



Our Great Savior



"Jesus! What a Friend for sinners!
Jesus! Lover of my soul;
friends may fail me, foes assail me,
He, my Savior, makes me whole.

"Jesus! What a Strength in weakness!
let me hide myself in Him;
tempted, tried and sometimes failing,
He, my Strength, my victory wins.

"Jesus! What a help in sorrow!
while the billows o'er me roll;
even when my heart is breaking,
He, my Comfort, helps my soul.

"Jesus! I do now receive Him,
more than all in Him I find;
He hath granted me forgiveness,
I am His, and He is mine.

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!
Hallelujah! What a Friend!
Saving, helping, keeping, loving,
He is with me to the end."

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus ..." - Titus 2:11-13

"To the artist, Christ is the one altogether lovely;
To the builder, He is the sure foundation.
To the doctor, He is the great physician;
To the geologist, He is the Rock of Ages.
To the sinner, He is the Lamb of God who forgives sin;
To the Christian, Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God,
our great Savior." - Unknown

"I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, who says to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you'." - Isaiah 41:13

"Our Great Savior" was written in 1910 by Wilbur Chapman, and it is sung to the glorious tune named "Hyfrydol." The author was a Presbyterian evangelist who experienced joy and satisfaction in life, along with much tragedy and loss. You can sense that he is looking back on his life, and reminding himself that God was always present with Him in his struggles. His Friend, Jesus, was with him through it all, and He had met every need of his heart.

Over the course of 21 years, Chapman had lost two wives and an infant son, leaving him with four children to raise. Yet, at the same time, thousands of people across North America and Asia were converted to Christ as a result of the evangelism efforts he had partnered with. What a contrast - the sorrow brought by the deaths of those so close to his heart, and the joy of witnessing the rebirth of thousands of people! As he prepared to marry for the third time, he wrote this hymn, and also, "One Day."

Wilbur Chapman became a "wounded, but wiser" man, not just leaning, but clinging to his faithful Ally. The first four verses speak of trials and disappointments that only God could resolve. It is said that Chapman's life-theme was to turn away from anything that drew him away from God. That is surely a wise approach we all can take as we continue this earthly journey.

We can learn from Chapman's example as we keep our gaze on the Savior who is a Friend for sinners, Lover of our souls, Strength in weakness, Help in sorrow, Comfort, Guide, Keeper, and Pilot through the storms and sorrows of life.

We are often more comfortable being the person giving help to another than to accept the fact that we need help. This takes a special grace to admit, but it opens an opportunity for others to show their compassion and concern as we would hopefully do for them. But even when there is no one there to help, Scripture tells us repeatedly that Jesus is our strong and wise Helper, and we can lean upon Him during our times of trouble.

So keep this truth in mind as the trials of life sometimes weigh you down, and rest in the promises of God's Word that assure us of His presence in our problems and His willingness and ability to help. For as we read in Hebrews 4:15-16:

"We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."