



# DAILY FAITH PRACTICES

## Sunday, August 14-20 (B) – Ephesians 5:15-20

**Focus:** *Making Melodies to the Lord*

### **word of life**

**“...as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melodies to the Lord in your hearts...”** Ephesians 5:19 (NRSV)

Read Ephesians 5:15-20

This passage begins with basic, common-sense advice: “Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time. . .” (Ephesians 5:15 NRSV) This message about wise or foolish living is a proverb and parallels the first reading of the lectionary found in Proverbs 9:1-6.

We are to be cautious and aware of not only how we live, but how we use our time. This proverb found in Ephesians recognizes time as a limited commodity. One can almost hear these words coming from the mouth of a wise grandparent to a grandchild.

1. *What are other things wise people do?*
2. *How do unwise people use their time?*

Making the most of our time on this earth could be interpreted as living life at a fast speed and cramming as many experiences in as possible. But, the wise person knows life is not so much about quantity of possessions or experiences as it is about quality. This passage continues with an ominous phrase, “. . . because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:16 NRSV) Just because Christians want to follow Christ does not mean there are no temptations to draw followers from God.

3. *How might days be evil?*
4. *Is it helpful to be reminded of the evil on earth? Explain.*

Wise people discern what the will of the Lord is and live their days accordingly. Discerning is not a one-time process, but the wise person realizes seeking God’s will is a continual process until death itself.

5. *What can we do to discern the will of God?*
6. *What keeps you from doing foolish things?*

There is a plea for followers of Christ to not get drunk with wine. Instead of being filled with alcohol, Christians are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Wine was the primary drink of the first century, but drinking too much wine can blur sound thinking and decision-making. This is just a single example.

The wise person gives thanks to God at all times and in all circumstances. “. . .as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melodies to the Lord in your hearts...” (Ephesians 5:19 NRSV)

What a beautiful phrase! “Making melodies to the Lord in your hearts. . .” is something we can do whether we are musical or not. It is not about being able to read music or sing in tune. A melody in our heart comes from our relationship with God which cannot help but overflow with a life of thanksgiving.

7. *How do you make a melody to the Lord in your heart?*
8. *How does music invite people into a closer relationship with God?*

## **word among us**

The confirmation class was asked to select a hymn or song to be used at the worship service when the class affirmed their baptism. Joe started snapping his fingers and yelled out, “I got it. I know what we need to sing. It’s that new tune. Oh what is it called? Ah, I got it. *Amazing Grace*. I love that song.”

1. *What is it about some songs that people love to sing?*
2. *What is one of your favorite hymns?*

Much has written about Martin Luther’s love for music. Luther is attributed to say, “Music is God’s greatest gift. It has often so stimulated and stirred me that I felt the desire to preach.” (*What Luther Says: A Practical In-Home Anthology for the Active Christian*, compiled by Ewald M. Plass, Concordia Publishing House, 1959, p. 982) Because of his high regard for music and the way music could impact people, Luther was known for taking tunes sung in taverns and putting words of scripture to it. He wondered why those who went to taverns should get all the easy-to-sing music.

3. *What role does music play in your church?*
4. *What kind of music do you like to sing at church?*
5. *In your opinion, what kind of music does God prefer for worship?*
6. *How does a faith community select music to touch the lives of a variety of ages and interests?*

This passage of Ephesians strongly encourages followers of Christ to praise God by singing and making music, “. . . but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing praises and hymns and spiritual songs among yourself, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts. . .” (Ephesians 5:18-19 NRSV) The Spirit of God comes to us in a variety of ways, but note the emphasis on singing.

7. *Describe a time when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit through music.*
8. *Is music necessary for worship? (Or can a person worship without music?) Explain.*

## **faith practice in daily life**

### **Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed**

Have you ever had the experience of a tune of music getting in your head and it would not go away? It might be jingle of a commercial or music from the radio. Maybe it is a song from childhood or long ago. It is interesting to imagine a melody to the Lord being repeated over and over again.

9. *Would it be helpful on your daily walk with Christ to have a melody to the Lord repeated over and over in your mind and heart? Explain.*
10. *How easy or difficult is it to be angry with someone while singing praises to God? Explain.*

Take some time to imagine your life as a melody to the Lord. Pause in silence to hear that melody. Listen for instruments which accompany that melody.

11. *What does it mean for your life to be a melody to the Lord?*

### **Prayer**

Creator of music, create in us a melody to the Lord which gives delight and pleasure to you. Amen

## ***last word***

Take a walk this week  
and listen for your melody to the Lord.