

Jesus Loves the Church

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"...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless." (Ephesians 5:25-27)

In recent years, more songs and hymns about the church have been introduced into our collective hymnody. And this is a good thing for us. The church finds herself under attack in this 21st century, so we must often remind ourselves and affirm together who we are in Christ.

When a friend ask me to write a new song on the church, I immediately contacted Josh, inquiring if he had a tune on hand to which I could match lyrics. To my delight, he had recently composed a beautiful melody he was happy to give to me. Thus the work began.

While listening to his tune on loop, I kept hearing these words: *Jesus loves the church*. What a thought! I sketched various ways Jesus loves us and soon discovered that if I were to touch upon all His loving ways this hymn would become far too long! Therefore, I cut things back to four major ways Jesus loves His church.

Stanza One: Jesus loves the church by **selecting** us to be His bride

John 15:16 -- You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Stanza Two: Jesus loves the church by **dying** for us and redeeming us by His blood

Ephesians 5:25-27 -- ...Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Stanza Three: Jesus loves the church by **uniting** us all together in Him

Ephesians 4:4-6 -- There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Stanza Four: Jesus loves the church by **coming again** for us that we may be with Him forever

Revelation 19:7 -- Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.