



HYMNS

F O R F A M I L Y W O R S H I P



www.BuildingFaithFamilies.org

Dedicated to Sandi Beth, Isaac, Ethan, Joseph, and John for their help, patience, support, and understanding in the journey to incorporate family devotions into the fabric of our home.

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MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE

I have written a book entitled Family Worship, which encourages families to have regular times of reading scripture and worshiping in their home. This following section is an excerpt. You may order your own copy, or download a free audiobook or PDF of this book here: <http://www.buildingfaithfamilies.org/familyworship/>

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!” (Psalm 100:1-2)

If we had time in the morning, we might sing after we had read from the Bible. There were several factors which contributed to what we chose to sing. I realized early on our repertoire as a family was very limited. On one errand when we were all together in the car, I said, “Let’s sing all of the gospel songs we know.” In a few minutes it was quiet. We knew “Only a Boy Named David,” “The Wise Man Built His House upon the Rock,” and a few first verses of hymns, and some Christmas carols, but this was the extent of our knowledge.

About the same time we attended a seminar where we were exhorted to memorize hymns. I also recalled Elisabeth Elliot sharing how the Holy Spirit used hymns she had learned in her youth to encourage her through the many valley experiences in her life. She mentioned her parents would gather the family together before school each morning, sing one hymn, and read one chapter of Scripture. I also was influenced by the Book of Acts. If I were ever in prison with Paul and Silas, I wouldn’t be able to contribute much to the singing of hymns from memory!

One of my favorite characters books and movies is Pollyanna. She and her dad used to play the Glad Game after he searched the Scriptures one night and discovered over 800 “glad” verses. I looked up the following words with my concordance

to see how many times they are mentioned in the Bible: praise—210, joy—173, joyful—26, sing—126, song—82, worship—103, rejoice—179, gladness—46, give thanks—58. Together we have 921 “glad” references.

Scripture and praise go together. In the recent history of the church, we have preachers of the gospel accompanied by song leaders. Billy Graham and George Beverly Shea ministered together. Before them we had D. L. Moody as the evangelist and Ira Sankey leading the worship and P. P. Bliss worked with R. A. Torrey. Worship and the Word complement each other. “Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands.” (Psalm 149:6)

I am drawn to hymns which have stood the test of time, especially those rich in Scripture and theology. In my personal valleys, when life is tough, and God seems distant, it is then my theology and what I know about God kicks in. The knowledge of God acquired through singing and memorizing hymns helps me through these dark days when I have little or no inspiration.

Elisabeth Elliot’s family (the Howards) would go through a hymn book in a year. Number 1, January 1. Number 2, January 2. However, they had a pianist in the home. In order for our family to sing in our home, I had to contract with a friend to record piano accompaniment on cassettes. We bought several hymnals, started with number 1 in January, and over a period of two years sang almost 200 songs. It was a rich experience.

For a season we decided to memorize hymns. We discovered our children learned verses much more quickly than we did. After singing a verse through two or three times, the kids were already on their way to picking it up. As parents, we are the ones who struggled, but we did have the advantage of having heard these hymns many times over the

years. Since we have boys, and boys are more visual, we used to pass out a piece of paper, markers, and crayons and encourage them to draw a picture of the verse we were studying. We focused on one verse for a day or two until we all knew it by heart.

Sometimes we had hymns which were difficult to illustrate. In "Dare to Be a Daniel," the first verse is "standing by a purpose firm, heeding God's command." How do you illustrate a purpose firm? Do you know what we did? A dead porpoise. After rigor mortis sets in, you have a "porpoise firm." This was all I could come up with. The boys loved it.

"Oh yeah, dead fish!" My wife just rolled her eyes and smiled benignly upon her children—all five of them.

I've forgotten most of the props and the pictures, but I have memorized several hymns now. If I'm ever in prison, I can now contribute: I've got nine hymns under my belt.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." (Colossians 3:16)

SOME BACKGROUND ON HYMNS AND HYMNBOOKS IN THE MODERN ERA OF THE CHURCH

One day in 1870, a young choir leader named Ira Sankey was attending a YMCA convention in Indianapolis. When he arrived late at the evening prayer meeting, his friend leaned over and said, "Mr. Sankey, the singing here has been abominable; I wish you would start up something."

So at the next opportunity, Sankey began to sing, "There is a Fountain." Everyone joined in enthusiastically, and the whole atmosphere seemed brighter. After the meeting, Sankey met its leader: a 33-year-old shoe salesman turned evangelist named Dwight L. Moody. Moody had little time for small talk. As soon as he found out Ira Sankey's occupation, he said, "You'll have to give it up."

The younger man was amazed. "What for?" he asked.

"To come to Chicago to help me in my work." Sankey was working for the Secretary of the Treasury, and didn't think he could leave.

"But you must," replied Moody. "I've been looking for you the last eight years."

Dwight Moody's greatest difficulty in his evangelistic meetings was the fact that he could not sing, and had to rely on whoever was available to lead the music. Their mistakes could easily distract the audience, especially when it was time to respond to

the message.

More than six months went by before Ira Sankey recognized this was God's plan for him. But once he was in, he was all in! Years later, the friendship of the two men, just three years apart in age, would be compared to David and Jonathan in the Bible.

They began working together in 1871, and that fall, they survived the Great Chicago Fire.

In 1873, they were invited to minister in England, but when they arrived in June after the long ocean voyage, they learned that the two men who invited them had died.

"It seems as if God has closed the door for us," said Dwight to his friend. "And if he will not open it, we will return to America at once." The next day, however, he discovered that he been carrying, unopened, a letter from the YMCA secretary in York, inviting him to speak, should he ever come to England. The door was at least partly open, after all!

Less than fifty people attended their first meeting—and all of them sat as far away from the front as they could. But invitations continued to come in, and the two Americans continued to hold meetings.

Ira Sankey had brought just two books with him to Britain. One, of course, was his Bible. The other was a musical scrapbook in which he collected the

songs he sang. These songs became more and more popular, and people began to ask if they could borrow Sankey's scrapbook. At first he said "Yes," until they failed to return it in time for meetings. Then he printed up some small cards with a few of the hymns on them—but these were all used up at the very first meeting he offered them.

There were no photocopiers then, and Ira Sankey couldn't just send people to the internet to look up the lyrics themselves. He didn't have the money to have a printing company create more copies, so he tried to get the publisher of his friend Philip Phillips's songbook to simply add a few more songs in the back of the existing book. They declined.

One day while they were still in England, the editor of a Christian paper arrived to interview Moody and Sankey. When he heard about their dilemma, he offered to publish their songs in a little paperback pamphlet. So Ira Sankey cut 23 pieces out of his scrapbook, rolled them up, and labeled them "Sacred songs and solos sung by Ira D. Sankey at the meetings of Mr. Moody of Chicago."

Two weeks later, they received 500 copies—which sold out the first day. Within a few more days, the booklet began to be sold in bookstores,

grocery stores, fabric shops, and more.

More than thirty years later, when Ira Sankey published his autobiography, *Sacred Songs and Solos* was still being published—having grown to include about 1200 hymns and gospel songs. Many Sankey wrote himself, while others were written by friends. Some were mailed to him, and several he found in other hymnbooks, or even in the newspaper.

By the end of their visit (two years later), Moody and Sankey had spoken and sung the gospel all over England, Scotland, and Ireland, to crowds of as many as 20,000. Thousands made professions of faith in response to their ministry. One significant convert who put his trust in Jesus was the future missionary, C.T. Studd.

You'll learn more about this story when you read the history for #29, "The Bridegroom Comes" and #91, "Jesus Loves Even Me." Ira Sankey's song collection grew to become an essential part of God's work among the British people—and later people around the world. The power of the gospel proclaimed in song continued melting hearts, even when Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey themselves were nowhere around.



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HYMNS?

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The following article is reprinted from the Elisabeth Elliott Newsletter, May/June 1999. It is being used with permission. For more info on her books, newsletters, radio broadcasts, and other resources visit <http://www.elisabethelliott.org>.

Many of the churches my husband Lars and I visit on our travels seem to know nothing of the great old hymns that have instructed, comforted, and enriched the church for centuries. Hymns constitute a crucial part of worship, but not by any means the whole. In churches which use almost exclusively what are called “praise songs,” that part of the service is usually referred to as “Worship,” as though prayer, preaching, offering, and listening were something else. May I lodge a plea to those who use overhead projectors to make sure that some great hymns are displayed in addition to the praise songs? Hymns will get you through the night.

In January of 1956, when five women were waiting with bated breath to find out whether our husbands were dead or alive, I lay in bed in Nate Saint’s home, my little daughter Valerie sick in a crib beside me. The hymn “How Firm a Foundation,” with those magnificent words taken from Isaiah 43:1-2, sustained me, especially stanzas 2, 3, and 6, memorized when I was a child in our daily family prayer time:

“Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,/ For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;/

I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,/ Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,/ The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;/

For I will be with thee thy trials to bless,/ And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

...

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,/ I will not, I will not desert to his foes;/

That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,/ I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake!”

Someone sent me a magazine featuring a musician named Michael Card who presents to a new generation of believers ancient melodies and hymns. His music is described as “folk-flavored, biblically sound music.” Unable to recommend or comment on his work since I have heard none of it, I can nevertheless say Amen to his observation: “So many of today’s worship songs are all about us: ‘We do this, we do that, we worship You . . . ’ without presenting the depth and richness of who God is, proclaiming His greatness and His might. You can read the lyrics of one of these old hymns and learn so much about God’s attributes and His creation.”

Everywhere I go I try to point out what a tragic loss is the disappearance of these powerful aids to spiritual stamina. A true hymn has rhyme and meter, a logical progression from the first verse to the last, and I feel like jumping up and down and “hollering” to get my message across, but I try to keep it to merely begging and imploring folks to get their hands on a good hymnbook. Where to find them? they ask. Perhaps they are moldering in the church basement. More than likely they’ve long since been dumped—“Young folks don’t like hymns,” we’re told. But of course they don’t like them—they don’t know them. Alas!

Blessed Assurance

Words by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915), Music by Phoebe Knapp (1839-1908)

Fanny Crosby was born healthy in 1820, but a doctor incorrectly prescribed a hot poultice to treat her, and it made her go blind when she was six weeks old. Yet Fanny chose to bless God, not blame him:

“It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me. If I had a choice, I would still choose to remain blind . . . for when I die, the first face I will ever see will be the face of my blessed Saviour.”

Fanny wrote over 8,000 hymns and songs throughout her life and had over 100 million copies of her songs in print! She also wrote over 1,000 secular poems and four books of poetry. She is one of the hymn writers we know best today.

Fanny Crosby was close friends with Phoebe Knapp, who attended the same New York City church as Crosby. Knapp was the daughter of itinerant Methodist speakers Walter C. Palmer and Phoebe Worrall Palmer, whose ministry influenced tens of thousands.

One day in 1873, Crosby visited Knapp in her home as she sat at her piano. Knapp had composed yet another tune, but she hadn’t worked out any words for it! Phoebe thought that her friend could help, so she played the tune on her piano two or three times and asked Crosby, “What do you think the tune says?”

Fanny knew. “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine,” she replied. Hebrews 10:22 was the song’s inspiration: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Fanny Crosby had found her own “blessed assurance” twenty-two years earlier. Though she had been raised in a God-fearing home and memorized entire books of the Bible in her childhood, she truly surrendered to God when she was 31, in 1851. One night after praying the Lord’s Prayer, she had wrestled over whether she could truthfully say, “Thy will be done.” Her test came that night when she dreamed that a godly man she greatly respected was on his deathbed. She visited him, and he asked her, “Fanny, can you give me up?” She told him honestly, “No, I cannot.” He questioned her further, and she admitted that she couldn’t give him up in her own strength, but she would be willing to try in God’s strength. Her friend then asked her to promise him that she would meet him in heaven, and he passed away. When she woke from the dream, she didn’t rest inside until she could honestly say, “Thy will be done.”

The song, like many of Crosby’s others, gained worldwide popularity. A man told Ira Sankey that British soldiers fighting the Second Boer War in South Africa, around 1899, referred to it. When relieving each other of duty on the front lines, they would pass each other with the greeting “Four-nine-four, boys; four-nine four.” The other soldier would answer, “Six further on, boys; six further on.” Their code referred to numbers in Sankey’s book, *Sacred Songs and Solos*. “Four-nine-four” was “God Be With You Till We Meet Again,” and “six further on” was number 500, “Blessed Assurance.”

After Fanny died in 1915 at age 94, her tombstone was inscribed with Jesus’ words from Mark 14:8: “She hath done what she could.” Forty years later, in 1955, the city of Bridgeport, Conn., where she was buried, replaced her tombstone with one inscribed with the words of her beloved “Blessed Assurance.”

Blessed Assurance

1

1. Bless - ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine! O what a fore - taste of glo - ry di -
 2. Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light! Vi - sions of rap - ture now burst on my
 3. Per - fect sub - mis - sion - all is at rest, I in my Sav - ior am hap - py and

4 A D D G/D D

vine! Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of God, Born of His
 sight; An - gels de - scend - ing bring from a - bove Ech - oes of
 blest; Watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a - bove, Filled with His

7 G Em/G D/A A⁷ D G D

Spir - it, washed in His blood. This is my sto - ry, this is my song, Prais-ing my
 mer - cy, whis - pers of love. This is my sto - ry, this is my song, Prais-ing my
 good - ness, lost in His love. This is my sto - ry, this is my song, Prais-ing my

11 G D/F# A/E E A A⁷ D G/D

Sav - ior all the day long; This is my sto - ry, this is my
 song, Sav - ior all the day long; This is my sto - ry, this is my
 song, Sav - ior all the day long; This is my sto - ry, this is my

14 D G D/A A⁷ D

song, Prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long. song, Prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

We're Marching to Zion

Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) and Robert Lowry (1826-1899), Music by Robert Lowry

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, England, on July 17, 1674, to Isaac and Sarah Watts. Isaac and Sarah were believers but did not agree with the Church of England, which was a crime at that time. The elder Watts was arrested shortly after his son's birth, and Sarah is said to have nursed the baby Isaac while sitting on a stone outside his father's prison.

The young Watts was a bright rascal who enjoyed thinking up poems. When reprimanded for not shutting his eyes during prayers, he replied, "A little mouse for want of stairs ran up a rope to say its prayers." This didn't deter a spanking, so Isaac tried a different rhyme: "Oh Father, Father, pity take, and I will no more verses make." Either pity was not forthcoming or Watts didn't keep his word, for the verses kept pouring forth. At seven, he wrote an acrostic with his name that demonstrates the gospel instruction he was receiving:

I am a vile, polluted lump of earth
So I've continued ever since my birth
Although Jehovah, grace doth daily give me
As sure this monster, Satan, will deceive me
Come therefore, Lord, from Satan's claws relieve me.

Wash me in Thy blood, O Christ
And grace divine impart
Then search and try the corners of my heart
That I in all things may be fit to do
Service to Thee, and Thy praise too.

Watts was also learning languages—Latin when he was four, Greek when he was nine, French when he was ten, and Hebrew when he was thirteen. Some who knew him offered to pay for him to attend university, but he opted to follow his parents' stance against the Church of England, which limited his educational opportunities. Instead he studied at a nonconformist academy until he was twenty.

But even in the independent church he attended, Watts found another form of deadness in its congregational singing! Churches in England were still singing psalms, even though hymns had come into vogue in Germany as much as a hundred years earlier. Watts didn't have a problem with the psalms, but he did have a problem with lifelessness. One day after listening to his complaints over the dead singing, Watts' father challenged him: "Well then, young man, why don't you give us something better to sing?"

Watts rose to the challenge! Over the next two years, he wrote a new hymn each Sunday. The psalms remained near to his heart, however, but he felt they should be sung in light of Christ's finished work, which the psalmists had not known in full. He also felt they should be more singable, so he compiled metered "imitations" of 138 psalms in poetic meter. His book, *Psalms of David, Imitated in the Language of the New Testament*, was published in 1719.

"We're Marching to Zion" was published in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in 1707, and in 1709 as "Heavenly Joy on Earth." The original contained ten stanzas and opened in the first person: "Come, we that love the Lord and let our joys be known." "Heavenly Joy on Earth" also contained the line, "Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God." It's quite possible that some mischief was left in Watts, and he was referring to those who staunchly refused to sing his hymns.

The tune we use today was written by Robert Lowry, the pastor remembered for his hymns, in 1867, while he was pastoring a church in Brooklyn, New York. Lowry also added the words and music for the chorus we sing today.

We're Marching to Zion

2

F C F C F C

1. Come, we that love the Lord, And let our joys be known; Join
 2. Let those re - fuse to sing Who nev - er knew our God; But
 3. The hill of Zi - on yields A thou - sand sa - cred sweets Be -
 4. Then let our songs a - bound And ev - 'ry tear be dry; We're

F Bb/F F Gm/Bb Bb F/A C F/C C G7 C

in a song with sweet ac - cord, Join in a song with sweet ac - cord
 chil - dren of the heav'n - ly King, but chil - dren of the heav'n - ly King
 fore we reach the heav'n - ly fields, Be - fore we reach the heav'n - ly fields
 march - ing thru Im - man - uel's ground, We're march - ing thru Im - man - uel's ground

C/E F C F Gm/Bb F/C C7

And thus sur round the And thus sur round the
 May speak their joys a - broad, And May speak their joys a - broad
 Or walk the gold worlds a - broad, And Or walk the gold worlds a - broad
 To fair the streets, high, To fair the streets, high

12 F F C

throne. broad. streets. high. We're march - ing to Zi - on, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Zi - on, We're

F Bb F/C C7 F

march - ing up - ward to Zi - on, The beau - ti - ful cit - y of God.

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

Words by Joseph Scriven (1819-1886), Music by Charles Converse (1834-1918)

Life is hard. Valleys are normal. When we are in a valley, Jesus understands our pain, for He is a “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). And He is very near to us in difficult seasons of life: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”(Psalms 46:1)

In some of my deepest times of grief and loss, I have tried to carry my burdens alone, only to be overwhelmed and depressed. But when I placed my burden in His lap, He carried them, “He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;” (Isaiah 53:4)

When I have taken my cares to “the Lord in prayer” I find sweet relief as he bears them with me. I can attest to the truth of “O what grief we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer. As Psalm 55:22 says: “Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved.”

I love this hymn, and hope you will be strengthened by the truths expressed by Joseph Scriven which he first penned in a poem to encourage his sick mother across the ocean. He called it “Pray Without Ceasing” and was a personal message he never intended for a wider audience.

Born in 1819, Scriven grew up in Ireland and attended Trinity College in Dublin. He had a bright future after his graduation in 1842, and he asked a local young lady to marry him. They scheduled to meet each other next to the Bann River on the day before their wedding. Scriven was waiting for his fiancée when she neared the river and, in a freak accident, was thrown from her horse into the river. She drowned before Scriven could save her.

He emigrated to Canada sometime between 1844 and 1847 and found a new and happy home in Ontario, where he became a tutor for the Pengelly family. This family introduced Scriven to a young lady relative, and he fell in love with her. They planned to be married in 1854. However, she fell ill—some said it was a result of a swim or even her baptism in the chilly nearby lake—and died before they could be married. Scriven’s faith was being deeply tested.

Around 1857, Scriven received word that his mother was ill. A trip home was impractical, so he wrote her a poem he titled “Pray Without Ceasing” and mailed it to her in a letter of encouragement. It began, “What a friend we have in Jesus” and contained truths that Scriven himself was learning about trusting Jesus in hard times. (Some believe that Scriven wrote an early draft of the poem on a trip to Damascus before he moved to Canada. If he did, he certainly had tested its truths further by the time he sent it to his mother in 1857.)

Scriven’s life demonstrates the faith of his poem. He lived simply and performed manual tasks like woodcutting for people who couldn’t do them for themselves. His personal relationship with Jesus made him a good friend to those around him.

We know Scriven’s poem as “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” shifting its emphasis from prayer to friendship with God the Son. Yet the two are more similar than we might think, for prayer is fellowship, and knowing Jesus as our friend is the closest fellowship we could know.

“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15)

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

3

1. What a Friend we have in Je - sus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
 2. Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y- where?
 3. Are we weak and heav - y la - den, Cum - bered with a load of care?

5 What a priv - i - lege to car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!
 We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged, Take it to the Lord in prayer.
 Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - - uge, Take it to the Lord in prayer.

9 O what peace we of - ten for - feit, O what need - less pain we bear,
 Can we find a friend so faith - ful Who will all our sor - rows share?
 Do thy friends des - pise, for - sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer;

13 All be - cause we do not car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!
 Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak - ness, Take it to the Lord in prayer.
 In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a sol - ace there.

Joseph Scriven, between 1844 and 1857

Charles C. Converse, ca. 1875

O Worship the King

Words by Robert Grant (1778-1838), Music by Johann Michael Haydn (1738-1806)

In the Revelation to John, we have a glimpse of pure worship: “They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.” (Revelation 15:3-4) When I sing this hymn I feel as if I engaged in similar adoration of God, who is Our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.”

Sir Robert Grant was born in India in 1779 because his father, Charles, was working for the British East India Company at the time. Charles had come to India twelve years earlier to take up a military position, but he ended up working for the East India Company for most of his time in India and earned multiple promotions. Charles had plenty of money and lived the high life with its vices. However, after he lost one child, then another, to smallpox, he turned to God.

Life in the Grant family was quite different thereafter. Charles suddenly awoke to the spiritual impact he could have on India through his business position. He noticed the horrors of sati, or widow burning, and of killing lepers. He also became ashamed of the loose lifestyles of the British overseers in India and of their indifference to the country’s social needs.

The family moved back to England when Robert was eleven. Charles paired his ongoing East India Company involvement with his passion for missions by securing East India Company licenses to enable missionaries to go to India. In this he was influenced by the Clapham Sect, a group of like-minded evangelical political and social leaders catalyzed by William Wilberforce to advance the abolition of slavery, the spread of the gospel in India, and other social causes.

These events shaped Robert’s outlook. He attended Magdalene College, Cambridge, with his brother Charles. In 1801, they ranked third and fourth in Cambridge’s mathematics honor rankings system. (Henry Martyn, who would later go to India as a missionary, ranked first that year. Martyn’s way into India was as an East India Company chaplain, a position Charles Grant opened for a number of young men.)

Robert became a member of Parliament. Like his father, he advocated for the rights of disadvantaged people, including England’s Jews, who faced discrimination at that time. He also was involved in the East India Company, which led to him being appointed governor of Bombay. He moved back to India in 1834 and continued championing causes that would benefit that nation.

Robert wrote poetry in his adulthood, writing “O Worship the King” around 1833, inspired by Psalm 104. “His chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form, and dark is His path on the wings of the storm.” Verse 2 in the hymn is inspired by Psalm 104:3: “Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind.” (KJV)

Robert died in India at age 59, just four years into his governorship there. He had earned respect in that time, however, and a prominent Zoroastrian named a medical college after him. The year after Robert died, his brother Charles published 12 of Robert’s poems in a volume called *Sacred Poems*. Charles prefaced that volume with the explanation that “many of them have already appeared in print. . . . but they vary so much from the originals as well as from each other that it becomes necessary to present to the public a more correct and authentic version.” This collection included “O Worship the King.” The verses are very similar to those we know today.

O Worship the King

4

1. O wor - ship the King, all glo - rious a - bove, And
 2. O tell of His might! O sing of His grace! Whose
 3. Thy boun - ti - ful care what tongue can re - cite? It
 4. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail, In
 5. O meas - ure - less Might! in - ef - fa - ble Love! While

5
 grate - ful - ly sing His won - der - ful love; Our
 robe is the light, whose can - o - py space; His
 breathes in the air, it shines in the light; It
 Thee do we trust, nor find Thee to fail; Thy
 an - gels de - light to hymn Thee a - bove; The

9
 Shield and De - fend - er, the An - cient of days, Pa -
 char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der clouds form, And
 streams from the hills, it de - scends to the plain, And
 Mer - cies how ten - der! How firm to the end, Our
 hum - bler cre - a - tion with in - spired lays! And

13
 vil - ioned in splen - dor and gird - ed with praise.
 dark is His path on the wings of the storm.
 sweet - ly dis - till in the dew and the rain.
 Mak - er, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er, and the Friend!
 true ad - o - ra - tion shall speak forth Thy praise.

Sir Robert Grant, 1833

E. J. Hadyn

All the Way My Savior Leads Me

Words by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915), Music by Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

In 1864, Fanny Crosby began her hymn-writing career in earnest when she met William Batchelder Bradbury. (You'll learn more about him with #78.) Since 1841, he had been creating songbooks, many of them for Sunday school students, and in 1861, he had just opened his own music publishing house. Fanny was already known for her poetry, and Bradbury was delighted to meet her. When she arrived at his office, he said, "For many years I have been wanting you to write for me, but somehow could not get opportunity to talk with you on the subject. I wish you would begin, right away."

For Fanny herself, the meeting was life-changing. "It now seemed to me," she said later, "as if the great work of my life had really begun."

Sadly, William Bradbury died of tuberculosis four years later, at just 54 years old. But soon Fanny began writing for Bigelow & Main. This new publisher, which grew out of William Bradbury's company, would publish about 4,000 of her songs.

Robert Lowry, the pastor who became famous for his music (see #18), was the music editor for this new company. He wrote the tune for "All the Way My Savior Leads Me," and in 1875 it was published in *Brightest and Best*, a collection of Sunday school and worship service songs. Robert Lowry called this one of Fanny Crosby's best hymns.

Sometimes Fanny's ideas came from visitors, who were often pastors or musicians. Perhaps the reason her songs resonate with so many of us is because she also wrote from her own difficult real-life experiences. This song came from a visitor—and from a test of faith.

One day in 1875, Fanny urgently needed five dollars, which would be about 100 dollars today. She didn't know how she could get that amount just then, so she got down on her knees and asked God to give the money to her. Here's how she continues the story:

Not long after I had prayed for the money, a gentleman came into the house, 'passed the time of day', shook hands with me, and went out immediately. When I closed my hand, after the friendly salutation, I found in it a five-dollar bill, which he had left there.

I have no way to account for this, except to believe that God, in answer to my prayer, put it into the heart of this good man, to bring me the money.

As soon as she realized it was a five-dollar bill, Fanny thought, "In what a wonderful way the Lord helps me! All the way my Saviour leads me!" Then these words flowed into her mind:

All the way my Savior leads me
What have I to ask beside?

Can I doubt His tender mercy
Who through life has been my guide?

The fact that Fanny immediately completed the song helps us understand just how saturated with Scripture her thinking was. Her opening thought is very similar to Deuteronomy 8:2, which begins: "You shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness."

Fanny recalled how God cared for the Israelites in the wilderness. But as she wrote, she put herself into the account of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness for forty years. "For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10:1-4)

The message that we can trust God to care for us is timeless, and it grew out of Fanny Crosby's own moment of need. "He has done all things well." (Mark 7:37)

All the Way My Savior Leads Me

5

1. All the way my Sa - vior leads me; What have I to ask be - side? Can I
 2. All the way my Sav - ior leads me; Cheers each wind - ing path I tread, Gives me
 3. All the way my Sav - ior leads me; Oh, the full - ness of His love! Per - fect

5 D_b/A_b E_b⁶ E_b B_b E_b

doubt His ten - der mer - cy, Who through life has been my guide? Heav'n - ly
 grace for ev - 'ry tri - al, Feeds me with the liv - ing bread. Though my
 rest to me is prom - ised In my Fa - ther's house a - bove. When my

9 A_b E_b

peace, di - vin - est com - fort, Here by faith in Him to dwell! For I
 wea - ry steps may fal - ter, And my soul a - thirst may be, Gush - ing
 spir - it, clothed im - mor - tal, Wings its flight to realms of day, This my

13 A_b D_b E_b⁶ E_b A_b

know, what - e'er be - fall me, Je - sus do - eth all things well; For I
 from the Rock be - fore me, Lo! a spring of joy I see; Gush - ing
 song thro' end - less a - ges: Je - sus led me all the way; This my

17 A_b D_b E_b⁶ E_b A_b

know, what - e'er be - fall me, Je - sus do - eth all things well.
 from the Rock be - fore me, Lo! a spring of joy I see.
 song thro' end - less a - ges: Je - sus led me all the way.

Fanny J. Crosby, 1874

Robert Lowry, 1875

Come, Thou Almighty King

Words by unknown author, Music by Felice Giardini (1716-1796)

“Come, Thou Almighty King” turned up in England in 1757, when it was published anonymously in a pamphlet. The fact that Charles Wesley wrote a song in this pamphlet which was published by his brother John led to the idea that Charles wrote “Come, Thou Almighty King” as well.

The song may have been intentionally anonymous because it was so similar to the popular British song “God Save the King,” published thirteen years earlier. The songs are written in the same meter, and “Come, Thou Almighty King” may have been sung to the same tune, leading to speculation that it was a slight to the current king. However, since it was published in a leaflet by John Wesley, it is unlikely that this song was intended to be subversive. In 1744, its publisher, John Wesley, had written to King George II, assuring him of his loyalty as a citizen:

“We are ready to obey your Majesty to the uttermost, in all things which we conceive agreeable thereto. And we earnestly exhort all with whom we converse, as they fear God, to honour the King. We, of the clergy in particular, put all men in mind to revere the higher powers as of God; and continually declare, ‘Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience’ sake.’”

So it is more likely that “Come, Thou Almighty King” was a follow up prayer to the King of Kings. It was written in honor of Trinity Sunday, celebrated the first Sunday after Pentecost in the Western Christian liturgical calendar. The Methodists celebrated Trinity Sunday along with Western liturgical churches.

“Come, Thou Almighty King” is a song that should be sung with all its verses. Each of the first three honors a distinct aspect of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit. And the final verse lifts praise to all three. Here are a few Bible passages that help us with this praise:

To the Father, Almighty King

“We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.” (Revelation 11:17)

To the Son, Incarnate Word

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
“The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:1, 14)

To the Spirit, Holy Comforter

“When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even

the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.”
(John 15:26 KJV)

To the Trinity, the Great Three in One

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
(2 Corinthians 13:14)

Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, a wealthy and influential Methodist at the time, commissioned the tune we sing with “Come, Thou Almighty King” today. For a tune to match these majestic words, she turned to Felice Giardini, a violin virtuoso who was friends with J. C. Bach, youngest son of J. S. Bach. Giardini directed the Italian Opera in London around the time that the Countess commissioned him. The tune he produced for “Come, Thou Almighty King” this song is known as “Italian Tune” after Giardini’s heritage, or “Moscow” after the place where he died after moving there to find work.

It is said that during the Revolutionary War, British soldiers entered an American church and demanded that the congregation sing “God Save the King.” Instead, the congregation sang “Come, Thou Almighty King.”

Come, Thou Almighty King

6

1. Come, Thou Al - might - ty King, Help us Thy name____ to sing,
 2. Come, Thou In - car - nate Word, Gird on Thy might - y sword,
 3. Come, Ho - ly Com - fort - er, Thy sa - cred wit - ness bear
 4. To the great One____ in Three E - ter - nal prais - es be,
 7 N.C. D G/D D⁷ G D G/D D⁷
 Help us to praise: Fa - ther, all glo - ri - ous, O'er all vic -
 Our prayer at - tend: Come and Thy peo - ple bless, And give Thy
 In this glad hour: Thou who al - might - y art, Now rule in
 Hence ev - er - more: His Sov - 'reign maj - es - ty May we in
 12 G N.C. G Am/C G/D D G
 to - ri - ous, Come and reign o - ver us, An - cient of Days.
 word suc - cess, Spir - it of ho - li - ness, On us de - descend.
 ev - 'ry heart, And ne'er from us de - part, Spir - it of pow'r.
 glo - ry see, And to e - ter - ni - ty Love and a - dore.

Unknown, but possibly Charles Wesley, 1757

Felice de Giardini

Holy, Holy, Holy

Words by Reginald Heber (1783-1826), Music by John Dykes (1823-1876)

Reginald Heber was born into a wealthy family in England in 1783. Heber was interested in the Bible from an early age, and he read and memorized it. At Brasenose College, Oxford, he proved himself a talented poet and won prizes for a Latin poem, a prose essay called “The Sense of Honour,” and an English poem titled “Palestine.” After he graduated from university, he traveled across Europe.

When he returned, he took up his real calling: the ministry. He was ordained in 1807 at the age of 24. He married in 1809. He was well liked and respected, and received further ministry appointments. He deeply appreciated the holiness of God, often writing, “Only thou are holy.” He wrote “Holy, Holy, Holy” while vicar of Hodnet in Shropshire, England, sometime between 1807 and 1823. Like the previous song, it was written in honor of Trinity Sunday, a day to honor the three persons of the Godhead, which is celebrated eight Sundays after Easter. “Holy, Holy, Holy” was not published until years later.

In 1823, Heber was appointed Bishop of Calcutta (Kolkata) in India. He sailed there with his family that same year, confident that he was following God’s will. Heber worked hard to spread Christianity in India—so hard that he aged quickly and went gray within a year. He didn’t always protect himself when he traveled in diverse climates that his body wasn’t accustomed to, and the strain took its toll. In 1826, he traveled to what is now the city of Tiruchirappalli, whose climate is said to be “eight months hot and four hotter.” While there, Heber died when his brain burst a blood vessel. His was an adventurous life and I honor him for his contribution of this sacred song of worship.

Of all the hymns in this collection, this particular one inspires and enables me to worship God in spirit and in truth. The lyrics are based on the words from Revelation 4:8-11: “The four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!’ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ‘Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.’”

Isaiah also had a wonderful glimpse into heaven. He wrote, “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. . . . And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isaiah 6:1-3)

In the fourth verse of this song, we see saints gathered around the “glassy sea”. We find similar imagery in Revelations 15:2: “I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands.”

The hymn is full of symbolic threes that affirm the glory of the Trinity. “Holy” is repeated thrice. Holiness, mercy and might, as well as power, love, and purity, are attributes assigned to God. Saints, cherubim, and seraphim are mentioned in the description of heaven. God’s presence, past, present, and future, is referred to and all God’s work in earth, sky, and sea are said to praise His holy name.

Holy, Holy, Holy

7

E_b C_m B_b E_b A_b E_b
 1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord____ God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! ho - ly is the Fa - ther, And
 3. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it! In
 4. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! all the saints a - dore Thee,
 5. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord____ God Al - might - y!

5 B_b/D E_b B_b/D C_m F⁷/C B_b/D E_b B_b F⁷ B_b / B_b'
 Like a breath of heav - en our praise as - cends to Thee:
 ho - ly is the Spir - it, and ho - ly is the Son:
 ho - ly ad - o - ra - tion, pros - trate we wor - ship Thee:
 Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea:
 All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea:

9 E_b C_m B_b E_b A_b E_b
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Thou E - ter - nal One!
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! our souls are low be - fore Thee,
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim fall - ing down be - fore Thee,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y,

13 C_m E_b/G E_b⁷/G A_b E_b E_b⁷ A_b F_m/A_b B_b⁷ E_b / A_b E_b
 An - cient of days, we bow and wor - ship Thee.
 Match - less in wis - dom, power, and per - fect love.
 Thou Might - y Sov - 'reign, King of Eter - ni - ty!
 Which wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 God in Three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

Jerusalem the Golden

Words by Bernard of Cluny (12th century), Translation by John Neale (1818-1866), Music by Alexander Ewing (1830-1895)

I have stood with kindred spirits, on the steps opposite the Western Wall in Jerusalem, and sung this song while the sun was setting on a Sabbath eve. I love Jerusalem, “beautiful in elevation . . . the joy of all the earth, Mount Zion . . . the city of the great King.” (Psalm 48:2)

Bernard of Cluny’s early years are a mystery. He was likely born in France, possibly of English descent. While a youth, he joined a monastery at Cluny run by Peter the Venerable. Peter was an early champion of Islamic studies in the West, believing that Islam was a Christian heresy that needed to be corrected. Cluny’s monks focused on praying, but unlike many other monks they didn’t live ascetic lives. They dressed in linen and silk and ate meats, wines, and cheeses—luxuries in those days.

While at Cluny, Bernard wrote a 3,000-line poem he called “On Contempt of the World.” It began, “Tis the last hour; the times are at their worst.” Wherever he observed the sin, his satirical poem soundly denounces it. Yet in the midst of the swirl of darkness the poem describes, Bernard also wrote about the beauties of heaven. “Jerusalem the Golden” came from this part of the poem! Even though it was written at a time when crusading fervor was high, “Jerusalem the Golden” was a picture of heaven, not of earthly conquest.

Bernard prefaces his poem with a declaration that only God’s Spirit could have enabled him to write such a poem in Latin. The portions we know—more than sixteen stanzas—describe the beauty of Jerusalem as we will know it in the future. Here’s how the book of Revelation paints the same scene:

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:1-2)

“And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.” (Revelation 21:1-11)

The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel.” (Revelation 21:18-19)

Bernard was just a link in the chain of events that brought us “Jerusalem the Golden.” Another link was John Mason Neale, a strong-willed Anglican priest born in 1818. Ill health moved him to the Madeira Islands from about 1842 to 1845. While there, he discovered and marinated in the writings of Bernard of Cluny. Even after Neale’s return to England, his bishop did not allow him to perform ministerial duties from 1846 to 1863. Neale used those waiting years to write copiously—travel guides, children’s stories, poems, hymns, history, and theology.

Sometime before 1851, Neale translated Bernard’s “On Contempt of the World” and excerpted the words for “Jerusalem the Golden” into stanzas from the longer poem. Indeed, Neale revered the old hymns—“that treasure, into which the saints of every age and country had poured their contributions.” He determined not to leave these treasures “a sealed book and . . . a dead letter” and consequently translated or adapted many of them from Greek and Latin. If it weren’t for Neale’s passion, we wouldn’t know hymns such as “Of the Father’s Love Begotten,” “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” and “Good Christian Men, Rejoice.”

Neale did not compose the music we sing to “Jerusalem the Golden.” We can thank another link in the chain, Alexander Ewing, a Scottish church leader, for the tune.

Jerusalem the Golden

8

D_b D_b^{6(sus4)} D_b G_b/D_b D_b A_b B_bm D_b / F B_bm G_b
 1. Je - ru - sa - lem the gold - en! With milk and hon - ey blest, Be -
 2. They stand, those halls of Zi - on, All ju - bi - lant with song, And
 3. With jas - per glow thy bul - warks, Thy streets with em - 'rald blaze; The
 4. There is the throne of Da - vid: And there, from care re - leased, The
 5. To Thee be praise for - ev - er, Thou glo - rious King of kings! Thy

5 D_b F B_bm A_b D_b / E_b/G_b B_bm A_b
 neath thy con - tem - pla - tion Sink heart and voice op - pressed. I
 bright with many an an - gel, And all the mar - tyr throng: The
 sar - dius and the to - paz U - nite in thee their rays: Thine
 song of them that tri - umph, The shout of them that feast; And
 won - drous love and fa - vor Each ran - somed spir - it sings: There

9 G_b D_b G_b F_m B_bm A_b D_b / E_b/G_b E_b A_b C⁷
 know not, oh, I know not What joys a - wait us there, What
 Prince is all thy splen - dor, The Cru - ci - fied thy praise; His
 age - less walls are bond - ed With am - e - thyst un - priced; Thy
 they who, with their Lead - er, Have con - quered in the fight,
 God, our King and Por - tion, In full - ness of His grace,
 Shall

13 D_b/F D_b F B_bm A_b D_b / D_b/F A_b⁷ D_b / G_b D_b
 ra - dian - cy of glo - ry, What bliss be - yond com - pare. A - men.
 laud and ben - e - dic - tion Thy ran-somed peo - ple raise.
 saints build up its fab - ric, the cor - ner - stone is Christ.
 ev - er and for - ev - er, Are clad in robes of white.
 we be - hold for - ev - er, And wor - ship face to face.

Trust and Obey

Words by John Sammis (1846-1919), Music by Daniel Towner (1850-1919)

The spoken word is a powerful thing. In fact, the saints overcome the devil because of Jesus' blood and their spoken word, "They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." (Revelation 12:11) And an uncertain young man in an evangelistic service in Brockton, Massachusetts, spoke out and inspired the song "Trust and Obey."

Daniel Towner was a music director in Methodist circles in the Midwest. He was working at a church in Cincinnati in 1885 when D. L. Moody booked a campaign in the city. Towner prepared a choir for the event. Moody was impressed with Towner's skills, urging him to join his evangelistic team.

Towner accepted, and in 1886 he was singing at a Moody meeting in Brockton. It was a testimony meeting, and a young man rose to speak. Perhaps his heart had been stirred by the gospel, but he didn't know how it was going to work out in his life. Or perhaps he was simply acknowledging that he didn't understand everything he had heard in the meetings. The young man simply said, "I'm not sure—but I am going to trust, and I am going to obey."

Those words stuck with Towner. He jotted them down. Then he wrote out the story of the boy and his testimony in a letter to a Presbyterian minister friend named John Sammis. The words also struck Sammis, for he developed them into the song we know today. Towner wrote the accompanying music.

Music historian Al Smith recounts that Towner became so discouraged in the process of composing the tune that he threw his efforts into the trash. His wife discovered them there, and fished his work out and hummed the tune. "I feel the melody you have written is just what is needed to carry the message," she told him, encouraging him to work on it further.

"Trust and obey" reverberates throughout the song. Life may be difficult, and we may not understand why things happen, but we can trust God and do what He tells us to do.

Sammis and Towner are the names credited for the words and music of "Trust and Obey." But let's not forget that it was an anonymous boy feeling out his way in the Christian life who gave us that timeless phrase. You may not feel that you know everything or have a lot to offer to God, but you never know when the word of your testimony might have a similarly powerful effect.

I appreciate the call to "walk with the Lord in the light of His word" for it speaks of a personal relationship with God who gently and patiently reveals the truth to each of His children at the perfect time. This thought originates in 1 John 1:7, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."

His word is doable. "For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it." (Deuteronomy 30:11, 14)

As we trust God and obey the truth as he shows it to us, we find ourselves abiding and nestling in His arms of love. "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." (John 15:10-11)

The more we know God, the more we love Him. The more we know and love Him, the easier it is to trust and obey Him.

Trust and Obey

9

N.C. F C⁷ F C C⁷ F

1. When we walk with the Lord In the light of His Word, What a
 2. Not a shad - ow can rise, Not a cloud in the skies, But His
 3. Not a bur - den we bear, Not a sor - row we share, But our
 4. But we nev - er can prove The de - lights of His love Un - til
 5. Then in fel - low - ship sweet We will sit at His feet, Or we'll

5 B_b F C F C⁷ F

glo - ry He sheds on our way! While we do His good will He a -
 smile quick - ly drives it a - way; Not a doubt nor a fear, Not a
 toil He doth rich - ly re - pay; Not a grief nor a loss, Not a
 all on the al - tar we lay, For the fa - vor He shows And the
 walk by His side in the way; What He says we will do, Where He

10 C C⁷ F B_b F/C C⁷ F C F F⁷

bides with us still, And with all who will trust and o - bey. Trust and o - bey, for there's
 sigh nor a tear, Can a - bide while we trust and o - bey.
 frown nor a cross, But is blest if we trust and o - bey.
 joy He be - stows, Are for those who will trust and o - bey.
 sends we will go. Nev - er fear, on - ly trust and o - bey.

17 D D⁷ Gm C⁷ F F/C C⁷ F

no oth - er way To be hap - py in Je - sus But to trust and o - bey.

J.H. Sammis, 1887

Daniel B. Towner, 1887

It is Well with My Soul

Words by Horatio Spafford (1828-1888), Music by Philip P. Bliss (1838-1876)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

We find comfort in “It is Well with My Soul” because Horatio Spafford, the man who wrote it, suffered. Spafford was a devout Christian active in his Presbyterian church. He had a wife, Anna, and four daughters. Spafford was a loyal friend of D. L. Moody and other contemporary evangelical leaders. He was also a senior partner in a Chicago law firm, and the Spafford family enjoyed a comfortable life. Then in 1871, the Chicago Fire swept the city and destroyed Spafford’s extensive real estate investments.

In 1873, he decided that a family vacation to Europe would be just the thing for his wife’s health. He thought they might participate in Moody’s evangelistic meetings in London on the trip, as well. However, real estate business detained Spafford in Chicago when it came time for their ship, the *Ville du Havre*, to depart in November. So he sent his family on ahead of them, expecting to catch up with them.

Partway through the Spafford ladies’ journey, the *Locearn*, a British iron sailing ship, rammed the *Ville du Havre*. The Spaffords made it to the deck, but the lifeboats were stuck to the ship by fresh paint, and *Ville du Havre* was quickly sinking. Nine-year-old Maggie was terrified and commanded a pastor friend near them, “Pray!” Then the bow broke away from the ship, and Maggie became suddenly calm. “Mother, God will look after us,” she said. Eleven-year-old Annie continued, “The sea is His, and He created it.” The *Ville du Havre* sank in twelve minutes. Of the 273 passengers aboard, fewer than one in five survived.

When Anna awoke from unconsciousness in a rescue rowboat a few hours later, she learned that all her girls had drowned. Yet she sensed a divine voice speaking: “You have been spared for a purpose. There is a mission for you to accomplish.” It took nine days to reach land, and while making their way there, she told the pastor Maggie had commanded to pray, “God gave me four daughters. Now they have been taken from me. One day I shall understand why.” When she landed at Cardiff, Wales, she sent her husband a simple telegraph message: “Saved alone.” In a London shop, she chose a mourning outfit that included white to show her faith that her separation from her daughters was only temporary.

Spafford immediately sailed for England to join his grief-stricken wife. When they were passing over the spot where the *Ville du Havre* sank, the captain pointed it out to the passengers. Spafford stared into the ocean, thinking of his lovely daughters. Then he went to his cabin and began to write: “When peace, like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll. Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul.”

A few days later, Spafford wrote to his sister, “We passed over the spot where she went down, in mid-ocean, the water three miles deep. But I do not think of our dear ones there. They are in safety, folded, the dear lambs, and there, before very long, shall we be too. In the meantime, thanks to God, we have an opportunity to serve and praise Him for His love and mercy to us and ours. ‘I will praise Him while I have my being.’ May each one arise, leave all, and follow Him.”

It is Well with My Soul

10

C / C/G G/F C/E G⁷/D G⁷ G⁷/B C
 When peace, like a river, at - tend - eth my way, When
 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, Let
 My sin, O the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought, My
 And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight, The

5 Am E⁷/B Am/C / G/D D G G⁷ C C/E F A⁷/E
 sor - rows like sea - bill - ows roll; What - ev - er my lot, Thou hast
 this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ has re - gard - ed my
 sin, not in part, but the whole, Is nailed to the cross, and I
 clouds be rolled back as a scroll: The trump shall re - sound and the

10 Dm D⁷/F# G Am⁷/G G⁷ C/E Dm⁷ C/G G C N.C.
 taught me to say, "It is well, it is well with my soul." It is
 help - less es - tate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
 bear it no more: Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
 Lord shall des - cend, "E - ven so," it is well with my soul.

15 C C/E G N.C. G G⁷/B C F C/G G C
 well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.
 It is well with my soul,

Victory Through Grace

Words by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915), Music by John Sweney (1837-1899)

We know little of the context in which Fanny Crosby and John Robson Sweney wrote “Victory through Grace.” Fanny wrote the words in 1890, around the time she wrote “He HIDETH My Soul.” She turned 70 that year and was quite involved in mission work in New York City. “Victory through Grace” appears in some publications under one of Crosby’s many pen names, Sallie Martin. She used pen names in part, perhaps, out of humility and in part because it may have looked odd to have so many songs by one author in a single volume!

Sweney had shown talent since boyhood and had started teaching in public schools and leading Sunday school music when he was still a youth. He was the band leader for the Third Delaware Regiment in the Civil War, and he taught music at Pennsylvania Military Academy after the war. He was concurrently music director at Bethany Presbyterian Church, whose Sunday school superintendent was John Wanamaker, of department store fame. Wanamaker helped gain name recognition for Sweney, and summer revival groups around the country started asking Sweney to lead their singing. Like Crosby, Sweney wrote secular music for years before transitioning to sacred music.

The song Crosby and Sweney produced is a fascinating journey through Scripture. It starts out “Conquering now, and still to conquer,” referencing Revelation 6:2: “I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.”

Then it moves to “the host of all the faithful,” mentioned in Revelation 17:14: “They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

Other Revelation themes surface: fighting, fine clothing, exultant shouting, a Leader, kingship, armies, and glory. Then from Daniel: “Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.” (Daniel 12:3). The chorus is from Ecclesiastes 9:11: “I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.”

2

16 Gm⁷ Eb/G Cm/Eb B_b(sus4) B_b Cm/Eb B_b/F F B_b

name of their stars that for man-sions Lead - er, ev - er e - ter - nal Hear them ex - ult - ing - ly Bright in His King - dom Rest, when their war - fare is say: _____ shine. _____ past. _____

D.S. true and the faith - ful Vic - t'ry is promi - sed through grace. _____

20 F B_b/F F⁷ B_b

Not to the strong - is the bat - tle, not to the swift is the race, _____

Victory Through Grace

11

B♭ Cm/E♭ B♭/F F7 B♭

1. Con - quer-ing now and still to con- quer, Rid-eth a King in His_ might! Lead - ing the
 2. Con - quer-ing now and still to con- quer, Who is this won - der - ful King?_ Whence are the
 3. Con - quer-ing now and still to con- quer, Je - sus, Thou Ru - ler of all!_ Thrones and their

6

B♭ C C7 F B♭/D

host of all the faithful In - to the midst of the fight; See them with
 ar - mies which He lead - eth, While of His glo - ry they sing?__ He is our
 scep - ters all shall per - ish, crowns and their splen - dor shall fall,___ Yet shall the

11 Eb D Gm F⁷ Gm F/A B_b  B_b⁷



cour - age ad - vanc - ing, Clad in their brill - iant ar - ray, _____ Shout-ing the
 Lord and Re - deem - er, Sav - ior and Mon - arch di - vine; _____ They are the
 ar - mies Thou lead - est, Faith-ful and true to the last, _____ Find in Thy

Yet to the

Onward, Christian Soldiers

Words by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), Music by Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)

“Necessity is the mother of invention” proved true for Sabine Baring-Gould. An assistant to a parish priest in 1865, Baring-Gould was responsible for a school festival on Whit-Monday, the day after Pentecost. The children from his village were to march to join the children of a nearby village. Baring-Gould wanted a festive song appropriate for the occasion, but he couldn’t think of any known song that was quite right.

So he wrote a song himself! He wrote it at night, and it took all of 15 minutes. He apparently based it on the biblical concept of the believer as a soldier creating a march written for children celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit! “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 2:3) He originally titled it “A Hymn for Procession with Cross and Banners.” He had no idea that it would be used by anyone beyond that celebration. Baring-Gould apologized later: “It was written in great haste, and I am afraid that some of the lines are faulty.”

Because of the haste in which he wrote it, Baring-Gould allowed later hymnal compilers to modify the words. One compiler changed “one in hope and doctrine” to “one in hope and purpose.” Another changed “We are not divided” to “Though divisions harass.” Nonetheless, Baring-Gould’s words have outlived their modifications.

Baring-Gould was also considered one of the top ten novelists of his day. He produced more than 1,240 published pieces—from novels and biographies to ghost stories and folk songs. He considered his folk songs his highest achievement, yet his simple children’s song is the piece that has swept the world!

His song probably wouldn’t have become popular with the tune the children originally marched to, Haydn’s Symphony in D No. 15. Around 1871, when on the cusp of hitting fame as a comic opera writer, Arthur Sullivan stumbled across Baring-Gould’s lyrics. Though he did not live a Christlike lifestyle, Sullivan was a church organist in London at the time, and he had composed a number of other hymn tunes. Sullivan was staying in the home of a family friend while he composed the new tune for “Onward, Christian Soldiers.” He named the tune “St. Gertrude” in honor of his friend’s wife, Gertrude Clay-Ker-Seymer. Sullivan may have been no saint, but his tune carried “Onward Christian Soldiers” to worldwide fame.

In 1941, when British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U. S. President Franklin Roosevelt met to sign the Atlantic Charter, which envisioned the goals of the Allies for a postwar world (even though the United States had not entered World War II at that point), Churchill selected “Onward, Christian Soldiers” to be sung at a church service. Churchill explained:

“I felt that this was no vain presumption, but that we had the right to feel that we (were) serving a cause for the sake of which a trumpet has sounded from on high. When I looked upon that densely packed congregation of fighting men of the same language, of the same faith, of the same fundamental laws, of the same ideals . . . it swept across me that here was the only hope, but also the sure hope, of saving the world from measureless degradation.”

Interestingly, the Salvation Army, founded by William and Catherine Booth, adopted the hymn as its favored processional.

As I sing this hymn, I am reminded, and strengthened, by several references to triumphant nature of the Church of Jesus Christ. “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18) “Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.” (2 Corinthians 2:14)

Onward, Christian Soldiers

12

1. On - ward, Christ - ian sol - diers! March - ing as to war, With the cross of
 2. At the sign of tri - umph, Sa - tan's host doth flee; On, then, Chris - tian
 3. Like a might - y ar - my Moves the Church of God; Broth - ers, we are
 4. Crowns and thrones may per - ish, King - doms rise and wane, But the Church of
 5. On - ward, then, ye faith - ful, Join our hap - py throng, Blend with ours your

6 G⁷(sus4) C/G G⁷ F/G G⁷ C / F / B_b
 Je - sus Go - ing on be - fore. Christ, the roy - al Mast - er, Leads a - gainst the foe;
 sol - diers, On to vic - tor - y! Hell's foun - da - tions qui - ver At the shout of praise;
 tread - ing Where the saints have trod; We are not di - vid - ed, All one bod - y we,
 Je - sus Con - stant will re - main; Gates of hell can nev - er 'Gainst that Church pre - vail;
 voic - es In the tri - umph song; Glo - ry, laud, and hon - or Un - to Christ the King,

13 B_b F B_b/D F B_b F B_b/D F B_b F/B_b Gm/B_b G⁷/B C F
 For - ward in - to bat - tle, See, His ban - ners go! On - ward, Christ - ian
 Bro th - ers, lift your voic - es, Loud your an - them - raise!
 One in hope and doc - trine, One in char - i - ty.
 We have Christ's own pro - mise, And that can - not fail.
 This thro' count - less a - ges Men and an - gels sing.

18 C⁷ / F / Gm F/A B_b C⁷ F
 sol - diers! March - ing as to war, With the cross of Je - sus Go - ing on be - fore!

Sabine Baring-Gould, 1865

Arthur S. Sullivan 1871

The Doxology

Words by Thomas Ken (1637-1711), Music by Louis Bourgeois (1510-1561)

Thomas Ken set out to write simple private hymns, not a famous doxology! “Doxology” comes from the Greek word *doxa*, which means “opinion” or “glory.” In the mid-1600s, people started using “doxology” to refer to a short hymn of praise to God. But Ken, a bishop in the Church of England, lived in the day when people felt that public praise to God should be sung only in the words of the Bible. Ken believed that it was very appropriate for people to praise God in their own words, at least in private.

In 1674, Ken published a book of songs for boys who attended Winchester College, founded in the late 1300s to educate clergy members. (Ken himself attended Winchester, still the oldest public school in England.) However, Ken encouraged the students to use the songs for private devotions, likening their personal worship to King David’s in the Psalms. Three of these songs were morning, evening, and midnight prayers: “Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun,” “Glory to Thee, My God, This Night,” and “Lord, Now My Sleep Does Me Forsake.” All three ended with the same line: “Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

Ken exhorted students, “Be sure to sing the Morning and Evening Hymn in your chamber devoutly, remembering that the Psalmist, upon happy experience, assures you, that it is a good thing to tell of the loving kindness of the Lord early in the morning, and of His truth in the night season.” Some say that Ken himself played the lute and sang the morning hymn in his personal worship each morning. These passages from the Psalms could have been his inspiration:

“The LORD will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life.” (Psalm 42:8 NASB)

“It is good to give thanks to the LORD, and to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High; To declare Thy lovingkindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness by night,”
(Psalm 92:1-2 NASB)

“Let me hear Thy lovingkindness in the morning; For I trust in Thee;”
(Psalms 143:8 NASB)

It is ironic that this one stanza, composed for private worship, is one of the most-sung worship stanzas in the centuries since! Yet it is right to remember that this beloved worship stanza was originally attached to simple prayers over daily activities. Praise should ascend to God not just in inspiring worship services, but when one is lying awake in bed at night.

Ken lived out practical worship through obedience to God. He was a kind fellow who gave money to beggars, but fiery when it came to sin. He was a chaplain to officials and royalty and didn’t hesitate to speak up about their wrongdoing. His boldness got him sent away from the royal Dutch court, but it endeared him to England’s King Charles II, who called Ken “the good little man” and said at chapel time, “I must go in and hear Ken tell me my faults.” He was not so well received by the two rulers after Charles II and was eventually removed from his position as bishop. He lived out his days in happy contentment in the home of a friend, refusing to be reinstated later by Queen Anne when he had the chance. Before he died, he requested that he be buried at sunrise. His “Morning Hymn” was sung as his body was lowered into the grave.

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow,” or the Doxology, as it is commonly called, has expressed praise on many occasions since. It is both praise song and prayer, as Ken originally intended.

The tune is one of the finest melodies in Christian music and was first associated with Psalm 134 in the Genevan Psalter. It was also associated with the 100th Psalm when translated by William Kethe in “All People that on Earth do Dwell,” hymn #27.

The Doxology

Old Hundredth

13

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise
Him above, ye heav'n - ly host; Praise Fa- ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

5

Thomas Ken 1637-1693

Lewis Bourgeoise, 1551

Crown Him with Many Crowns

Words by Matthew Bridges (1800-1894) and Godfrey Thring (1823-1903), Music by George J. Elvey (1816-1893)

Writer E.B. White once said, “There is nothing more likely to start disagreement among people. . . than an agreement.” The two authors of “Crown Him with Many Crowns” agreed on Jesus’ kingship. Yet if they had not disagreed in some other ways, we would not know the song as it is today.

You see, Matthew Bridges wrote the original words to the song in 1851. Bridges was raised in the Anglican church, but he became a Catholic around 1845. One of his six stanzas was the following:

Crown him the virgin’s Son, the God incarnate born,
Whose arm those crimson trophies won which now His brow adorn;
Fruit of the mystic rose, as of that rose the stem;
The root whence mercy ever flow, the Babe of Bethlehem.

Godfrey Thring was a faithful Anglican who appreciated Bridges’ song but didn’t agree with his Catholic theology. Hymns do affect our theology! Instead of abandoning the song, Thring refreshed it by adding six verses of his own in 1874. The song we sing today is a blend of the two men’s words—the sum better than the parts because of their disagreement!

Both men drew inspiration from Revelation 19:12: “His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.” Both wrote of the roles of Jesus Christ: the Lamb on the throne, the virgin’s Son, the Son of God, the Lord of life, the Lord of peace, the Lord of love, the Lord of heaven, the Lord of lords, the Lord of years. Both desired to honor Jesus. And both revered Him through their words.

“Crown Him with Many Crowns” was the opening hymn for the great Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, where 1,200 delegates from several western nations met to discuss “the Evangelization of the World in this Generation.” It was a fitting rallying point of worship. One hundred years later, in 2010, 4,000 delegates from 198 nations met in Cape Town to discuss issues facing the global church. The Cape Town congress opened with the same hymn. Its subject is unchanged, and worship to Him is growing throughout the nations of the earth.

Crown Him with crowns of gold, All nations great and small,
Crown Him, ye martyred saints of old, The Lamb once slain for all;
The Lamb once slain for them, Who bring their praises now,
As jewels for the diadem, That girds His sacred brow.

“And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.’”
(Revelation 5:6-10)

Crown Him with Many Crowns

14

1. Crown Him with man - y crowns, The Lamb up - on His throne:
 2. Crown Him the Lord of love: Be - hold His hands and side;
 3. Crown Him the Lord of life: Who tri - umphed o'er the grave,
 4. Crown Him the Lord of heav'n: One with the Fa - ther known, Hark!
 Rich Who One

5 D A/C# Bm D E G/D A/C# G/B A D E(sus4) E
 how the heav'n - ly an - them drowns All mu - sic but its
 wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, In beau - ty glo - ri -
 rose vic - to - rious to the strife For those He came to
 with the Spir - it through Him giv'n From yon - der glo - rious

8 A A⁷/G D/F# D C⁷/E D/F# G B⁷/F# E D/F# E/G# A A⁷/G
 own! A - wake, my soul, and sing Of Him who died for thee, And
 fied; No an - gel in the sky Can full - y bear that sight,
 save; His glo - ries now we sing, Who died and rose on high,
 throne. To Thee be end - less praise, For Thou for us hast died;
 Be

13 D/F# G D/F# Em⁷ A D D/F# G D A⁷ D
 hail Him as thy match - less King through all a - ter - ni - ty.
 down - ward bends his won - d'ring eye At mys - ter - ies so bright.
 died e - ter - nal life to bring And lives that death may die.
 Thou, O Lord, through end - less days A - dored and mag - ni - fied.

Jesus Loves Me

Words by Anna Warner (1827-1915) and William Bradbury (1816-1868), Music by William Bradbury

Anna Warner was born in 1827. Her mother died when Anna was a baby and her sister Susan was 10. Their father's sister Fanny came to live with the girls and raise them. Their father, Henry Warner, was a well-to-do lawyer, but a national economic crisis in 1837 led to him losing most of his money. This forced him and the girls to relocate to Constitution Island, near West Point, New York. It was around this time that both Anna and Susan came to know Christ for themselves and joined a Presbyterian church.

After 10 years or so of financial hardship, Anna and Susan determined to help the family finances. They started writing stories—sometimes under pseudonyms—and discovered they had a wealth of talent! In 1850, Susan published the popular *The Wide, Wide World*, a book about a girl facing adversity with God's help. It became a bestseller that went through fourteen editions in two years because of its relevance to its everyday readers (Louisa May Alcott even shows Jo March reading it in *Little Women*). Unfortunately, due to loose copyright laws and people pirating their works, the sisters never made much money from their writing. Yet they knew God would care for them.

Susan went on to publish a less known book, *Say and Seal*, in 1860. Anna supplied some parts of the book. At one point, a young boy in the story is extremely ill. His Sunday school teacher visits him and comforts him with a poem, which we now know as "Jesus Loves Me." Anna wrote the words to this poem that still comforts children around the world today.

William Bradbury was a musical genius who learned to play every instrument around him by the time he was 14—every instrument except piano and organ, because he had never seen either until he was 14 and moved with his family to Boston! No matter—within four years he was a noted organist in Boston. By 1840 he was holding singing schools and often conducted concerts with as many as 1,000 children performing. He also published musical works for choirs and schools. Bradbury discovered Warner's poem in *Say and Seal* around 1862, and he recognized a good thing. He set "Jesus Loves Me" to music and added the chorus "Yes, Jesus loves me . . . the Bible tells me so." He published it in his hymnal *The Golden Shower* in 1862.

Bradbury's tune is often called "China," possibly because the missionaries there loved to use it. Further proof that the hymn is loved worldwide came in 1944. John F. Kennedy told the story of how his PT boat crew was rescued in the Solomon Islands after their boat was demolished. On the way home, one of the rescued men sat with two of the natives and sang a song they had in common: "Jesus Loves Me." The story is also told that in 1972, believers in China suffering under Mao Tse Tung passed a message out of the country that said, "The 'this I know' people are well." The censors never realized that the message was telling the world that the Chinese church was thriving.

Anna and Susan Warner lived out their belief that Jesus loves young people by leading Bible studies for U.S. Military Academy cadets at West Point for 40 years until Anna's death in 1915. Anna Warner willed her Constitution Island property to the U.S. and her portrait of George Washington to the West Point cadets so that "the Cadets can have free access to see and to study it; so learning to love and revere the man who—under God—not only founded the Institution to which they belong, but gave them the Country they have sworn to defend." Today, Anna and Susan are the only civilians buried in the West Point Cemetery.

"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10)

Jesus Loves Me

15

E♭

1. Je - sus loves me! this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so;
 2. Je - sus from His throne on high, Came in - to this world to die;
 3. Je - sus loves me! He who died Heav - en's gate to o - pen wide;
 4. Je - sus, take this heart of mine; Make it pure, and whol - ly Thine;

A♭

A♭/E♭ E♭

5

Lit - tle ones to Him be - long, They are weak, but He is strong.
 That I might from sin be free, Bleed and died up - on the tree.
 He will wash a - way my sin, Let His lit - tle child come in.
 Thou hast bled and died for me, I will hence - forth live for Thee.

E♭/B♭ B♭⁷ E♭

9

E♭ A♭ E♭ E♭/B♭ B♭ E♭ A♭ E♭/B♭ B♭⁷ E♭

Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! Yes, Je-sus loves me! The Bi-ble tells me so.

A ... D W ... 1950

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words by Charles Wesley (1707-1788), Music by Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

“Hark how all the welkin rings, ‘Glory to the King of kings’” was the original opening to this Christmas song by Charles Wesley! “Welkin” is an old word for “heaven” (the place where God lives) or “firmament” (the vault of the sky). “Hark,” of course, means “pay attention.” The song’s message exhorts us to listen to what all of the heavenly beings are saying!

Wesley was undoubtedly thinking of the story of Jesus’ birth in the Gospels, where “suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:13-14). His original “welkin rings” might be more accurate in describing the heavenly sound after Jesus’ birth, since the Bible doesn’t actually say that the angels sang. However, since the Bible does say in other places that the heavens sing (see Job 38:7, Isaiah 44:23, and Isaiah 49:13), the updated version, “Hark! the herald angels sing ‘Glory to the new-born King!’” could be correct as well. (Wesley’s friend George Whitefield updated the song to “herald angels” fourteen years after its publication. He changed the song in other minor ways too.)

Wesley published the song as “Hymn for Christmas-Day” in his 1739 *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, the same book in which Hymn for Easter-Day (see hymn No. 13) was published in. In fact, Hymn for Easter-Day came just two hymns after “Hymn for Christmas-Day.” The two were written in identical meter, hinting that Wesley may have expected them to be sung to the same tune. Indeed, it is likely that the original music that accompanied the song was slow and solemn. They wouldn’t remain that way, thanks to a man who lived 300 years before and men who lived 100 years after Wesley!

In 1440, Johannes Gutenberg invented movable type printing, a massive leap for the publishing industry and, particularly, for Bible production. In 1840, composer Felix Mendelssohn wrote a festgesang (“festive song”) cantata to be performed at the 400-year anniversary celebration of the printing press in Leipzig. Seven years after the printing press celebration, William Hayman Cummings sang in the first London performance of Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, which Mendelssohn himself conducted. Cummings was also familiar with the Mendelssohn’s festgesang for Gutenberg, and he recognized that a section of it would go well with the words to Wesley’s Christmas hymn.

This is the joyful song we know today! It is rich in theology and scriptural imagery about Christ’s coming. I hope you are edified by these inspired phrases from the lyrics and their scriptural origins.

Verse 1: God and sinners reconciled

“While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,” (Romans 5:10)

Verse 2: Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see; Hail, Incarnate Deity!

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:1, 14)

Verse 3: Hail the Son of Righteousness, Light and life to all He brings, Ris’n with healing in His wings

“For you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings.” (Malachi 4:2)

Verse 4: Second Adam from above, Quick’ning Spirit, breathe thy love

“The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. . . . The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven.” (1 Corinthians 15:45, 47)

“God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5)

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

16

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!
 2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord:
 3. Hail, the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of right - eous - ness!
 4. Come, De - sire of Na - tions, come! Fix in us Thy hum - ble home:

5 G Em G/D A⁷/C[♯] D A/C[♯] D G A⁷ D

Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - - ners re - con - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.
 Rise, the wo - man's con q'ring seed, Bruise in us the ser - pent's head.

9 D G/B D⁷/F[♯] G G/D D G/B D⁷/F[♯] G G/D D

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see; Hail, th'in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die;
 Ad - am's like - ness now ef - face, Stamp Thine im - age in its place:

13 C Em⁷ Am E Am D⁷/C G/B G/D D G

With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem."
 Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.
 Sec - ond Ad - am from a - bove, Quick n'ing Spi - rit, breathe Thy love.

Charles Wesley, 1738

Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Ring the Bells of Heaven

Words by William Cushing (1823-1902), Music by George Root (1820-1895)

The song started with its composer, George Frederick Root. Named after German composer George Fridric Handel, Root was born into a musical Massachusetts family in 1820. He determined not to stay on the farm where his family lived, however, and moved to Boston to pursue music education. He was ambitious and studied under outstanding musicians there. He also became a church organist and led choirs in three Boston churches. He married in 1845 and moved to New York City and taught music part time in three New York schools, including the New York Institute for the Blind, where he met Fanny Crosby.

Root collaborated with Crosby on sixty or more secular pieces between 1851 and 1857. Their parlor songs, as the description implies, were designed to be sung by groups in parlors. Root was probably not only inspired by Stephen Foster's popular melodies, but by his own family's singing as he was growing up.

Root moved on to writing Civil War hits in the early 1860s. One of these was a song about a little slave girl who took shelter with the Union Army, published in 1866. Root sent a copy of this song to William Cushing, a pastor friend in New York state. But Cushing wasn't satisfied with the current words. He sensed the music said something more, and yearned to use the tune for spreading the gospel. When he thought of the joy in heaven over a sinner who repents in Luke 15, he realized what the tune said. "'Ring the bells of heaven' at once flowed down into the waiting melody," Cushing explained. He rewrote most of the words retaining bits of the original chorus—its "Glory! Glory!" opening and the concepts of "army," "sea," and "freedom."

The song was republished with its new words two years later (in 1868) in *Chapel Gems for Sunday Schools*. Its title was "The Prodigal Son," and the accompanying verse was Luke 15:32: "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

The song tells the story of the Prodigal Son from the perspective of heaven. The repeated line "Ring the bells of heaven" is the instruction to the heavenly beings watching the return of the wanderer.

Luke 15 has two other parables which precede the account of the prodigal son; the lost sheep, and the lost silver coin. Both of these culminate in joy and rejoicing. First the friends and neighbors celebrate finding the sheep, then there is rejoicing when the lost coin is retrieved. Jesus informs us there is a joyous celebration in heaven when one lost sinner repents.

"Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:6-7)

"Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:9-10)

The 144,000 (twelve times twelve thousand) is mentioned twice in Revelation 7 and 14. These precious saints are joined by 'multitudes' and learn a song 'no other man can sing.'

"A great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands," (Revelation 7:9)

"They were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed" (Revelation 14:3)

Ring the Bells of Heaven

17

1. Ring the bells of heav-en! there is joy to-day, For a soul re-turn-ing from the wild;
 2. Ring the bells of heav-en! there is joy to-day, For the wan-d'er now is rec-on-ciled;
 3. Ring the bells of heav-en! spread the feast to-day, An-gels, swell the glad tri-umphant strain!
 4. Ring the bells of heav-en! sound the harps to-day, For twelve times twelve thou-sand souls are born:
 5. Ring the bells of heav-en! on the Mount to-day, See the ov-er-com-ers with their King!

5 See! the Fath-er meets him out up-on the way, Wel-com-ing His wear-y, wan-d'ring child.
 Yes, a soul is res-cued from his sin-ful way, And is born a-new a ran-somed child.
 Tell the joy-ful ti-dings! bear it far a-way! For a pre-cious soul is born a-gain.
 See them gath-ring na-tions, "mul-ti-tudes each day," Wav-ing palms of praise be-fore God's throne.
 Ev-ry eye is glist-ning, 'tis a heav-nly lay, 'Tis "a song no o-ther man can sing!"

9 Glo-ry! glo-ry! how the an-gels sing! Glo-ry! glo-ry! how the loud harps ring!

13 'Tis the ran-somed ar-my, like a might-y sea, Peal-ing forth the an-them of the free!

Christ Arose

Words and Music by Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

Born into a Presbyterian family in Philadelphia on March 12, 1826, Robert Lowry loved music from a young age and played any musical instruments he could get his hands on. However, what he really wanted to do was preach.

With this in mind, Lowry enrolled in the brand-new but remote University at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania (now Bucknell University). Lowry joined a Baptist church at age 17 and had been active in choir and teaching Sunday school at First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. So it was natural that he would select a college founded by Baptists who intended it to be a theological school as well as a “literary institution.” (James Buchanan, later the 15th U. S. president, was one of the university’s early board members.) After eight years of college study, Lowry graduated in 1854.

He started pastoring the same year and pastored five churches over the next 45 years, including a church in Lewisburg, his college town. While in Lewisburg, he also taught literature at his alma mater. He was noted for his genial personality and good sense of humor, and people loved to hear his descriptive stories.

Lowry dabbled in music on the side, and he succeeded William Bradbury at editing Christian songbooks for the Bigelow & Main Publishing Company in the late 1860s. The responsibility of editing songbooks made him realize that he needed to study music further himself, so he began collecting works on composition, music history, and the philosophy and science of music.

His own method for composing songs was less than scientific, and he admitted to a reporter that he neither wrote “words to fit the music, [n]or music to fit the words.” Instead, he explained:

“I have no method. Sometimes the music comes and the words follow, fitted insensibly to the melody. I watch my moods, and when anything good strikes me, whether words or music, and no matter where I am, at home or on the street, I jot it down. Often the margin of a newspaper or the back of an envelope serves as a notebook. My brain is a sort of spinning machine, I think, for there is music running through it all the time. I do not pick out my music on the keys of an instrument. The tunes of nearly all the hymns I have written have been completed on paper before I tried them on the organ. Frequently the words of the hymn and the music have been written at the same time.”

In fact, Lowry wrote a number of songs on Sunday evenings when tired from a full day of preaching. It was in Lewisburg that Lowry applied his “un-method” and wrote “Christ Arose” in the spring of 1874. One Sunday evening while spending time with Jesus, Lowry noted Luke 24: 6-7: “He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.” He moved to the organ in his parlor and soon composed the words and tune to the song. It was published the following year.

Lowry wrote many other songs, including “Nothing But the Blood of Jesus” and “Shall We Gather at the River.” Yet preaching was always his first love. “Music, with me has been a side issue,” he once said. “. . . I would rather preach a gospel sermon to an appreciative audience than write a hymn.”

So Lowry became defined by something he did along the way. Powerful as they may have been in his lifetime, none of his sermons are widely available for us to appreciate today. Lowry’s songs were his truest sermons! And those sermons are still preaching.

Christ Arose

18

Slowly

C F/C C G G⁷ F/C C F C/E C

1. Low in the grave He lay, Je - sus, my Sav - ior! Wait - ing the com-ing day,
 2. Vain - ly they watch His bed, Je - sus, my Sav - ior! Vain - ly they seal the dead,
 3. Death can - not keep his prey, Je - sus, my Sav - ior! He tore the bars a - way,

Faster

7 Am G/D D⁷ G N.C. C C/E G^{7(sus4)}/F

Je - sus, my Lord! Up from the grave He a- rose, With a might-y tri-umph o'er His
 Je - sus, my Lord!
 Je - sus, my Lord!

He a- rose,

12 C G G⁷ Am F C F D⁷

foes; He a- rose a Vic - tor from the dark do- main, And He lives for - ev - er with His
 He a- rose;

16 G Am G C F C/G G⁷ C

saints to reign: He a- rose! He a- rose! Hal - le - lu - jah! Christ a - rose!
 He a- rose! He a- rose!

Joy to the World!

Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), Music Arranged by Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

“Joy to the World” was another of Isaac Watts’ *Psalms of David, Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* (see hymn No. 2). Originally titled “The Messiah’s Coming and Kingdom,” it was a paraphrase of Psalm 98:

“Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody! With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD! Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.” (Psalms 98:1-8)

In line with his desire to interpret the psalms in a gospel light, Watts related God’s protection of his chosen people to Christ’s coming in human form and equated the anticipation of His rule over the whole earth with our joy over His imminent return!

Though “Joy to the World” is one of the most-published Christmas songs in North America, and it is certainly appropriate to sing during Christmas season, it was never intended to be a Christmas carol!

Watts wrote the song after he had to leave his pastorate due to a fever he couldn’t shake. His friends the Abneys invited him to live on their estate and tutor their daughters, and he penned the song sitting under a tree on the grounds. The words are packed with Scripture references.

God said to Adam: “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you;” (Genesis 3:17) “The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

The song traveled to America through Benjamin Franklin, who published an edition of Watts’ psalms in 1729. They were published in Boston by someone else in 1739 and were well loved during the Revolutionary War period.

As with “Jesus Shall Reign,” we do not know the original tune to “Joy to the World.” Though Handel is often attributed as the composer of the music we know today, he was actually merely the inspiration for part of the tune. The opening line echoes “Glory to God” from Handel’s Messiah, and the refrain “And heav’n and nature sing” echoes Handel’s orchestral introduction to “Comfort Ye My People.”

The man who adapted Handel’s music to Watts’ words was Lowell Mason, a man whose ideas moved American churches from relying on professional choirs to congregational singing with organ accompaniment. Mason had earlier produced a whole hymnal with tunes based on the works of other classical composers. He called his “Joy to the World” tune “Antioch,” after the city from which Paul left on his missionary journeys and where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:26). Mason published the tune around 1839.

When I sing this inspired song in worship, I believe I am sending “joy to the world” as I proclaim by faith the good news, that “the Lord is come” and urge every heart to “prepare Him room!”

Joy to the World!

19

D Em/G D/A A⁷ D G Em A

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come! Let earth receive her
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, Nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the na - tions

7 D D G/D D

King: ploy; Let ev - ry heart pre -
 ground; While fields and floods, rocks,
 prove. He comes to make His His

11 G/D D D

pare Him room, And heav'n and na - ture sing, And
 hills and plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
 bless - ings flow Far as the curse is found, Far
 right - eous ness, And won - ders of His love, And

15 A A⁷ D G/D D Em⁷/D D/A A⁷ D

heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound ing joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
 won - ders of His love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

sing,
Isaac Watts, 1719 And heav'n and na - ture sing

Adapted from George F. Handel, 1742
by Lowell Mason, ca. 1856

Be Still, My Soul

Words by Katharina von Schlegel (1697-1768?), Translated by Jane L. Borthwick (1813-1897), Music by Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Little is known about Katharina Amalia Dorothea von Schlegel. Some say she was part of an Evangelical Lutheran convent in Köthen, Germany as a canoness (a woman living in community under a rule, but not a vow). We do know Katharina wrote at least 20 hymns.

She also corresponded with two fellow hymn writers, Count Stolberg and August Hermann Francke, who were prominent Pietists. Pietism was a seventeenth to nineteenth-century movement within the Lutheran church, which promoted small Bible studies, the priesthood of all believers, kind treatment of unbelievers, a more devotional focus in universities, fruitful rather than merely ornamental preaching, and the importance of practicing and not just knowing Christianity.

Katharina's song, which begins, "Silence, my will! Your Jesus helps you win," was published in a German hymnbook in 1752. In 1866, a Scotswoman named Jane Borthwick and her sister Sarah Findlater translated and published it in their book, *Hymns from the Land of Luther*, as "Be Still, My Soul." In the introduction, Jane wrote: "A few of the following poems may be considered as rather imitations than as translations."

The tune by Jean Sibelius, called Finlandia and with different words, is an important national hymn of Finland. At least five other hymns are set to the same tune, including "We Rest on Thee," sung by Jim Elliot, Nate Saint and their three fellow missionaries, just before their death in 1956, in the eastern jungle of Ecuador as chronicled in *Through Gates of Splendor* by Elisabeth Elliot.

The English version of the song was accompanied by Luke 21:19, which says, "By your patience possess your souls." And indeed it is a hymn for deep suffering. "Be Still My Soul" was the favorite hymn of Eric Liddell, a Scottish Olympic athlete who became well-known for his refusal to race on Sundays. (You might know him from one of my favorite movies, "Chariots of Fire.") Eric went on to become a missionary in China. During World War II, he sent his wife and three small daughters to Canada for safety. Meanwhile, he spent two years in a Japanese internment camp. Eric poured his energy into organizing sports and other activities for the 1,500 people who shared a space of just 150 by 200 yards! He showed special love to the children, elderly, and sick. He taught his fellow internees this song, and in 1945, as he lay dying of a brain tumor at age 43, the camp band was asked to play it for him.

Meanwhile in France, an American soldier named Virgil Bachman was deeply discouraged with the way the war was going. One day, his chaplain arranged a service in a tiny village chapel, and while they sang "Be Still, My Soul," God spoke to his heart. Virgil wrote, "As we left that little church, the peace I felt among the horrors of war was nothing but a gift of the Holy Spirit."

In 1978, Jim and Nancy Smith were on a plane to the Congo—where Jim had lost his father when he was 10 years old. Nobody was waiting to meet them, and Jim was full of questions: Would he remember the language? How would they care for their three (soon to be four) children? Was this really of God? Then, he says, "the Holy Spirit, the Great Comforter, swept up my thoughts and brought the truth of 'Be Still My Soul' to my heart and mind." Jim and Nancy are still serving in the Congo today.

"Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge." (Psalm 46:10-11)

Be Still, My Soul

20

1. Be still, my soul; the Lord is on thy side; Bear pa-tient - ly the
 2. Be still, my soul; thy God doth en - der- take To guide the fu - ture
 3. Be still, my soul; the hour is hast'ning on When we shall be for-

7

cross of grief or pain; Leave to thy God to or - der and pro vide;
 as He has the past. Thy hope, thy con - fi - dence let noth - ing shake;
 ev - er with the Lord. When dis - ap - point - ment, grief, and fear are gone.

13

— In ev - ery change He faith-ful will re - main Be still, my soul; thy
 — All now mys - te - rious shall be bright at last. Be still, my soul; the
 — Sor-row for - got, love's pur-est joys re - stored. Be still, my soul; when

19

best, thy heav'n - ly Friend Thru thorn - y ways leads to a joy - ful end.
 waves and winds still know His voice who ruled them while He dwelt be - low.
 change and tears are past, All safe and bless - ed we shall meet at last.

Brighten the Corner Where You Are

Words by Ina Duley Ogdon (1872-1964), Music by Charles H. Gabriel (1856-1932)

Ina Ogden was the daughter of a farmer who fought in the American Civil War, and spent the rest of his life with a musket ball in his knee. When she was 11, she lived briefly in a 160 acre claim in Dakota Territory, and went to school in a sod shanty. She began college at about 16 and at 20, she became a schoolteacher, a job she would hold for the next eight years. That same year, she published her first hymn, "Open Wide the Windows," which was prompted by a story in which a mother lost her only child. She wrote her next hymn for her brother, when he had a prolonged hospital stay after a train accident.

At 24, Ina married James Weston Ogdon, who became the editor of the Toledo Times. When their only son, William, was born in 1901, Ina gave up her job as a schoolteacher, but continued to write almost daily. In fact, she wore a silver pencil around her neck, so she could jot down her thoughts as she did housework. Her 25-year career as a Sunday school teacher inspired her to write poems for her students. Ina sensed her ability came from God to share His word.

To a woman who longed to work in the inner city or in foreign missions, Ina's sphere of influence seemed much too small. She became interested in the Chautauqua Circuit, which began as a summer school for Sunday school teachers and grew into an educational movement which President Teddy Roosevelt called "the most American thing in America." In 1912, Ina was invited to be a Chautauqua speaker, but when her father was paralyzed by a stroke, she stayed home to care for him instead.

One day, when a neighbor remarked that the brightest spots in her life came from time at home, Ina began wondering whether the people in her own life could say the same. Shut up in the upstairs corner bedroom, she wrote the words to "Brighten the Corner Where You Are" because she wanted "to be cheerful and have a wholesome attitude" and to plant seeds of God's love, rather than spreading anxiety through the home. Perhaps she was thinking of Philippians 2:14-15, which tells us, "Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world."

God did let Ina's light shine throughout the world from her small corner caring for her father. Billy Sunday's musical director, Homer Rodeheaver, would often use the song "Brighten the Corner Where You Are" at his evangelistic meetings. Sunday had it sung by the Massachusetts Legislature—and once got a crowd of 16,000 to whistle it. "Brighten the Corner" was known as the most-often performed and printed, and perhaps even the most popular American song of the 20th century. Teddy Roosevelt used it in his political rallies.

Visitors to the Billy Sunday Tabernacle told stories of what the song meant to them. A Chinese immigrant realized his recovery from drug addiction would begin by removing the darkness in his soul. A factory manager recognized she didn't know the names of the girls who worked for her, and began looking out for their physical and spiritual welfare. A woman who had nearly stopped speaking to her husband was convicted by the words "Do not let narrow self your way debar," and after weeks of showing kindness to him, they were reconciled. A single mother realized in her struggle to support her four children, she'd forgotten tenderness—and their home life was transformed.

"One who is faithful in a very little thing is also faithful in much." (Luke 16:10)

Brighten the Corner Where You Are

21

1. Do not wait un - til some deed of great-ness you may do, Do not
 2. Just a - bove are cloud-ed skies that you may help to clear, Let not
 3. Here for all your tal - ent you may sure - ly find a need, Here re -

4

wait to shed your light a - far, To the ma - ny du - ties ev - er near you now be true,
 nar - row self your way de - bar; Though in - to one heart a - lone may fall your song of cheer,
 flect the bright and Morn - ing Star; Ev - en from your hum - ble hand the Bread of Life may feed,

8

Bright-en the cor - ner where you are.
 Bright-en the cor - ner where you are. Bright-en the cor - ner where you are!
 Bright-en the cor - ner where you are.

12

Bright-en the cor - ner where you are! Some-one far from har - bor you may

15

guide a - cross the bar; Bright-en the cor - ner where you are!

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Words by Robert Robinson (1735-1790), Music by John Wyeth (1770-1858), Arranged by Norman Johnson (1928-1983)

Robert Robinson lost his father at five, and since his wealthy grandfather disapproved of his mother's marriage to a lowly customs agent, he received no inheritance. Their family's poverty kept him from studying to be an Anglican minister as his mother had hoped, and at 14, Robert was apprenticed to a barber in London. It was a poor fit for a scholarly boy. In order to satisfy his intellectual hunger, he used to rise at four in the morning, and read whatever books he could borrow or buy cheaply.

At 17, Robert and his rowdy friends heard a Gypsy fortune-teller predict their futures. Sobered by her mention of his future children and grandchildren, he decided to focus on reading even more. The same year, he convinced his friends to attend a service by George Whitefield, suggesting they could make fun of the message. Whitefield's topic was Matthew 3:7: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Robert immediately resolved to live a godly life, and for the next two and a half years, he was haunted by that message. Meanwhile, the barber released Robert from his apprenticeship. He affirmed Robert's good character, but said he was "more employed in reading than working, in following preachers than in attending customers."

Finally, at age 20, Robert "found peace by believing." He was intensely grateful that Jesus had provided "His precious blood" for complete forgiveness! Robert was just 22 when George Whitefield published eleven of his hymns. Though these were destined to be forgotten, in the following year he was able to express his gratitude in a lasting way with this song: "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing."

An independent thinker who would go through numerous phases of belief throughout his lifetime, Robert was acutely aware of his own need. Briefly a Methodist and then an Independent preacher, Robert became a Baptist, married and settled down to serve Stone Yard Chapel in Cambridge. He began with a small group meeting in a dilapidated barn, but his informal preaching style attracted crowds, and the congregation eventually grew to more than one thousand. The father of 12 children, Robert became a farmer to supplement his income, while continuing to preach two or three times every Sunday, and evangelize during the week.

He also found time to study and to write. When Dissenting pastors and schoolteachers appealed for liberty to carry out their jobs without agreeing to the 39 Articles of the state church, parts of Robert's petition were read in Parliament. His scholarly *Plea for the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ* (written for Unitarians and published in 1776) was widely praised, and he was even offered a position in the Church of England, just as his mother had once hoped. Despite the financial ease this would have brought, he stuck to his convictions and refused the post.

When I sing "streams of mercy, never ceasing" I think of the wonderful passage in Lamentations 3:22-23 "The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." The steadfast love and mercy of our faithful God never ceases!

"Here I raise my Ebenezer," is taken from the account in the life of Samuel the prophet. Ebenezer means 'stone of help'. To remind the children of Israel how God had wonderfully intervened and rescued them from their enemies, Samuel raised this stone as a memorial. "Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, 'Till now the LORD has helped us.'" (1 Samuel 7:12)

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing." (Ephesians 1:3)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

22

1. Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless - ing, Tune my heart to sing Thy
 2. Here I raise mine Eb - en - e - er Hith - er by Thy help I'm
 3. O to grace how great a debt - or Dai - ly I'm con - strained to

5 D D A G

grace; Streams of mer - cy nev - er ceas - ing, Call for songs of loud - est
 come; And I hope by Thy good pleas - ure Safe - ly to ar - rive at
 be! Let Thy good - ness like a fet - ter Bind my wan - d'ring heart to

9 D D G

praise. Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net Sun by flam - ing tongues a -
 home. Je - sus sought me when a strang - er Wan d'ring from the fold of
 Thee; Prone to fol - low Lord, I feel it Prone to serve the God I

13 D D A G D

bove; Praise the mount-I'm fixed up - on it Mount of Thy re - deem-ing love.
 God; He to res - cue me from dan - ger In - ter - posed His pre - cious blood.
 love; Here's my heart O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts a - bove.

Count Your Blessings

Words by Johnson Oatman, Jr. (1856-1922), Music by Edwin O. Excell (1851-1921)

THE MUSIC

Edwin Othello Excell, who wrote the music to this song, was the son of a German Reformed pastor. He worked as a bricklayer and plasterer, and beginning at age 20, he founded several singing schools. About the time he was singing on behalf of Ulysses S. Grant's presidential campaign, a local pastor asked him to lead the music for some special meetings. In the revival that followed, Edwin himself came to faith. In order to be more effective in this new calling, he studied music at Normal Musical Institutes with George Root (who also taught music to Fanny Crosby). While involved with the Chautauqua movement, he developed teaching skills that became useful for Sunday schools. He also worked at a music publishing house in Chicago. Edwin wrote, composed, or arranged 2,000 gospel songs, and was involved with the production of about 90 songbooks. By 1914, his company had printed almost 10 million books, selling about half a million per year.

In the last 150 years, every evangelist had his song leader: Billy Graham had George Beverly Shea, D. L. Moody had Ira Sankey, R. A. Torrey had Daniel Towner, Billy Sunday had Homer Rhodeaver, and Sam Jones had Edwin Excell. Singing the gospel and preaching the gospel go hand in hand. "Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands," (Psalm 149:6).

Edwin was described as "a big, robust six-footer, with a six-inch caliber voice," A member of the International Sunday School Association said, "Probably no man who ever lived, and certainly in this country, was more capable than he in directing great audiences in singing. He was large of body and happy in his disposition." In 1909, he arranged "Amazing Grace" to sound as we sing it today.

THE WORDS

As a child, Johnson Oatman, Jr. loved to hear his father sing hymns. Ordained as a Methodist Episcopal minister at age 20, he also worked full time in retail and insurance. At 36, he wrote his first song, continuing at the rate of four or five a week, until he'd written the lyrics to about 5,000 gospel songs, including "Higher Ground," "No, Not One," and his most famous, "Count Your Blessings." Though he didn't want payment, his publisher finally convinced him to accept one dollar per song.

The idea for Johnson's lyrics may have originated in a sonnet by John Charles Earle, published in 1878. As the poet worries about his cold, wavering heart, and whether he will be sad for the rest of his life, he hears a voice saying, "Count thy blessings, count." Realizing his ungratefulness, he obeys. "Nor has my hymn of praise since grown less," he writes, "for oh how high those mounts of blessing mount!"

Not long after "Count Your Blessings" was published in 1897, it became known as the most popular American hymn in Britain. Gipsy Smith said, "In South London the men sing it, the boys whistle it, and the women rock their babies to sleep on this hymn." In 1954, the movie "White Christmas" spread this idea even further, with the song "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep."

This concept of counting one's blessings is biblical. In Psalm 136 David systematically lists God's kindnesses to him. Focusing on the lovingkindness of God, His unchangeable character, and His many benefits is a wonderful antidote to self-pity and doubt. It can also invite God's presence—as it did when "Count Your Blessings" was sung at every service during the 1904-1905 Welsh Revival.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits." (Psalm 103:2)

Count Your Blessings

23

1. When up on life's bil-lows you are temp-est tossed,
 2. Are you e-ver bur-dened with a load of care?
 3. When you look at o-thers with their lands and gold,
 4. So, a-mid the con-flict, whe-ther great or small,
 When you are dis- Does the cross seem Think that Christ has Do not be dis-

6
 cour-aged, thin-king all is lost, Count your ma-ny bles-sings name them
 hea-yy you are called to bear? Count your ma-ny bles-sings, ev'-ry
 pro-mised you His wealth un-told; Count your ma-ny bles-sings, mo-ney
 cour-aged, God is o-ver all; Count your ma-ny bles-sings, an-gels

11
 one by one, And it will sur-prise you what the Lord hath done.
 doubt will fly, And you will be sing-ing as the days go by.
 can not buy Your re-ward in hea-ven nor your home on high.
 will at-tend, Help and com-fort give you to your jour-neys end.

17
 Count your bles-sings, name them one by one; Count your your
 Count your man-y bles-sings, name them one by one; Count your man-y

22
 bles-sings, see what God hath done; Count your bles-sings,
 bles-sings, see what God hath done; Count your man-y bles-sings

27
 name them one by one; Count your ma-ny bles-sings, see what God hath done.

Johnson Oatman, Jr., 1897

Edwin O. Excell, 1897

Faith of Our Fathers

Words by Frederick Faber (1814-1863), Music by Henri F. Hemy (1880-1888), Arrangement and chorus by James G. Walton (1821-1905)

Frederick William Faber was born in Yorkshire, England, the seventh child in his family. As a boy, he and his friends trespassed on private farmland, making the owner very angry. Fredrick defended himself so eloquently that the farmer's wife said, "You must let them go, Master; the young gentleman has such a pretty tongue."

After living in England's gorgeous Lake District, and studying at home, Frederick became a talented speechmaker, winning the Newdigate Prize for poetry while a student at the University of Oxford. When he mentioned to his friend, the poet William Wordsworth, that he intended to become a pastor, Wordsworth replied, "I do not say you are wrong, but England loses a poet."

Frederick's desire to provide songs that would appeal to the poor led him to publish three volumes of hymns: 150 in all, to match the number of Psalms. From a Huguenot background, Faber became a Catholic just three years into his pastoral career. His hymns were strongly influenced by John Newton, William Cowper, and Charles Wesley—and several of them are still sung by Protestants today. (You may also recognize "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy.") Poetry experts consider him to be one of the most skilled hymn-writers of all time. When A.W. Tozer published a book containing the cream of poetry throughout church history, he included many of Frederick Faber's hymns.

"Faith of Our Fathers" was a favorite of President Herbert Hoover, who said "A nation is strong or weak; it thrives or perishes upon what it believes to be true. If our youth are rightly instructed in the faith of our fathers. . . then our power will be stronger." He and his wife had been trapped in China by the violently anti-Western Boxer Rebellion in 1900, where he led barricade-building while under fire. Many Christians, both Western and Chinese, were martyred at that time, but as one Chinese girl boldly said, "I am not afraid, even though you kill me, for I shall go straight to my Heavenly Father."

The chorus of this powerful hymn is "Faith of our fathers, holy faith, we will be true to thee 'til death." Eusebius, a third-century Roman Christian, saw the same boldness in his day: "We were witnesses to the most admirable ardour of mind, and the truly divine energy and alacrity of those that believed in the Christ of God. They received the final sentence of death with gladness and exultation, so far as even to sing and send up hymns of praise and thanksgiving, until they breathed their last."

Nik Ripken writes that under Communist rule, a Russian man named Dmitri was unable to take his sons to church, so they began telling Bible stories, singing and praying together as a family. Eventually their neighbors wanted to join in, and despite repeated warnings, he continued hosting the meetings. When the group grew to 150, Dmitri was imprisoned. The only believer there, he survived 17 years of torture, loneliness, lies, and worry about his family with two things: writing down every Bible verse and song he could remember, and singing to Jesus every single sunrise, even when guards beat him, and the other prisoners tried to shut him up. One night, when he was about to give up and say he was not a Christian, the Holy Spirit prompted his family to pray him out of despair. Finally, as the guards led Dmitri to the courtyard for execution, all 1,500 criminals began to sing his song. Terrified, the guards asked "Who are you?" Dmitri replied, "I am a son of the living God, and Jesus is His name!" Eventually, he was set free.

"They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death." (Revelation 12:11)

Faith of our Fathers

24

1. Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still In spite of dun - geon,
 2. Our fa - thers, chained in pris - ons dark, Were still in heart and
 3. Faith of our fa - thers, we will love Both friend and foe in

7

fire and sword O how our hearts beat high with joy
 con - science free; How sweet would be their chil - dren's fate
 all our strife; And preach thee too, as love knows how,

13

When-e'er we hear that glo - rious word!
 If they, like them, could die - for thee! Faith of our fa - thers, ho - ly
 By kind - ly words and vir - tuous life.

20

faith, We will be true to thee till death!

Frederick W. Faber 1849

Henri F. Hemy 1864
 Adapted by James G. Walton 1864

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Words & Music by Martin Luther (1483-1546), Translation by Frederick Henry Hedge (1805-1890)

Martin Luther was a German priest and professor of theology. After earning his doctorate of theology, Luther traveled to Rome and was horrified by the corruption he found amongst the clergy. They were saying that if people paid them the right price, they could remove sin's punishment. This practice was also known as selling indulgences for sin. And people were buying this false sense of security!

Martin Luther confronted the Catholic church on October 31, 1517, by nailing his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg, Germany. In them, he stated that God's pardon for sin could not be bought with indulgences, but instead was the free gift of God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Luther's action sparked a change, or "reformation," in how people viewed righteousness and faith. The fire of reformation soon swept across Germany, then Europe.

Many in Catholic church leadership didn't like what Luther was doing, and they threatened him with imprisonment and death! When he was discouraged and felt that people would never think rightly about faith, he would say to his friend Philipp Melancthon, "Let's sing the forty-sixth Psalm." While the whole Psalm is rich, here are three of the more widely known verses, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. . . . Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress." (Psalms 46:1, 10-11)

Music had been an important to Luther for most of his life. He paid part of his way through school by singing in the streets of Eisenach, Germany. He also played the lute. Naturally his heart yearned for musical expression of God's truth. Luther once wrote, "Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions . . . which control men or more often overwhelm them. . . . Whether you wish to comfort the sad, to subdue frivolity, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate, or to appease those full of hate . . . what more effective means than music could you find?"

Luther wrote "Ein feste Burg," or "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," between 1527 and 1529. He may have written it for an assembly at Spires (April 20, 1529), when a group of German princes formally protested the Catholic church and were first called "Protestants." This song was a source of strength and inspiration with its majestic chords and its acknowledgement of God's unending sovereignty and love for mankind. It was published under the name (in German and Latin) "The 46th Psalm. God is our refuge and strength."

It is also known as "The Hymn of the Reformation." Luther's followers believed, as Martin Luther did, that "The Devil, the originator of sorrow, anxieties, and restless troubles, flees before the sound of music almost as much as the Word of God." To chase the devil, Luther wanted "to compose sacred hymns so that the Word of God may dwell among the people also by means of songs."

"A Mighty Fortress" has been translated into many languages, and into English over eighty times. It was first translated into English in 1539 by Miles Coverdale, who also translated the first entire printed Bible into English. Coverdale's title for it was "Oure God is a defence and towre." The American version commonly sung today was translated by Frederic Henry Hedge in 1852. The tune has been repeated by composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn.

When Luther died, he was buried in Wittenberg, the first line of "A Mighty Fortress" on his tombstone. The song is now recommended for singing in Catholic masses.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

25

D D D/F# A F#m Bm E⁷ A Bm F#m G D B/D# Em A⁷ D D
 1. A migh - ty for - tress is our God, A bul-wark nev - er fail - ing; Our
 2. Did we in our own strength con - fide Our striv-ing would be los - ing, Were
 3. And tho' this world, with dev - ils filled, Should threat-en to un - do us, We
 4. That word a - bove all earth - ly pow'rs, No thanks to them, a - bid - eth; The

6 D D/F# A F#m Bm E⁷ A Bm F#m G D B/D# Em A⁷ D D
 help - er He a - mid the flood Of mort - al ills pre - vail - ing. For
 not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choos - ing. Dost
 will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri - umph through us. The
 Spir - it and the gifts are ours Thro' Him who with us sid - eth. Let

11 D/F# B A E⁷ A D A/C# D G C⁷/E Bm F#
 still our an - cient foe Doth seek to work us woe; His
 ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus it is He! Lord
 prince of dark - ness grim, We trem - ble not for him; His
 goods and kin - dred go, This mor - tal life al - so; The

15 Bm F# Bm E⁷ A G G/B D B Em F# Bm F#m G D B Em A⁷ D
 craft and pow'r are great, And, armed with cru - el hate, On earth is not his e - qual.
 Sab-aoth is His name, From age to age the same; And He must win the bat - tle.
 rage we can en - dure, For lo! his doom is sure: One lit - tle word shall fell him!
 bod - y they may kill: God's truth a - bid - eth still, His king - dom is for - ev - er.

Jesus Shall Reign

Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), Music by John Hatton (1710-1793) and other composers

Some have called Watts the greatest name among hymn-writers, for his published hymns number more than eight hundred. Not everyone liked the idea of singing songs of “human composure,” rather than the words of the psalms taken directly from God’s Word. Some critics labeled Watts’ hymns “Watts’s Whims.” The controversy divided churches in those days. Some churches took the middle road and sang psalms at the start of the service and a hymn at the very end. They reasoned that those who did not like the hymn could leave early or not sing.

Of his philosophy in arranging the psalms, he explained, “Where the Psalmist describes religion by the fear of God, I have often joined faith and love to it. Where he speaks of the pardon of sin through the mercies of God, I rather choose to mention the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Where He promises abundance of wealth, honor, and long life, I have changed some of these typical blessings for grace, glory and life eternal, which are brought to light by the gospel, and promised in the New Testament.”

“Jesus Shall Reign” was Watts’ rendition of part of Psalm 72. He titled it “Christ’s Kingdom Among the Gentiles,” anticipating the spread of the gospel as the British expanded their borders. Although there was not a concerted mission effort when the hymn was originally penned, it caught on and entered many hymnbooks during the nineteenth century when modern missions came into being with the Moravians and later William Carey.

I have always appreciated the faith and the worldwide tenor of this hymn. When I was in seminary I aspired to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth and was edified and stirred when singing this anointed hymn. For we have each been called to make disciples of all the nations (Matthew 28:19). These inspired lyrics capture the certainty of the day when “every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:10-11)

“May they fear you while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all! May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth! In his days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more! May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth”

“May all kings fall down before him, all nations serve him! May his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in him, all nations call him blessed! Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory!” (Psalms 72:5-8, 11, 17-19)

Fittingly, “Jesus Shall Reign” was sung in worship 143 years later in the South Sea Islands, around the time that Christian King George Topou I of Tonga revised the country’s constitution. The tune we commonly use today for “Jesus Shall Reign” was published anonymously in 1793 but was most likely written by John Hatten.

I have mentioned the poetic bent of this young man in the story for hymn #2, “We’re Marching to Zion.” I was blessed by his gift of poetry while teaching at a Christian school in Massachusetts where we encouraged the students to memorize the Ten Commandments by quoting this poem by Isaac Watts.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Thou shalt have no more Gods but me | 6 Take heed that thou no murder do. |
| 2 Before no idol bend the knee | 7 Abstain from words and deeds unclean; |
| 3 Take not the name of God in vain: | 8 Nor steal, though thou are poor and mean. |
| 4 Nor dare the Sabbath Day profane. | 9 Nor make a wilful lie, nor love it. |
| 5 Give both thy parents honor due. | 10 What is thy neighbor’s dare not covet. |

Jesus Shall Reign

26

D A⁷/E D/F# G A⁷/E D Am/E E⁷ A D D/F#

1. Je - sus shall reign where_ e'er the_ sun Does his suc -
 2. His name like sweet per - fume shall_ rise With ev - 'ry
 3. There Per - sia, glo - rious_ to be - hold, And In - dia
 4. See ev - 'ry crea - ture_ rise, and_ bring Pe - cu - liar

6 G D/F# A⁷/E D A D A⁷ D D/F# G D/F# A⁷/E D

ces - sive jour - neys run; His king-dom stretch from_ shore_ to_
 morn - ing sac - ri - fice; And in - fant voic - es_ shall_ pro -
 shines in east - ern gold; From North to South the_ princ - es_
 hon - ors to th'Great King; An - gels de - scand with_ heav'n - ly_

12 D/A A D/F# G A⁷/E D G D/A A⁷ D

shore, Till moons shall wax and wane no more.
 - claim Their ear - ly bless - ings on His name.
 meet To pay their hom - age at His feet.
 throngs, While Earth bursts forth in rap - turous songs.

All People that on Earth Do Dwell

Words by William Kethe (?-1594), Music by Louis Bourgeois (c. 1510-1560)

“All People That on Earth Do Dwell” comes directly from Psalm 100, so it is also called the “Old Hundredth.” This version is attributed to William Kethe, a mystery man. Some think he was born in Scotland, but we know that he also spent time in mainland Europe. We’re not even sure when he was born, but we know that he lived in the 1500s. Some think he fled Scotland because of the persecution of Protestant Christians under Mary I, “Bloody Mary.” He ended up in Geneva and spent time in Switzerland translating the Geneva Bible alongside William Whittingham and others between 1558 and 1560.

Kethe most likely adapted the words of Psalm 100 around the same time he was working on the Geneva Bible. The Geneva Bible was translated by men who, influenced by John Calvin, believed that singing anything but Scripture added to the word of God, a “dangerous liberty.” So singing the psalms was important to them!

In 1561, around two dozen psalm-hymns by Kethe were published in the Anglo-Genevan Psalter, from which we can guess that Kethe’s role in the Geneva Bible was translating psalms. These English versions are based on French translations from the original Hebrew. It was logical that Kethe, who lived in a predominantly French-speaking city abutting France, would rely heavily on the French Scriptures. Kethe’s “Old Hundredth” was one of the songs that employed the old French meter.

“All People That on Earth Do Dwell” echoes Psalm 100’s call to praise:

“Sing ye loud unto the Lord, all the earth.
Serve the Lord with gladness:
Come before him with joyfulness.
Know ye that even the Lord is God:
He hath made us, and not we ourselves:
We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter into his gates with praise, and into his courts with rejoicing:
Praise him and bless his Name.
For the Lord is good: his mercy is everlasting,
And his truth is from generation to generation” (Geneva Bible, updated English).

Louis Bourgeois probably wrote the tune we use today before Kethe produced the “Old Hundredth.” The tune was originally used to sing Psalm 134, but it was written to be used interchangeably with other songs, and it has worked well for the “Old Hundredth” for centuries.

More on the Geneva Bible (adapted from Wikipedia):

The Geneva Bible is one of the most historically significant translations of the Bible into the English language, preceding the King James translation by 51 years. It was the primary Bible of the 16th-century Protestant movement and was used by William Shakespeare, Oliver Cromwell, John Milton, John Knox, John Donne, and John Bunyan. It was one of the Bibles taken to America on the Mayflower, and read by many English Dissenters.

What makes this version of the Holy Bible significant is this was the first mechanically printed, mass-produced Bible, made available directly to the general public, which came with a variety of study guides and aids (collectively called an apparatus). These resources included verse citations to allow the reader to cross-reference one verse with numerous relevant verses in the rest of the Bible; introductions to each book of the Bible, which acted to summarize all of the material that each book would cover; maps; tables; woodcut illustrations; indexes; and other features—all of which would eventually lead to the reputation of the Geneva Bible as history’s very first study Bible.

All People That on Earth Do Dwell

27

G / D⁷ Em G/B Em D G /

1. All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, Sing to the
 2. Know that the Lord is God in - deed; With - out our
 3. O en - ter then His gates with praise; Ap - proach with
 4. Be - cause the Lord our God is good; His mer - cy

6 D Em C G D Em D G D G/B C D⁷

Lord with cheer - ful voice; Him serve with mirth His praise forth -
 aid He did us make; We are His flock, He doth us
 joy His courts un - to; Praise, laud, and bless His Name al -
 is for - ev - er sure; His truth at all times firm -
 ly

12 Em D/F# G Em D Am G/B D⁷ G

tell, Come ye be - fore Him and re - joice.
 feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.
 ways, And it seem - ly so to do.
 stood, For shall is from age en - dure.

From Psalm 100

Attributed to William Kethe, 1561

Louis Bourgeois, 1561

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Words by John Wade (1710-1786), Translation by Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880), Music by Unknown Composer

“O Come, All Ye Faithful” has sometimes been assumed to be ancient because it was written first in Latin as “Adeste Fidelis.” The reality is that “O Come, All Ye Faithful” is probably more Catholic than it is ancient! Its story is fascinating!

Several manuscripts of “Adeste Fidelis” have been discovered and at least seven of them have John Francis Wade’s signature on them. It is possible that Wade merely copied the words that someone older than he wrote. Wade was a scribe who copied and embellished hymn texts for a living, at least after he moved to France. His obituary honored him for his “beautiful manuscripts.”

However, Wade was also a Jacobite. Jacobites were Brits who believed that the throne of England belonged to the Stuarts. The Stuarts’ throne had been transferred to a Protestant daughter/sister (William and Mary) at the invitation of men who didn’t want rulers who tolerated Catholics and Dissenters. As a result, many Jacobites were Catholics who wanted freedom to practice their religion! They tried to regain the throne, but after their last attempt in 1745, many fled England for their lives.

Wade fled England for France, where he taught music and copied hymns. Many people believe that he wrote “Adeste Fidelis” at this time. He published it in a collection of pieces called *Cantus Diversi* (“Different Tune”) in 1751. Keep in mind that the Catholic mass was always entirely in Latin, so someone writing a hymn for Catholic worship would write it in Latin as well. The earliest printed version of “Adeste Fidelis” also includes a tune, which hints that Wade made have composed the tune, as well. The notes are written in chant form, appropriate for mass.

Some even believe that “Adeste Fidelis” was a political rallying cry, saying that “the faithful” referred to Jacobites and that “angelorum” (in the phrase “king of angels”) was a pun for “anglorum,” which meant “England.” They also point to the fact that early appearances of the song in English hymnals place it near prayers for Charles, the aspiring Jacobite king, and that the illustrations on the page are link it with other Jacobite calls disguised as hymns. It is also included in a mass that Wade apparently put together to call for the return of the Jacobites to England. Whether or not this theory is true, the Jacobites did not achieve their political goals. Yet Jesus Christ, whose birth this song honors, reigned then and continues His reign today.

The original “Adeste Fidelis” contained four verses. The verses often printed as three through five were probably added by French clergyman Etienne Jean Francois Borderies in the 1800s. Another anonymous Latin verse is rarely printed.

Frederick Oakley was an Anglican clergyman in England who became a Catholic in 1845, 100 years after the Jacobite uprising of 1745. He translated “Adeste Fidelis” into English before he shifted to Catholicism. He translated the first line, “Ye Faithful, Approach Ye,” which didn’t stick very well! After he became a Catholic, he modified it to the far more popular “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”

This popular song is sometimes sung to the same tune as “How Firm A Foundation.” It invites faithful believers to worship along with the angels, who are adoring Christ the Lord. It is one of my favorite carols extolling Jesus, who is “Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.” As I meditate on the lyrics I feel as if I am joining the shepherds in Bethlehem as He was “born this happy morning.”

In Hebrew, Bethlehem means ‘house of bread’. Beth=house and lehem = bread. It is not only the birthplace of the Christ Child, it was the town where King David was born. “Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse,” (1 Samuel 17:12).

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

28

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, Come ye, O
 2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, Sing all ye
 3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this hap - py morn - ing, Je - sus, to

6 E_b A_b/C E_b/G Fm⁷/A_b E_b/B_b B_b E_b C B_b A_b B_b A_b
 come ye to Beth - le - hem; Come and be - hold Him,
 bright hosts of heav'n a - bove; Glo - ry to God, all
 Thee be all glo - ry giv'n; Word of the Fa - ther,

11 E_b/G A_b Fm B_bm/D_b E_b A_b/C E_b/B_b A_b/C E_b⁷/D_b A_b/C A_b E_b/G A_b B_bm
 born the King of an - gels: glo - ry in the high - est: O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a -
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

16 A_b E_b/G A_b B_bm A_b E_b/G B_b⁷/F E_b A_b/C D_b A_b/E_b E_b⁷ A_b
 dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ, the Lord.

Latin hymn, 18th century
 Translated by Frederick Oakeley, 1841

From Wade's Cantus Diversi, 1751

The Bridegroom Comes!

Words by Horatius Bonar (1808-1889); Music by John Baptiste Calkin (1827-1905)

Horatius Bonar was born in 1808 in Edinburgh, Scotland, one of eleven children! He attended Edinburgh University, and in 1837, he was ordained at thirty years old. 1843 was an eventful year for him: He married Jane Catherine Lundie, and became part of the Great Disruption movement which led to the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland.

Do you remember Isaac Watts? In 1707, most Christians sang only psalms in their church services, until Isaac set about writing hymns for them. In 1837, when Horatius Bonar began writing the first of his six hundred-plus hymns, this was still the case in many churches in Scotland. Among them was North Church in Kelso, where Bonar served as pastor. This means that he was unable to sing his own songs in his own chapel.

In 1873, when Horatius Bonar was 65 years old, D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey held their first evangelistic meetings in England. At that time, many people were still unsure about solo-singing—not to mention the cabinet organ Sankey used to accompany himself, fearing they were just for showing off. But Sankey would sing, and Moody would follow with a Bible lesson, and in this way, many came to faith. In fact, two Americans became known as the men who spoke and sang the gospel.

That November, an unexpected invitation brought them to Scotland. For their first meeting in Scotland, Moody was sick and unable to preach; in their second, the organ they had borrowed was damaged en route, and Sankey could not sing without it. Both men felt suspense and fear as they prepared for their third meeting. To Ira Sankey's great surprise, there in a front seat, encouraging him, was Horatius Bonar, who would become a close friend and supporter. As the meeting ended, Bonar turned to him with a smile and said, "Well, Mr. Sankey, you sang the gospel tonight."

Ira Sankey called Horatius Bonar "my ideal hymn-writer, the prince among hymnists of his day and generation." Bonar was so busy writing that he rarely bothered keeping track of the stories behind his hymns. But several of his songs reflect that fact that he spent much time pondering the return of Christ.

The title of "The Bridegroom Comes" refers to Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish virgins:

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. . . . Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." (Matthew 25:1-7, 13)

This hymn focuses on the Lord's return and the eager expectation believers can have as they prepare for that day. It places emphasis on being always ready as Christians await the Lord's return. Bonar's hymn also focuses on the joyful celebration believers can anticipate. "The Bridegroom Comes" is a song of invitation, but an invitation that requires preparation. "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" (Revelation 19:7-9)

"Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)

The Bridegroom Comes!

29

1. The Bride - groom comes! Bride of the Lamb, a - wake! The
 2. Shake off earth's dust, And wash thy wea - ry feet! A -
 3. The mar - riage day Has come; lift up thy head! Put
 4. Sing the new song! Thy tri - umph has be - gun: Thy

5 E_b/B_b F/B_b E_b/B_b B_b D/A Gm Gm/B_b F/C C⁷ F N.C.

mid - night cry is heard: Thy sleep - for - sake. All
 rise, make haste, go forth, The Bride - groom greet.
 on thy bri - dal robe, The feast is spread.
 tears are wiped a - way, Thy night is done.

10 F B_b/F F⁷ B_b B_b/D E_b F⁷ B_b

hail, all hail, Thou Lamb of God once slain! We

14 F/C B_b/D E_b G⁷/D C B_b/F C⁷/G F^{7(sus4)} F⁷ B_b

wor - ship Thee, we wel - come Thee To earth a - gain.

Horatius Bonar, 1861 George C. Stebbins, 1867

Rise Up, O Men of God!

Words by William Merrill (1867-1954), Music by William Walter (1825-1893) and other composers

Born in 1867, William Pierson Merrill lived in a time when, like today, people were discussing how to get men more involved in church. The gap between the number of men and women in church had widened significantly throughout the 1800s. In the early 1900s, church leaders were pondering what to do.

Merrill had graduated from Union Theological Seminary and was a pastor of a Presbyterian church in Chicago when an editor friend mentioned to him that the church really needed a song to rally men. Merrill had written words or music for a handful of songs, but he was not a career hymn writer. Yet he continued to think about the need for a song for men.

Around the same time, Merrill came across an article called “The Church of the Strong Men” by Gerald Stanley Lee, published in 1905. Lee compared a grand European cathedral with a humble New York City church dwarfed by skyscrapers to illustrate that men were not drawn to church because church didn’t show them an awesome God. Instead, church was overshadowed by business and other pursuits that offered men significance and power. Lee wrote:

“The main trouble with the modern Church. . . is that it has made it so exceedingly convenient not to notice God. . . . If the lives of God’s people are not noticeably godlike, a little wonderful and out of the way, with a touch of the miraculous and heroic and enviable about them, why should anyone notice their God? . . . If the church service is not full of the dignity and splendor and majesty of God, or if it caricatures him as merely a distant elegant but feeble person, it does more harm than good. The only church that shall ever rule [these great, masterful, godlike-looking cities of ours] shall be a church with the cathedral spirit. It shall be a church of Strong Men. And the spirit of the Strong Men shall build on all the great streets of the world mighty homes for God. . . . It shall be one that suggests, when one looks at it, nations and empires, centuries of love and sacrifice and patience, and it shall gather the great cities like children about its feet.”

Lee’s words stirred Merrill. In fact, they stirred new song words right out of him one weekend when he was returning to Chicago aboard a steamer on Lake Michigan. “Suddenly this hymn came up,” Merrill wrote later, “almost without conscious thought or effort.”

And thus was born a strong song that would call men to action. Lee never meant it to slight women, but to call men to take their rightful place alongside the many women who were already faithfully serving God in his time. The imagery is vivid as it calls men to reach for a high calling, that of serving the King of kings. It encourages men to step up to advance God’s Kingdom. It challenges men to use their strength to build the Church. And it calls them to live humble lives, lives of “love and sacrifice and patience,” as Jesus Himself did.

This rousing tune and the stirring words appeals to me as a man. Verse 1 calls me to “Have done with lesser things.” Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 16:24-26)

Verse 3 tells me I am needed. “The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.” (Romans 8:19)

I hear the appeal as a Christian brother of the Son of God. “Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.” (Mark 3:35)

Finally, I hear Paul, in the Spirit, appealing for us all to be devoted and committed as good soldiers. “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 2:3) “Fight the good fight of the faith.” (1 Timothy 6:12)

Rise Up, O Men of God!

30

B_b E_b B_b E_b B_b F/C C⁷ F

1. Rise up, O men of God! Have done with less - er things; Give
 2. Rise up, O men of God! His King - dom tar - ries long; Bring
 3. Rise up, O men of God! The Church for you doth wait, Her
 4. Lift high the cross of Christ! Tread where His feet have trod; As

5 B_b F/A E_b/G B_b/F Cm/E_b E⁷ F B_b/D E_b B_b/D F(sus4) F⁷ B_b

heart and soul and mind and strength To serve the King of kings.
 in the day of broth - er - hood And end the night of wrong.
 strength un - e - qual to her task; Rise up, and make her great!
 broth - ers of the Son of Man, Rise up, O men of God!

William P. Merrill, 1911

William H. Walter, 1872

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Words by Charles Wesley (1707-1788), Music by Carl Glaeser (1784-1829) and Other Composers

In 1736 John and Charles Wesley sailed as missionaries with General Oglethorpe on his second expedition to Georgia. They returned to England a few years later, believing their ministry had failed. John Wesley wrote “I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?”

In the providence of God, during their passage, the ship encountered severe storms. All on board were terrified, except the singing Moravians. These dedicated believers were able to face the prospect of death for they had a divine assurance of their salvation, which the Wesleys did not.

Meeting the Moravian brethren, was to prove instrumental in the conversion of both brothers. Upon their return to England, the Moravian Peter Boehler became their friend and spiritual advisor. After several conversations with Boehler, Charles was the first of the two brothers to be justified by faith on Whitsunday, May 21, 1738. He wrote in his journal that the Spirit of God “chased away the darkness of my unbelief.”

Three days later, on May 24, 1738, John’s search for the grace of God ended in a meeting house on Aldersgate Street in London. He wrote in his journal: “In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed.”

The year after Charles Wesley was saved was a busy one. He became a curate at St. Mary’s in Islington, but he preached in a number of locations outside of the church, including the Fetter Lane Society, where his Moravian friends were. (Peter Boehler had started Fetter Lane in May 1738, the same month that Wesley came to faith.) Wesley preached, shared the gospel in prisons, prayed for prostitutes, and saw God do many wonderful things!

He was so effective that the wardens of St. Mary’s demanded that he give up his preaching license. Wesley writes in his journal, “I wrote down my name; preached with increase of power, on the woman taken in adultery. None went out.” That same night he met with Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf, leader of the Moravians internationally, who told Wesley of 600 Spanish Muslims, 200 Greenlanders, and 300 Africans who had recently been saved. God was moving around the world.

The following month, Wesley celebrated his one year salvation anniversary. In honor of it, he wrote a new hymn. It was inspired by a conversation that he had had with his Moravian friend Peter Boehler. The two friends were discussing praising God. Wesley wondered about appropriate praise. Boehler replied, “Had I a thousand tongues, I would praise him with all.”

Wesley published this hymn in the 1740 version of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. He headed it “For the Anniversary Day of One’s Conversion” and opened it “Glory to God, and praise, and love be ever, ever given.” The original is 18 stanzas, far too many to manage in our hymnals today. So those specific to Wesley’s own testimony are usually left out, as are stanzas calling the nations and sinners to saving faith in Jesus. Wesley acknowledges his own sins along with those of “harlots, publicans, thieves . . . [and] murderers” and beckons them with his own excitement in the Gospel.

In the context of Wesley’s own heart change and of the preaching he was doing to the very harlots, publicans, thieves, and murderers he writes to, the hymn’s praise is fitting. “He breaks the power of cancell’d sin, He sets the prisoner free: His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood avail’d for me” was something that Wesley had seen for himself and was seeing almost daily in his ministry. It was also fitting in light of the report of the Gospel’s spread he had heard from Count von Zinzendorf weeks before.

O for a Thousand Tongues

31

1. O for a thou - sand tongues to sing My great Re - deem - er's praise,
 2. My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, As - sist me to pro - claim,
 3. Je - sus! the name that charms ours fears, That bids our sor - rows cease,
 4. He breaks the pow'r of can - celed sin, He sets the pris - 'ner free,
 5. He speaks, and, list - 'ning to His voice, New life the dead re - ceive;
 6. Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb; Your loos-ened tongues em - ploy;
 7. Glo - ry to God and praise and love Be ev - er, ev - er giv'n

5 The glo - ries of my God and King, The tri- umphs of His grace.
 To spread through all the earth a - broad The hon - ors of thy name.
 'Tis mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, 'Tis life and health and peace.
 His blood can make the foul - est clean, His blood a - vailed for me.
 The mourn - ful, bro - ken hearts re - joice, The hum - ble poor be - lieve.
 Ye blind, be - hold your Sav - ior come; And leap, ye lame, for joy.
 By saints be - low and saints a - bove, The Church in earth and heav'n.

Charles Wesley, 1839

Carl G. Gläser, 1828

Glory Be to the Father

Words by unknown author, Music by Henry Greatorex (1813-1858) and Christopher Meineke (1782-1850)

The “Gloria Patri,” which means “Glory Be to the Father,” is a doxology because it is a short hymn of praise. It is called the “lesser” to set it apart from the “Greater Doxology,” which is “Gloria in Excelsis Deo” (“Glory to God in the Highest”). The Gloria Patri dates back to the earliest days of Christianity, and some sources say that it first came from Syria. Without music, it is sometimes known as the “Glory Be” prayer. Its references to the Trinity are quite possibly based on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20: “Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Henry Greatorex, who wrote the tune for #32, was born into an intellectual musical family in 1816. His father, Thomas Greatorex, was the organist of Westminster Abbey and a composer. He was also an astronomer and mathematician who belonged to the Royal Society, one of the oldest science-promoting societies in the world. The elder Greatorex was a friend of Bonnie Prince Charlie (Charles Edward Stuart), as well, and it was said that when King George IV was Prince Regent, he told Thomas, “My father is Rex, but you are a Greater Rex.”

Henry emigrated to the United States in 1839 and played organ in churches in Hartford, Connecticut, before settling in New York City. His most well known composition is the tune he wrote to the “Gloria Patri,” or “Lesser Doxology.”

Glory Be to the Father

33

Source unknown, 2nd century

Charles Meineke, 1844

Glory Be to the Father

Words by unknown author, Music by Henry Greatorex (1813-1858) and Christopher Meineke (1782-1850)

Christopher Meineke wrote another popular tune for *Gloria Patri*. Meineke, who is also known as Charles or Karl, was born in 1782 and emigrated to America around 1800. It is said that he visited Europe again in 1817 and met Beethoven, who complimented his concerto. When Meineke returned to America in 1819, he became the organist at St. Paul's Church in Baltimore. We may assume that he composed his tune to *Gloria Patri* in conjunction with his organ work at St. Paul's, probably around 1844.

The divinity of all three members of the trinity is powerfully declared in this sublime song of praise to God. I thought the reader might enjoy a short foray into church history to learn how the doctrine which is embraced today had its origin.

In 325, the Council of Nicaea adopted the Nicene Creed which described Christ as “God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father”. The creed used the term homoousios (of one substance) to define the relationship between the Father and the Son.

The Confession of the Council of Nicaea said little about the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit was developed by Athanasius (293–373) who was present at the Council of Nicea, in the last decades of his life. He defended and refined the Nicene formula. By the end of the 4th century, under the leadership of Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus (the Cappadocian Fathers), the doctrine had substantially reached its current form.

Gregory of Nazianzus would say of the Trinity, “No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the splendour of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish Three than I am carried back into the One. When I think of any of the Three, I think of Him as the Whole, and my eyes are filled, and the greater part of what I am thinking escapes me. I cannot grasp the greatness of that One so as to attribute a greater greatness to the rest. When I contemplate the Three together, I see but one torch, and cannot divide or measure out the undivided light.” (*Orations* 40, 41)

Glory Be to the Father

32

11

D Em A D A E A

Glor-y be to the Fa-ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Ghost, As it

7 D A D

was in the be-gin-ning, is now and ev-er shall be,

A A/D A D

world with-out end, A- men, A- men.

Source Unknown, 2nd century

Henry W. Greatorex

Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee

Words by Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153), Translation by Edward Caswall (1814-1878), Music by John Dykes (1823-1876)

Bernard was born into a noble family in France; his father was a knight. From a young age, he was interested in Bible study. His mother seems to have greatly influenced him and encouraged his pursuit of God. She died when Bernard was 19 or 20, and shortly thereafter he entered a monastery. He believed in seeking God through strict self-discipline (e.g. fasting and sleeping minimally), and he was appointed abbot of a separate monastery in the same order three years later. The new monastery's location was the Valley of Wormwood, a haunt of thieves, but Bernard renamed it "Clairvaux" which means "Clear Valley," and he was called "Bernard of Clairvaux." His father and all six of his brothers joined him in this monastery.

Bernard was an ascetic, but he acknowledged that outward actions were not the source of inward character. Regarding spiritual pride, he remarked, "There are people who go clad in tunics and have nothing to do with furs, who nevertheless are lacking in humility. Surely humility in furs is better than pride in tunics."

Bernard was a champion of Christianity, a passionate man and an eloquent speaker. Even though Bernard promoted beliefs such as the honor of Mary the mother of Jesus, reformers centuries later considered him a kindred spirit who believed in justification by faith. He certainly advocated the marriage of faith and works. He rallied men and women to fight in the Second Crusade, yet he tried to make sure that each person who went on the Crusade knew Jesus first.

Bernard died a broken man after the Second Crusade failed and people blamed him for its failures.

Bernard's writings indicate that he truly knew Jesus. One of his hymns, "De nomine Jesus" ("Of the Name of Jesus"), is the source of several other hymns: "Jesus the Very Thought of Thee," "O Jesus! King Most Wonderful" and "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts," and this song: "Jesus the Very Thought of Thee," which originally had fifteen stanzas. The other stanzas are below.

The tenderness of the words and the reverence of the tune, combine to make this hymn special. Like Paul, Bernard knew Jesus and shared an intimate relationship with his Savior. "Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." (Philippians 3:7-8)

O Jesus, King most wonderful
Thou Conqueror renowned,
Thou sweetness most ineffable
In Whom all joys are found!

When once Thou visitest the heart,
Then truth begins to shine,
Then earthly vanities depart,
Then kindles love divine.

O Jesus, light of all below,
Thou fount of living fire,
Surpassing all the joys we know,
And all we can desire.

Jesus, may all confess Thy Name,
Thy wondrous love adore,
And, seeking Thee, themselves inflame
To seek Thee more and more.

Thee, Jesus, may our voices bless,
Thee may we love alone,
And ever in our lives express
The image of Thine own.

O Jesus, Thou the beauty art
Of angel worlds above;
Thy Name is music to the heart,
Inflaming it with love.

Celestial Sweetness unalloyed,
Who eat Thee hunger still;
Who drink of Thee still feel a void
Which only Thou canst fill.

O most sweet Jesus, hear the sighs
Which unto Thee we send;
To Thee our inmost spirit cries;
To Thee our prayers ascend.

Abide with us, and let Thy light
Shine, Lord, on every heart;
Dispel the darkness of our night;
And joy to all impart.

Jesus, our love and joy to Thee,
The virgin's holy Son,
All might and praise and glory be,
While endless ages run.

Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee

34

1. Je - sus, the ver - y thought of Thee With sweet - ness
 2. No voice can sing, nor heart can can frame, Nor can the
 3. O hope of ev - 'ry con - trite heart, O joy of
 4. But what to those who find? Ah, this Nor tongue nor
 5. Je - sus, our on - ly joy be Thou, As Thou our

6

fills my breast; But sweet - er far Thy face to
 mem - 'ry find A sweet - er sound than Thy blest
 all the meek, To those who fall how kind Thou
 pen can show; The love of Je - sus, sus, what it
 prize wilt be; Je - sus, be Thou our glo - ry

11

see And in Thy pres - ence rest.
 name, O Sav - ior of man - kind.
 art! How good to those who seek!
 is, None but His loved ones know.
 now And through e - ter ni - ty.

Bernard of Clairvaux, 12th century
 Translation by Edward Caswell, 1849

John B. Dykes, 1866

Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet

Words by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915), Music by William Doane (1832-1915)

Beloved songwriter Fanny Crosby showed spiritual acuity and rhyming ability at an early age. Between the ages of 10 and 15, she memorized an average of five Bible chapters a week, so that by age 15 she had memorized Genesis through Deuteronomy, the four Gospels, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and many of the Psalms. She wrote poetry from the age of eight, starting with a piece about her blindness:

Oh what a happy soul I am, Although I cannot see;
I am resolved that in this world, Contented I will be.
How many blessings I enjoy, That other people don't;
To weep and sigh because I'm blind, I cannot, and I won't.

She didn't start writing music for God until around 1864, when she was 44. "I had found my mission," she wrote at that point, "and was the happiest creature in all the land." She dedicated herself to writing music that would touch people who didn't yet know Jesus. She prayed that her songs would play a part in saving a million men, and she aimed to do it through emphasizing forgiveness. "You can't save a man by telling him of his sins," she was known to say. "He knows them already. Tell him there is pardon and love waiting for him." This passage from Romans corroborates her thinking, "God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" (Romans 2:4)

Around 1887, she teamed up with her good friend and co-worker William Doane once again to produce "Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet." God's words in her heart once again flowed out through her pen. The song's opening stanza echoes God's own invitation to come to Him as recorded in Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."

A similar verse is found in David's prayer of contrition in Psalm 51 after being confronted of his sin by Nathan the prophet. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psalms 51:7)

The second stanza reflects the spirit of Isaiah 55: "Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:6-7)

And the third stanza references Jeremiah 31 and Isaiah 45: "No longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:34) "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:22 KJV)

One of the first scriptures I memorized as a young believer was 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When I am tempted to doubt the mercy of God, I call to mind this scripture as well as the longer passage in Psalm 103: "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." (Psalm 103:10-12)

Though Your Sins Be as Scarlet

35

1. "Tho' yoursins be as scar - let, they shall be as white as snow; be as white as snow; Tho' they be
 2. Hear the voice that en-treats you, Oh, re-turn ye un - to God! turn ye un - to God! He is of
 3. He'll for-give your trans-gres-sions, And re-mem-ber them no more; mem-ber them no more." Look un - to

8
 red like crim - son, They shall be as wool." "Tho' your
 great com - pas - sion, And of won - drous love: Hear the
 Me, ye peo - ple," Saith the Lord your God: He'll for -

13
 Tho' they be red
 He is of great
 "Look un - to Me,"

17
 sins be as scar - let, Tho' your sins be as scar - let, they shall
 voice that en - treats you, Hear the voice that en - treats you, Oh, re -
 give your trans-gres - sions, He'll for - give your trans-gres - sions, And re -

be as white as snow, They shall be as white as snow.
 turn ye un - to God! Oh, re - turn ye un - to God!
 mem - ber them no more, And re - mem - ber them no more.

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O WORSHIP THE KING	4	1	4	THE COMFORTER HAS COME	82	4	8
ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS	12	1	12	THE OLD RUGGED CROSS	97	4	23
PRAISE, MY SOUL, THE KING OF HEAVEN	44	2	19	THE SOLID ROCK	36	2	11
PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY	76	4	2	THERE IS A FOUNTAIN	68	3	16
REDEEMED	77	4	3	THERE IS POWER IN THE BLOOD	98	4	24
REJOICE, THE LORD IS KING!	58	3	6	THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD	99	4	25
RING THE BELLS OF HEAVEN	17	1	17	THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS SCARLET	35	2	10
RISE UP, O MEN OF GOD	30	2	5	'TIS SO SWEET TO TRUST IN JESUS	55	3	3
ROCK OF AGES	40	2	15	TO GOD BE THE GLORY	39	2	14
RUTHERFORD	54	3	2	TRUST AND OBEY	9	1	9
SAFE IN THE ARMS OF JESUS	37	2	12	TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS	83	4	9
SAVIOR, LIKE A SHEPHERD LEAD US	78	4	4	VICTORY IN JESUS	100	4	26
SINCE JESUS CAME INTO MY HEART	79	4	5	VICTORY THROUGH GRACE	11	1	11
SITTING AT THE FEET OF JESUS	80	4	6	WE'RE MARCHING TO ZION	2	1	2
SOLDIERS OF CHRIST, ARISE	81	4	7	WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS	3	1	3
TAKE MY LIFE	96	4	22	WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS	57	3	5
TAKE THE NAME OF JESUS WITH YOU	60	3	8	WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED UP YONDER	84	4	10
THE BLEEDING SACRIFICE	62	3	10	WHEN WE ALL GET TO HEAVEN	85	4	11
THE BRIDEGROOM COMES	29	2	4	WONDERFUL GRACE OF JESUS	52	2	27
THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION	51	2	26	YESTERDAY, TODAY, FOREVER	74	3	22