

Bill's Bestowals:
"A Recommendation for Lent"

*"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword,
it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow;
it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."*

(Hebrews 4:12)

I have always been a fan of great music. Those who have heard me reflect on my musical passions before know that I have about a hundred titles in my "Top Ten Favorite Songs List." There are just too many beautiful pieces of music out there for me to limit myself, you know?

Some pieces I recognized instantly as having my heart – such as the upbeat "Love Is Blue" (Paul Mauriat), the tear-jerking "Seasons in the Sun" (Terry Jacks), the powerful and haunting "Phantom of the Opera" (Andrew Lloyd Webber) and the equally powerful and moving "Chariots of Fire" (Vangelis – arguably my favorite of all time).

Others, however, were slower in making an impression. For instance, a member of my youth group back in Kansas very passionately introduced me to the song "Let It Go" from the Disney Movie "Frozen" Soundtrack. Though the teen girl population raved about it, I didn't share their passion for it at first. It was "nice," sure, but didn't really move me. It wasn't until I saw the movie (I recommend it) and put the song in context that it started to grow on me. Now it is near the top of my favorites, and my daughter, Charis, and I love singing trios along with Queen Elsa!

Would you agree that music has a heavy influence on our lives? Personally, music has the ability to make me cry, as well as lift my spirits when I am down. It has an unusual power!

But there is something else that has that power also. Something which –like "Let It Go" – worked slower to make an impression on me. That "something" is God's Word – the Bible. It wasn't until I invested myself in it and put it in context that its great power started working on me. Since then, I have found it has the ability to make me cry, as well as lift my spirits when I am down. In fact, unlike music, I can find the answers and guidance for my life in it.

If you don't already have a habit of reading God's Word, now is the time to start! I certainly recommend the "Daily Family Devotions" you find in your worship guides each week. Be sure you read the text in your Bible first so you can hear not just Godly wisdom, but also the source of that wisdom!

The Christian season of Lent is upon us – it begins February 14. A Christian tradition is to "give something up" for Lent. This idea usually frustrates people, or ends in failure – UNLESS we replace the thing that has been given up with something better! We replace bad habits, perhaps, with good ones. I recommend increasing time spent in the Word!

"May the Lord bless and keep you ..." always! Pastor Bill