

STUDY GUIDE: Week #1

I'm In <3 | Created For Romance

September 7-13, 2013

"I'm in <3" is a six week sermon series focused around Bruce's fall sermon series. The messages are based on his new book, "I'm In <3," which challenges us "to know the deep intimate love of God through the person of the Holy Spirit."

INTRODUCTION

For too many Christians the Holy Spirit is little more than a name mentioned in baptisms and benedictions. The Holy Spirit is mostly a doctrinal belief. We believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We give that idea mental assent and then move on. The problem with this approach to the Holy Spirit is that we never discover the incredible joy of falling in love with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a romantic. The Holy Spirit whispers in poetry and sings to our hearts.

CHAT

- When you are talking with God which person of the trinity do you usually engage with personally? Do you pray to God the Father, Jesus the Son or the Holy Spirit?
- What are some classic images for the Holy Spirit? What images really resonate with you?
- How do you feel about using the feminine pronoun to refer to the Spirit?
- When you hear the words ecstasy, passion and romance what is the first thing that jumps to mind?
- Take a moment to get out a smart phone (or reference page #3 of guide) and look up the definitions of these words; ECSTASY - PASSION - ROMANCE.
- In what ways does your thinking about, and/or experience of, the Holy Spirit fit some of the descriptors of these words? What is a new idea for you?

READ & DISCUSS

Read Genesis 1:26-27

- What does it mean to be created in their image? What human attributes do you feel reflect being "made in the image of God"?
 - Pastor Bruce said *"Often what we have done with this idea that we are the image of God is to explain it primarily as our intelligence that allows us to make the right moral choice. Yes, that is true as far as it goes. However, we are more than minds and bodies. We are also social, emotional, spiritual beings. Just as we are hard-wired for thought and choice, we are also heart-wired for romance and ecstasy."* Thoughts?

Read Acts 2:1-13; Galatians 5:19-26; Ephesians 5:17-20

- What do these verses reveal about who the Holy Spirit is and how the Spirit works in our lives?
- In what ways do these scriptures relate to the words we defined earlier?

APPLY

This weekend pastor Bruce said, *"We are created in the image of God. That means we are intended for romance as well as intelligence and choice. We are double wired. We are hard-wired for intelligence and morality, choices and self-control. We are also heart-wired for romance. The Holy Spirit primarily connects with us through our heart-wiring."*

How can we allow ourselves to be wooed by the romantic Spirit? What will you do this week to engage the person of the Holy Spirit at the heart level?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

ro·mance *noun*

1.
 - a. A love affair.
 - b. Ardent emotional attachment or involvement between people; love: They kept **the** romance alive in their marriage for 35 years.
 - c. A strong, sometimes short-lived attachment, fascination, or enthusiasm for something: a childhood romance with the sea.
 - d. A feeling of excitement and mystery associated with love: "in search of romance."
 2. A mysterious or fascinating quality or appeal, as of something adventurous, heroic, or strangely beautiful: "These fine old guns often have a romance clinging to them" (Richard Jeffries).
 3.
 - a. A long medieval narrative in prose or verse that tells of the adventures and heroic exploits of chivalric heroes: an Arthurian romance.
 - b. A long fictitious tale of heroes and extraordinary or mysterious events, usually set in a distant time or place.
 - c. The class of literature constituted by such tales.
 4.
 - a. An artistic work, such as a novel, story, or film, that deals with sexual love, especially in an idealized form.
 - b. The class or style of such works.
 5. A fictitiously embellished account or explanation: We have been given speculation and romance instead of the facts.
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ec·sta·sy *noun*

- 1
 - a : a state of being beyond reason and self-control
 - b *archaic* : swoon
- 2 : a state of overwhelming emotion; *especially* : rapturous delight
- 3 : trance; *especially* : a mystic or prophetic trance

pas·sion *noun*

- 1 *often capitalized*
 - a : the sufferings of Christ between the night of the Last Supper and his death
 - b : an oratorio based on a gospel narrative of the Passion
- 2 *obsolete* : suffering
- 3 : the state or capacity of being acted on by external agents or forces
- 4
 - a (1) : emotion <his ruling *passion* is greed> (2) *plural* : the emotions as distinguished from reason
 - b : intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction
 - c : an outbreak of anger
- 5
 - a : ardent affection : love
 - b : a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept
 - c : sexual desire
 - d : an object of desire or deep interest