

## Rescue the Perishing--May's Hymn of the Month 2020

By  
Bill Dagle

Since 9/11, there has been a new awareness of the heroic services our fire fighters, emergency personnel and police render each and everyday; and so it should be. Now, with this pandemic, we see all the more our rescue workers in action including the doctors and nurses on the front lines. These men and women are truly the heroes for this hour of need. They have answered the call and are standing in the gap. We too, as Christians, should also be engaged in the business of rescuing people. As a Christian, our duty is to rescue people from the pit of hell. Many folks we see during our daily activities have never been told the true way to be saved. That's where you and I come in. If you know Christ as your personal Savior, then you should be a rescue worker. As Fanny Crosby put it, "Rescue the Perishing."

When you think of Fanny Crosby as a rescue worker, you'd think she would be the least likely candidate. Blind all of her life, small in stature and not a bit of rescue training—yet she did more in her lifetime to rescue souls than most would do in two lifetimes. Her song, *Rescue the Perishing*, came about because of her interest in the Bowery Mission in New York City and her love for the people who frequented there and certainly needed rescue. In her own words, she tells us how the song was born:

It was written the year 1869, when I was 49 years old. Many of my hymns were written after experiences in New York missions work. I was addressing a large company of working men one hot summer evening, when the thought kept forcing itself on my mind that some mother's boy must be rescued that night or not at all. So I made a pressing plea that if there was a boy present who had wandered from his mother's home and teaching, would he come to me at the close of the service. A young man of 18 came forward and said, "Did you mean me? I promised my mother to meet her in Heaven; but as I am now living, that will be impossible." We prayed for him and finally he arose with a new light in his eyes and exclaimed in triumph, "Now I can meet my mother in Heaven, for I have found God."

A few days before, Mr. Doane had sent me the subject, "Rescue the Perishing, Care for the Dying." I could think of nothing else that night. When I arrived home, I went to work on the hymn at once; and before I retired, it was ready for the melody. The next day, my song was written out and forwarded to Mr. Doane who wrote the beautiful and touching music as it now stands to my hymn.

Fanny had a love for people and a desire to see them saved. She spent her life in the rescue business, saving souls and winning rewards from her heavenly Father. Why not purpose today to sign up as a rescue worker and maybe you too will be a hero when you arrive safely home in Heaven and hear," Well-done."

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying  
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave  
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen  
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

Though they are slighting Him, still He is waiting,  
Waiting the penitent child to receive;  
Plead with them earnestly, plead with them gently;  
He will forgive if they only believe.

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,  
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;  
Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,  
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

Rescue the perishing, duty demands it;  
Strength for the labor the Lord will provide;  
Back to the narrow way patiently win them;  
Tell the poor wand'rer a Savior has died.

Refrain:

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying  
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.