

Must I Go and Empty Handed- September's Hymn of the Month 2023

**By
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The Bible encourages all Christians to share their faith in Mathew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8, to name just a few references. God doesn't simply save us to take us to Heaven. He saves us so we can be empowered to tell others of His great love for mankind. So it was for a nameless man back in 1877. His strong desire to share his faith in Christ became the catalyst for a hymn.

It all started when Evangelist A.H. Upham was leading a series of meetings in a church in New England where Reverend C.C. Luther was the pastor. Back in those days, the preacher would first preach to the Christians to get them "right with God" and then go after the sinners outside the church. This was the method used in old-fashioned revivals and still works today.

On one of the evenings, Evangelist Upham chose as his topic, "Stars for Your Crown," or "The Importance of Witnessing." In his message, he gave a true story of a young man who, a month after being saved, was fatally injured in an accident. It became quite apparent that he didn't have long to live, and a Christian friend at his bedside asked if he were afraid to die. He replied, "Friend, no, I am not afraid to die; for Jesus has saved me. But I have not been able to lead even one, such as I was, to Christ in the time I have known Him. No, I am not afraid to die; but oh, if I go, must I go and empty-handed?"

Pastor Luther was so moved by that story that right there in the meeting, he took a piece of paper and jotted down these lines as quickly as he could write them. George Stebbins would add the music and give us a hymn that should challenge us to fulfill God's command as it was stated in Matthew 28: 19-20 and Acts 1:8.

Must I go, and Empty-Handed?

**"Must I go, and empty-handed," Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give Him, Lay no trophy at His feet?**

**Not at death I shrink nor falter, For my Savior saves me now;
But to meet Him empty-handed, Tho't of that now clouds my brow.**

**O ye saints, arouse, be earnest, Up and work while yet 'tis day;
Ere the night of death o'ertake thee, Strive for souls while still you may.**

**"Must I go, and empty-handed?" Must I meet my Savior so?
Not one soul with which to greet Him: Must I empty-handed go?**