



*And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. (1 Cor 3:23)*

*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. (James 4:8)*

Here we have yet another masterpiece by the great lady of hymnody, Fanny Crosby – the most prolific and spiritual writer of hymns that, in my opinion, has ever put pen to paper. Fanny knew Christ is a more intimate way than any – she was blind and could not physically see the beauty of His Creation; but she learned to FEEL it and to SEE it with spiritual eyes. She wrote more than 8,000 hymns – enough to fill sixteen average hymnals and a greater number of her hymns appear in hymnals today than any other single author. Her sense of feeling was enhanced by the absence of sight, not hindered thereby. The music is by the well-known hymn-writer, Mr. D.H. Doane. The category under which this hymn falls is that of Gospel Hymn.

It may shock some to know that Fanny Crosby did not start writing hymns until her mid fifties. After that, she continued unabated until her death at age 95 in 1915. Someone asked, “Fanny, you have written so very many great hymns and are blind; can you imagine what you could have accomplished if you had your sight?” to which Fanny responded, “Not at all! I am glad I have been blind all of these years because the first sight I shall see will be the smiling face of my Savior who died for me!” I do not know from what vines such spiritual giants grow, but I look forward to meeting Fanny along with many other old saints at some happy day.

### **I Am Thine, O Lord**

*I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,  
And it told Thy love to me;  
But I long to rise in the arms of faith  
And be closer drawn to Thee.*

**Refrain**

*Draw me nearer, nearer blessèd Lord,  
To the cross where Thou hast died.  
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer blessèd Lord,  
To Thy precious, bleeding side.*

*Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord,  
By the power of grace divine;  
Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope,  
And my will be lost in Thine.*

**Refrain**

*O the pure delight of a single hour  
That before Thy throne I spend,  
When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God  
I commune as friend with friend!*

**Refrain**

*There are depths of love that I cannot know  
Till I cross the narrow sea;  
There are heights of joy that I may not reach  
Till I rest in peace with Thee.*

**Refrain**

*“I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice, And it told Thy love to me; But I long to rise in the arms of faith And be closer drawn to Thee.”* What does it mean to belong to Christ – to be closer drawn to Him? It means, in my view, to leave the old selfish ‘YOU’ behind and draw more into His Holy Self. Drawing near to God is departing more and more from self. It means giving up that superstitiously called Freewill for His Holy and perfect will. The Voice of Jesus speaks love to all who will understand; and it speaks condemnation to those who reject His Voice. Faith is the substance that causes us to rise more and more to His Presence.

**REFRAIN:** *“Draw me nearer, nearer blessèd Lord, To the cross where Thou hast died. Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer blessèd Lord, To Thy precious, bleeding side.”* This refrain evokes the principle of God’s calling to us. We love Him because He first loved us, and we can in no wise approach Him unless we are drawn by His Holy Spirit to His divine Presence. We are drawn to Christ for all that He is. As He drank of the Cup of suffering, so must we. We are drawn to the placid shores of Galilee and to the grassy banks of Jordan Waters; but, lest we forget, we are also drawn to the cross and to His sacrificial suffering.

*“Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord, By the power of grace divine; Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope, And my will be lost in Thine.”* By what process are we consecrated to God? The biblical definition of consecration is ‘separation with relationship to God.’ Separation from what? From the old self will (freewill) and acceptance of His will for your life. You cover those old rags, made filthy by the prodigal’s pig sty, and don the White Robe of Righteousness of Christ. A true relationship with Christ can never be half-hearted or halfway – it is all or nothing! It is not by our own power or merits that we are consecrated, but by His grace and mercy.

This explanation of consecration appeared in the Calvary Church News:

*To believe costs nothing; to FOLLOW Christ is expensive.  
I believe in Christ’s work for me, but discipleship is the RESULT of His work IN me.  
Believers consider themselves first; disciples consider Christ first.  
Believers (only) produce no perfect fruit, but disciples are KNOWN for their fruit.*

*Belief saves my soul, but discipleship glorifies Christ.  
Believers (only) are not necessarily known as Christians (for even the devils believe and tremble), but disciples are known always as Christians.  
Believers may go to heaven (if they believe unto salvation), but disciples are richly rewarded there.*

When we look to Christ, we will lose self in Him. We become part of His very Being – a part of His Body – the Church. I care not to hear of your free will for it is evil, and it is not, after all, free. The will of man is in bondage to Satan. When we surrender that bondage for Christ, our own will go with it. We are either Christ's or some other (the Devil). The wicked Pharisees believed that their will was free, but was it? Speaking to this sordid lot, Jesus said, *If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.* (John 8:42-45) If your will is what mean call "free" then it still belongs to Satan.

*"O the pure delight of a single hour That before Thy throne I spend, When I kneel in prayer, and with Thee, my God I commune as friend with friend!"* Prayer is the only means by which we can share time before the Throne of God. But I tell you for a fact that the singing of hymns is as much prayer, when sung from the understanding heart, as prayer on the knee. I have, many times, been driving a lonely highway with no one to share the sorrows of my heart when, suddenly, I decide to sing one of the fine, old hymns my mother used to sing. After a single verse, my soul is taken to a higher plane. I enjoy a revival one ONE while at the wheel of my car. Try it, friend – it works. Even an old voice that reverberates as the cracked barrel of a twelve pound cannon makes beautiful sounds to the ears of God when sung with conviction. Remarkable beyond belief is the fact that we can actually commune with the One who created the sun, stars, moon, earth, and every living thing when we kneel in prayer. He is our Friend, our Brother, our Lord, our Father, our King, our Savior – in fact; He is our All-in-All.

*"There are depths of love that I cannot know Till I cross the narrow sea; There are heights of joy that I may not reach Till I rest in peace with Thee."* In order to get to that peaceful shore over yonder, we must first cross the stormy Sea of Galilee. But the Lord will meet us, as He did the disciples, that stormy night. The Love of God, the old hymn tells us, is greater than every ocean:

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
And were the skies of parchment made;  
Were every stalk on earth a quill,  
And every man a scribe by trade;  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

The important part of the last of this verse is that we may enjoy those heights of joy and rest in the peace of God while here on this earth. The surrounding circumstances and outward environment have nothing to do with the joy and peace one feels in his heart when he is surrendered to God.

Do you know that joy and peace?