

Devotion on Hymns of the Church (What God Ordains is always Good) – 25 March 2014, Anno Domini (In the Year of our Lord)



He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. (Deut 32:4)

He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. (Mark 7:37)

**NOTE: This devotion dedicated to a dear Christian gentleman at Wake Forrest University.**

This grand hymn is found in the THE HANDBOOK TO THE LUTHERAN HYMNAL (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941, #571 in the Lutheran Hymnal). Music composed by *Severus Gastorius*, 1681

### "WHAT GOD ORDAINS IS ALWAYS GOOD"

*by Samuel Rodigast, 1675*

*1. What God ordains is always good;  
His will abideth holy.  
As He directs my life for me,  
I follow meek and lowly.  
God indeed in every need  
Doth well know how to shield me;  
To Him, then, I will yield me.*

*2. What God ordains is always good.  
He never will deceive me;  
He leads me in His own right way,  
And never will He leave me.  
I take content What He hath sent;  
His hand that sends me sadness  
Will turn my tears to gladness.*

3. *What God ordains is always good.  
His loving thought attends me;  
No poison can be in the cup  
That my Physician sends me.  
My God is true; Each morn anew  
I'll trust His grace unending,  
My life to Him commending.*

4. *What God ordains is always good.  
He is my Friend and Father;  
He suffers naught to do me harm,  
Though many storms may gather.  
Now I may know Both joy and woe,  
Some day I shall see clearly  
That He hath loved me dearly.*

5. *What God ordains is always good.  
Though I the cup am drinking  
Which savors now of bitterness,  
I take it without shrinking.  
For after grief God grants relief,  
My heart with comfort filling  
And all my sorrow stilling.*

6. *What God ordains is always good.  
This truth remains unshaken.  
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine,  
I shall not be forsaken.  
I fear no harm, For with His arm  
He shall embrace and shield me;  
So to my God I yield me.*

This hymn takes us through the dark Valley of the 'Shadow' of Death and takes us to the Fountain of Light atop the Hills from whence cometh our help. It repeats the scriptural assurance that the Lord is with us through the dark night of the soul, and the brilliant sunrise of resurrection glory. God's will is forever Holy because He is Holiness personified! **"What God ordains is always good; His will abideth holy. As He directs my life for me, I follow meek and lowly. God indeed in every need Doth well know how to shield me; To Him, then, I will yield me."** There is only ONE way to follow the Lord – in humility. There is no place for pride in Heaven. When we surrender the free will of the sinner (which is bondage to sin) and put on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is His will that guides and directs in every right way.

**"What God ordains is always good. He never will deceive me; He leads me in His own right way, And never will He leave me. I take content What He hath sent; His hand that sends me sadness Will turn my tears to gladness."** The Shepherd of the Psalms will lead always to green pastures of love. He will never leave us or forsake us. He is able to lead us through the shade of the tomb and into the sunrise of eternity. He has already trod that path in our stead. ***"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."*** (John 11:25-26) God is never the author of sadness. Sorrow came as a result of Adam's sin which taints our blood. But His blood washes us

whiter than snow, and joy always comes in the morning sunrise.

*“What God ordains is always good. His loving thought attends me; No poison can be in the cup That my Physician sends me. My God is true; Each morn anew I’ll trust His grace unending, My life to Him commending.”* God can do no evil for His very nature is GOODNESS. Whatever comes into our lives, whether from the ambience of sin in the world, or of even our own careless indiscretions, God can turn the shortcomings into benefits. His thoughts are forever fixed upon His Elect. *“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 1Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.”* (Isaiah 49:15-16) His Cup is filled with the wine of Love and sacrifice. *“...let God be true, but every man a liar.”* (Romans 3:4) Each morning dawns a day of love and service to our God. *“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.”* (Psalms 63:1-2)

*“What God ordains is always good. He is my Friend and Father; He suffers naught to do me harm,*

*Though many storms may gather. Now I may know Both joy and woe, Some day I shall see clearly That He hath loved me dearly.”* What a privilege to be a friend of our Lord. *“Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”* (John 15:15) What a Friend Jesus is to us – he is a *“friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”* (Proverbs 18:24) You are a CHOSEN friend, not one who was seeking friendship. *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”* (John 15:16) His Commandment that comprehends all others is that of LOVE. *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* (John 15:13) This is the high mark of LOVE and that high mark that our Lord measured unto Himself for us at Calvary. In our mortal state, we cannot comprehend that infinite love with which Jesus loves us, but in the resurrection, we *“shall know even as we are known.”*

*“What God ordains is always good. Though I the cup am drinking Which savors now of bitterness,*

*I take it without shrinking. For after grief God grants relief, My heart with comfort filling And all my sorrow stilling.”* That Cup from which the Lord drank was full of bitter suffering and death – the death that we deserve and He did not! Yet, He drank of that Cup, and we, too, are privileged to drink from that same Cup in bearing our crosses daily for Him. Just as there came a glorious Easter Passover at the Garden Tomb of Christ, there shall be a bright and early morning during which we shall all arise, who are in Christ, to eternal day. *“... weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”* (Psalms 30:5 KJV) Before we reach that bright and happy morning, we must endure, perchance, a night of weeping. *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”* (John 16:20) To the devout Christian, *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,”* (Phil 3:7-8)

*“What God ordains is always good. This truth remains unshaken. Though sorrow, need, or death be mine, I shall not be forsaken. I fear no harm, For with His arm He shall embrace and shield me; So to my God I yield me.”* The Truth of God is immutable and eternal – unchanging. *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever”* (Heb 13:8) God’s Love is spoken softly on the winds of the Holy Spirit to us, and it demands an echo of love from its hearers. That Love of God is the most powerful Voice we can ever know. It is stronger than death. *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 8:38-39) His arms are the *“everlasting arms”* of hope and promise that shall never fail. *“But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”* (Psalms 3:3) If we yield OURSELVES to God, we have yielded all that goes with our persons – our pride, our wills, our hearts, our service, our minds, and our tongues. Have you done, my friend?