

Artist:

Carrie Underwood

Song: Little Toy Gun

Album: Greatest Hits, Decade 1

By: Jeff Williamson

Williamson@unionavenue.org

Theme

Family

Teaching Point

Family relationships are of utmost importance.

Opening Questions

What have been some of the most difficult moments in your family? Does someone in your house deal with anxiety, isolation, and hurt as a result of the family "fight"? How does your family respond to that kind of situation?

Discussion

When you listen to the words of Carrie Underwood's, "Little Toy Guns" you can clearly discern her message. The singer (and mom-to-be) discusses the harmful effects of fighting in front of children, and how parents' words can wound deeply even if they aren't directed at the children themselves. While listening to the song one can imagine the hurt that "yelling" in the household does to the children and the family.

Each of us has experienced those moments in the home. Mom and Dad are having a loud discussion about finances, children, or other difficulties in the home. The Rev. Billy Graham was quoted once saying, "The true test of a Christian is how he or she acts in the home." How have you responded to those difficult moments in your home? How have you corrected the problem if you are the source?

Read **Ephesians 6:1-4**. Paul lays out a "job description" for the family. It appears to be simple – children obey and honor your parents, fathers don't anger the children, and finally bring up the home in the teaching of the Lord. That may not feel like it is remotely possible to have a "normal" family today, much less this un-realistic perfect family that Paul mentions. Just know that what Paul describes is indeed possible, because with God all things are doable and can be overcome.

Conclusion

Remember that stronger individuals make stronger families. How strong is your relationship with God?

Artist:

Ellie Goulding

Song: Love Me Like You Do

Album: Fifty Shades of Grey Soundtrack

By: David Garntt

davidg@srbconline.net

Theme

Love; Romantic

Teaching Point

Sex is healthy within the context of a loving and Biblical marriage.

Opening Questions

What do you think love looks like? How does love positively and negatively affect you? Have you ever "loved" someone to the point you couldn't think clearly? Or to the point that they could do whatever and you were okay with it just because, "they still loved you?"

Discussion

Love and sex are not totally evil. Ellie Goulding sings about allowing her guy to "love her" the way that he does, whatever that is. His love for her has her to the point that he is her everything, she can't see straight, and she can't think clearly. He has complete freedom to do whatever he wants because she is under his spell. This kind of love is dangerous because we become fixated and obsessed in a way with a person. That person consumes our thoughts, our time, our energy, and whatever love that we have to offer. He or she becomes a god of sorts in our life. Sometimes this can lead to unhealthy and maybe even unwanted physical relationships that lead to further physical and emotional damage.

God says that we must have no other gods before Him. (**Exodus 20:3-6**) He should consume our thoughts, time, energy, and love. We aren't to turn things into other gods or worship any other gods (vs.4-5). When we focus on our special someone more than we focus on God, have we not given that person top priority in our life and moved God to a lower position of order?

Falling in love (particularly with the person you will or have married) is not wrong in any way, and sex in the bonds of marriage is not either. God created us to have that special someone to be our friend, helper, lover, and to share in the joy of parenting together. What we have to be careful of is falling in love with someone to the point that we actually fall out of love with God. We have to guard ourselves because no human can compare to or should ever take the place of God.

Conclusion

Ask God to retake that top place of priority and love in your life. Ask Him to forgive you of allowing people and relationships to come in front of Him. Thank Him for loving you. Ask Him to continue to "love you like He does."

Artist:

Hozier

Song: Take Me to Church

Album: Hozier

By: Jessica Parrent, New Beginnings

parentj@iecc.edu

Theme

Sin

Teaching Point

Although we are born into a world of sin, there is a way out.

Opening Questions

We sin, right? How do you deal with your sin? Are you proud of it, embrace it, enjoy it, or do you repent and seek God's forgiveness?

Discussion

In the song, "Take Me to Church" the lyrics *I was born sick* stand out. As people, are we born sick – are we born sinful?

If we are born sick (in sin) how are we to react? Do we respond as the song says, *I was born sick, but I love it?* Or, is there hope for our sin?

David wrote in **Psalms 51:3-6**, "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

1 John 1:9 explains that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Conclusion

Hozier's song "Take Me to Church" deals with the sickness of being born into sin. As humans, we are doomed to sin. However, we are not called to love our sin. As Christians we are told to repent, ask for forgiveness of our sin, and the Love of Jesus will forgive us.