

First Love: A Deeper Understanding of Church
From the Book of Ephesians
Northern Virginia Church of Christ Fall 2017
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| <u>Date</u> | <u>Class</u> | <u>Memory Verse</u> |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| October 1 | Ephesians 1: Restore Awe | Ephesians 1:18 |
| October 8 | Ephesians 2: Get Grace | Ephesians 2:10 |
| October 15 | Ephesians 3: Behold the Bride | Ephesians 3:10 |
| October 22 | Ephesians 4: The Battle for Unity | Ephesians 4:15 |
| October 29 | Ephesians 5: The Song of Life | Ephesians 6:18 |
| November 5 | Ephesians 6/Revelation 2: First Love | Test |

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. (Ephesians 6:18, NIV)

Devotional Thoughts from Ephesians 5: The Song of Life

His Love Song (v.1-2)

The example artist

- We are “dearly loved children”
 - Imitate God's example (refer to Ephesians 1-4)
- Love people the way Jesus loved*
- Fully available – making time for what matters
 - Completely pure – not hypocritical
 - Never self-indulgent – doing this for him or us?

“Paul described Jesus' love: fully available, completely pure, never self-indulgent.” (First Love)

Impurity and Greed?

“Make yourself fully available for God's purposes... without a hint of impurity or worldly self-indulgence.” (First Love)

“Not even a hint... No immoral, impure or greedy person... has any inheritance in the kingdom” (NIV)

How to Start Singing (v.3-21)

1. Tune Your Instrument (v.3-7)

What causes you to stop singing?

- Impurity, Greed, and Hypocrisy – out of tune!
- ##### 2. Get in tune with the light (v. 8-14)
- Light exposes our sin and other's
 - We can't sing sincerely in sin (1 Cor. 13:1)
 - Don't be deceived – our sin hurts the body

“Our lives are a wakeup call to those in a spiritual slumber, shining the light of Christ on them... “by applying God's word to our lives, we not only find out his will, we become the people he ‘intended’ us to be... “God builds a choir of voices who sing the same song in harmony with God tuned by the Holy Spirit.” (First Love)

3. Follow the Sheet Music (v.15-17)

- God has a plan – our goal is to follow it!

4. Sing in the Spirit (v.18-21)

- Not an escape: every breath sings his songs

Could Paul have been married?

1 Corinthians 7:8 seems to indicate that Paul was married but is not now married

- Paul puts himself in the category of unmarried
- The term here refers to people who were married but are now unmarried (1 Cor. 7:11,34)
- As a good Pharisee, it is highly unlikely that Paul would have been single his entire life.

<http://www.dennyburk.com/was-the-apostle-paul-married/>

Our Three Songs

- Sing to encourage each other (v.19)
- Sing to give thanks to the very heart of God (v.20)
- Sing, resonating as one body in unison, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ (v.21)

The Wife's Song (v.22-24)

- God created wives to be a partner
- Disrespect tears a man down by attacking his deepest insecurities
- Respect empowers a man to believe in himself and to become all that God created him to be

"When the wife submits to the husband, a powerful transformation occurs, making the husband a better man, and mysteriously displaying the glory of Christ in their marriage." (First Love)

The Husband's Song (v.25-30)

- God created husbands with a built-in capacity to love
- Unloving behavior dishonors God and embitters the wife
- The more extravagantly generous the husband is with his wife, the stronger the bonds created in the relationship
- Love fuels the marriage, just as love fuels the body of Christ

"A man who does not love does not fully become the man God intended... your godly marriage proclaims Christ's love for his body as every husband loves his wife and every wife honors her husband." (First Love)

The Song of the Church (v.31-33)

Paul unlocks the secret of a powerful marriage by describing the power of Christ's love for the church. As Christ created the church to be loved, God created wives to be extravagantly cherished without limits. Just as the church is designed to resonate and magnify Christ when the body of Christ reveres, submits to, and respects Christ, God created husbands to be honored. Together these two dynamics amplify the song of the church and ultimately bring glory to God. (First Love)

The Children's Song: Honor (6:1-3)

- Respect your parents like God does!
"Obey your parents in the Lord"
"Honor your father & mother... command with a promise"

Honor
To assign value (give honor), as it reflects the personal esteem (value, preciousness) attached to it by the beholder (God)

The Parent's Song: Nourish (6:4)

- ἐκτρέφει = Nourish, nurture, or "bring up"
- Same word as "feed and care for your own body" (5:29)
"Speak to your children in a way they can understand. Do not nag your children or admonish them out of frustration. Nurture them, training them as the Lord trained you." (First Love)

Family in Ephesians

God demonstrated his love for us by adopting us as his children (1:5)

- into his family (2:19)
- to give us his inheritance and to bear his name (3:14)
- God set the example and we are to imitate him (5:1)
- as husbands and wives (5:25-32)
- children and parents (6:1-4)

"Every time you kiss your spouse, bring each other a gift, serve one another out of love, or pray together as a couple, your love projects the relationship between Christ and the church." (First Love)