

Message Extras

a little something extra to keep you connected to Jesus this week

Message Extras accompany the [weekly message](#).

The Lord God Almighty, through the power of the Holy Spirit, in the person of Jesus Christ is our first love. Did you know, that before God spoke the universe into motion, He looked out over all time and saw you. And oh, how He loved you! Oh, how He loves you!

The Lord is your first love because He first loved you! Sometimes, when life, when culture wears us down, we forget the love of God. We know God loves us, but we stop experiencing His great love. And when we stop experiencing His love, we seek things other than God to fill that part of our heart only He can fill. The result: we forget our first love.

Paul wrote a prayer for the Ephesians and for us that I believe is designed for two purposes. One, it is a reminder to us why we must never forget our first love. But if we, like the Ephesians forget our first love, this prayer reminds us of the love of God and provides a pathway to always remember our first love.

I bow my knees [in reverence] before the Father [of our Lord Jesus Christ]... May He grant you out of the riches of His glory, to be strengthened and spiritually energized with power through His Spirit in your inner self, [indwelling your innermost being and personality], so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through your faith. And may you, having been [deeply] rooted and [securely] grounded in love, be fully capable of comprehending with all the saints (God's people) the width and length and height and depth of His love [fully experiencing that amazing, endless love]; and [that you may come] to know [practically, through personal experience] the love of Christ which far surpasses [mere] knowledge [without experience], that you may be filled up [throughout your being] to all the fullness of God [so that you may have the richest experience of God's presence in your lives, completely filled and flooded with God Himself]. (Ephesians 3: 14, 16-19 AMP)

There is a lot here to unpack, and I encourage you in your devotions this week to meditate on this prayer, even pray this prayer over yourself and your loved ones. Here are a few keys in this prayer to hold onto so that you will never forget your first love:

1. God strengthens and energizes you through the Holy Spirit in your inner self so that you love Him.
2. Your faith in Christ opens your heart to Christ so that He lives in you.
3. As Christ lives in you, His love goes deep, like the roots of a tree and His love makes you secure.
4. As you are secure in Christ, He gives the ability to comprehend the width and length and height and depth of His love.
5. As you comprehend the vastness of the love of Christ, you will understand His love transcends knowledge as you fully experience His amazing, endless love.
6. Christ doesn't love you so that you will love Him back. He loves you so that you will experience the fullness of God in your entire being.

We forget our first love when we seek to fill ourselves with anything other than God. We remember our first love when we live by faith in Christ. A life lived by faith in Christ is a life completely filled and flooded with God Himself. Such a life, such a love, transcends knowledge. It is only truly known and understood through experience. Oh, how He loves you! If you have forgotten your first love, go to Him now. He is waiting with arms wide open.

Let me share a few thoughts for those who feel worn down by culture. A feeling of being worn down does not mean you have forgotten your first love. But it does put you at risk to forget. We must be on guard against allowing low emotion to cloud our vision. You can be worn down and not feel the love of God, and still fully experience His endless love.

We must not be disappointed if the tides are not always equally high. Even at low tide the ocean is just as full. – A. B. Simpson

I have often wondered why the Lord leads his children to dry places in life ... places where it seems that the Lord has somehow taken a part of Himself from us, as if that were possible. It is in these times that our hearts are most tempted with discouragement, our faith most tempted with doubt, and our eyes most tempted to tell our feet where to walk. When these times come, we must remember that the fullness of the Lord is always with us, and we are meant to continually turn to Him.

Even at low tide, the ocean is full. We are not always called to mount on wings like eagles, nor are we always called to run. There are days when we are simply called to walk by faith. Remember, no matter what season of life the good Lord leads you to, if you have made Him Lord of your life, at all times His fullness is with you. He never leaves you nor forsakes you. So while emotions may be low, and there are few hints of the warm excitement of the Holy Spirit stirring the heart, still His fullness is in you, and He is whispering, "I love you My child. Why are you so downcast? I love you. Walk with Me ... just walk with Me."

- Have you forgotten Jesus, your first love?
- Jesus has not forgotten you! Read the prayer in Ephesians 3 again, but this time pray it over yourself as follows:

I bow my knees in reverence before You my Heavenly Father. Grant me out of the riches of Your glory, to be strengthened and spiritually energized with power through the Holy Spirit in my inner self, in my innermost being and personality. Jesus, my faith is in You. I love you and I trust you. I open my heart to You. Come and live in my heart. May the roots of Your life go deep in me, and securely ground me in Your love. Make me fully capable to comprehend the width and length and height and depth of Your love. Draw me near O Lord and that I may fully experience Your amazing, endless love. Let me know through personal experience the love of Christ which far surpasses mere knowledge. As I experience Your love, may I be filled up throughout my being to all the fullness of God so that I may have the richest experience of God's presence in my life, completely filled and flooded with God Himself. (Ephesians 3: 14, 16-19 AMP)

- How are you protected from forgetting your first love, when you are completely filled and flooded with God Himself?
- If you are worn down by culture, how does the illustration of the ocean at low tide help you lean into the Lord?

