

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

“IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL”



Horatio G. Spafford (1828-1888)
Courtesy of [American Colony Hotel](#)

Words: Horatio G. Spafford, 1873.

Music: Philip P. Bliss, 1876
The tune is named after the ship on which Spafford's children perished, the *S.S. Ville de Havre*. Ironically, Bliss himself died in a tragic train wreck shortly after writing this music.



Philip P. Bliss (1838-1876)

This hymn was written after two major traumas in Spafford's life. The first was the great Chicago Fire of October 1871, which ruined him financially, as he had been a wealthy businessman. Shortly after, while crossing the Atlantic, all four of Spafford's daughters died in a collision with another ship. Spafford's wife Anna survived and sent him the now famous telegram, "Saved alone." Several weeks later, as Spafford's own ship passed near the spot where his daughters died, the Holy Spirit inspired the words to this hymn. They speak to the eternal hope that all believers have, no matter what pain and grief befall them on earth.

Copied from the Cyber Hymnal

Usually when we sing hymns in church we do not know the background or circumstances behind the words or music. This has always been a favorite hymn of mine, but it was not until I learned the circumstances which caused the writing of it that it caused me to sing it with greater feeling. When I think of the loss of four daughters at one time, besides the loss of everything Horatio Spafford owned due to the great Chicago fire, my troubles and problems seem quite insignificant. As we sing this great hymn of the church this morning, I pray that we sing it with a greater voice and remembrance of the man who gave it to us. As he was able to say that it was well with his soul in spite of all that confronted him, so may we say that all is well with our soul this day.

Pastor Bob+

HOW DO WE LEARN ABOUT OUR FAITH?

Many of us grew up in the church and learned about our faith through Sunday School or catechism classes, or both. Most all of us know what Sunday School is, but what about catechism classes where we memorized the answers for Confirmation.

In the Westminster Short Catechism of 1647 there are 107 questions asked to which there are 107 answers. For example, the first question asked is:

Q. 1. What is the chief end of man? (And then we had to give the answer.)

A. *Man's chief end is to glorify God, [a] and to enjoy him for ever. [b]* SEE:

[a]. Ps. 86:9; Isa. 60:21; Rom. 11:36; I Cor. 6:20; 10:31; Rev. 4:11

[b]. Ps. 16:5-11; 144:15; Isa. 12:2; Luke 2:10; Phil. 4:4; Rev. 21:3-4

If we answered correctly then we proceeded to the second question:

Q. 2. What rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?

A. *The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, [a] is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him. [b]*

SEE:

[a]. Matt. 19:4-5 with Gen. 2:24; Luke 24:27, 44; I Cor. 2:13; 14:37;

II Pet. 1:20-21; 3:2, 15-16

[b]. Deut. 4:2; Ps. 19:7-11; Isa. 18:20; John 15:11; 20:30-31; Acts 17:11; II Tim. 3:15-17; I John 1:4

The third question of the 1647 Catechism is this:

Q. 3. What do the Scriptures principally teach?

A. *The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, [a] and what duty God requires of man [b].* SEE:

[a]. Gen. 1:1; John 5:39; 20:31; Rom. 10:17; II Tim. 3:15

[b]. Deut. 10:12-13; Josh. 1:8; Ps. 119:105; Mic. 6:8; II Tim. 3:16-17

The fourth question is a great one, for it asks:

Q. 4. What is God?

A. *God is a Spirit [a], infinite [b], eternal [c], and unchangeable [d] in his being [e], wisdom [f], power [g], holiness [h], justice [i], goodness [j], and truth [k].*

[a]. Deut. 4:15-19; Luke 24:39; John 1:18; 4:24; Acts 17:29

[b]. I Kings 8:27; Ps. 139:7-10; 145:3; 147:5; Jer. 23:24; Rom. 11:33-36

[c]. Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90:2; 102:12, 24-27; Rev. 1:4,8

[d]. Ps. 33:11; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:12; 6:17-18; 13:8; Jas. 1:17

[e]. Ex. 3:14; Ps. 115:2-3; I Tim. 1:17; 6:15-16

[f]. Ps. 104:24; Rom. 11:33-34; Heb. 4:13; I John 3:20

[g]. Gen. 17:1; Ps. 62:11; Jer. 32:17; Mat. 19:26; Rev. 1:8

[h]. Heb. 1:13; I Pet. 1:15-16; I John 3:3, 5; Rev. 15:4

[i]. Gen. 18:25; Ex. 34:6-7; Deut. 32:4; Ps. 96:13; Rom. 3:5, 26

[j]. Ps. 103:5; 107:8; Matt. 19:17; Rom. 2:4

[k]. Ex. 34:6; Deut. 32:4; Ps. 86:15; 117:2; Heb. 6:18

HOW ABOUT TAKING THIS WEEKLY REFRESHER COURSE WITH ME?