

Sermons in Song – Hymnal Supplement

Hymns of the Saints

775 – For Builders Bold Whose Vision Pure
(Disc 2, Track 1 Christian Worship Supplement Hymn Sampler)

1. For builders bold whose vision pure
Saw more than brick or stone,
Who laid in hope foundations sure
With Christ the cornerstone;
For those who honored your commands
And trusted your strong Word,
Who offered faithful hearts and hands,
We give you thanks, O Lord.

2. As here they raised a soaring spire
Which thrusts toward worlds above,
So may our prayers, like tongues of fire,
Leap kindled by your love.
And let your living Word descend
As seed on waiting hearts
And, fruitful, there, its grace extend,
To earth's most distant parts.

3. Here saints newborn you generate
Through water and the Word;
Through bread and cup communicate
The gift of Christ the Lord.
We gather, Christ's own family;
Christ's meal of love we share.
Come, help us live in unity,
Each other's burdens bear.

4. We come, O Lord, inheritors
From those whose work is done.
Lord, make us now contributors
To years beyond our own.
Let faith's enkindled flame not fail;
Let love's best gifts increase.
Let hope in Christ's sure Word prevail
Till earth and time shall cease.

Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr., 1923-2007 © 1993 GIA
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1. For what blessings does verse one thank the people of the past? *Verse one thanks the people of the past for seeing beyond just the bricks and mortar, to the building up of the Church in accord with God's will. Notice the focus on Christ and the Word! It thanks the people not only for their legacy of faith (hearts), but also for their legacy of love in action (hands).*
2. Take a moment to reflect on your religious heritage. Make a list of those people from the past that you remember with thanks and give your reasons for putting them on your list. *Answers will vary. Encourage people to look into the distant past (even as far back as Old Testament Bible history characters), into the intermediate past (500+ years back and the players on the Reformation stage), and into the immediate past (people who influenced the formation of the WELS and your own local congregation).*
3. Identify the images used in verse two that describe the ongoing conversation between God and his people that occurs at worship. *Worship has been described as a conversation between God and his people, with God's half of the conversation taking place through Word and Sacrament and our half of the conversation taking place through prayer and praise. The author poetically captures that conversation in the image of prayers ascending like a spire or tongues of fire and God's Word descending on us like "seed on waiting hearts."*
4. What blessings of the Church does verse three highlight? *The first two lines extol the blessings of the sacraments performed and distributed within the church by the Church. The last two lines speak of the blessings of fellowship and encouragement we receive from one another when we gather together for worship.*
5. What is the "vision" that verse four promotes...
... for the past? *People in the past have handed on a legacy upon which we operate and build in the present.*
...for the present? *People of the present are asked to be active in the work of the congregation, looking beyond their own circumstance to the future.*
...for the future? *In the future, we ask that God maintain his people in faith and active in love.*
6. Where do you fit in with those "visions" at your congregation? *Answers will vary. Challenge the class to verbalize how they can contribute to the vision of the congregation.*

7. Sing through this hymn or listen to it on the CD. How does the tune emphasize key phrases within the text? *Especially in first, third and eighth bars, the music ascends upward on appropriate phrases like "soaring spires" and "tongues of fire".*
8. Find a history of your congregation, your church body, or your denomination and read it in the week ahead. Take special note of the those people from the past whose "vision pure" influenced your present.

Sermons in Song – Hymnal Supplement

Hymns of the Saints

729 – There Is a Blessed Home

(Disc 2, Track 9 Christian Worship Supplement Hymn Sampler)

1. There is a blessed home beyond this land of woe,
Where trials never come, nor tears of sorrow flow;
Where faith is fully lost in sight, and patient hope is crowned,
And everlasting light its glory casts around.
2. There is a land of peace, good angels know it well;
Glad songs that never cease within its portals swell;
Around the glor'ious throne of God the countless saints adore
Christ, with the Father one, and Spirit evermore.
3. O joy all joys beyond, to see the Lamb who died,
And count each sacred wound in hands, and feet, and side;
To give to him eternal praise for ev'ry triumph won,
And sing through endless days the great things he has done!
4. Look up, you saints of God, nor fear to tread below
The path your Savior trod of daily toil and woe:
Wait only for a little while in uncomplaining love,
His own most gracious smile will welcome you above.

Henry W. Baker, 1821-77, alt.

1. Match the descriptions of heaven from verse one below with the Bible passage(s) that fit the description:

“blessed home” **D** _____

“trials never come” **G** _____

“nor tears of sorrow flow” **J** _____

“faith is fully lost in sight” **H, K** _____

“patient hope is crowned” **B, E, F, I, L** _____

“everlasting light its glory casts” **A, C** _____

- A. Revelation 22:5
- B. Psalm 103:4
- C. Isaiah 60:19,20
- D. Hebrews 11:9
- E. Revelation 2:10
- F. Romans 8:25
- G. Revelation 7:16
- H. 2 Corinthians 5:7
- I. James 1:12
- J. Revelation 21:4
- K. 1 Corinthians 13:12
- L. Isaiah 35:10

2. Describe the activity of heaven as outlined in verse two. *As the angels have enjoyed singing God's praises in heaven throughout time, so the countless saints in heaven will take great pleasure in singing the praises of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – with unhindered adoration. Note the angels singing in Isaiah's vision of heaven (Isaiah 6) and the angels singing from heaven on Christmas (Luke 2). Consider also the visions of the angels and the saints singing in heaven throughout the book of Revelation (chapters 4, 5, 7, and 19).*
3. If verse two spoke of our heavenly singing, verse three speaks of the content of our songs. **What is that content?** *Our songs of praise rise especially to the Lamb, Jesus Christ, who died to save us. In praising him, we are not bashful about pointing to those badges of our salvation (and his love!) present in the wounds of the cross and death. We are not bashful because we know that by his death he defeated sin, death and the devil. And that is just the beginning of our song that recounts with an eternal time signature the great things Jesus has done for us.*
4. Some have accused Christians of being so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. How does the hymn-writer dispel that criticism in verse four? *It is the promise of heaven above that helps us to “tread below.” Only the heavenly minded can be of any lasting earthly good!*
5. Evaluate the poetry of this Sir Henry Baker hymn (you can find more information about Sir Henry Baker and a list of his hymns that appear in *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* in *Christian Worship: Handbook*, p. 640). *Baker's poetry flows with a style of simplicity. Marvel at the meaningful ways he says ordinary things, e.g. “faith is fully lost in sight,” “patient hope is crowned,” “good angels know it well,” “count each sacred wound,” “uncomplaining love,” “his own most gracious smile will welcome you.”*
6. Sing through this hymn or listen to it on the CD. How does the rhythm or pace fit the mood of the hymn? *The 6/8 time moves the tempo along as though we were literally skipping our way to the joys of heaven! The appropriately slow tempo in the recording conveys peace and calm confidence.*
7. Saints Triumphant (3rd Sunday of End Time) is a day on which “There Is a Blessed Home” could be sung. Saints Triumphant Sunday is a day for singing with many powerful hymns that fit the occasion. In the coming week sing through some of the great “saints triumphant” or “heaven” hymns (*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* hymns 206-220, 549-555 and *Christian Worship: Supplement* hymns 727-731, 776).

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Hymns of the Saints

732 – We Are Singing

(Disc 2, Track 10 Christian Worship Supplement Hymn Sampler)

Refrain

We are singing, for the Lord is our light,
we are singing, for the Lord is our light.
We are singing, for the Lord is our light,
we are singing, for the Lord is our light.
We are singing, oh, we are singing,
for the Lord is our light,
We are singing, oh, we are singing,
for the Lord is our light.

1. The Lord is the strength of our lives;
Of whom shall we be afraid?
Though foes may be near to destroy;
The Lord will be our light. **Refrain**
2. One thing have we asked of the Lord,
Yes, this is the thing we seek:
To dwell in the house of the Lord;
To live with God forever. **Refrain**
3. When burdens are heavy to bear,
Our shelter is God alone.
Our feet are lifted high;
Yes, high upon a rock. **Refrain**
4. We walk in the strength of the Lord,
God's love is ever sure.
We shout that the world may hear,
We sing a joyful song. **Refrain**

South African

1. This hymn is a paraphrase of which psalm (choose from the list below):
 - ❖ Psalm 130 (From Depths of Woe I Cry to You - #305 in CW)
 - ❖ Psalm 1 (The Man Is Ever Blest - #475 in CW)
 - ❖ **Psalm 27** (We Are Singing - #732 in CW Supplement)
 - ❖ Psalm 98 (Joy to the World - #62 in CW)
 - ❖ Psalm 46 (A Mighty Fortress Is Our God - #200, 201 in CW)
2. Once you have pegged the correct psalm, identify which verse of the psalm is expounded by each hymn verse.
The paraphrase only covers the first half of the psalm.
Verse one: Psalm 27:1-3 _____
Verse two: Psalm 27:4 _____
Verse three: Psalm 27:5 _____
Verse four: Psalm 27:6 _____
3. Think of situation(s) when the message of verse one would be a comfort. *Answers will vary. Encourage participants to share stories of when God calmed their fears. Certainly, our great enemies, the devil, the world and our flesh (or sin, death and the devil) can cause us great anxiety. Nonetheless, we can have peace because our God has defeated them all.*
4. What would motivate someone to seek sanctuary in God's house above all else, as in verse two? *Once we know about and believe in God's love for us, there is no one we love more than him. Consequently, there is no place we would rather be than in his presence forevermore. On earth, that place where we come most regularly in contact with God through the means of grace is in his house – at worship!*
5. How does God fulfill the kind of protection he promises in verse three? *Being our shelter and lifting us upon a rock are metaphors for the way in which he preserves and protects us from our spiritual enemies. He does that primarily through his Son, Jesus Christ, whose forgiveness had defeated those who once stood against us.*
6. List ways in which you personally, your congregation, or your church body “shouts [God's love] that the world may hear”. *Answers will vary. Lead the class to recognize their own witness, the evangelism of your congregation, and the world-wide mission efforts of your church body.*
7. Sing through this hymn or listen to it on the CD. What is the country of origin of this hymn tune?
South Africa. Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal and Christian Worship Supplement contain hymns that come from various cultures.
8. The book of Psalms has been called the “hymnal of the Bible.” For that reason, the psalms have been paraphrased as metrical hymns. One of the most prolific writers of metrical psalms was Isaac Watts. On page 941 of *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* find the list of hymns penned by Isaac Watts. During the week compare his metrical versions with the psalm upon which each is based.

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Hymns of the Saints

734 – When in Our Music God Is Glorified
(Disc 2, Track 13 Christian Worship Supplement Hymn Sampler)

1. When in our music God is glorified,
And adoration leaves no room for pride,
It is as though the whole creation cried:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
2. How oft, in making music, we have found
A new dimension in the world of sound
As worship moved us to a more profound
Alleluia! Alleluia!
3. So has the Church, in liturgy and song,
In faith and love, through centuries of wrong,
Borne witness to the truth in ev'ry tongue:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
4. And did not Jesus sing a psalm that night
When utmost evil strove against the light?
Then let us sing, for whom he won the fight:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
5. Let ev'ry instrument be tuned for praise;
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise,
And may God give us faith to sing always:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000, alt. © 1972 Hope Publishing Co

1. Read through the hymn. What is unique about the message of this hymn? **This is a hymn about music!** How does verse one set a proper stage for a hymn about music? **We don't use music in worship just for music's sake and especially not out of selfish pride. Instead our music is composed, played or sung for God's glory and to communicate his truth.**
 2. Tell of a time when you experienced what is described in verse two. **Answers will vary. Encourage the class to explore the *emotional* aspect of words connected with music. Why does music carry that kind of power? Theories about music abound – but aside from the philosophy of the discussion, it is difficult to deny that music touches the senses and emotions in a way the ordinary spoken words rarely do.**
 3. How does verse three underscore the truth that worship music is more than notes on a page? **Certainly it has not been the notes in and of themselves that have "borne witness to the truth" but the message of the words connected with the notes.**
 4. According to verse three what are the benefits of a solid liturgy and hymnody? **History testifies that even when many in the church strayed from the truth, the solid (somewhat unchanging) message of the liturgy (which includes songs) and the best of time-tested hymnody continued to proclaim the truth of the Gospel.**
 5. List at least five times that music is mentioned in the Scriptures and discuss the role it played in those passages. **1. Jesus singing on Maundy Thursday evening (used as part of the devotional context of the Last Supper). 2. Music first mentioned in Genesis 4 with Lamech (used as the prideful boast of a bold unbeliever).**
3. "For the director of music" in the Psalms (used to accompany written text in Temple worship).
 4. Paul refers to "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (As used in Colossians, Paul sees these hymns as a means of instruction and admonishment).
 5. The songs of the saints in Revelation (used to praise the Savior).
6. In verse five, in what original ways does the hymn-writer encourage godliness in the motivation and use of our music?
The godly use of instruments = "let ev'ry instrument be tuned for praise"
The godly use of our voices = "let all rejoice who have a voice to raise"
The proper motivation = "and may God give us faith to sing always..."
 7. Sing through this hymn or listen to it on the CD. This is one of the few hymns in *Christian Worship Supplement* that also appears in *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* (the words are the same, but the tune is different). How do they compare? **Both tunes are commendable. The tune that appears in *Christian Worship Supplement* is perhaps a bit more of a "toe-tapper" than the tune in *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*. See comments in the Accompaniment Edition.**
 8. What are ways that a congregation could reflect the message this hymn proclaims?
Rather than accompany the hymn with one instrument (organ or keyboard), the congregation could add instrumentation of various kinds, including creative use of percussion.
 9. This Bible study has introduced you to the message of a handful of hymns from *Christian Worship Supplement*. There are many more hymns and other resources available in *CWS*. In the year ahead, use the resources and hymns from *CWS* for your home devotions.