



Fill My Cup Lord....

A weekly devotional provided through the Women's
Ministry of
First Congregational Church of Hopkinton, MA

I had some interesting teachers in high school. My 10th grade math teacher was known to sing the praises of trigonometry while accompanying himself on the banjo. My German teacher also used music as an educational tool. She made us sing Beatles songs in German, oblivious to the fact that doing so made us totally uncool. But even now, twenty years later, I can tell my husband that I want to hold his hand in either English or German, depending on my mood. Frau Talke once made our class sing the German words for various vegetables to the tune of "The Blue Danube" and to this day, if I am ever lost in Munich, I know I can at least walk into a restaurant and order a salad.

Music is powerful. It not only evokes emotion and memories, but it has an uncanny way of helping us commit things to memory. Perhaps that's why there are many passages in the Bible that are actually written as songs. They are found in the book of Psalms. If you flip through the book of Psalms, you will find that many of the Psalms begin with words like this: "***For the director of music. With stringed instruments.***" They are praises, laments, and requests directed at God, set to music – powerfully emotive and easily committed to memory.

But songs aren't just found in the Psalms. In Deuteronomy 31, we find an example of a time when God Himself directed the Israelites to learn a song in order to commit His words to memory. He spoke to Moses and predicted that after Moses died, the Israelites would rebel against God. He wanted the Israelites to remember His words of warning, so He asked Moses to teach the Israelites the warning through a song. Read what He says: "***Now write down this song and teach it to the Israelites and have them sing it, so that it may be a witness for me against them.*** When I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, the land I promised on oath to their ancestors, and when they eat their fill and thrive, they will turn to other gods and worship them, rejecting me and breaking my covenant. ***And when many disasters and calamities come on them, this song will testify against them, because it will not be forgotten by their descendants.*** I know what they are disposed to do, even before I bring them into the land I promised them on oath.' ***So Moses wrote down this song that day and taught it to the Israelites.***" When God wanted His people to commit His words to memory, He turned to the power of song.

I don't know how often you try to commit scripture to memory or what methods you use to do so. But I wonder if you realize how much scripture you know because of the music you sing. I didn't always realize what I was actually singing in church, but over time, as I read my Bible and stumbled across scripture that I knew because I had sung it many times, I was amazed. Here are just a few examples:

- "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere." Psalm 84:10
- "But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high." Psalm 3:3
- "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8
- "For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations." Psalm 100:5
- "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Deuteronomy 6:4

If you find that you struggle to learn scripture, using a search engine to help you find songs based on scripture can be a good place to start. If you ever wonder why some of the songs we sing in church repeat the same phrases over and over, you might want to investigate those phrases. They may just be God's words lifted straight from scripture and set to music to help you commit His powerful words to your memory – to help you write them on your heart.

There is no time like the present to memorize God's word. Whatever method you use, why don't you commit to memorizing some scripture this summer? Open your Bible, turn on your iPod, or sing the songs you bring home from church. His Words will stick with you for years to come and will spring to mind when you need them most. I'm going to memorize some scripture this summer. Will you join me?