

HERE COMES THE SUN

Week #5 of the 6-Week Series, "The Songs of Life"

May 22, 2022

With Rev. Richard Maraj

Lyrics – "Here Comes the Sun" (The Beatles)

Here comes the Sun (doo-doo-doo-doo)

Here comes the Sun and I say

It's all right

Little darling

It's been a long cold lonely winter

Little darling

It feels like years since it's been here

Here comes the Sun (doo-doo-doo-doo)

Here comes the Sun and I say

It's all right

Little darling

The smiles returning to their faces

Little darling

It seems like years since it's been here

Here comes the Sun

Here comes the Sun and I say

It's all right

Sun, Sun, Sun, here it comes (4x)

Little darling

I feel that ice is slowly melting

Little darling

It seems like years since it's been clear

Here comes the Sun (doo-doo-doo-doo)

Here comes the Sun and I say

It's all right

Here comes the Sun (doo-doo-doo-doo)

Here comes the Sun

It's all right

It's all right

Message:

In a Texas courtroom, an attorney was questioning a farmer, who made a large claim for bodily injuries. *"Farmer Brown, did you or did you not say to the constable at the scene of the accident, and I quote, 'I never felt better in my life'?"*

The farmer said, *"That's right."*

And the attorney said, *"Well, then, how is it that you're now claiming that you were seriously injured when my client's car hit your wagon?"*

And the farmer said, *"Well ... You know, when the constable arrived, he went over to my horse that was really damaged. He looked at him and then he shot him. And then he walked over to my dog that was bleeding and injured. He looked at him and he shot him! Then he walked over to me, and I was laying*

there, and he asks me how I was doing." [Congregation laughs] *"And I thought, under the circumstances, it was in my best interest to say, 'I never felt better in my life!'"* [Congregation laughs]

So ... um ... [Congregation applauds]

I think every single one of us at some level has a desire to say every day to ourselves, *"I've never felt better in my life."* I mean, every one of us wants to feel great. We want to feel on top of the world. On our "A" game. We want to have a passion and a joy for life. I mean, we want to live in the flow!

However, sometimes life doesn't always flow the way we want it to flow. How many people have ever had a time in your life when it felt like nothing was going your way, and you couldn't catch a break? Anybody? How many people have had a time where life just felt like one thing after another, and you just couldn't get ahead? How many people right now would like to have a breakthrough in your life? Have things turn around? For your life to be a little brighter and better than it is? Anybody?

You know, sometimes the truth is: Life does not go as smoothly, as easily or as wonderfully as we would like it to go. And for us to move through those tough periods where things aren't going as well as we want -- to move through it successfully -- comes down to one thing: and that is our mindset. It is our attitude; it is our outlook and how we see; how we perceive; how we react; how we define the things that aren't going well in our life that makes the difference of us having better and a brighter life and experience.

You know, "Here Comes the Sun," in my opinion, is one of the all-time greatest, uplifting, optimistic songs there is. It was from 1969 -- The Beatles' *Abby Road* album. Written by George Harrison. And written at a time where things were not going his way. He had just had surgery for his tonsils; that wasn't going as quick as he'd like. Then he got arrested for drug possession. And then he found out that his mom had terminal cancer. And then Apple Records were making him sign some contracts that were really very restrictive and limited, and he really did not want to do that.

And so there was just a lot of inner struggle; a lot of frustration. And he was so upset about things not going so well, he just decided to check out for a few days. And he went to his friend's house, Eric Clapton. And he grabbed one of Eric's guitars, and he was walking around in Eric's garden thinking about all this stuff, and how he frustrated he was. And how life wasn't going his way.

Now the backdrop to that was that England just came out of one of the harshest, coldest winters in their history. So as he's walking around thinking about all of this, trying to write something to cheer himself up, and to give him optimism to move through this, and knowing it would be okay ... It was that inspiration -- in Eric's garden -- that he wrote "Here Comes the Sun."

Today we're in Week #5 in our annual "Songs of Life" series, where we take some famous, fabulous songs that make us feel so good and try to glean from it some life lessons and spiritual insights to help us. I'll bet every one of us has at least one song that is our favorite song, that got us through a break-up or a loss, or helped give us the courage to carry on or go after our dreams. I'll bet we all have! Songs have a powerful way to touch our lives; to uplift us in amazing ways; to help us grieve and heal. And I think they also have a gift in teaching us.

So today we're going to look at the life lessons and the spiritual insights we can gain from this fabulous, fabulous song, "Here Comes the Sun."

The first message I think it gives to us is the importance of connecting to hope, especially when life isn't going the way you want. First verse says:

***Little darling
It's been a long cold lonely winter
Little darling
It feels like years since it's been here***

I love how he uses the analogy of winter: a cold, long, lonely winter that feels like it's been here forever. And he uses it as an analogy to point to times in our lives that are so difficult, where we feel alone. Where things are dark, and it feels like it's never going to end. I'll bet we've all had those experiences that have been so tough that it was hard for us to hope and even believe that it was going to get better and improve.

But I will tell you one of the greatest gifts that God has given us is the power of hope. I think hope does not get as much credit or value as it should. Somebody once said that hope is a soft burning flame that cannot be extinguished and can endure and lead you through any condition of life.

The fact is: without hope, we wouldn't get out of bed in the morning. That when we build our lives on hope, that road will be much more joyful -- much more joyful! -- than when we build that road of our lives on despair and on depression and negativity.

You know, I think hope does three things for us. The first one is: it helps us see beyond the current situation, and know that there's something better beyond, even if I can't see it right now. The second thing it does: it helps us from sinking into negativity; into self-pity and feeling powerless or hopeless. And the third thing it does is: hope helps us endure while we make that journey for things to change and transform, and to get better and to get brighter.

You know, the hope in this song comes from knowing that the sun will rise again. When you think about it, the sun is a powerful symbol; it is a symbol of light. It is a symbol of life and warmth and nourishment and growth. You know, we couldn't live here -- we couldn't be alive -- without the sun. And the rising of the sun is a symbol of a new day, of a fresh start and a new beginning. It is powerful; this is where the hope comes from.

It comes from the source of light and life. The sun, even when we can't see it, we know it's still there. It is the foundation of tremendous hope for us. I love that symbol of light!

And just as a little aside, on that first song that we heard -- "Dancing in the Moonlight" -- that song was written by a guy named Sherman Kelly. And so he was in the Caribbean vacationing in what he called paradise. So while he was in "paradise," he got beat up and left for dead. I mean, seriously, seriously beaten.

And so he was laying in the hospital recovering, and he's thinking, "*I just got beat up in paradise! How does this make sense that I got beat up in paradise? If we can't be nice to each other in paradise ...?*" And so he wrote "Dancing in the Moonlight" as a little reminder and a dream that we can live a life where we celebrate love and peace and each other in a harmonious and wonderful way. That we can be dancing in the moonlight!

And the interesting thing about the song is every single verse ends with a word that rhymes with light:

***Dancing in the moonlight
Everybody here is out of sight;
They don't bark and they don't bite;
They keep things loose; they keep things light;
We like our fun and we never fight;
You can't dance and stay uptight;
It's a supernatural delight;
Dancing in the moonlight.***

Isn't that fabulous? [Congregation murmurs and applauds]

And so whether you use the symbol of sunlight or moonlight, light in and of itself is a powerful symbol of hope; of life. That it is always there -- the sunlight and the moonlight. Even if you can't see it, you know it's there for you.

And so there is hope for all of us. Whatever you're going through in your life, there is hope. The Bible says there is a light that shines that no darkness can overcome. And whether you call it moonlight, sunlight ... truly, it's the light of God. That light of God is our hope of glory! Christ in you is our hope of glory! And it is a powerful thing.

This song reminds us -- "Here Comes the Sun" -- the first thing it reminds us is that there's hope. Whatever you are going through in your life, there is hope. As dependable as the sun is, and the moonlight is, that light of God in you is for you to hang on to your hope.

The second thing I think this song teaches is the power of the word.

Here comes the sun

Think about that!

Here comes the sun.

Four words! And yet, when I either say, "*Here comes the sun,*" hear "*Here comes the sun,*" or sing -- well, that's not always the most pleasurable thing if you're hearing me ... [Congregation laughs] But uh ... It's amazing that the optimism and the joy and the excitement.

Here comes the sun

There's something uplifting about it. Why? Because there's power in the spoken word. That our words absolutely have power. In the Old Testament it says, "*Life and death are in the power of the tongue.*" It means that your words can tear down or your words can build up.

You know, our words have an attracting vibrational energy that, whatever we put out, we're going to attract more of it. So I mean, are you speaking words more of faith or words of fear? Are you speaking more positive words or are you speaking more negative words? Are you speaking more words of happiness or more words of sadness? More words of how powerful you are or words of how powerless and helpless you are?

Words matter! And we need to be careful, because there is a vibrational energy and attractive force in them.

"Life stinks." "Life is unfair." "You can't trust anyone." "Things just go from bad to worse." "There is never enough." "I always seem to get taken advantage of."

Compared to ...

"Life is good!" "Life is fun!" "People are so friendly and helpful!" "There is more than enough." "Things always seem to work out for me!" "I am so loved and so blessed!"

Words matter! And speaking the word creates a vibrational energy; it builds into thoughts and beliefs; it expands and develops a consciousness that absolutely attracts and makes a difference in what's going on in our lives.

But here's the thing: it is not just when we speak affirmations. We all love affirmations; they're a beautiful thing! I'll talk more about them in a second. However, when we talk about that words make a difference, it's not just the affirmations we speak, it's about all the words we speak.

You know, we can't affirm, "*I am prosperous and I live in God's abundance,*" but when you get your paycheck think, "*I am always broke! There is never enough!*" We can't pray, "*God, give me peace and love and joy and abundance ... and get that dirty so-and-so boss for what they did and said!*" [Congregation laughs] We can't! It's all the words we speak have a cumulative effect on that vibration and energy and consciousness we create that will attract the things back to us.

The great spiritual teacher Louis Hayes says this: "*An affirmation opens the door. It's the beginning point on the path to change. In essence, you're saying to your subconscious mind, 'I am taking responsibility. I am aware that there is something I can do to change.'*"

See, affirmations are about consciously choosing words that radiate a vibration and energy that will move some things, eliminate things from our lives, and will attract more desirable things into our lives. We need to be careful and intentional and conscious of the words that come out of our mouth.

In Psalm 19, Verse 14 it says, *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer."* And what it's saying: Let the words that come out of my mouth reflect the Spirit; reflect the consciousness; reflect the life that God has called me to live, and the person that God has called me to be. To align our mouths with the words that really fit the kind of life that we are here to live.

So are your words really reflecting the kind of life that you want? The kind of person that you are? The kind of relationships that we want to have? The kind of level of happiness and success? I mean, are you speaking words of hope and positivity? Are you speaking words of love and kindness and peace? This is a question we all need to ask ourselves, and to connect more consciously and intentionally with the words that we speak.

My favorite affirmation, as you all know, is: *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

Let's say that: [with congregation] *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

Again: [with congregation] *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

What the heck? One more time: [with congregation] *"Each and every day, in each and every way, my life is getting better and better and better."*

It's a powerful thing! That originated by a French pharmacist and psychologist named Dr. Emile Coue in the 1800s. He was a pharmacist, and he's giving these pills, so physiologically you think they're going to help. But he's also a psychologist, and he thinks psychologically we have to also use the power of our mind when we take the pills. So when you take the pills, say this. His original affirmation is, *"Every day, in every way, I am getting better and better."* And what he found was: people got better the more they said it and took the medication.

Here's what Coue said. He said, "I never cured anyone. I just showed people how to cure themselves." And what he was saying is: auto-suggestion; self-talk; affirmations -- whatever you want to call it -- activates a creative power in all of us. That we have that power in us. And it comes through the power of our words. Our words help build the energy of the very things that we want to create. We are creators, and one of the greatest creative powers God has given us is the power of our words. So we need to speak the words that reflect the life and the person that we are called to be.

"I am happy, healthy and energetic."

Just repeat after me; go ahead: [with congregation] *"I am happy, healthy and energetic."*

"I am passionate, positive and playful."

Together: [with congregation] *"I am passionate, positive and playful."*

"I have a great memory!"

[With congregation]: *"I have a great memory!"*

"All my relationships are loving, affirming and caring."

Together: [with congregation] *"All my relationships are loving, caring and affirming."*

"I am patient and calm in rush hour traffic."

[With congregation]: *"I am patient and calm in rush hour traffic."*

"I can handle tough situations with ease and grace."

Together: [with congregation] *"I can handle tough situations with ease and grace."*

"Abundance always flows freely in my life."

[With congregation] *"Abundance always flows freely in my life."*

"Good things always happen to me and through me!"

[With congregation]: *"Good things always happen to me and through me."*

Can you feel the vibe is raised enough a little bit? [Congregation: "Yes!"] Because words are powerful! And the more intentional and the more clear that we get about what it is that we want to attract and create, we can really transform our lives by speaking the word. *"Here comes the sun!"* All those things really bring a lot of life and power to our lives.

Third thing from this great song: I like, when after they say, *"Here comes the sun"*:

And I say it's all right

I love that!

Here comes the sun

And I say it's all right

And what that speaks to me about is that, when you're living your life, live it with joy and enthusiasm.

Here comes the sun

And it's all right

"My life's getting better and it's all right!" There is something about joy and enthusiasm. So when I was a kid, I used to love inspirational quotes. I don't know where they came from. First one I remember was on the front of our bulletin cover of Centenary United Church. It was on there every week, and I saw it, and I loved it. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."*

How many people would say that rings true? Nothing great is really ever achieved without enthusiasm? How many would say that you're pretty enthusiastic? [Congregation laughs] How many people would say you could use a little more enthusiasm in your life? [Congregation laughs] Okay.

Enthusiasm is this vibration and this energy of excitement and passion and love and enjoyment of whatever it is that we're doing in our lives. Would you say that Michael Jordan had some enthusiasm and joy? Would you say Bruce Springsteen when he performed had some enthusiasm and joy?

You know who really brought me joy from their enthusiasm when I was a kid? Televangelists! Oral Roberts! I'm not kidding! Oral Roberts; Robert Schulle; even today, Joel Osteen. There is something about passion; there is something about enthusiasm that just even watching it triggers something in us. It brings the "aliveness" back in us; the spirit in us; the heart; the joy that is always in us. It helps bring it out.

En-thusiasm. "En-theos." It means "God within," meaning God possessed. You know, Paul said, *"Stir up the gift of God that is in you."* That's what enthusiasm does!

Now, you're probably saying to yourself, *"Yeah; of course it's easy to be passionate about things I like."*

Art and music. You know, if you love theatre; if you love your family. But how do you be passionate about things you don't like? Those mundane, boring things. Those difficult things. How do you get enthusiastic about working out or starting a new diet or doing the laundry? [Congregation laughs] Taking out the trash? Doing your taxes? Paying your bills?

Well, the best example of how to bring joy and enthusiasm into those mundane things -- into those things we don't like -- is by my brother, Brian. I've shared this before, but I've got to tell you, it's one of my favorite examples, because it's practical and we can all do it.

So my brother -- wife and six kids. And he has his rotation of doing the dishes, including his least favorite: the pots and pans, especially when they've got caked-on, baked-on stuff on them. So he hated

it; he resisted it. And he wouldn't enjoy it; he complained about it. And he always wished he was doing something else -- playing cards with the kids, or whatever.

So he recognized this little thing about himself and he said, *"I've got to do something about this."* And he decided he's going to put his heart and spirit more into it and try and derive some joy out of it.

And so he started kind of noticing and savoring that it was a time of solitude where things really just slowed down as he did the dishes. He started intentionally observing and noticing how the washing process of filling up the sink, putting in the soap, and all those suds coming out and how cool that was. And then putting the plates in, and how a couple of soft rubs around it, and they came out clean. He noticed what the scrubbing was like and, you know, the pan that had the baked-on chicken on it. And even when some of them had to soak. He started noticing the experience.

And what he noticed: that his energy and enjoyment was absolutely changed and transformed by being more engaged, more intentional, and seeing the joy in it. He noticed that washing the dishes was serving his family. Helping them have prepared, clean dishes for the next lovely meal that they were going to have. And one of the things he said ... He said he was amazed how this action -- this change in attitude; investing his joy -- turned a "hellish" experience into a "heavenly" experience.

And the thing I loved about it is it was all in here. [Points to his chest] It was an inside job of bringing that spirit -- bringing your heart; bringing your joy and your inner enthusiasm -- into the event. And that's what changed and transformed it.

I'll bet every one of us has a "don't-like-to-do-the-dishes" activity that, if we followed this same simple process, we would absolutely change and add enthusiasm and joy to our lives. Enthusiasm is an absolute choice.

And the way we do it is: first we fill ourselves with the love and the spirit and the presence of God. Because the more we are filled from within, the more we can let it flow it. The second thing is just realize how wonderful your life is. Even the things you don't like -- they're actually a blessing! Dishes are a pretty good sign you've got food! [Congregation laughs] You know, cleaning your house means you've got a house! I mean, a job; a family. There are all kinds of things. Just take a little time to appreciate how wonderful your life is. And the third one is to infuse your joy in whatever you do. Intentionally! Consistently! Whole-heartedly!

So think of something that you're passionate about: that you really like right now in your life. And ask yourself: How can you turn up the level of enthusiasm and spirit and joy that you invest in doing that thing? Whether it's your family or your work.

Second one: think about something you don't like doing and think of how you can infuse more joy and enthusiasm into it. And finally, think about how you show up in life. And think: what way can you infuse more joy and enthusiasm in how you just show up? And even if it's as simple as just smiling a little more and welcoming and greeting and encouraging and complimenting people! Maybe it's about intentionally listening more and asking people how you can be of help to them. Whatever it is, I guarantee you: you infusing more joy and enthusiasm in how you show up in life will absolutely make a difference.

Winston Churchill said this: *"Success is going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm."* [Congregation laughs] And while it's funny, here's the wisdom behind it. He's saying don't let failures -- or whatever the result is that didn't go as well -- have you lose your joy or lose your ability to engage and be passionate and thankful in all that you do in your life. Don't let the result stop you from being fully engaged and expressing your joy and enthusiasm in whatever you do. Because the truth is: there are going to be more failures. There are going to be times. There are going to be periods where things don't go our way. We are all going to have some form of a long, cold, lonely winter experience.

And the way to make the best of it is, number one: is to connect with hope. The hope of that light -- whether it's sunlight, moonlight -- but the light that shines in you. That is your hope of glory! Connect to hope!

Number two is speak the word. Consciously and intentionally choose the words that will reflect the kind of life you want, and activate that power in you. That your life is getting better and better and better.

And finally, express your joy and enthusiasm in the things you have passion for, and the things you don't like, and just in the way that you show up.

Even when things don't go well, don't despair! Even the sun has a sinking feeling every day!
[Congregation moans, laughs and applauds] Okay. But the next day it still rises! And those are the lessons from this great song, "Here Comes the Sun."

God bless you, everybody! [Congregation applauds]

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