

Because He Lives—April's Hymn of the Month 2023

By
Bill Dagle

The great hope of Easter is new life, life beyond this life with a new beginning in a new world where pain and death have vanished away. This new world is a place void of good-byes, farewells or partings - a place the Bible calls Heaven. The Bible assures us such a place exists and gives us the way of entrance. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) You could say, because He lives, we too will live someday in Heaven. Well, that's exactly what the song writer Bill Gaither said in his song, *Because He Lives*.

Bill Gaither tells how the song was born. He wrote:

We wrote *Because He Lives* after a period of time when we had had a kind of dry spell and hadn't written any songs for a while... Also, at the end of the 1960's, when our country was going through some great turmoil with the height of the drug culture and the whole "God is Dead" theory which was running wild in our country and also the peak of the Vietnam War, our little son was born--Benj--at least Gloria was expecting him. I can remember at the time we thought, "Brother, this is really a poor time to bring a child into the world." At times, we were even quite discouraged by the whole thing. And then Benjy was born. We had two little girls whom we loved very much; but this was our first son, and so that lyric came to us, "How sweet to hold our newborn baby and feel the pride and joy he gives, but better still the calm assurance that this child can face uncertain days because Christ lives."

Not much has changed since the 60's. We still live in uncertain times and probably will until Christ returns. Yet there is that calm assurance that Bill Gaither wrote about as well as Fanny Crosby who would remind us of that *Blessed Assurance* that's found in Christ and Christ alone. Because Christ rose from the dead that first Easter morn, we can have the gift of life that never ends-- in Heaven. By putting our trust for the future in the one that holds the future, we too can say as the songwriter said:

And then one day I'll cross the river,
I'll fight life's final war with pain:
And then as death gives way to victory,
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know He lives.

Because He lives I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives all fear is gone:
Because I know He holds the future.
And life is worth the living just because He lives.