Soviet-controlled country?

If you replied affirmatively to any of the above questions, you are very likely a saunterer.

So when I'm dancing behind these saunterers like a four-year-old that has to go to the bathroom, I find the strangest thing happens. From somewhere deep inside, I hear the words, "*My times are in your hands.*" Ps. 31:15a NIV

Suddenly I remember that all of my life, including my schedule, is in God's hands. I remember that surrendering myself to him means submitting my schedule, my priorities, and even my anxieties to his care. It's amazing how much easier life's annoyances are to bear when you're submitted to the Lord's will.

This revelation, of course, translates into my having a much more relaxed attitude. I used to harbor rather harsh feelings toward saunterers, but now I'm in favor of more lenient prison sentences for them. See how God's grace is permeating my life?

© 2005 Charles Marshall. *Charles Marshall is a nationally known Christian comedian and author. Visit his Web site at www.charlesmarshallcomedy.com or contact him via e-mail at charles@charlesmarshallcomedy.com.*