

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

Creating God, Your Fingers Trace Jeffery Rowthorn

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Creating God, your fingers trace the bold designs of farthest space;
let sun and moon and stars and light and what lies hidden praise your might.

Sustaining God, your hands uphold earth's mysteries known or yet untold;
let water's fragile blend with air, enabling life, proclaim your care.

Redeeming God, your arms embrace all now despised for creed or race;
let peace, descending like a dove, make known on earth your healing love.

Indwelling God, your Gospel claims one family with a billion names;
let every life be touched by grace until we praise you face to face.

Creating God, your fingers trace the bold designs of farthest space;
let sun and moon and stars and light and what lies hidden praise your might.

Psalm 33:4-7 *“Let all the of the godly well up in praise to the Lord for it is right to praise him. For all God’s words are right and everything he does is worthy of our trust. He loves whatever is just and good; the earth is filled with his tender love. He merely spoke and the heavens were formed and all the galaxies of stars. He made the oceans, pouring them into his vast reservoirs.”*

The Living Bible¹

NASA has shared amazing photos of deep space taken by the James Webb space telescope, things that were previously hidden from our eyes. If you can, access them and spend some time considering the enormity of God’s creation, the designs we have never seen before. Describe how this makes you feel.

Sustaining God, your hands uphold earth's mysteries known or yet untold;
let water's fragile blend with air, enabling life, proclaim your care.

Genesis 9:13-17 *“I have placed my rainbow in the clouds as a sign of my promise until the end of time, to you and to all the earth. When I send clouds over the earth, the rainbow will be seen in the clouds, and I will remember my promise to you and to every being, that never again will the floods come and destroy all life. For I will see the rainbow in the cloud and remember my eternal promise to every living being on the earth.”*

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Do the “mysteries known or yet untold” deepen your faith, or diminish it? In what ways?

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Psalm 7: 9-11 *“End all wickedness, O Lord, and bless those all who truly worship God; for you, the righteous of God, look deep within the hearts of men and examine all their motives and their thoughts. God is my shield; he will defend me. He saves those whose hearts and lives are true and right. God is a judge who is perfectly fair, and he is angry with the wicked every day.”*

The Living Bible¹

Why do you think people try to create separation based on faith or race?
What would it look like in your life to claim *“God is my shield; he will defend me”*?
Have you experienced God’s *“healing love”*? Describe how that feels. What effect has that had on your life? Your faith?

Indwelling God, your Gospel claims one family with a billion names;
let every life be touched by grace until we praise you face to face.

John 1:9-14 *“Later on, the one who is the true Light arrived to shine on everyone coming into the world. But although he made the world, the world didn’t recognize him when he came. Even in his own land and among his own people, the Jews, he was not accepted. Only a few would welcome and receive him. But to all who received him, he gave the right to become children of God. All they needed to do was to trust him to save them. All those who believe this are reborn! - not a physical rebirth resulting from human passion or plan - but from the will of God. And Christ became a human being and lived here on earth among us and was full of loving forgiveness and truth. And some of us have seen his glory - the glory of the only Son of the heavenly Father!”* The Living Bible¹

Romans 8:14-16 *“Those who are led by God’s Spirit are God’s children. For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God’s*

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children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, 'Father! My Father!' God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children." Good News Translation²

The coming of the Messiah, and His gift of the Spirit created one family of all believers. Where do you see that in your life? How does that make you feel?

John tells us that to all who received Jesus and trusted Him He gave "*the right to become children of God.*" Do you see examples of people who use their personal interpretation of the Gospel to try to deny this right to certain people? Who claim that some people do not deserve to "be touched by grace"? How does that make you feel? How do you think those pushed aside feel? Why do you think that? How do you think it makes Christ Jesus feel, that some try to limit His grace?

"Creating God... Sustaining God... Redeeming God... Indwelling God..."

Where do you see these attributes of God in your relationship with God? How do they affect your faith?

"Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain – his Spirit – where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves – labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free – are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive. I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less."

1 Corinthians 12:13-14a The Message³

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