

Matthew 6:25-34
Trust in Jesus
August 20th, 2017

Today we are highlighting music, our hymns and our songs as vehicles for our theology, and beliefs. Music is the means by which we recall the power of the scriptures and outside of this sanctuary re-experience the presence of God in our lives.

We sing our beliefs because they help us remember our beliefs. Our songs help our hearts praise God in the good times and cling to God in the bad. Our songs and hymns are sources of power for they remind us of who to trust in, and when we sing them, remind us always of the presence of God with us wherever we are, and in whatever circumstances we find ourselves.

I have committed to memory many of the old time classic hymns of the Christian faith. Not that I memorized them as an adult after years and years of singing them, but I heard them as a child sung often by my mother.

I asked my mom once why she sung so much when I was a child and she said, "It was because we used to live in such remote areas. (My dad was a Forest Ranger) and she did not know how to pray for our safety, so she sung the hymns she learned in the church as a means of praying for us kids."

The songs and hymns of our faith are powerful vehicles for strength and help in time of need.

Singing has always been a unique part of our Methodist heritage and worship. Charles Wesley, one of our denomination's founders, wrote over 3000 hymns that captured the beliefs and experiences of the people called Methodists. Our songs and hymns are as important to the promotion and remembrance of our faith as is our teaching and preaching.

Early Methodist preachers were required to sing and know how to lead people in singing. For if the lay people, who came to worship could not read and remember the written Word of God, they could hear and remember the sung Word of God.

Singing is so important every one of our hymn books begins with John Wesley's "Directions for Singing". I would ask every one to turn to Roman numeral VII in our hymn books and follow along as these directions are read.

- I. Learn these tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
- II. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.
- III. Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.
- IV. Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength.

Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan. (Some of the tunes of these hymns were taken from drinking songs.)

- V. Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.
- VI. Sing in time. Whatever time is sung be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices,

and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing to slow. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.

- VII. Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature.

In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound,

but offered to God continually; so shall your sing be such as the Lord will approve here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven. *From John Wesley's Select Hymns, 1761*

Today's theme is about "Trusting Jesus". During this service we are singing a hymn that reminds us of the importance of trusting in Jesus in all the circumstances of our lives. This hymn is indeed a source of strength in our lives in times of need.

This hymn is "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus," which is based on a tragic life experience of its author, Louisa Stead, and the providence of God.

Mrs. Stead speaks of trusting in God in the midst of the most tragic circumstances in life. It is so easy to say we trust in the Lord when life falls in pleasant lines and places, when life is like a party as it was for Job's kids, or picnic like it was for Mrs. Stead. But in those times in which life takes a tragic turn; or the Lord, or life takes something away can we still say, "Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him!"

Now, if we can, then our faith will be strengthened and our ability to overcome life at its worst will prevail.

The following video is the story of this hymns' origin.

[PLAY VIDEO "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus"](#)

The miracle of this story is not only did God provide for Louisa and Lily for a day, for a single meal, beginning with that sweet pie. God provided for them for a lifetime. God called and provided for them both to go to Africa.

Both Louisa and Lily became missionaries in Africa. **Louisa remarried a Methodist Missionary named Robert Wodehouse.** They worked in Rhodesia which is today known as Zimbabwe. **Lily also married a Methodist Missionary a Rev. D. A. Carson** and they served for many years at a Missionary station in southern Rhodesia.

Zimbabwe as many know is where the United Methodist African University is located, which we support through our apportionments. Today, our faith is coming full circle for members of the Methodist church in Africa are now returning to America and sharing with us the faith they received from those long ago missionaries.

When I was at Christ Church UMC 5 brothers began worshipping with us. They were refugees and had fled the Gutumba massacre. They were from the Congo and had been raised as Methodists the oldest of whom, Dennis, was a Lay Preacher. They came to our church not speaking a word of English and in a little over a year started a church called Goshen ministries that ministers to refugees that come to Tucson from countries from all over the world.

They came trusting in Jesus. Dennis' wife had the scars of bullets that she received while carrying their daughter whose name translates as Grace. She was the first child born after the massacre and brought hope to the survivors.

In your life if you know you need to trust in Jesus more, this old hymn is actually a prayer to trust him more. The chorus line ends with the phrase, a prayer, **"O for grace to trust him more."**

If your life is filled with worries over rent, food, clothing, politics etc. now is the time to take our scripture seriously and take your concerns to God. To do as verse 33 of our scriptures says to **"Strive (or seek) first**

for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Take your concerns to Jesus!!!!

So take this time as we sing these verses to make this hymn the deepest prayer of your heart. As John Wesley said, “Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing.”

And as verse three says, “Yes, ‘tis sweet to trust in Jesus, just from sin and self to cease; just from Jesus simply taking life and rest, and joy and peace.”

Let us sing these last 3 verses of “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus”. Make this the deepest prayer of your heart to trust in Jesus and Jesus alone. Make this a time of commitment and recommitment of your heart to Jesus.

SING HYMN #467 “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus” (verses 2, 3, 4)