



## What's your favorite hymn?

Our organist, Sharon Willen, asked me this question a couple months ago. One of the other churches she accompanies was having a "March Madness"-style tournament to determine that congregation's favorite hymn.

That's a question with no "easy" answer. That's because the answer will likely change every time I'm asked that question.

For example, if I fielded that question in December, my answer would most likely be "*Hark the Herald Angels Sing.*" It does a masterful job of describing what really happened when Christ was born. e.g. "God and sinners reconciled." (Plus, it's the song the kids sing at the end of A Charlie Brown Christmas after Linus recites from Luke chapter 2 reminding them what Christmas really is all about!)

If I were asked around Easter "*Jesus Christ is Risen Today*" would get my vote - based on the rousing tune that really helps us get into celebrating the greatest event in all of history.. "*I Know That My Redeemer Lives*" would win out if words were the main criteria. In all eight verses that hymn reminds us what Jesus' resurrection really means for our everyday lives.

"*What A Friend We Have in Jesus*" is another favorite, and may be the greatest reminder we have of the power of prayer - and the peace God brings through it. The hymn title is also what my father chose for his and mom's gravestone.

"*How Firm a Foundation*" is also a great song with an easy-to-sing tune. It reminds us that God's Word is the rock on which to build a solid life. It contains, in my estimation, one of the greatest verses of comfort and hope ever penned:

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to it's foes.  
That soul, though all hell shall endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

The refrain of *Solid Rock* (in our hymnal it's titled *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*) has a much needed reminder that everything other than Jesus in which we can place our trust will eventually crumble:

"On Christ the Solid Rock I stand,  
all other ground is sinking sand."

The answer I gave off the top of my head the moment Sharon asked was "*Be Thou My Vision.*" That answer is based largely on the tune - which probably is my all-time favorite (*From All That Dwell Below the Skies* is a very close second) - although the words are also a great reminder of the difference that focusing on Jesus makes in life.

If you were to ask me that question a week from now, I just might name a hymn that has slipped my mind today, one whose words are a perfect fit for the situation that day.

The answer to the above question, I assumed, was limited to the more traditional songs in hymnals. But, if I were

to be able to include some of the contemporary songs..... well, that's a question for another month.

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

**Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)**