

Amazing Grace

A great song to get used to playing a melody while adding bass notes and simple arpeggios in a pretty straightforward way. Practice this one nice and slowly, pay attention to intonation and your tone in general, and see if you can get this one worked up beginning to end over the next week. It'll be good prep for "How Great Thou Art" which has a pretty similar approach overall.

Hand Position – repeating this note from last week!

Remember that your picking hand position is important. Try for a rounded hand and relaxed fingers and have your fingers in proximity of the strings you want to play in advance, i.e. don't 'dive bomb' at the strings from above. We want economy of motion, and we want to train your hand and fingers to learn certain positions/shapes so you can automatically get ready to, for example, play strings 4-3-1 or 6-3-1.

D phrase with changing bass note to suggest chord changes

This is a great exercise that you can loop around and around, and it's intended as prep work for "Here This Morning." I recommend spending 20 or 30 minutes dialing in this exercise before spending too much time on "Here This Morning."

Here This Morning

As solo Dobro tunes go, this one isn't too terribly complicated, but it does have some challenging bar moves and some instances where you need to change your picking 'grip' to get different sets of strings rapidly. Refer to the class recording if you're having any trouble keeping track of the rhythm. It's a little tricky because while it's in 4/4, there's a bar of 3 for the Bm and A chords each time. I recommend just trying to "feel it" instead of counting the bar of three, because the phrase there is syncopated, but you can always start counting "one two three four" again when you get to a D or G chord.

Next Week

Practice up, and I'll see you next week when we learn a harmony to "Here This Morning" and learn an approximation of Rob Ickes's version of "How Great Thou Art." Here's a link to Rob version, which is Dobro perfection. We'll do something similar but simplified in a few spots. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uKEsG19xw4>

Also, I have a couple of solo Dobro albums if you want to steep yourselves in solo Dobro. "Ashes and Coals" is an old one that's intended as mellow background music more than anything else. There are two songs with guitar as well, but otherwise it's all solo Dobro or Weissenborn. My latest is "Hello in There," my lonesome solo pandemic album, mostly with vocals, all with lap style Dobro or Weissenborn. Singing and playing Dobro at the same time requires its own separate toolkit, and I'll show you some of that for the last session of this workshop series. You can stream the albums here:

<https://ivanrosenberg1.bandcamp.com>