***Till Death Do Us Part***

**The Covenant of Our Spirit-Filled Worship; Ephesians 5:15-20**

I. Our Mutual Command – “Be filled with the Spirit.”

II. Our Mutual Activity – Worship

* “Speaking to one another…”
* “in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”
* “singing and making melody with your heart”

III. Our Mutual Audience – The Lord

* “to the Lord”
* “always giving thanks”
* “for all things”

IV. Our Mutual Cause – For the glory of the Father through the exaltation of His Son

* “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.”

Elements of Worship from Psalm 34

I. Magnification: Seeing God as He truly is as infinitely glorious and precious and worthy and all satisfying in His attributes and works, especially in seeing who God is and what He has done in His Son Jesus Christ. Psalm 34:3

II. Humility: Seeing ourselves as we truly are, as infinitely needy and fragile and contingent and sinful in all our essential attributes and behaviors, especially in seeing who God is and what He had done in His Son Jesus Christ. Psalm 34:2

III. Exaltation: Telling ourselves and others what we have seen concerning our infinitely glorious and precious and valuable and worthy and all satisfying God, especially those things pertaining to His Son Jesus Christ. Psalm 34:3

IV. Praise: Expressing to God through music and prayer because we have seen our infinitely glorious and precious and valuable and worthy God, especially His work of salvation brought about through His Son Jesus Christ in light of our need. Psalm 34:1

V. Joy: Experiencing the all satisfying presence of God in a way that transcends this world and our routine daily activities, verifying the truth of what we have seen, told to ourselves and others and what we have expressed to God – that He is infinitely precious. Psalm 34:2

Worship as Covenant: God gave us the church so we could glorify God through the exaltation of His Son together for our greater joy. Every aspect of my life is to be an act of worship. Music is God’s gift to us as individuals and to the church to grant particular focus of our worship.

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**The Covenant of Our Spirit-Filled Worship; Ephesians 5:15-20**

**Scripture Reading and Prayer by Eric Hedin, Ephesians 5:15-20 (NLT) (slides)**

**I. Introduction**

* Appropriate that we would discuss this topic on Valentine’s Day
* Love, affections, emotions expressed – these are the words to describe the romantic love between people, but these words also describe the expressed love of people toward God
* God uses these elements of our heart to help us in our expressions of worship toward Him – the Spirit of God comes and gives testimony to His presence through the use of these deep, inner feelings when we worship
* This is why, when we worship, we sense the heart stirrings that are so similar to our feelings of love for others
* Struggle – which passage should I use, which is the reason I don’t prefer topical preaching because I don’t want to find a text to prove a sermon
* **Read John 4:23-24**
* Worship must be in spirit and truth
* Spirit to prevent the dead orthodoxy that can be part of our worship
* Truth to prevent emotionalism from driving our worship
* Simeon in the temple with the infant child Jesus – truth as he declares that Jesus “is the light of the Gentiles and the glory of His people Israel,” spirit in that he takes the baby and starts to sing, having come into the temple in the power of the Holy Spirit
* Mary and the costly perfume – truth as she is bowed at the feet of Jesus, spirit in that she has taken something of value and given it to Christ in a dramatic fashion
* The twofold necessary and sufficient requirements for worship to occur
* The Father seeks after worshipers – this is why we have been made, why we have a voice, we there is music, why we gather to worship

**II. Ephesians 5**

* Despite the beauty of this passage in John’s gospel, the passage does not deal with the greater issue of worship as a corporate experience
* I. Our Mutual Command – “Be filled with the Spirit.” **(Slide)**
* This is not a suggestion, meaning that there is something we can do for this to happen
* In Ephesians, Paul contrasts this with drunkenness – do not be filled with wine
* In Colossians 3:16, Paul says it this way **(Slide)**
* In Colossians it is the Word of Christ richly dwelling in us that prompts worship
* So we see even in Paul that the issue of spirit and truth in the same admonition
* II. Our Mutual Activity – Worship
  + “Speaking to one another…” This is something we do together “to one another”
  + “Speaking” – communicating because later he says with singing and melody
  + “in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”
* The exact meaning of these three words is difficult to distinguish, but the meaning seems to be the depth and variety of music that marked the early church and marks our worship today
* Consider the variety that is occurring all over the world today by fellow believers – Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, just in America there is great variety
* Psalms – similar in themes to the Old Testament Psalter **(Slide)**
* Hymns – theological New Testament themes **(Slide)**
* Spiritual Songs – Songs that express more emotive themes **(Slide)**
* Maybe this is not what Paul had in mind, but the reason we do not have in Scripture a particular style of music as requirement was to allow the difference of time and culture and personality of individuals to freely express these themes
* Now back to the verse **(Slide)**
  + “singing and making melody with your heart”
  + With the heart protects us from dead orthodoxy in our singing and making melody WITH YOUR HEART
* III. Our Mutual Audience – The Lord
  + “to the Lord”
  + This is where we are directing our mutual language – we sing to the Lord
  + “always giving thanks”
  + With thankful hearts
  + “for all things”
* IV. Our Mutual Cause – For the glory of the Father through the exaltation of His Son
  + “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father.”
  + We exist to bring glory to God the Father through the exaltation of His Son

**III. From the Psalms** Elements of Worship from Psalm 34

* **Read Psalm 34:1-3 (Slide)**
* I. Magnification: Seeing God as He truly is as infinitely glorious and precious and worthy and all satisfying in His attributes and works, especially in seeing who God is and what He has done in His Son Jesus Christ. **Read Psalm 34:3**
* Two ways that things are magnified
* Really good things that can replace our view of God and become evil
* Christmas lights and Christmas tree for the enjoyment of my kids, but not as a replacement for our relationship
* Many children could look at Michael Angelo’s Sistine Chapel and prefer see a twenty minute cartoon on television – you can see the child totally disinterested in the masterpiece and would be much happier with a cheaply made 20 minute cartoon
* II. Humility: Seeing ourselves as we truly are, as infinitely needy and fragile and contingent and sinful in all our essential attributes and behaviors, especially in seeing who God is and what He had done in His Son Jesus Christ. **Read Psalm 34:2**
* It is a necessary condition of our corporate and individual worship that we consciously and purposely humble ourselves
* It is one thing to acknowledge that God is great, it is another thing to say that God is great and we are not
* Most of the world cannot worship God because they think too highly of themselves
* III. Exaltation: Telling ourselves and others what we have seen concerning our infinitely glorious and precious and valuable and worthy and all satisfying God, especially those things pertaining to His Son Jesus Christ. **Read Psalm 34:3**
* Having see God as He is and having seen ourselves as we truly are, we exalt God
* IV. Praise: Expressing to God through music and prayer because we have seen our infinitely glorious and precious and valuable and worthy God, especially His work of salvation brought about through His Son Jesus Christ in light of our need. **Psalm 34:1**
* Music is a gift by God to us to express all kinds of emotions but especially in our ability to express to God our love and gratitude for Him
* V. Joy: Experiencing the all satisfying presence of God in a way that transcends this world and our routine daily activities, verifying the truth of what we have seen, told to ourselves and others and what we have expressed to God – that He is infinitely precious. **Psalm 34:2**
* There is a transformation that takes place within the heart of an individual and a congregation when we worship
* Worship as Covenant: God gave us the church so we could glorify God through the exaltation of His Son together for our greater joy. Every aspect of my life is to be an act of worship. Music is God’s gift to us as individuals and to the church to grant particular focus of our worship.