

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

These Days Paul T Duncan, Jeremy Thomas Camp, Emily Weisband, Jordan Douglas Sapp
© Stolen Pride Records LLC, under exclusive license to Capital CMG 2024

If you'd like to hear the song: <https://youtu.be/oqXn2I449qs>

These days, my hearts always on the run.
These days, the world's spinning out of control.
These days are fast and they're furious, feels like the worst is ahead of us.
Sometimes it's hard to feel at home but...

Refrain:

I believe that you and I are in the right place at the right time.
God called us by name, and He doesn't make mistakes.
I know we were born to shine bright, in a dark world that needed some light.
Don't have to be afraid, maybe we were made for these days.
Maybe we were made for these days.

What if the beauty isn't crushed? It just needs the hope that's inside of us.
What if it's more than a destiny? What if we're part of a masterpiece?
Until our Father brings us home...

Refrain:

Cause staying when it gets hard, to love with open arms, it's something to embrace.
Maybe we were made for these days.

Refrain:

These days, my hearts always on the run.
These days, the world's spinning out of control.
These days are fast and they're furious, feels like the worst is ahead of us.
Sometimes it's hard to feel at home but...

Isaiah 61:2-3 *"He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of God's favor to them has come, and the day of wrath to their enemies. To all who mourn in Israel he will give: beauty for ashes; joy instead of mourning; praise instead of heaviness. For God has planted them like strong and graceful oaks for his own glory."* The Living Bible¹

Psalms 33:22 *"Yes, Lord let your constant love surround us, for our hopes are in you alone."* The Living Bible¹

Do you feel as the writers do, that things are "out of control", speeding on to worse days?
Why do you feel that way?

Isaiah talks of similar times some 600 years before the birth of Jesus, and offers us reassurance of God's awareness of our struggles, and hope for the future. The psalmist

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

offers us similar hope. Read these verses several times and sit with the words. What words of reassurance and hope do you take from these verses? Make note of these words, carry them with you into the new year, and take them out when you feel the need for God's reassurance.

I believe that you and I are in the right place at the right time.
God called us by mistake, and He doesn't make mistakes.
I know we were born to shine bright, in a dark world that needed some light.
Don't have to be afraid, maybe we were made for these days.
Maybe we were made for these days.

Esther 4:13-14 "Mordecai sent this reply to Esther 'Don't think for a moment that because you're in the palace you will escape when all other Jews are killed. If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?'"

New Living Translation²

Isaiah 43:1-3a "But now, O Jacob, listen to the Lord who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, 'Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine. When you go through deep waters, I will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.'"

New Living Translation²

Mordecai's words to Esther remind us that we are all called to be part of the solution to the problems we see in the world; none of us has the luxury of sitting on the sidelines – even if we live in a “palace” – when we see evil at work, because evil unchecked will come for us too. Isaiah reminds us that even in evil times, we are not alone because God walks with us. Where have you seen or felt God walking beside you? Describe what that was like. Spend some time considering the places you find yourself in, and the gifts God has given you that allow you to “shine bright, in a dark world that [needs] some light”. Offer your thoughts about these, as well as any concerns you might have, to God, and listen for the Holy Spirit's guidance on how you are called to respond.

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

What if the beauty isn't crushed? It just needs the hope that's inside of us.
What if it's more than a destiny? What if we're part of a masterpiece?
Until our Father brings us home...

Ephesians 2:10 *"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."* New Living Translation²

1 Chronicles 29:10-13 *"David blessed God in full view of the entire congregation: 'Blessed are you, God of Israel, our father from of old and forever. To you, O God, belong the greatness and the might, the glory, the victory, the majesty, the splendor; yes! Everything in heaven, everything on earth; the kingdom all yours! You've raised yourself high over all. Riches and glory come from you, you're ruler over all; you hold strength and power in the palm of your hand to build up and strengthen all. And here we are, O God, our God, giving thanks to you, praising your Splendid Name.'" The Message³*

Can you praise God for creating you with your specific gifts, and empowering you to use them to give hope to a hurting world? Why do you feel that way?

Cause staying when it gets hard, to love with open arms, it's something to embrace.
Maybe we were made for these days.

Proverbs 4:18-22a *"The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day. But the way of the wicked is like total darkness. They have no idea what they are stumbling over. My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them..."* New Living Translation²

Romans 5:3-5 *"This doesn't mean, of course, that we have only a hope of future joys – we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles. Taken in the right spirit these very things will give us patient endurance; this in turn will develop a mature character, and a character of this sort produces a steady hope, a hope that will never disappoint us. Already we have some experience of the love of God flooding through our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us."* Phillips⁴

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

Do you find it difficult to stay “when it gets hard”? Why? Can you find comfort from Paul’s words to the Romans that “*we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles*”? How does that feel to you?

In what ways might you be able to embrace the light within you that is “*like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day*”? How can that help you, help others, in the days ahead?

“You are living a brand new kind of life that is continually learning more and more of what is right, and trying constantly to be more and more like Christ who created this new life within you.”

Colossians 3:10 The Living Bible¹

¹ The Living Bible copyright © 1971 by Tyndale House Foundation. All rights reserved.

² New Living Translation Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. All rights reserved.

³ The Message Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson.

⁴ The New Testament in Modern English by J.B Phillips copyright © 1960, 1972 J. B. Phillips. Administered by The Archbishops’ Council of the Church of England.