



A Spiritual Encouragement Message August 7, 2020

Filled With The Spirit by Andrew Lemus

On Wednesday, I was fortunate enough to meet with several of the remarkable members of our youth group to talk about Paul's second letter to Timothy, how he encouraged him, and how we are encouraged today. When asked what lifts their spirits up when they are spiritually down one student said relationships in the body. Another student said the word of God. A third student said singing. It is that third one that I would like to focus on in this article of encouragement.

I recall walking into the Canyon church of Christ (Canyon Church) up in Yorba Linda about 8 years ago with my wife and three children. We walked into that congregation spiritual beaten up, down, and discouraged in so many ways. Having just stepped away from a three-year evangelistic endeavor that we poured our hearts and souls into to only see it all crumble apart was hard for my family, especially my wife and I. Where were we going to go? What were we going to do? We were walking in a bit of a fog and were having a hard time seeing our next step in this challenging thing called life.

We walked in, put on our best Sunday morning smiles, said hi to the Christian brethren that we knew and didn't know, and sat in our seats to do what we do every Sunday. We heard the welcome and nodded, bowed our heads in prayer, and prepared ourselves to sing when the song leader stood up. Dry, spirit-deprived, down, discouraged, disorientated, and depressed we prepared ourselves to sing with the Canyon Church. *(It is amazing that even 8 years later I still tear up thinking about this remarkable time of renewal!)*

It was like the Lord and His church that meets in Yorba Linda knew what we needed that day and the teaching, admonishment, and encouragement coming off of the lips of those saints were aimed directly at my wife and I. I remember my wife and I, crying, looking at each other, soaking up the life-giving songs that were being proclaimed by our Christian family through music. Neither of us had to say a word to each other, we just looked at each other and nodded in affirmation, knowing exactly what we had been missing

and what the Lord was providing that morning. The two of us, like a parched land, were swallowing up the life being taught in song by our brothers and sisters as we were filled with the Spirit.

I imagine a lot of you can empathize with my story having been away from the body at Johnson Avenue for around five months now. The beautiful singing that comes off of each of our lips when we unite together on the first day of the week is encouraging, motivating, and uplifting. Our souls have grown a bit dry as we long to sing to one another and the Lord in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with our hearts.

When are we going to be able to gather together as the Lord's body to build each other up in song? When are we all going to be able to look at each other again, face to face, as we sing to God and each other? I wish I could give an answer but unfortunately, I do not. While I appreciate the limited, mask-covered singing we are doing now, it is just not the same. What I can say is that like the rest of you, I look forward to singing to one another again. Let us not grow weary in this time of trial but rather let us look forward to the being back together, greeting one another, and building one another up in the Lord through song.

So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another I psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. Paul the Apostle (Ephesians 5:17-21)