Sunday, November 29, 2026

Sermons from Songs
LEAD ME TO CALVARY
#179 – Hymns for Worship

This being a 5th Sunday, we want to consider another song that we sing from time to time. This is a song with a powerful message. It calls for us to remember. We often sing this song preparing for the Lord's Supper which is very appropriate. But the message should resonate with us at all times.

This song was written by Jennie E. Hussy (1874-1958). She was a 4th generation Quaker who wrote poetry beginning at an early age. She is credited with the texts to more than 150 hymns. She led a difficult life suffering from arthritis and caring for her invalid sister much of her life. This song, published in 1921 later in life was a decision to more publicly proclaim her faith. What is interesting about this hymn is that verse 4 was the first verse she penned and the catalyst for the song. Verses 2 & 3 were added shortly thereafter. Verse 1 was added later.

The tune was composed by William J. Kirkpatrick (1838-1921), who penned the tunes, and sometimes the words of many hymns, including: Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, We have heard the joyful sound (Jesus saves); Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It; Coming Home (I've wandered far away from God); Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah; and Away in a Manger (vs. 3), plus many more that we sing and know. Lead me to Calvary was published the year of his death.

This song serves as a reminder that our life is to be one of surrender as we consider what Jesus did for us.

I. King of my life

a. *King of my life, I crown Thee now*. The opening declaration of this song calls for us to surrender to Him now.
   i. John 18:33-19:12ff begins a discussion between Pilate and Jesus about Him being a king. The ultimate conclusion was that Jesus IS King, though "not of this world".
   ii. When Jesus ascended to heaven He was seated at God's right hand to reign as Lord. Acts 2:33-36.
   iii. Is He king of your life? Romans 10:9-10, as one obeys the gospel, we are confessing Jesus as Lord. That means we are letting Him rule in our lives. To "crown Him" means complete surrender. And we must do so NOW! Colossians 2:6 declares, *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him*. Matthew 7:21 reminds us that making Him Lord includes doing His will.

b. *Thine shall the glory be*. Revelation 5:11-12 describes the Lamb slain was worthy of honor, glory and blessing. Do we glorify Him in our lives as we ought to? 1 Timothy 1:17 , *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen*. Glorifying Christ means we honor and show due reverence to Him. We seek to reflect His glory in our lives, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12, *that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ*.

c. *Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow*. Included in John's reading (John 19:1-3) is the purple robe and crown of thorns placed upon Jesus as Roman soldiers mocked Him. Little did they know what they were doing.
   i. In this act, we are reminded that it led to the crucifixion.
   ii. Jesus endured the suffering because of OUR guilt, not His – 1 Peter 2:21-24.

d. *Lead me to Calvary* – Luke 23:33 (KJV, NKJV) mentions Jesus being led to a place called Calvary where Jesus was crucified.
   i. The other accounts give different descriptions of the place. Newer translations say, "the skull" (based on the word – from which we get our English word cranium).

ii. A study of the cruelty of the crucifixion and the events leading up to it shows how terrible this form of execution was. It was intentionally brutal to send a message to those considering rebelling against the king.

iii. The cross is the central point of our faith. That is why each week, we are commanded to remember His death on that cross as we partake of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

II. He was buried

a. *Show to me the tomb where Thou wast laid* – We do not know the exact location where Jesus was buried. But His burial indicates that Jesus had died on that cross (cf., Mark 15:44-45). NOTE: Those who observed the events DID know – Mark 15:47, Luke 23:55. The actuality of His death and knowing where His tomb was is important in establishing the miraculous resurrection through which we have hope. Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

b. *Tenderly mourned and wept* reminds us of the sorrow associated with that occasion. Those who loved Him grieved His passing, and many lost all hope as His body was buried.

c. *Angels in robes of light arrayed, Guarded Thee whilst thou slept* – this expression is not directly stated in scripture, but we can be assured that God was watching over His body as He "rested" in that tomb. Cf. Psalm 16:9-10, *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption*. (See also Acts 2:24-28, 13:34-35). We know angels were present AS He arose – Matthew 28:1-7, and following His resurrection (Lule 24:4-8, etc.

III. He appeared

a. *Let we like Mary, thru the gloom…*

i. John 20:1 - records Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb first (along with other women – Luke 24:1). Luke also records they brought spices to finish the burial process.

ii. Anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one understands the gloominess of the situation. BUT, as we know, their gloom would soon to turn to joy as they saw Jesus. John 20:11-18 continues his account as Jesus sees Mary Magdalene on that glorious morning.

b. *Come with a gift to Thee* – the women brought spices to honor their loved one. Knowing who Jesus is, do we come to Him with a "gift"? Namely ourselves! Galatians 2:20, Romans 12:1-2 – we present ourselves as a living sacrifice to Him.

c. *Show to me now the empty tomb* – He arose.

i. In this expression I am reminded that Jesus arose and was seen by many.

ii. Therein is our hope. 1 Peter 1:3-5 notes this. Paul after making his case that Jesus was physically resurrected appealed to our hope because of that – 1 Corinthians 15:12-22

iii. In addition to the women, Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 lists a number of appearances that made His resurrection indisputable. Too many and too often for it to be denied. That is the point Paul is making.

d. *Lead me to Calvary* – without Calvary there is no significance to the empty tomb. In his sermon on Pentecost, one of the points Peter made was that the tomb was empty! (Acts 2:22-32)

IV. Will I bear my cross

a. *May I be willing Lord to bear daily my cross for Thee* – Matthew 16:24 – a part of discipleship is a willingness to take up our own cross. The idea of a cross is a willingness to endure whatever is necessary, including suffering. The cost of being a disciple is that He comes first in all things.

b. *Even the cup of grief to share* – Are we willing to suffer as He did. Acts 5:41, as the apostles are beaten by the council for preaching Christ, they depart rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. 1 Peter 4:12-16 notes that we rejoice to the extent that we partake of Christ's sufferings.

c. *Thou hast borne all for me* – 2 Corinthians 8:8-9, *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might*

become rich. Hebrews 12:1-3, we are *looking to Jesus who for the joy set before Him endures the cross, despising the shame*… He *endures such hostilities from sinners against Himself*… One source noted that the inspiration behind this hymn was a day when she was suffering greater than at other times and prayed, "Please, Lord, make me willing to bear my cross daily, without complaining, because You bore Yours for me."

V. Chorus – Lest I forget Gethsemane

a. *Lest I forget*… - This is a song about remembrance. We need continual reminders, even of things we are familiar with. (cf. 2 Peter 1:12, 1 Corinthians 11:23, 2 Timtohy 2:8-9 - *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained*.)

b. There is a reason, we are to partake of the Lord's Supper each week (Acts 20:7). We do this "in memory of Me." (Luke 22:19-20)

c. *Gethsemane* - is where Jesus made preparation – another stressful time in His life

d. *Lest I forget Thine agony* – Luke 22:44 describes Jesus as being in agony, even in the garden. Then there is the cruel torture of the cross itself.

e. *Lest I forget Thy love for me* – WHY did Jesus do what He did? Because of His great love for us. Romans 5:8, John 15:13, Ephesians 5:2, *And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma*.; 1 John 3:16 - *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren*. It is His love that motivates us to love Him and others as well (1 John 4:10-11, 19).

f. *Lead me to Calvary* – Throughout and in conclusion to this hymn we are taken back to the cross, where that ultimate act of love becomes the fulcrum of his and the reason for our hope beyond this life. If we sing all verses with chorus, 6 times we will repeat this phrase.

This is truly a powerful hymn that reminds us why we are here and why we are willing to endure whatever is necessary. Our hope lies in His death AND resurrection. So, when we find ourselves struggling, facing difficulties or even suffering, let us remember Calvary, So that one day we can begin our eternal rest with Him. How often do your thoughts lead you to Calvary? Think about it!