

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...

Song for Memorization

- No study required to finish off these lyrics
 - “Don’t stop, believing...”
 - “Whooooa! Living on..”
- Advertisers make use of it
 - “Nationwide is...”

Song for Memorization

- 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

Song for Memorization

- 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

Song for Memorization

- 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. [WSJ Article](#)

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

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

- **Setting Ephesians 3 Prayer to Music**

- **Step 1:** Write it out by hand! Do it well and take your time.

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

Eph 3:16-21
I pray that, according to
the riches of his glory, he may
grant that you may be strengthened
in your inner being with power
through his Spirit, and that
Christ may dwell in your hearts
through faith, as you are being
rooted and grounded in love.

I pray that, you may
have the power to comprehend,
with all the saints, what 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. like rooted + grounded

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 - What natural phrases, occur?
 - What lends itself quickly to memory?
 - 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.

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

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in your inner being with power
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through faith, as you are being
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Looking at vowel sounds for patterns

Using color for sections

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

Starting to add notes to remember rhythm

pray that, you may
have the power to comprehend,
with all the saints, what 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.

like rooted + grounded

Making notes on how phrases relate

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 - 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.

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

I pray that according to the riches of his glory
he may grant that you may be strengthened in your being
with power through his Spirit and that Christ
may dwell in your hearts through faith
as you are being rooted and grounded in love
I pray that you may have the power

to comprehend with all the saints what
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

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

Handwritten musical notation for the Ephesians 3 Prayer. The lyrics are written below the notes on a five-line staff. The music is written in a simple, accessible style, using a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "I pray that according to the riches of his glory he may grant that you may be strengthened in your being with power through his Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith as you are being rooted and grounded in love I pray that you may have the power". The notation includes various note values, rests, and bar lines. There are some annotations above the notes, such as "1 1/2", "1 2/3", and "D3", which likely refer to specific rhythmic or melodic patterns. The word "inner" is written above the notes for "being" and "power".

- 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 be used and improved!

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

- **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!

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

- 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

Memorizing Ephesians 3 Prayer

- Work on it together (v16-19)!

I pray that | according to the riches of his glory |

he may grant that | you may be | strengthened in your ^{inner} being

with power | through his Spirit | and that Christ

may dwell | in your hearts through faith |

4/4 as you are being rooted | and grounded | in love

I pray that | you may have the power |

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