

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

Love Divine All Loves Excelling Charles Wesley 1747

Love divine, all loves excelling, joy of heaven to earth come down;
fix in us thy humble dwelling; all they faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast!
Let us all in thee inherit; let us find that sacred rest.
Take away our bent to sinning; Alpha and Omega be;
end of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver, let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return and never, never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing, serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation perfectly restored in thee;
changed from glory into glory, till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee, lost in wonder, love, and praise.

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fix in us thy humble dwelling; all they faithful mercies crown!
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visit us with thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

Ephesians 3:16-18 *“I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.”*
New Living Translation¹

The idea of God walking the earth as a human can be a difficult concept to understand, to accept. Is it difficult for you to understand? To accept? Spend some time exploring why you feel that way.

Why do you think God came to us not just as a human, but as a helpless human infant? Does this impact on how you relate to Jesus? Why?

Why do you think Charles Wesley felt it was important to include the concept that, as Paul puts it *“Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him”*? Do you feel Christ has a home in your heart? Why do you feel that way?

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Romans 7:15-17, 21-25 *“I don’t understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I can’t. I do what I don’t want to – what I hate. I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience proves that I agree with these laws I’m breaking. But I can’t help myself because I am no longer doing it. It is sin inside me that is stronger than I am that makes me do these evil things. It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love to do God’s will so far as my new nature is concerned; but there is something else deep within me, in my lower nature, that is at war with my mind and wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. In my mind I want to God’s willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved to sin. So you see how it is: my new life tells me to do right, but the old nature that is still inside me loves to sin. Oh, what a terrible predicament I’m in! Who will free me from my slavery to this deadly lower nature? Thank God! It has been done by Jesus Christ our Lord. He has set me free.”* The Living Bible²

Can you relate to Paul’s dilemma? Describe what that is/was like for you.
What does Christ as the beginning and end ending of faith mean to you?

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1 Corinthians 1:30-31 *“God Himself made the way so that you can have a new life through Christ Jesus. God gave us Christ to be our wisdom. Christ made us right with God and set us apart for God and made us holy. Christ bought us with His blood and made us free from our sins. It is as the Holy Writings say, ‘If anyone is going to be proud of anything, he should be proud of the Lord.’”* New Living Version³

What do Paul’s words *“If anyone is going to be proud of anything, he should be proud of the Lord”* mean to you?

What might it look like in your life if you were to try to *“pray and praise (God) without ceasing”*?

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Romans 5:5-7a *“Then, when that happens, we are able to hold our heads high no matter what happens and know that all is well, for we know how dearly God loves us, and we feel this warm love everywhere within us because God has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. When we were utterly helpless, with no way of escape, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners who had no use for him. Even if we were good, we really wouldn’t expect anyone to die for us...”*
The Living Bible²

We can become a new creation because *“When we were utterly helpless, with no way of escape, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners who had no use for him.”* How is Christ calling you to step into His saving grace and become a new creation? What “crowns” do you need to place at Christ’s feet in order to live as this new creation? Why is this an important step?

“May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. By his divine power God has given us everything we need for a godly life. We have received all this by coming to know him, the one who called us unto himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.”
2 Peter 1:2-3 New Living Translation¹

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