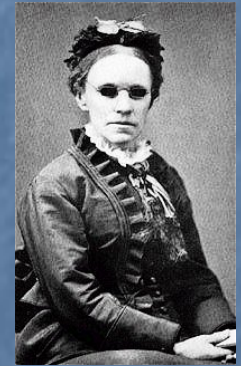


A History of Hymns & Hymnists

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July 11, 2008



Hymns in Scripture

- Original Greek word – humnos (ὕμνος)
- Dictionary Definition – “A song in the praise of gods, heroes, conquerors; a sacred song”
- “Speak to one another with psalms, *hymns* and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Ephesians 5:19-20)
- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, *hymns* and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Colossians 3:16)

Hymns in Scripture

- “Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with **hymns [songs – NIV]** of thanksgiving and with songs to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps and lyres.” (Nehemiah 12:27, NASB)
- “He put a new song in my mouth, a **hymn** of praise to our God” (King David, director of music – Psalm 40:3a)
- “When they had sung a **hymn**, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Jesus and His disciples after the Lord’s Supper, Matthew 26:30)
- “About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing **hymns** to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody's chains came loose.” (Acts 16:25-26)

Hymns in Church History

- *“Throughout church history great periods of spiritual fervour and revival have always been accompanied by a renewed interest in congregational singing.”* -- Professor Kenneth W. Osbeck
- *“Historians have stated that Martin Luther won more converts to Christ through his encouragement of congregational singing than even through his strong preaching and teaching”* -- 16th century
- *“Of the Wesleys (John & Charles) it was said that, for every person they won with their teaching, ten were won through their music”* -- 18th century
- *“Singing does at least as much as preaching to impress the Word of God upon people’s minds. Ever since God first called me, the importance of praise expressed in song has grown upon me.”* -- D.L. Moody, 19th century

What is a Hymn?

- Four necessary elements (St. Augustine)
 - *Words of praise*, to be *sung*, addressing *God*
- Texts that meet most of these criteria:
 - Composed
 - In the form of poetry
 - In strophic form (has regular verses)
 - On a religious topic with a religious message
 - For singing
 - For use in public/private Christian worship
 - Addressed to God as the primary audience
 - Expressing the thoughts of the singers (praise, prayers, promises, beliefs, or mutual encouragement)

Hymns Vs Contemporary Worship Songs

A farmer was in the city on business one weekend. While he was there, he attended one of the city's churches. Upon returning home, his wife asked him what it was like at the city church.

"Oh, it was a lot like our country church, except they sang these things called 'praise choruses' instead of hymns."

"Praise choruses? What are those?" asked the wife.

"Well, they're sort of like hymns, just different."

"Different how?"

"Well... it's sort of like this. If I said, *Martha, the cows are in the corn*, it would be a hymn.

"Now if I said, '*Martha, Martha, Martha, the cows, the white cows, the brown cows, the black cows, the cows, the cows, the cows, are in the corn, in the corn, the corn. Oh, Martha, the cows are in the corn,*' that would be a praise chorus!"

Hymns Vs Contemporary Worship Songs

It just so happened that the same weekend, a businessman was in the country and went to a country church. Upon returning home, his wife asked him how the service was.

"Pretty much the same as ours, except we sang hymns instead of praise choruses."

"Hymns?" his wife replied, "I think my mother told me about those! What were they like?"

"Oh, sort of like a praise chorus except different."

"And that difference would be?"

"All right, if I were to say, *Mary, the cows are in the corn*, that would be a praise chorus.

"On the other hand, if I said: *'O Mary, wife of my youth with whom I shall all of my days abide, Incline thine ear and hearken unto my cry! For the cows of varying shades and hues - who can explain their ways? Have left the fields in which they graze and have traversed yonder into the fields of golden corn that gleams in the sun.'* THAT would be a hymn!"

Hymn Trivia

- Oldest hymn for which the author is known
 - "Shepherd of Tender Youth" – Clement of Alexandria (200AD)
 - Translated from Greek to English by Henry Dexter (1846)
- First hymn in English written for public worship
 - "Behold the Glories of the Lamb" – Isaac Watts (1688)
- Youngest hymnist
 - John Milton wrote "Let Us With a Gladsome Mind" at age 15 (1623)
- Most prolific hymnist
 - Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby wrote >8000 hymns in her lifetime of 90 years

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Best known hymns include:
 - A Mighty Fortress is our God
 - Out of the depths I cry to You
 - From Heaven above to earth I come
- Born in Eisleben, Germany
- Received Master's degree in 1505 then enrolled in law school



Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- July 17, 1505: Left law school to become an Augustinian monk
- Luther attributed this decision to being nearly struck by lightning on July 2, 1505 – he became terrified of death and divine judgment
- 1507: Ordained to the priesthood
- 1508: Taught theology at the University of Wittenberg
- 1512: Awarded Doctor of Theology
- 1510-20: Lectured on the Psalms, Hebrews, Romans, and Galatians
 - Luther became convinced the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) was corrupt and had lost sight of the central truths of Christianity
 - Most important RCC error was on the doctrine of Justification
 - Salvation is a gift of God's grace, attainable only through faith in Jesus
 - Justification entirely the work of God unlike the RCC view that righteous acts of believers are performed in cooperation with God

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Titus 3:5
 - “he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit”
- Ephesians 2:8-9
 - “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.”
- Romans 6:23
 - “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

- Roman Catholic Indulgences
 - RCC theology stated that faith alone cannot justify man – man must be active in charity and good works
 - These good works could be obtained by donating money to the church through the sale of “Indulgences” used to rebuild St. Peter’s Basilica
- Luther protested the sale of indulgences
 - October 31, 1517 wrote a letter and included what was later known as the “95 Theses” – A catalyst for the Protestant Reformation
 - With the help of the printing press, the “95 Theses” spread through Germany within 2 weeks and throughout Europe within 2 months
- Roman Catholic Response
 - June 15, 1520 – Warned to recant the “95 Theses” within 60 days or risk excommunication
 - Excommunicated on January 3, 1521

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

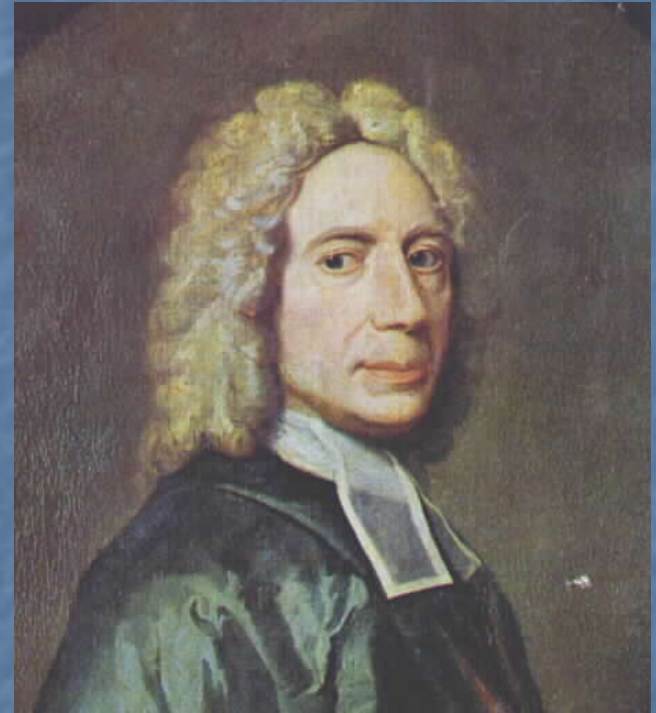
- One important benefit of the Reformation Movement was the rediscovery of congregational singing
 - *"I wish to compose sacred hymns so that the Word of God may dwell among the people also by means of songs"*
 - *"I would allow no man to preach or teach God's people without a proper knowledge of the use and power of sacred song"*
- Most well-known hymn: A Mighty Fortress is Our God

A Mighty Fortress is our God

- Written between 1527-29
- Based on Psalm 46
- Called the “Battle Hymn of the Reformation”
- Theories of its origin:
 - Sung by Luther and his companions as they went to the Diet of Worms
 - Tribute to a friend who executed as a Protestant martyr
 - Sung by German Lutheran princes as they went to the Diet at which the Augsburg Confession was presented
 - Composed in connection with German Lutheran princes’ protest to Charles V who wanted to enforce the Edict of Worms
- No less than 60 translations into English alone in addition to other languages
- Most popular English version translated by Frederick H. Hedge

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

- "Father of English Hymnody"
- First prolific and popular English hymnwriter (~6000 hymns)
- Born in Southampton, England; eldest of 9 children
- Named after his father
 - Kept a boarding school, deacon at a chapel, a non-Conformist
 - Thrown in prison twice for his controversial views
 - Watt's mother often took Isaac and sat on a cold stone by the prison walls
- Childhood: loved to read, skilled at writing rhymes, learned Latin, Greek, and Hebrew



- Teenager: attended a Nonconformist Academy at Stoke Newington (East London)
 - Unable to attend Oxford/Cambridge due to his Nonconformity
 - After 4 years, went home to live for 2 years
- Complained to his father one Sunday about the horrible state of congregational singing in churches
 - Congregational singing limited to poetry of Bible, mostly Psalms
 - Each line 1st read by a deacon (slowly) → followed by the droning of the congregation
 - "The singing of God's praise is the part of worship most closely related to heaven, but its performance among us is the worst on earth"
- Encouraged by father to write something better → 1st hymn written before evening service began and received with great enthusiasm by the congregation
- Wrote a new hymn every Sunday for 2 years (the bulk of his "Hymns and Spiritual Songs")
 - Sung from manuscripts in the Southampton Chapel
- Age 24: preached his 1st sermon; chosen as assistant minister at the Independent Church (not part of Church of England)
- Age 30: Became pastor of the church → pastored for 46 years

- Unable to preach regularly
 - Frail in health and grotesque in appearance – 5 feet tall, big head, long-hooked nose
 - Fell gravely ill soon after becoming pastor → in confinement for a long time with slow recovery
 - Fell gravely ill for 2nd time after some years → nervous system debility, severe insomnia, unresponsive to meds → wrecked and shattered his poor body even more
- During 2nd illness, Sir Thomas Abney invited him stay at their home in Hertfordshire, and, later, at their 2nd residence, Abney House (Stoke Newington)
 - Watts only intended to stay 1 week, but stayed there for 36 years until his death
- “My design was not to exalt myself to the rank and glory of poets, but I was ambitious to be a servant to the churches, and a helper to the joy of the meanest Christian”
- Never married, but always loved children and wrote much for them

- A renowned theologian and logician, writing many books and essays on these subjects
 - Left behind a massive legacy of hymns, treatises, educational works, essays, etc.
 - Wrote a popular textbook on logic
 - Published 1724 and went through 20 editions
 - Standard text on logic at Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, and Yale; used at Oxford for > 100 years
- His work was influential amongst independents and early religious revivalists in his circle
- Age 75: died in Stoke Newington → buried in Bunhill Fields
- After his death, his papers were given to Yale University (connection due to its being founded predominantly by fellow Independents)



- Several memorials in England commemorating him
 - Chest tomb in Bunhill Fields is much-visited
 - Stone bust in central London at Dr. William's Library (non-conformist library)
 - Earliest public statue stands at Abney Park (now a cemetery and arboretum)
 - Similar statue in Southampton (city of birth)
 - Dr. Watts Memorial Hall built in Southampton in mid-19th century
 - Lost after WWII due to redevelopment
 - Today: Isaac Watts Memorial United Reformed Church



The Hymns of Isaac Watts

- Pioneer in including non-Biblical poetry in Christian worship → opened up a new era of Protestant hymnody
- Forced to cut back on his preaching because of his declining health → he spent his time writing hymns with a desire to "Christianize the Psalms with the New Testament message and style"
- Two particular trends in his verses - "emotional subjectivity" and "doctrinal objectivity"
- Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed
- Blest is the Man Whose Bowels Move (!)
- Joy to the World
- I Sing the Mighty Power of God
- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

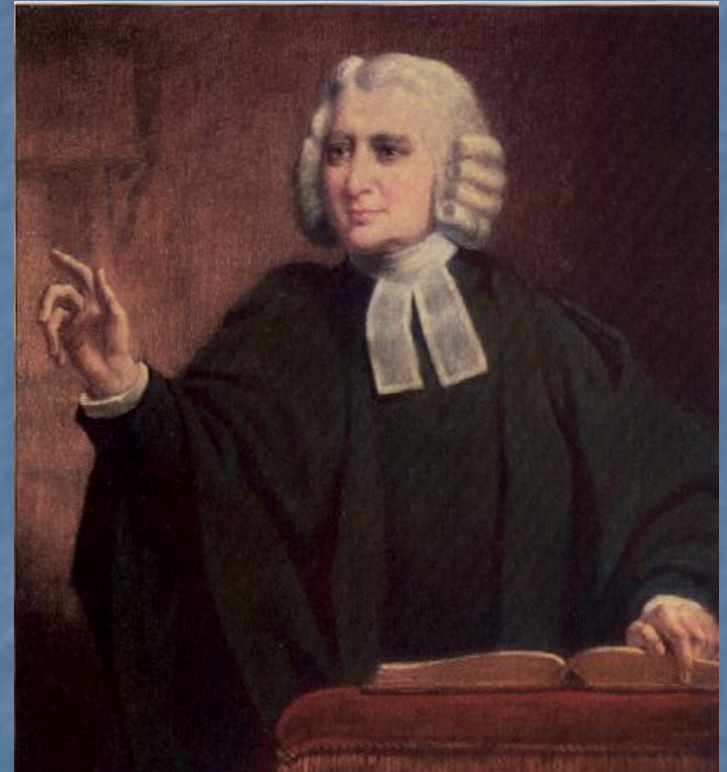
- Written in preparation for a communion service in 1707
- Original name: "Crucifixion to the World by the Cross of Christ"
 - The practice of the day was to summarize a hymn's theme in the title
- First published in 1707 in his collection "Hymns and Spiritual Songs"
- Considered one of the finest hymns ever written
 - Charles Wesley reportedly said he would have given up all his other hymns to have written this one
- First known hymn to be written in the first person → introduces a personal religious experience rather than limiting itself to doctrine
 - "Hymns of human composure" (very controversial)
- Gave Christians of Watts' day a way to express a deeply personal gratitude to their Saviour

Joy to the World

- Ironically never intended for Christmas use
- Age 45: sat under a favorite tree on the Abney estate-property where he lived and penned the lyrics
- Based on last half of Psalm 98: "Shout for joy to the Lord all the earth . . . Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; let them sing before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth." (vs. 4, 8)
- Included in 1719 hymnal, "Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament" → original title "The Messiah's Coming and Kingdom"
- Despite its lack of reference to Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, wise men, or the manger, it became one of the most loved Christmas carols

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

- Wrote over 6,500 hymns including:
 - And Can It Be That I Should Gain?
 - Christ the Lord is Risen Today
 - Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
- Born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England
- 18th of 19 children
- Younger brother of John Wesley, an early leader of the Methodist Movement



Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

- Formed the 'Holy Club' in 1727
 - Oxford students devoted to holiness
 - Started by Charles, later led by John in 1729
 - Name was given by other students in mockery
 - Devoted to:
 - Fasting until 3 PM Wed & Fri
 - Holy Communion once a week
 - Nightly studied & discussed Greek New Testament & Classics
 - Visited prisoners & the sick
 - Members later nicknamed "Methodists" for their methodical ways

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

- Conversion – May 1738 – Legalism to Salvation
 - Peter Bohler, a companion of the Wesley's stated in April 1738:
 - *"The elder, John, is a good-natured man; he knew he did not properly believe in our Saviour, and was willing to be taught. His brother is at present very much distressed in his mind, but does not know how he shall begin to be acquainted with the Saviour"*
 - While recovering from illness in London was greatly affected by the concern and Christian testimonies of his hosts and others
 - On May 21, 1738 wrote:
 - *"At midnight I gave myself to Christ, assured that I was safe, whether sleeping or waking. I had the continual experience of His power to overcome all temptation, and I confessed with joy and surprise that He was able to do exceedingly abundantly for me above what I can ask or think."*
 - *"I now found myself at peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of loving Christ. I saw that by faith I stood"*
 - The next day wrote his first of over 6,500 hymns

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

- Conversion led to a deep compassion to reach the lost
 - Became a preacher and evangelist
 - Estimated that John & Charles travelled $\frac{1}{4}$ Million miles through Great Britain mostly on horseback while conducting 40,000+ services
- “Of the Wesley’s it was said that, for every person they won with their preaching, ten were won through their music.” – 18th Century
- Wesley’s hymns developed a new focus: Expressing personal feelings in the relationship with God
- Wesley’s contribution led to a new style called “gospel”
- Influenced other hymnists who wrote testimonial music for revivals and evangelistic crusades

And Can it be that I should gain?

- Lyrics written in 1738
- Believed to be the first hymn written by Charles
- Tune known as "Sagina" composed by Thomas Campbell in 1825

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

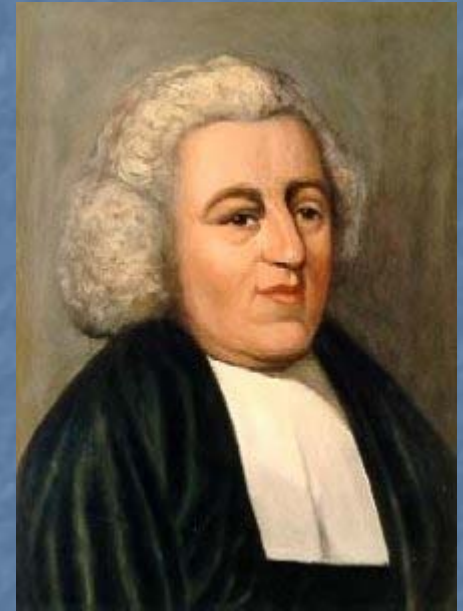
- Written for the first service of the first Wesleyan Chapel in 1739
 - Chapel was a deserted iron foundry that became known as the Foundry Meeting House
- Originally entitled "Hymn for Easter Day" and consisted of eleven four-line stanzas
- Composer of music never identified
 - Tune appeared anonymously in the Lyra Davidica hymnal published in London in 1708
 - "Alleluia" at the end of each line was not written by Wesley but was added to fit the tune

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

- First appeared in "Hymns and Sacred Poems" in 1739
 - Original first stanza began with "Hark, how all the welkin (heavens or sky) rings, Glory to the King of Kings!"
 - Text altered to present form in George Whitfield's "Collection of 1753"
- Although many tunes have been used with Wesley's lyrics, the most recognized version is called "Mendelssohn"
 - Composed by Felix Mendelssohn in 1840 (Festgesang, Opus 68)
 - Written to commemorate 400th anniversary of printing press
 - Wesley's Lyrics were linked with Mendelssohn's music by William H. Cummings and first published in 1857

John Newton (1725-1807)

- Author of Amazing Grace
- Born in Wapping, London on July 24th
- Father John Sr. commanded merchant ships in the Mediterranean trade
- Mother Elizabeth brought John up as a Christian but died of tuberculosis when John was 6
- Later rejected the faith of his childhood and ridiculed Christianity
- At age 11, was taken to sea with his father until he retired in 1742



John Newton (1725-1807)

- Pressed into naval service in 1743 (HMS Harwich)
 - Naval Service was to last 5 years but attempted to desert
 - Was captured, publicly flogged, and demoted
- Requested to be placed in service of a slave ship which took him to Sierra Leone (West Africa)
- Became a virtual slave and servant of an English slave dealer who abused him
- In 1748 was rescued by a sea captain who had been asked by John Sr. to find his son

John Newton (1725-1807)

- Day of conversion: March 10, 1748
 - While sailing back to England on the slave-ship Greyhound he encountered a severe storm and almost sunk
 - Recorded in his journal when all seemed lost that he exclaimed "Lord, have mercy upon us" – he was startled by his words
 - After 11 hours, the storm ended and the Greyhound survived
 - As the ship sailed home, he read the Bible and other Christian literature and accepted the doctrines of Christianity
 - Gave up profanity, gambling, and drinking, but continued to work in the slave trade
 - Later indicated that his true conversion did not happen until some time later: "I was greatly deficient in many respects... I cannot consider myself to have been a believer in the full sense of the word, until a considerable time later"

John Newton (1725-1807)

- After returning to England he obtained a position as first-mate aboard the slave-ship Brownlow
- After 1750 made 3 more voyages as Captain of slave ships:
 - Duke of Argyle (1750)
 - African (1752-3, and 1753-4)
- He tried to justify his work in the slave-trade:
 - Sought to improve conditions for slaves
 - Ensured crew treated slaves with gentleness and concern
 - Common practice to pack slaves so that they could barely move – Newton provided more space
 - Common to lose many slaves during the voyage, Newton was able on one of his voyages to avoid a single loss of a slave – one of the few slave-ship captains in history to do this
 - Held public worship services for his hardened crew every Sunday
 - Encouraged prayer

John Newton (1725-1807)

- Gave up slave-trading in 1754 after a minor stroke
- Newton wrote:
 - "I had often prayed that the Lord in His own time would be pleased to place me in a more humane calling. I longed to be freed from these long separations from home, which were often hard to bear. My prayers were now answered, though in a way I little expected"
- From 1755-64 was the official tide surveyor
- Came to admire John Wesley & George Whitefield
 - Their influence helped Newton decide to be a Minister
- Ordained in 1764 in the Church of England

John Newton (1725-1807)

- First pastorate in Olney near Cambridge, England (1764 – 1779)
- In addition to preaching at his church, often held services in other buildings and talked about his early life and conversion experience
- Desired to sing hymns that expressed the simple, heartfelt faith of his preaching
 - Could not find enough available hymns for this purpose so began writing his own
 - Assisted by William Cowper, produced the Olney Hymns hymnal in 1779
 - Newton wrote 282 of the 349 hymns
 - Newton wrote that the purpose of the hymnal was “a desire to promote the faith and comfort of sincere Christians.”
- Spent the remainder of his life (28 years) at St. Mary Woolnoth Church in London
- His constant message was that he was living proof that God could save the very worst

John Newton (1725-1807)

- John Newton the Abolitionist:
 - His view of the slave trade changed
 - Became convinced that it was immoral and was ashamed of his role in it
 - In 1785 began delivering sermons condemning slavery even when no political party would touch the subject
 - In 1787 wrote a tract supporting abolition called "Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade" where he described the "groans, and agonies, and blood of the poor Africans"
 - In 1789 spoke to the Privy Council (advisory group to the Monarch which included the Prime Minister) on the evils of slavery
 - Newton's "Journal of a Slave Trader", "Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade", and his autobiography comprise the most detailed records of the slave trade
 - Historians credit John Newton for much of what is known about the 18th century slave trade

John Newton (1725-1807)

- John Newton and William Wilberforce
 - William Wilberforce – British politician and leader of the movement to abolish the slave trade
 - Wilberforce found Newton's anti-slavery sermons life-changing
 - Wilberforce himself had recently become a Christian and considered leaving politics for Christian ministry
 - Newton encouraged Wilberforce to stay in Parliament and "serve God where he was" rather than enter the ministry
 - Wilberforce spent the next 20 years working towards the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire
 - British Parliament abolished slavery the same year Newton died
- John Newton's words shortly before he died:
 - "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Saviour"

Amazing Grace

- Original title was “Faith’s Review and Expectation”
- Based on 1 Chronicles 17:16-17 – A prayer of King David in which he marvels at God’s choosing him and his house
- Originally consisted of six stanzas
- Newton did not write music for the hymn
- Hymn became more established in America:
 - Set to the tune of an early American folk melody first known as a plantation melody entitled “Loving Lambs” (1831)
 - Substituted a final verse starting with “When we’ve been there ten thousand years”

Frances Jane (Fanny) Crosby

(1820-1915)

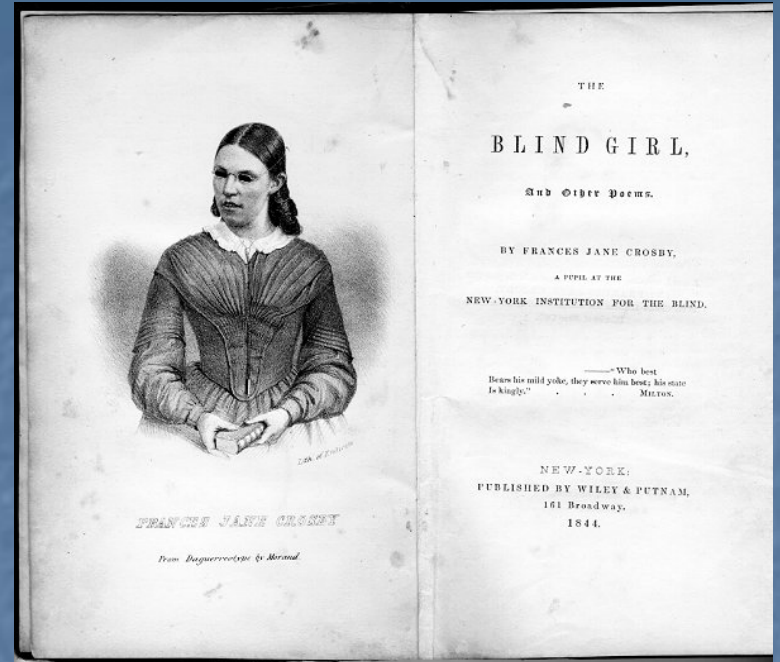
- One of the best known women of her time in America
- Most prolific hymnist – wrote >8000 hymns
- Born in New York; died in Connecticut
- A lifelong Methodist
 - Active member of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church (NYC)
- 6 weeks old: caught a cold → eye infection → improper medical treatment → blind
- 1 year old: father died, raised by mom and grandma, who grounded her in Christianity



- Amazing memory and concentration
 - Landlady helped her memorize the Bible (she learned 5 chapters/wk)
 - Knew the Pentateuch, Gospels, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and many of the Psalms by heart
- New York School for the Blind (New York Institute for Special Education)
 - Enrolled as student at age 15 – learned to play guitar, piano, and sing
 - Later became faculty member (English, history)
 - Left after her marriage
- Married Alexander Van Alstyne, a blind musician and fellow teacher → daughter (Frances) died in infancy

- Her blindness did not embitter her
- Began writing poetry at age 8:

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."



- Age 24: published 1st book "*A Blind Girl and Other Poems*"

"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."

"When I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Savior!"

- Age 40s: influenced by W.B. Bradbury and started writing gospel song lyrics earnestly → "happiest creature in all the land"
- Wrote 3 hymns/wk for publishers (Bigelow & Main) to use in their Sunday School publications
 - Sometimes wrote 6-7 hymns a day
- Some publishers hesitant to publish so many hymns by one person in hymnals → over 200 different pseudonyms
- Very well known during her time → often met with presidents, generals, other dignitaries
 - Played the hymn "Safe in the Arms of Jesus" at US President Grant's funeral in 1885
- Popular public speaker in later years
- Tombstone: "Aunt Fanny" and "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine"
- Inducted into the Gospel Hall of Fame in 1975

Hymns by Fanny Crosby

- Composed poems and hymns entirely in her mind → dictated them to someone else
- Was said to work mentally on as many as 12 hymns at once before dictating them all out
- She could write complex poetry and improvise music of classical structure, but her hymns were aimed at bringing the message of the Gospel to people who would not listen to preaching
- Never wrote a hymn text without first kneeling in earnest prayer and asking for divine guidance → prayed God would use it to lead many souls to Him
- All the Way My Savior Leads Me
- Blessed Assurance
- To God Be the Glory
- Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior
- Praise Him, Praise Him

All The Way My Savior Leads Me

(1875)

- Lyrics by Fanny Crosby; tune by Dr. Robert Lowry (Baptist Minister)
- Hymn came to Fanny as a result of a prayer
 - She was struggling financially and desperately needed money
 - She began to pray → a man offered her \$5 a few minutes later, exactly what she needed
- "I have no way of accounting for this except to believe that God, in answer to my prayer, put it into the heart of this good man to bring the money. My first thought was, it is so wonderful the way the Lord leads me. I immediately wrote the poem and Dr. (Robert) Lowrey set it to music."

Helen Howarth Lemmel (1864-1961)

- Wrote "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"
- Born in Wardle, England
- Father was a Wesleyan Methodist pastor
- Immigrated to US at age 12 → lived in Mississippi before settling in Wisconsin
- Reputation as a brilliant singer, studied private voice in Germany for 4 years, gave church concerts throughout the midwest in the 1900s
- Taught voice at Moody Bible Institute and Bible Institute of LA
- 1961: settled in Seattle, and was active at Ballard Baptist Church
- Wrote > 500 hymns and poems
- Also wrote a successful children's book (Story of the Bible) and composed several children's musical pieces

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus



Lillas Trotter

- Written by Helen Howarth Lemmel in 1922 (age 54)
- AKA "The Heavenly Vision"
- Inspired by a tract she received from a missionary friend in 1918
 - "Focused: A Story & Song"
 - Written by (Isabella) Lillas Trotter, an English artist and missionary to Muslims in Algeria

Lilias Trotter (1853-1928)

- Born to wealthy family in London and had a privileged upbringing
- Had a heart for the lost
 - Volunteer mission work with YWCA (hostel for working girls)
 - Brought prostitutes back for more "honorable employment"
- Helped open London's 1st affordable public restaurant for women so they wouldn't have to eat bag lunches on city sidewalks
- A very gifted artist – pegged to be the next big name in art during the late 1800s
- Had to make a very difficult decision between pursuing a promising career in art VS serving God in full-time ministry



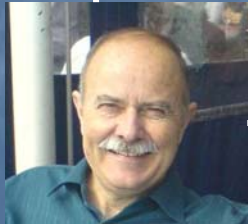
- May 1887: heard a message about North Africans who had never heard the name of Christ before → felt the call to bring the gospel to the people of Algeria
- Applied to the North African Mission → turned down for health reasons
- March 1888 (age 33): went to Algeria with her own resources and 2 friends to work alongside NAM → settled in Arab section of Casbah (ancient fortified city in Algiers, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Did not know anyone or any Arabic
- 40 years in North Africa: pioneered means, methods, and materials to reach Arab people – considered to have been a hundred years ahead of her time



- Established Algiers Mission Band (13 missions stations, 30 workers) to bring “the light of the knowledge of God, in the face of Christ” to the people of Algeria, from the cloistered world of Arab womanhood to the Sufi mystics in the desert southlands



- 1960s: Algiers Mission Band became incorporated into Arab World Ministries



"Focused: A Story & Song"

"Gathered up, focused lives, intent on one aim – Christ – these are the lives on which God can concentrate blessedness ...

It is easy to find out whether our lives are focused, and if so, where the focus lies. Where do our thoughts settle when consciousness comes back in the morning? Where do they swing back when the pressure is off during the day? Does this test not give the clue? ...

Dare to lay bare your whole life and being before Him, and ask Him to show you whether or not all is focused on Christ and His glory. Dare to face the fact that unfocussed good and useful as it may seem, it will prove to have failed of its purpose...

You have to choose which you will fix your gaze upon and let the other go."

"All aims, all ambitions, all desires, all pursuits – shall we dare to drop them if they cannot be gathered sharply and clearly into the focus of 'this one thing I do'? ...

Narrow as Christ's life was narrow, this is our aim; narrow as regards self-seeking, broad as the love of God to all around. Is there anything to fear in that? ...

And in the narrowing and focussing, the channel will be prepared for God's power – like the stream hemmed between the rockbeds, that wells up in a spring – like the burning glass that gathers the rays into an intensity that will kindle fire. It is worthwhile to let God see what He can do with these lives of ours, when 'to live is Christ.'...

How do we bring things to a focus in the world of optics? Not by looking at the things to be dropped, but by looking at the one point that is to be brought out."

"Turn full your soul's vision to Jesus, and look and look at Him, and a strange dimness will come over all that is apart from Him, and the Divine "attract" [English, attraction] by which God's saints are made, even in this 20th century, will lay hold of you. For 'He is worthy' to have all there is to be had in the heart that He has died to win."

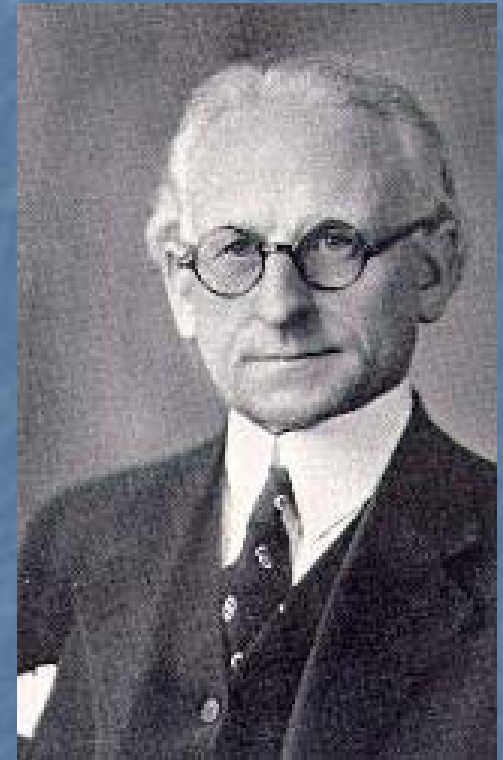
- Helen Howarth Lemmel's response:

"Suddenly, as if commanded to stop and listen, I stood still, and singing in my soul and spirit was the chorus of the hymn with not one conscious moment of putting word to word to make rhyme, or note to note to make melody. The verses were written the same week, after the usual manner of composition, but none the less dictated by the Holy Spirit."

- First published in the form of a pamphlet → later included in Lemmel's book of 67 songs
- Became especially popular in 1920s at the Keswick Bible Conference in northern England, where it was first introduced

Rev. George Bennard (1873-1958)

- Composed ~350 hymns including:
 - The Old Rugged Cross
 - God Answers Prayer
- Born in Youngstown, Ohio (Feb 4th)
- Raised in Iowa (Albia and Lucas)
- One of six children
- Father died when George was 16
- Supported mother and sisters as a miner after Father's death
- Known as a persuasive speaker, sharp dresser, yet humble & sincere



Rev. George Bennard (1873-1958)

- At age 24 became a minister in the Salvation Army
- By 1898, conducted revival meetings throughout the Midwest, later transferring to New York
- Resigned in 1910 to go out on his own as an evangelist - Began composing hymns at this point
- Played Guitar but not piano
- Settled in Albion, Michigan, and opened his own hymn publishing company
- Funeral was attended by 400 people – an organ rendition of “The Old Rugged Cross” was played

The Old Rugged Cross

- First sung at the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Pokagon, Michigan in 1913
 - Known as the "Original Old Rugged Cross Church"
- Hymn was popularized by Evangelist Billy Sunday with his nationally broadcasted radio show
- By 1939, 15 million copies of the hymn had been sold

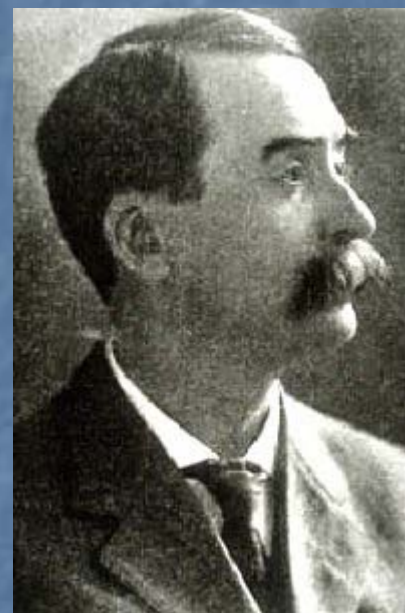


The Old Rugged Cross

- Bennard on writing this hymn:
 - "I seemed to have a vision... I saw Christ and the cross inseparable."
 - "The inspiration came to me one day in 1913, when I was staying in Albion, Michigan. I began to write "The Old Rugged Cross." I composed the melody first. The words that I first wrote were imperfect. The words of the finished hymn were put into my heart in answer to my own need. Shortly thereafter it was introduced at special meetings in Pokagon, Michigan on June 7, 1913. The first occasion where it was heard outside of the church at Pokagon was at the Chicago Evangelistic Institute. There it was introduced before a large convention and soon it became extremely popular throughout the country."
- Melody came easily but laboured over the words – Came weeks later:
 - "I sat down and immediately was able to rewrite the stanzas of the song without so much as one word failing to fall into place. I called in my wife, took out my guitar, and sang the completed song to her. She was thrilled!"

Charles H. Gabriel (1856–1932)

- Born in Wilton, Iowa
- Well known composer
- According to the Los Angeles Times wrote over 8,000 songs
- Wrote or collaborated on:
 - There is Glory in My Soul (1894)
 - O That Will be Glory (1900)
 - He is So Precious to me (1902)
 - I stand Amazed in the Presence (1905)
 - His Eye Is On the Sparrow (1905)
 - Since Jesus came into my heart (1914)



Charles H. Gabriel (1856–1932)

- At 15 declared to his mother that he wanted to write a song that would make him famous
 - Mother's Response: "My boy, I would rather have you write a song that will help somebody than see you President of the United States."
- Thought of melodies while he was ploughing and planting – wrote down after chores done
- Never had a single formal music lesson
- Taught himself to play family's reed organ
- Played piano, cornet, and violin – Also sang
- Some hymns use his pseudonym Charlotte G. Homer

Charles H. Gabriel (1856–1932)

- In total Gabriel was involved with editing:
 - 35 different gospel songbooks
 - 8 Sunday School songbooks
 - 7 Books for male choruses
 - 6 Books for ladies' voices
 - 10 children's songbooks
 - 19 collections of anthems
 - 23 choir cantatas
 - 41 Christmas cantatas
 - 10 children's cantatas
 - Numerous books on musical instruction

I stand Amazed in the Presence

- Published in 1905
- First appeared in the hymnal entitled "Praises" published by Edwin O. Excell who wrote 2,000 hymns
- Also known as "My Saviour's Love"

Be Thou My Vision

- Tune – Irish folk song “Slane”
 - Irish High King of Tara had decreed that no one could light a fire before he lit a fire on Tara Hill to begin the pagan spring festival
 - In 433 AD, St. Patrick defied the pagan High King by lighting candles on Easter Eve on the Hill of Slane (10 miles from Tara)
 - King was so impressed by St. Patrick’s devotion that he let him continue his missionary work in spite of his defiance
- Besides this general connection to Christianity, the folk song has little connection to the text



Be Thou My Vision

- Lyrics thought to be written by St. Dallan Forgaill
 - Born 530AD; martyred 598AD by pirates who broke into the island monastery and beheaded him
 - Christian Irish poet, widely known as chief poet of Ireland
 - Studied so intensely that he literally became blind from writing poetry and studying
- Text had been a part of Irish monastic tradition for centuries before the hymn was written
- English translation of the hymn is fairly recent
 - Translated from Old Irish into English – Mary E. Byrne (1905)
 - English text first versified by Eleanor H. Hull in 1912 – this version is the most common



The Love of God

- Rooted in Jewish poem, “Hadamut” (written in Aramaic) - Rabbi Mayer, a cantor in the city of Worms, Germany (1096)
 - Emphasizes God’s eternal love and concern for His people
 - Praises God as ruler of the world, the Creator of all things, including the Israelites as His special portion
 - Describes how the Jewish people have been persecuted/killed throughout the ages for the sanctity of God’s Holy Name
 - Tells of how the Jews refused to leave their religion in spite of the world’s influence, believing with absolute conviction that the world to come will vindicate them and then all the nations of the world will know that God has chosen Israel for His eternal glory
 - Speaks of a miracle that happened:
 - 1) Giving of the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai
 - 2) Miracle in the city of Worms – Jews successfully defended their faith against an evil German priest in front of the king → spared of death
 - 3) Can’t know with certainty what the miracle was

- One section of the poem → 3rd stanza of the hymn
 - Lines were found penciled on the wall of a patient's room in an insane asylum after he had died
 - It is believed that he adapted the lines from the poem and wrote them when he was still sane
- During a camp meeting, an evangelist quoted these lines in his message → inspired Frederick M. Lehman (1868-1953), who pastored Nazarene churches in the US mid-west, to write this hymn
 - "The profound depths of the lines moved us to preserve the words for future generations. Not until we had come to California did this urge find fulfillment, and that at a time when circumstances forces us to hard manual labour. One day, during short intervals of inattention to our work, we picked up a scrap of paper and, seated upon an empty lemon box pushed against the wall, with a stub pencil, added the first two stanzas and chorus of the song."
- First appeared in a volume of hymns in 1919
- Lehman's daughter (Claudia) wrote the harmony for this hymn

My Jesus, I Love Thee

- Written in 1864 by William Ralph Featherston (Born July 23, 1846; Died 1873, Montreal)
- Little is known about Featherston's life
 - Belonged to Wesleyan Methodist Church in Montreal (currently St. James United Church)
 - Featherston died prior to his 27th birthday
 - Not known to have written any other songs
- Written at the time of his salvation (age 16)
 - Sent a copy to his aunt in LA, who encouraged him to publish it
 - It appeared anonymously in *The London Hymn Book* in 1864
- Dr. A.J. Gordon (American Baptist pastor) discovered the anonymous hymn in the English hymnbook and decided to compose a better melody for it
- The original copy of the hymn, in the author's boyish handwriting, is still a cherished treasure in the family

Stuart Townend

- British Christian worship leader/composer of contemporary worship songs and hymns
- Attends Church of Christ the King (Brighton, UK)
- Son of a Church of England vicar in Halifax, West Yorkshire
 - Youngest of 4 children
- Starting learning to play the piano at age 7
- Accepted Christ at age 13
- Began songwriting at age 22
- Studied literature at the University of Sussex
- Married in 1988 (Caroline)
 - 3 children: Joseph, Emma, Eden
- Composer of several modern-day hymns:
 - How Deep the Father's Love for Us
 - In Christ Alone



Stuart's 6 Tips for Hymn-Writing

(Article for 2004 BBC Hymn-Writing Competition)

1. **Study the Scriptures** - The best hymns demonstrate insight and understanding of the Bible, and consequently bring the truths of the Christian faith to life. If you don't know the message of the gospel, you can't write something that will enable others to worship in spirit and truth.
2. **Be poetic, not pompous** - Sometimes when people set out to write a hymn, they use phrases which might sound 'hymny', but actually mean very little. Make your phrases mean something!
3. **Combine objective truth and subjective response** - When a hymn is just a statement of theological truth, it may be accurate, but it can be dry. Equally, when a hymn is just about how we feel, it's wishy washy. The best hymns powerfully express the emotions of the worshipper, but as an emotional response to the objective truth of the gospel.

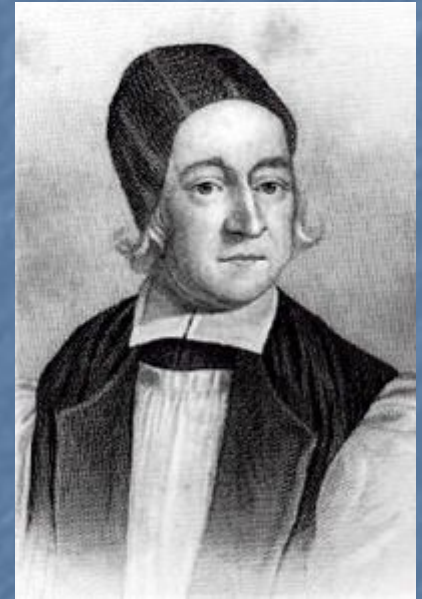
Stuart's 6 Tips for Hymn-Writing

(Article for 2004 BBC Hymn-Writing Competition)

4. **Look for musical dynamics** - A hymn should have musical peaks and troughs, and there should be a sense of building to a climax where the melody soars while expressing the main theme of the hymn.
5. **Make every line count** - I see hymns that contain a few good ideas, but some of the lines are clearly there as just 'filler', and let the whole thing down. Don't just stick in a line because it rhymes, or because you couldn't think of anything else to say.
6. **Prune it mercilessly** - Once you think you've finished, go through it carefully, and get rid of anything that distracts from the main theme you're expressing. Better to have two compact, punchy verses than four rambling, unfocused ones.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711)

- Composed the Doxology
 - A sung expression of praise to the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
- A bishop in the Church of England
- Born in Hertfordshire, England
- Attended Winchester College (boys' independent school) → completed his BA and MA at Oxford
- Ordained in 1662, resigned 5 years later
- Returned to Winchester College to work as prebendary (admin) of the cathedral and chaplain to the bishop
 - Also acted as curate and composed hymns, including the Doxology
- One of the first English writers to produce hymns that were not merely versifications of Psalms
- In his own day, he took high rank as a pulpit orator, and even royalty had to beg for a seat in his audiences; but his sermons are now forgotten



"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" (1674)

- Originally the final verse of two longer hymns written for morning and evening worship
 - "Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun," and "Glory to thee, my God, this night"
- Written for the boys at Winchester College – strict instructions to use them only in their rooms for private devotions
 - Written at a time when the established church believed that only Scripture should be sung as hymns (emphasis on Psalms)
 - Some considered it sinful and blasphemous to write new lyrics for church music, like adding to the Scriptures
- Ironically, widespread use as the Doxology
 - Perhaps the most frequently used piece of music in public worship
 - Most frequently sung words of any known song for > 300 years
 - Its been said that the doxology has done more to teach the doctrine of the Trinity than all the theological books ever written
- Sung at Ken's funeral (at his request), fittingly held at sunrise

The Power of Christian Song

Author Unknown

There's something about a fine old hymn
That can stir the heart of a man
That can reach to the goal of his inmost soul
Such as no mere preaching can

It's more than the tune of the song he sings
And its more than the poet's rhyme
It's the Spirit of God working through these things
That gives them their power sublime

So we thank Thee, Lord, for the fine old hymns
May we use them again and again
As we seek to save from a hopeless grave
The souls of our fellow men!

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