# Ephesians Prayer Memorization

October 20, 2019

## Song in the Bible

- Emphasized in the New Testament (Eph 5:15-20)
  - 15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Song in the Bible

- Emphasized in the Old Testament
  - Especially in
    - Psalms
    - Song of Solomon
    - Proverbs
  - But even portions of the narratives
    - Moses with all the people
      - Song of deliverance after leaving Egypt (Exodus 15)
    - David with all the people
      - Singing and dancing as the Ark was brought to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6)

## Song in the Bible

- Great there's singing in the Bible, so what?
- The point isn't valuing song over other forms of expression
- The songs are serving a purpose for the people
  - Commemorating big events
  - Focus on all aspects of relationship between God and His people
  - Keeping our hearts, minds, and lives focused on God
  - "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise" music is an enabler to living wisely with a heart focused on God
- We remember songs even when we don't want or need to...

- No study required to finish off these lyrics
  - "Don't stop, believing..."
  - "Whoooa! Living on.."
- Advertisers make use of it
  - "Nationwide is..."

- Structure matters!
  - "Music is a powerful mnemonic device, but the song's structure is what allows a person to recall the information it holds—not necessarily the catchy tune itself (that helps, though). The added melody encourages repetition and thus memorization, which is perhaps why patients with advanced Alzheimer's dementia have been known to sing along to a familiar song." WSJ Article
- Good structure helps your brain fill in the gaps when you might otherwise forget some words
  - Sections of the alphabet song end with a long E sound (rhyming) you know you're wrong if that isn't the sound
  - The structure (many devices can be used) serve as a double-check in your brain

- Familiar songs removing the structure
  - Don't stop having hope; hold onto those emotions
    - Don't stop, believing; hold onto that feeling
  - Whoa we're getting closer; hey, living by the seat of our pants
    - Whoa we're halfway there; whoa, living on a prayer
  - Nationwide is going to help
    - Nationwide is by your side

- It's a tool that's been effective for thousands of years
  - "Psychologists believe laws, stories and customs were presented as poems, chants and, eventually, as songs, in order for them to be memorized, and recalled, accurately," says Dr. Roediger. "The idea was that the chant would help people to remember large sets of information across the ages. <u>WSJ</u> <u>Article</u>

### Discussion

- 1. Is memorization worthwhile? What purpose does it serve us today?
- 2. Why does music help with memorization?
- 3. What is required to actually set scripture or other text to music?
  - 1. Can anyone do it? What level of professionalization is needed?
  - 2. Does all scripture/text lend itself to music?

## Music Credentials

- Monique
  - Graduated as a chemical engineer
  - Likes to sing
  - Played in high school marching band
    - Drum major as a senior
  - Extended family gifted musically
- Siene (age 11)
  - Plays piano and saxophone
  - Likes to sing
  - Extended family gifted musically
  - Left-brain dominant thinker
- NOTE: They are NOT composers let's take a look at their process

- Setting Ephesians 3 Prayer to Music
  - Step 1: Write it out by hand! Do it well and take your time.

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  - What words, phrases, or transitions are a struggle?

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- Step 3: Decide how to divide it into logical sections.
  - Give each syllable a count.
  - Look for words that rhyme, repeat, initiate, and conclude sections you've made.
  - The text must stay the same, no changing words to make it work. Use what you are given.
    - This is specifically required for this situation, liberties may be taken in other cases

## Making the Sections

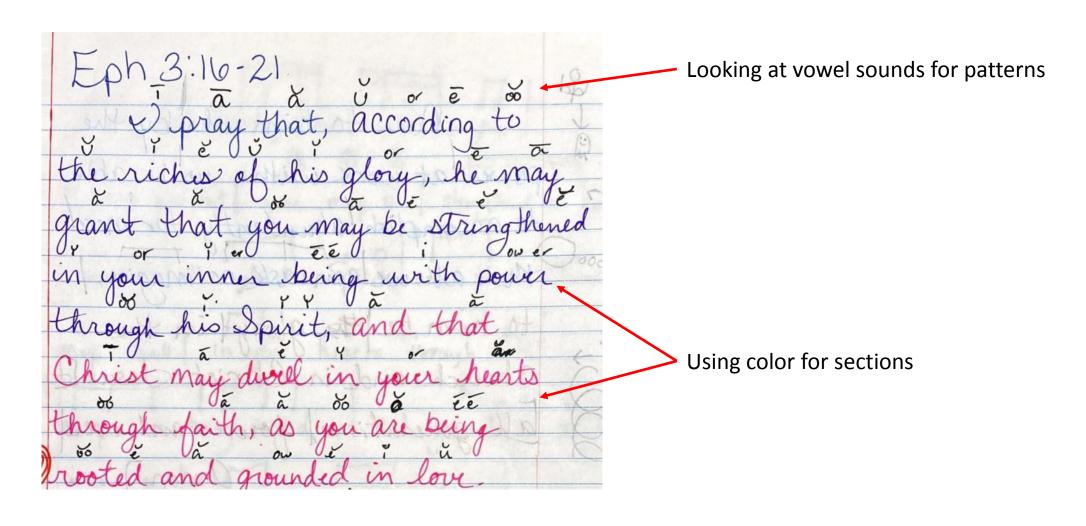
- I chose to make it 3 sections. 16&17, 18&19, 20&21
- Each section had an intro ("I pray that", "Now to him who") and a conclusion ("in love", "of God", "Amen")
- Each conclusion was naturally preceded by a repetitive pair ("rooted & grounded", "filled with all the fullness", and "to all generations, forever and ever")
- Within each section easy phrases begged to be addressed first.
  - "according to the riches of his glory", "his Spirit and that"
  - "breadth, and length, and height and depth" "and to know the love of Christ that, surpasses knowledge so that"
  - "able to accomplish, abundantly far more" "him be glory"

## Setting the Rhythm

- With so much about the heart and love, I slowed it down in the third section with a heart beat type rhythm, before accelerating to the finale.
- While in typical musical structure, the words are forced into the song's phrasing, here we enjoyed letting each section have its own rhythm, number of bars and tone.
- When memorizing anything, we value the ability to move through it quickly (we can do this in 50 seconds).
- Our tone is light and joyful.
- This is probably not the most accurate tonal interpretation of the passage, as he is begging for them to be able to grasp something so grand and community changing.
  - I tried to capture that with my slow section at the end.

## Setting the Rhythm

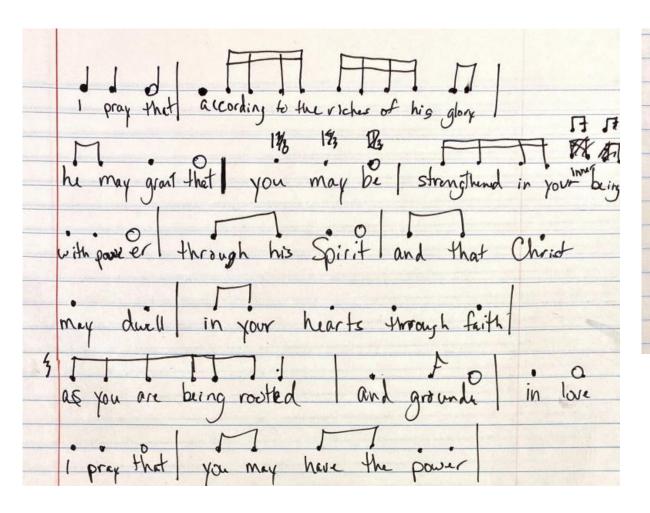
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- Does anyone else notice theology being done in this process?!

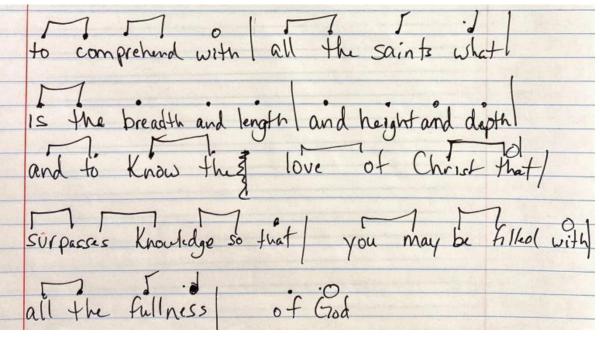


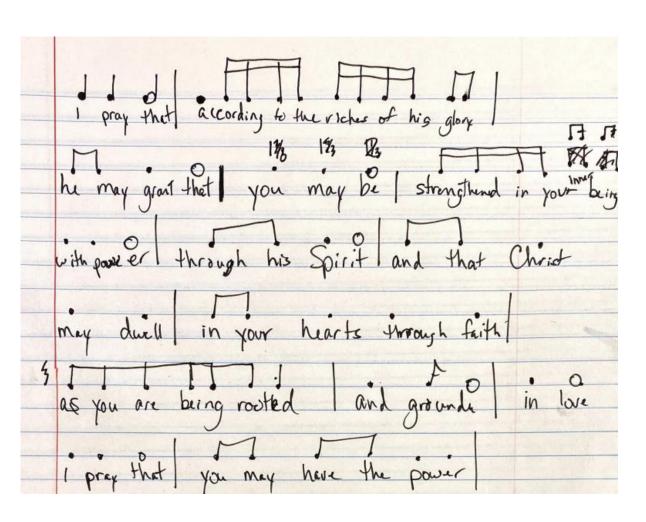
Starting to add notes to remember rhythm Making notes on how phrases relate

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- **Step 3**: Decide how to divide it into logical sections.
  - Give each syllable a count.
  - Look for words that rhyme, repeat, initiate, and conclude sections you've made.
  - The text must stay the same, no changing words to make it work. Use what you are given.
- **Step 4:** Give the easy sections a rhythm that works in your mind.
  - Consider using a Metronome to keep time.
  - Use your hands to play the rhythm on a table as you say it.
  - Repeat it over and over
  - Try different rhythms, allow your phrasing to include, or exclude a word, until there is a clear winner.
  - Draw bar lines and write notes over each syllable to help recall what you're doing.
  - Once the easy parts have taken shape, decide how you are going to work with the more challenging parts.







- This is the finished product
- Is it perfect not yet
  - Rhythm is spelled out
  - Can we use it to learn the Eph 3 prayer YES!
- They had FUN making this!
- AND after so much repetition, they had it memorized and with no trouble recalling it the next day, or even a week later.
  - They also documented it enough that it can used and improved!

#### Next Steps / Other Notes

- Have someone more musically inclined set it to music
  - My 14-year-old is working on putting music to it, but we may not be able to take it to 'song level'.
  - I'm sure others could improve what we've done here.
  - This effort began by trying to take this passage into our minds and hearts and encourage our church, and to this end, we feel, we have been successful.
- Learn it!

- Discuss with Sam and Monique
  - Sam set the prayer to Walk the Line by Johnny Cash
  - Monique set the prayer to a beat she developed with Siene

Work on it together (v16-19)!

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If It

In may grant that you may be strengthened in your being with power of through his Spirit and that Christ

may duell in your hearts through faith! as you are being rootted and grounds in love pray that you may have the power

to comprehend with I all the saints what I is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that Surpasses knowledge so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God