

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him (Col. 3:16-17).

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (Eph. 5:18-19).

## The Hymns We Sing in Worship



# ***“I’m Not Ashamed to Own My Lord”***

Isaac Watts (1707)

- Questionable Lyric – **I'm not ashamed to own my Lord**
- Is it really appropriate to say we “own” Jesus? He owns us (**1 Pet. 2:9; 1 Cor. 6:19**). Maybe the more appropriate thing to sing would be I’m not ashamed to defend, love, belong to, or proclaim my Lord.

# ***“When We All Get to Heaven”***

Eliza Hewitt (1898)

- Questionable Lyric – **When we all get Heaven**
- Some older hymnals (such as “Sacred Selections”) altered the lyrics to say, “When the saved get to Heaven.” Singing “When we all get to Heaven” certainly teaches something different. Not “all” will be saved; not even all Christians will be saved (**Matt. 7:21**).

# ***“Just As I Am”***

Charlotte Elliot, 1834

- Questionable Lyric – **Just as I am – thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve**
- This promotes the false “Jesus accepts you just as are” doctrine. Jesus offers to save all sinners, but He demands we change to receive pardon, cleansing, and relief from the punishment of sin (**Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Eph. 4:21-24**).
- “*I Am Resolved*” (Palmer Hartsough, 1896) teaches the correct attitude:  
**I am resolved to go to the Savior, leaving my sin and strife**

# ***“Amazing Grace”***

John Newton (1779)

- Questionable Lyric – **How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed**
- This possibly teaches salvation occurs at the point of faith rather than salvation occurring at the point of baptism (**Acts 9:10-11, 22:16; etc.**). The more appropriate thing to sing would be, “How precious did that grace appear the hour I first obeyed.”

# ***“I Am Praying for You”***

Samuel O'Maley Clough (1860)

- Questionable Lyric – **I have a Father: to me He has given a hope for eternity, blessed and true; and soon He will call me to meet Him in heaven, but O, that He'd let me bring you with me too**
- We cannot bring someone with us to Heaven. Individually, each person must respond to the gospel call (**Rev. 3:20; Phil. 2:12**). A better thing to sing would be “O, I pray that you will be there too.”

# ***“Rock of Ages”***

Augustus Montague Toplady (1776)

- Questionable Lyric – **Be of sin the double cure**
- It has been widely assumed for centuries that this line is in direct reference to the doctrine known as “entire sanctification,” “Christian perfection,” AKA “the second work of grace,” which runs contrary to scripture (**1 Pet. 5:8**).
- Although, this phrase is likely rooted in error, the idea of Christ offering a “double cure” for sin does have some scriptural merit if we use the phrase appropriately (**1 Pet. 2:24**).

# ***“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”***

Charles Wesley (1739)

- Questionable Lyric – **Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King: peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and Sinners reconciled!”**
- This line teaches that God and sinners were reconciled at the point of Christ’s birth rather than reconciliation being made possible through His death (**Rom. 5:6-11**).



# ***“He Lives”***

Alfred Ackley (1933)

- Questionable Lyric – **You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart**
- Christ should dwell in our hearts (**Eph. 3:17**), but that is not how we know Christ is resurrected. We know Christ lives because the Bible says so (**Acts 2:22-24; Heb. 7:22-25**)!

# ***“I Stand Amazed”***

Charles Gabriel (1905)

- Questionable Lyric – **He had no tears for His own griefs, but sweat-drops of blood for mine**
- This expresses a beautiful sentiment, but it simply is not true. Jesus agonized over His own griefs and sorrows (**Luke 22:41-44; Isa. 53:3; Matt. 27:46**).

***“Just Over in the Glory-Land”***

James Acuff (1906)

***“The Unclouded Day”***

Josiah Alwood (1890)

***“In Heaven They’re Singing”***

Tillit S. Teddlie (1937)

- Questionable Lyrics
  - + “*Just Over in the Glory-Land*” – **I’ve a home prepared where the saints abide**
  - + “*The Unclouded Day*” – **O they tell me of a home where my friends have gone**
  - + “*In Heaven They’re Singing*” – **Millions are singing it now in that beautiful city of gold**
- The idea of passed saints already residing in Heaven contradicts **Luke 16:19-31**.

# ***“I Want to Be Ready to Meet Him”***

Adger Pace (1938)

- Questionable Lyric – **There is one thing I can boast of, salvation from the fall**
- This line promotes the Calvinist idea that we have inherited Adam’s sin and, thus, must be saved from his fall rather than our own individual / personal falls to sin (**Eph. 2:1-2, NASB; Rom. 5:12b**). The more accurate thing to sing is “There is one thing I can boast of, salvation from my fall.”

# ***“I’ll Live in Glory”***

John Menson (1936)

- Questionable Lyric – **I’d like to stay here longer than man’s allotted days**
- There is nothing wrong with wanting to live a long life, but why should we want to continue living on earth rather than glory at the prospect of living with Christ (**Phil. 1:21-23**)?
- #396 “*We’ll Work till Jesus Comes*” (Elizabeth Mills, 1836) teaches the correct attitude:

**O land of rest, for thee I sigh! When will the moment come  
when I shall lay my armor by and dwell in peace at home?**

# The Hymns We Sing in Worship

- We need to make sure we can sing every hymn **“in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:24).
- We also need to be careful not to fall into tradition, singing specific songs just because *“those are the hymns that we have always sung.”*
  - We also shouldn’t avoid singing new hymns just because they are new[er].
- Whenever we select a hymn for worship, we need to ask ourselves if the lyrics in the hymn accomplish the following:
  - ☐ Does it teach the truth (**John 4:24**)?
  - ☐ Does it allow me to praise God (**James 5:13**)?
  - ☐ Does it allow me to teach and admonish others (**Col. 3:16; Acts 16:25**)?

**If a hymn/psalm/spiritual song doesn’t accomplish these things, then we shouldn’t sing it.**