



*11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 3:11)*

This is a beautiful classic hymn of the Church that expresses that quality that epitomizes the worth of a hymn and its purpose in teaching doctrine and Gospel Truth. Composed by Samuel J. Stone in 1866 as a part of a series of *Twelve Hymns of the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed (Lyra Fi-del-i-um)*, the hymn has become a victorious anthem of the Church and, especially, for magnificent occasions. The hymn was set to the musical score of *Aurelia* by Samuel S. Wesley. There are seven long verses; therefore, I will reserve my main comments to those of the hymn itself. The third and seventh (last) stanza's, included here, were omitted by the 1940 Hymnal. This hymn was intended as an exposition of the ninth article of the Apostle's Creed.

### **The Church's One Foundation**

(underlined verses were omitted in the 1940 Hymal)

The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,  
She is His new creation  
By water and the Word.  
From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her  
And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth;  
Her charter of salvation,  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy Name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses,  
With every grace endued.

The Church shall never perish!  
Her dear Lord to defend,  
To guide, sustain, and cherish,  
Is with her to the end:  
Though there be those who hate her,  
And false sons in her pale,  
Against both foe or traitor  
She ever shall prevail.

Though with a scornful wonder  
Men see her sore oppressed,  
By schisms rent asunder,  
By heresies distressed:  
Yet saints their watch are keeping,  
Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall be the morn of song!

'Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace forevermore;  
Till, with the vision glorious,  
Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great Church victorious  
Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union  
With God the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion  
With those whose rest is won,  
With all her sons and daughters  
Who, by the Master's hand  
Led through the deathly waters,  
Repose in Eden land.

O happy ones and holy!  
Lord, give us grace that we  
Like them, the meek and lowly,  
On high may dwell with Thee:  
There, past the border mountains,  
Where in sweet vales the Bride  
With Thee by living fountains  
Forever shall abide!

*Amen*

*The Church's one foundation Is Jesus Christ her Lord, She is His new creation By water and the Word. From heaven He came and sought her To be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her And for her life He died. If Jesus Christ is not the Good Shepherd, the Rock, and foundation of the Church, then that which is called by that name is NOT the Church! The Church is the new Creation of God that is Eternal which completes the intention of God at Eden where that first creation in Adam fell. The Lord Jesus died for His Bride, the Church, just as Adam died for his wife, Eve; however, with His own blood, Jesus (being innocent and righteous) was able to purchase the Church wherein Adam simply died (in his sins) with his bride, Eve.*

*Elect from every nation, Yet one o'er all the earth; Her charter of salvation, One Lord, one faith, one birth; One holy Name she blesses, Partakes one holy food, And to one hope she presses, With every grace endued. One tenet of the Creed that seems to be ignored in our day is: There is only ONE Name by which men are saved – the Lord Jesus Christ! "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) That One Holy Food is the Bread of Life – Jesus Christ. That One Faith is that expressed in the Gospel and by the Apostles without embellishment or*

diminution. The Church is not confined to stone, grey walls but is a building without borders encompassing every nation, tribe, and tongue – all sharing a blood relationship with Jesus Christ and each other. The Grace by which she is ‘endued’ is a free grace from God that only the elect will enjoy. It is granted as a special prerogative of the Throne of God, and is never earned or merited in any way.

*The Church shall never perish! Her dear Lord to defend, To guide, sustain, and cherish, Is with her to the end: Though there be those who hate her, And false sons in her pale, Against both foe or traitor She ever shall prevail.* It will not be possible for the Church to perish as did Adam’s bride. The Church is a staunch defender of the Word that is Christ just as Christ is of the Church! If it does not stand in defense of the Holy Gospel, it is not the Church. Christ has already been with His Bride the Church to the very end whose stripes He bore at Calvary. The “false sons in her pale” are the demons that inhabit the branches of the Church (Matthew 13:31). Those demons in the branches of the Church are traitors and more despicable than those who openly bear arms against her. But the Church will be purified and perfected at the coming of the Bridegroom for whom she languishes.

*Though with a scornful wonder Men see her sore oppressed, By schisms rent asunder, By heresies distressed: Yet saints their watch are keeping, Their cry goes up, “How long?” And soon the night of weeping Shall be the morn of song!”* Men who trample on, and contend over, the “Body of Christ” are not unlike their father, the devil who contended over the body of Moses: “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” (Jude 1:9) Herein lies the power of the Church – it is the Hand of the Lord her Bridegroom! The Church is like a war bride exposed to the scandalous gossip of wagging tongues that never see her virtue, but only her imagined shame. The Bride weeps and longs for her Bridegroom’s return so that she will be justified in the eyes of the wicked who have sorely abused her. When the “Morning of the Lord shall come and time shall be no more,” her night of weeping will seem only as a brief moment. Her Morning of song shall be an everlasting time of rejoicing and reward.

*’Mid toil and tribulation, And tumult of her war, She waits the consummation Of peace forevermore; Till, with the vision glorious, Her longing eyes are blest, And the great Church victorious Shall be the Church at rest.* It is the very toil and tribulation of her daily battles that strengthens the Church and which will be her medallions of victory at Christ’s return. There is only one means of peace for the Church and that is the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ at His Coming. In quoting Plato (perhaps erroneously) General of the Army Douglas MacArthur said, “Only the dead have seen the end of war.” It is true. Wars come by sin, and there will be no end of sin until the curtain of time drops as an ax upon the modern world. The Church Militant shall, at that time, become the Church Victorious, and her eternal Sabbath rest shall commence. How happy will the eyes of the war bride be to see the Captain of her Soul, and the owner of her heart, returning.

*Yet she on earth hath union With God the Three in One, And mystic sweet communion With those whose rest is won, With all her sons and daughters Who, by the Master’s hand Led through the deathly waters, Repose in Eden land.* There has been no breach of affection between Christ and His Church during the ages of their temporary separation. The love letters have continued from Heaven to earth, and earth to Heaven, by unabated prayers, and the Word read. How is it possible for the Church (who is comprised of MANY) to be One with Christ? It is because she has taken on the Mind and Will of Christ just as Christ, being One with the Father and Holy Ghost, has the Mind and Will of the Father. A problem of modern marriages is that the couple are not agreed as One. “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3) The silent, soul communion we enjoy with the

Church Victorious shall be consummated at the Last Day. If we are the Church, we are being led by the Master's Hand – the way we know not, but the WAY is our Lord, and we KNOW Him. He leads where we have never before been, but we trust in the Good Shepherd to lead us to ever greener pastures, and even through that Valley of the Shadow of Death. We will soon emerge on the far Banks of Jordan Waters to that same Paradise foreclosed on Adam, and the Tree of Life in the Midst.

*O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we Like them, the meek and lowly, On high may dwell with Thee: There, past the border mountains, Where in sweet vales the Bride With Thee by living fountains Forever shall abide! Amen* What a wonderful benediction to this great hymn of triumph and victory! The only way we may become large in the Eyes of the Lord is to become small and humble in the eyes of man. If we do not LOVE righteousness, how could we ever bear the blessings of the same in Heaven? If we are not graceful, as well as recipients of Grace, how can we claim the gift? The war bride is swept away at her bride groom's return, and carried to a vale surrounded by the mountains of the Lord, interspersed there with the Fountains of Living Waters, the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the Valleys. What an Eternal Sabbath she will enjoy in that seclusion from the wicked and evil ways of the world! Those temporary allurements of the world will not profit, but the eternal promises of God stand forever sure.