

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

God's Not Done With You Bernie Herms/Emily Weisband/Tauren Wells

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Standing in your ruins feels a lot like the end;
so used to losing, you're afraid to try again.
Right now all you see are ashes where there was a flame,
truth is you're not forgotten, 'cause Grace knows your name.

Refrain:

God's not done with you, even with your broken heart and your wounds and your scars.
God's not done with you, even when you're lost, and it's hard, and you're falling apart.
God's not done with you; it's not over it's only begun,
so don't hide, don't run, 'cause God's not done with you.

There's a light you don't notice, until you're standing in the dark;
And there's strength that's growing inside your shattered heart.

Refrain

He's got a plan; this is part of it; He's gonna finish what He started.
He's got a plan; this is part of it; He's gonna finish what He started.
He's not done, God's not done writing your story.
No, He's not done, God's not done with you, God's not done with you.

Refrain

You, you, no He's not done. God's not done with you.

If the Disciples were alive today, this could be their song. Can you picture them in the hours after Jesus' crucifixion? This man they had followed, worked with, befriended for 3 years, the man they believed was the Messiah come to set Israel free, is dead. Their hopes and dreams in ruins, their hearts broken – they must be wondering what will happen now?

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Matthew 26:31-35 *"Then Jesus said to them, 'Tonight you will all desert me. For it is written in the Scriptures that God will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. But after I have been brought back to life again, I will go to Galilee and meet you there.'* Peter declared, *'If everyone else deserts you, I won't.'* Jesus told him, *'The truth is that this very night,*

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before the cock crows at dawn, you will deny me three times!’ ‘I would die first!’ Peter insisted. And all the other disciples said the same thing.” 69-75 “Meanwhile, as Peter was sitting in the courtyard, a girl came over and said to him, ‘You were with Jesus, for both of you are from Galilee.’ But Peter denied it loudly. ‘I don’t even know what you are talking about,’ he angrily declared. Later, out by the gate, another girl noticed him and said to those standing around, ‘This man was with Jesus—from Nazareth. Again Peter denied it, this time with an oath. ‘I don’t even know the man,’ he said. But after a while the men who had been standing there came over to him and said, ‘We know you are one of his disciples, for we can tell by your Galilean accent.’ Peter began to curse and swear. “I don’t even know the man,” he said. And immediately the cock crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said, ‘Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.’ And he went away, crying bitterly.” The Living Bible¹

Peter may have been the disciple with the greatest regrets. Have you felt forgotten, that your dreams have turned to ashes, like Peter may have felt? Describe that. But just like Peter, grace knows *your* name. Isaiah 49:16 reminds us of God’s reassurance, the same one Peter received: “*Jerusalem, I can never forget you! I have written your name on the palms of my hands.*” (Good News Translation²) Read that reminder from Isaiah again. Did you notice? This is not an accidental thing, it’s very intentional. God says “*I have written your name*”. And even more God says “*hands*”. Not a hand, but hands – whichever direction God looks, God wants to see *your* name, regardless of how what you may have done or not done in your life. Spend some time with this idea...

God’s not done with you, even with your broken heart and your wounds and your scars.
God’s not done with you, even when you’re lost, and it’s hard, and you’re falling apart.
God’s not done with you; it’s not over it’s only begun,
so don’t hide, don’t run, ‘cause God’s not done with you.

Jonah 2:1-2, 6b-7 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from inside the fish: “In my great trouble I cried to the Lord and he answered me; from the depths of death I called, and Lord, you heard me! I was locked out of life and imprisoned in the land of death. But, O Lord my God, you have snatched me from the yawning jaws of death! “When I had lost all hope, I turned my thoughts once more to the Lord. And my earnest prayer went to you in your holy Temple.”
The Living Bible¹

Psalm 139:6-8 “This is too glorious, too wonderful to believe! I can never be lost to your Spirit! I can never get away from God! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, you are there.”
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What scars do you carry that you think keep you away from God's grace and mercy? It is easy to get stuck in the dark places, to think that what we see and feel in those times will never change. The psalmist reminds us God knows us and our pain, and will heal our broken hearts. Jonah knew the psalms. They were the basis of his appeal to God from the belly of the whale – and that was a very dark time, the “*jaws of death*” he called it. But just as God was not done with the psalmist, God was not done with Jonah. The psalmist and Jonah both knew of God's promise through Isaiah, that their names were written on the palms of God's hands. How does it feel to be in the company of the psalmist and Jonah? How does it feel to know that there is nothing you can do, there is no place you can go, that God cannot find you? Describe that.

There's a light you don't notice, until you're standing in the dark;
And there's strength that's growing inside your shattered heart.

John 20:11-16 *“by that time Mary [Magdelene] had returned to the tomb and was standing outside crying. And as she wept, she stooped and looked in and saw two white-robed angels sitting at the head and foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. ‘Why are you crying?’ the angels asked her. ‘Because they have taken away my Lord,’ she replied, “and I don’t know where they have put him.’ She glanced over her shoulder and saw someone standing behind her. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him! ‘Why are you crying?’ he asked her. ‘Whom are you looking for?’ She thought he was the gardener. ‘Sir,’ she said, ‘if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.’ ‘Mary!’ Jesus said. She turned toward him. ‘Master!’ she exclaimed.”* The Living Bible¹

Job 12:22 *“He floods the darkness with light, even the dark shadow of death.”* The Living Bible¹

Imagine yourself in Mary's place. Jesus had healed her of seven demons (Luke 8:2), effectively giving her back her life, but He has been crucified and now she believes His body has been stolen. Deep in another dark time in her life, standing in the shadow of Jesus' death, and God brings light into her life, allowing her to be the first to see the resurrected Christ Jesus. How has God brought light into the dark times of your life? It may be hard to see that light if you are currently in a dark time, but even then, there can be slivers of light that shine through – a hand held out to help, a door held open, a smile, the wave that allows you to go ahead of someone else. Take some time to list consider when you have seen the light, no matter how small, and how that made you feel.

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Jeremiah 29:11 *"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."*
The Living Bible¹

John 20:19-20 *"That evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors, in fear of the Jewish leaders, when suddenly Jesus was standing there among them! After greeting them, he showed them his hands and side. And how wonderful was their joy as they saw their Lord!"*
The Living Bible¹

God's plan - once it became clear people would not follow Jesus - became redemption through the resurrection of Jesus, a plan for good, for grace; a plan still being worked out every day in each of our lives. Can you accept that work, that grace in your life? Why do you feel that way? What does/might it look like in your life.

You, you, no He's not done. God's not done with you.

1 Peter 2:24 *"He personally carried the load of our sins in his own body when he died on the cross so that we can be finished with sin and live a good life from now on. For his wounds have healed ours!"*
The Living Bible¹

Take this with you as you move through Easter, and the days after. Rest in the assurance that God knows *your* name and that no matter how hard today might be, the light of healing that the resurrected Christ brings is yours if you will reach out and accept it...

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² Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition) © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved.