

## YOUNG AND IN LOVE

By John F. Hall

I admit that I have a long way to go before I can become a “Master” story teller. I have become too mellow and too sentimental in my ripe old age of being nearly 77 years old. I try not to repeat things too often, but I will repeat what Ralph Waldo Emerson said: “To leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed condition, to know that even one life has breathed easier because you have lived — that is to have succeeded.”



I wrote my first love story and my first love song this year, called: “We Had it All.” I wrote them for my wife, Paula. That is a dramatic departure from my typical stories that tell about my true adventures in life. I found myself wanting to write another love story. The first reason is seeing a young couple, Ciera and Kyler holding hands and being in love. The second reason is that they reminded me of that time, so long ago, when Paula and I were so desperately in love. In my first love story I mentioned that love, like life, can sometimes be short and full of uncertainty. But I also believe it is better to have loved someone than never to have loved at all.

I wish that I put those magical times, when I was young and in love, in a bottle. There is a song written by James J. Croce called “Time in a Bottle.” These are his lyrics: “If I could save time in a bottle, the first thing that I'd like to do is to save every day -'til eternity passes away, just to spend them with you. If I could make days last forever; if words could make wishes come true, I'd save every day like a treasure, and then again, I would spend them with you. But there never seems to be enough time to do the things once you find them. I've looked around enough to know that you're the one that I want to go through time with. If I had a box just for wishes, and dreams that had never come true, the box would be empty, except for the memory of how they were answered by you. But there never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do once you find them. I've looked around enough to know that you're the one I want to go through time with.”

The third reason for writing this story is partly due to the sermon by my Pastor in which he talked about the characteristics of love as found in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verses 4-8. The other part to the third reason is because my nephew, Joe DeHeadoville, asked me to read those verses at his wedding. It was held in the Chapel at the Valley Forge Military Academy and College in Wayne, Pennsylvania. This is what I read: “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.”

In Mark, Chapter 12, Verse 30, are these words: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” It is when your day begins with gratitude and thankfulness to Christ that love may survive.

Ira F. Stanphill wrote the hymn, "Happiness is the Lord." These are his lyrics: "Happiness is to know the Savior. Living a life within His favor; having a change in my behavior. Happiness is the Lord. Happiness is a new creation. Jesus and me in close relation. Happiness is the Lord. Real joy is mine, no matter if teardrops start. I've found the secret, it's Jesus in my heart. Happiness is to be forgiven. Living a life that's worth livin'; taking a trip that leads to heaven. Happiness is the Lord. Happiness is the Lord."

When I was a young teenager living in Miami, Florida, I would walk down Flagler Street and listen to my transistor radio. One of the songs that I enjoyed listening to was written by Berry Gordy Jr., Gwendolyn Fuqua, and Raguel Davis, titled, "To Be Loved." These are their lyrics: "Someone to care, someone to share. Lonely hours and moments of despair. To be loved, to be loved, oh what a feeling to be loved. Someone to kiss, someone to miss. When you're away to hear from me today. To be loved, to be loved, oh what a feeling to be loved. Some wish to be a king or a queen. Some wish for fortune or fame. But to be truly, truly, truly loved is more than all of these things. Someone to kiss, someone to miss. When you're away to hear from me today. To be loved, to be loved, oh what a feeling to be loved."

When I write my stories, I have music and songs spinning around in my mind. There were times, in the past, when I felt that Christ might have taken away the grace upon grace upon grace, and His inspiration, that He has so freely given to me, to write all the stories that I have written these past two years. I wrote this story for Ciera and Kyler. They started coming to church. They are a young couple in love. My story is my gift to them. Christ puts people in our life for a reason that only He knows. I'm a mentor and a teacher. I carry a small metal Christmas ornament in my pocket. It is in the shape of an angel. It has these words: "With God all things are possible."

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