



## First Love

Cho.

Lord I love you, yes I love you  
You're the cry and the hope of my soul  
And I want to always love you  
Your love is all I need to know

I

It's so amazing the way you saved me  
You came and took my heartache all away  
And I'm so thankful, my heart is grateful  
And that is why you'll always hear me say

Ii

Now I'm confessing it's just your blessing  
That has brought me safe thus far  
Should I know dark days,  
You'll be my joy, my strength  
You've brought me through it all  
That's why I sing your praise

Rev. 2:1 and Ephesians 5:

The goal is to reach your heart - **not** to impress you with me -

v **Not** to have you tell anyone - what a preacher

v Not to have you say - he hollered and yelled and spit and stomped

v Not to have you say - he used big words, what a vocabulary

But if before this service is over, you tell God,

God, I love you - I want to please you

Forgive me - my life isn't what it should be

It's not what you want it to be - I will change today

That's the goal - for you to draw closer to God

If we draw nigh to him, he'll draw nigh to us

EPHESIANS 5:22 **Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.**

23 For the **husband is the head of the wife**, even as **Christ is the head of the church**: and he is the saviour of the body.

24 Therefore as **the church is subject unto Christ**, so let the **wives be to their own husbands in every thing**.

25 **Husbands, love your wives**, even as **Christ also loved the church**, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought **men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.**

29 For **no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:**

30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a **man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.**

32 This is a great mystery: but **I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

33 Nevertheless let **every one of you** in particular **so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.**

REVELATION2:1 **Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;**

2 I know thy **works**, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes (**LIVE THE WAY YOU WANT TO**), which I also hate (**DETEST**).

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what **the Spirit saith unto the churches**; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Letters to the 7 churches - 4-fold application =

1) local = to the church actually addressed

2) admonitory = to all the churches in all time as a test by which they can discern their true spiritual state in the sight of god

3) personal = to him that hath an ear (as a test by which they can discern their true spiritual state in the sight of god)

4) prophetic = as disclosing 7 phases of the spiritual history of the church from about a.d. 96 to the end - today

Church is the bride of Christ (eph 5:23, 24, 25, 32) - we're going to talk about the bride

P.o.s. = to be a part of the bride / church

both letters were written to the church

Jn 3: born of water and spirit (Nicodemus)

Acts 2: peter's sermon

Ephesus - was the greatest temple city in Asia minor.

v It was dedicated to the great goddess artemis diana - the temple of artemis was the last of the great goddess temples to remain open and was the site of goddess worship well into the Christian era.  
- one of the 7 wonders of the world

OVER 400 X 200 FT PAGAN TEMPLE

Ephesus population up to 250,000

This is the place that God was sending a letter to (through John)



Jesus said (good points) "I know your...

v Works (doing an excellent job)

Matthew 7:22 **many will say to me in that day, lord, lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?**

23 and then will i profess unto them, **i never knew you**: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

v Love holiness (can't bear those that are evil)

v Tried those claimed to be something they weren't (apostles) you proved them liars - kept the doctrine pure -

didn't let false teachers come in and fool you

had the love of the truth

v Labor (for his name's sake) toiled, become weary

v Endured (borne [hardships, grief, pain, etc.]

v Patience - not grown weary in well-doing

(learned to bear/live with the hardships, etc.)

v You haven't given up or turned your back regardless of the circumstances

(fainted)

But in spite of all these "good" things, something is wrong -- you have left your first love

**You've changed**

v That spark is gone

v **That newlywed spirit is missing**

v That romance just isn't there- the playfulness of that childlike infatuation

v **The wonder is gone**

v That certain starry look in your eyes, that longing in your heart has left

v "You've lost that lovin' feelin'"

v You fulfil your duties, but for the wrong reasons - they're just duties to you

v **You're living by the rules but that's all**

The bride and groom fall in love it's a spiritual thing

but it's a physical thing

They want to be close - they don't want to be apart

They can sit next to each other for hours without talking and be perfectly content they want to be near each other

When you love someone - you want to talk to them

Spend time with them

You may write letters, poems, songs to express your feelings, your love

You think about them all the time -

You talk about them all the time

You want to please them - you live to please them

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You want each other - !

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Let's face it - the way to a man's heart is not through his stomach - regardless of who the idiot was that said that

What idiot says I want to marry her cause she won

v The blueberry pie contest at the Tanana valley fair

v The state chili cook-off

It's the intimacy that draws them together

The way to God's heart is not through your skills, talents, and abilities

God doesn't want you because you can sing/play/preach/give large offerings

(if God gives us those abilities/callings, we should use them for him - but that's beside the point)

**God wants an intimate relationship with you**

She takes a vow to love, honor, and cherish him till death doth them part

And to keep herself only unto him so long as they both shall live

She takes on certain roles and responsibilities in the household as does he

He provides for her welfare, her well-being, her protection, provides her with food, clothing, shelter, and as many things as his resources allow him to

He gives himself to her and keeps himself only unto her

He doesn't give himself to any other - just his bride

They become one flesh

She cleans the house, cooks the food, does the laundry, raises the children

She gives herself to him and keeps herself only unto him

She doesn't give herself to any other - just her groom

The Ephesian bride that Jesus is addressing here was still cleaning the house

She was still cooking the food,

She was still doing the laundry

She had gone through the hard times and kept going

She hadn't wearied in her work and labors

But she had lost that gleam in her eye

She didn't look longingly into his eyes anymore

She only gave herself to him out of just another duty to be performed as she had promised

And Jesus is saying, in essence,

v I can hire a cook,

v I can hire a housekeeper

v I can hire a babysitter

v I can have the laundry done

But I can't hire what is lost

That first love

It's against God's principles to hire a wife – (that's prostitution)

He's grateful that she has not given herself to anyone else but - she hasn't really given herself to him either

Jesus says he has "somewhat against her" because she has left her first love

She doesn't love to spend those intimate hours with him like she used to

Her prayer time has become a chore -

She hasn't really found a new love but she doesn't have that same love that she started with

Everything has turned to work and duty including the intimate times that just aren't as intimate when they are begrudgingly given

Jesus has become commonplace

There's no thrill in his presence

Although he still wants to be her delight, she looks at him as another weekly chore to be accomplished on Sunday or Wednesday or both if she's not too tired or too busy

And then get back to the other work that needs to be done

Jesus wants her to spend the time with him from a loving heart

He wants to be her delight

He wants to be the thrill of her life but she has let the peripherals become the focus of her life

The everyday work has become her life rather than him being her life and making him her number one priority

Jesus' warning was clear though when he demanded that she remember how things used to be and repent (turn around) and go back to them

Put him back in her life as first place

Rekindle that first love

Let him thrill and excite her again

Feel that longing inside for him and look forward to spending those intimate times - whether moments or hours

Don't make excuses for no time - take the time or make the time

Jesus expects his bride to be holy -

She willingly and lovingly complies - not only for the sake of duty or obedience, but out of a loving heart - if not, she's not his bride

She doesn't criticize and demand her rights to do as she wishes -

If you love me, keep my commandments

Man on the telephone to girlfriend - I love you so much

**I would climb Mt McKinley for you**

Swim the Amazon river, crocodiles/piranhas

I would cross the Mojave / Sahara desert

Are you gonna' come see me this evening

No, I just washed the car

And it looks like it might rain

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That may sound humorous - ridiculous but...

God, i 'd do anything for you, I'd go to the deepest jungles of South America and risk my life among the headhunters and cannibals for you

Will you be at prayer Saturday?

Well no, I've got some "stuff" to take care of

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God, I'd die for you, I wouldn't take the mark of the beast

Will you give up the things in your life that are displeasing to me and separate you from me?

No, you expect too much, don't expect me to make that kind of commitment

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God, if I won the lottery, I'd give half of it to the church

Will you pay your tithes?

You mean 10%? How will I live?

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A man called his pastor and told him – I won't be at church 'cause I feel like I might be aiming' to get ready to catch a cold

One of the problems with the world today is they don't understand the meaning of relationship

v It's just another word for fornication

If you don't put each other before self, you're wrong

If you don't put God first, you're wrong

(this is a hard saying - all left but the 12 disciples)

How many of you men would want your wife to treat you like you treat God?

How many of you women would want your husband to treat you like you treat God?

Is your desire = to live married to someone with that kind of commitment

Would you solemnly promise to be a part of the bride of Christ?

Would you give your all to him?

Would you give your life to him?

Would you give him your

v Hopes

v Dreams

v All that you have

v All that you are

v All that you ever hoped to be?

Would you give him

v Your yesterdays

v Your todays

v Your tomorrows?

Would you love him the way he loves you?

(and gave himself for you?)

Would you promise to love honor and cherish him 'til he calls you to heaven?

Would you take him to be your savior,

For better or for worse;

For richer or for poorer,

In sickness and in health,

And keep yourself only unto him,

As long as you shall live.

He loves you!

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