

Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

John Newton. Refrain by: Chris Tomlin, Louie Giglio

Verse 1

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see.

Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Refrain

Words to refrain are in the print copy.

Verse 3

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far and Grace will lead me home.

Verse 4

When we've been here ten thousand years bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we've first begun.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Credits

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Cover art. Frontispiece of a 1537 edition of *Treatise on the Spheres*, the standard medieval introduction to astronomy first published at the University of Paris in the 1200's by John of Holywood. This would have been the text Galileo used to learn astronomy.

Old Orchard Church

October 20, 2013 — 10:15 to 11:50 a.m.



In these last days God has spoken to us by his Son,
Whom he appointed heir of all things,
and through whom he made the universe.

(Hebrews 1:2)

Celebrating the Glory of Jesus Christ in the Creation of the World

And the Baptism of Hope Smull

At the name of Jesus,
Every knee shall bow.
Every tongue confess Him,
King of glory now.
'Tis the Father's pleasure,
We should call Him Lord.
Who from the beginning,
Was the mighty Word.

At His voice creation,
Sprang at once to sight.
All the angel faces,
All the hosts of light.
Thrones and dominations,
Stars upon their way.
All the heavenly orders,
In their great array.

—Caroline Noel (1870)



—Today's Scripture Readings—

Old Testament Lesson: Proverbs 8:22-31

Pearlstring on Christ and Creation:

John 1:1-5; I Corinthians 8:5-6; Colossians 1:13-17; Hebrews 1:1-4

Christianity in Ephesus, Christianity in St. Louis Series

—Today's Sermon—

“The Way We Talk”

Ephesians 4:29, 5:4

Mark Robertson, associate pastor, preaching

²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Ephesians 4:29/ESV)

⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. (Ephesians 5:4/ESV)

Christ and His Creation—Set Free

Here are the passages which teach it, and they are clear: **The Son...by whom all things were created...**(Colossians 1:16). **There is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came...**(I Corinthians 8:6). **God has spoken to us by his Son...through whom he made the universe** (Hebrews 1:2). **In the beginning was the Word... through him all things were made...**(John 1:1, 3). Christ the Son, my Savior, was God's agent in creating the universe. And Genesis teaches that everything God made was *good*. That's a beautiful affirmation of what our own experience tells us: that life is good, friendship is good, food is good, sexual pleasure is good, family is good, beauty is good, and on and on.

But our experience tells us something else: That what is good has lost something—a glorious straightness is now bent, a healthiness is now infected, a thing whole is now broken. The passages of Scripture which teach this are clear, too. Here's one: **For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in HOPE that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.** (Romans 8:20-22). A good world is made a slave by our disobedience, and now in chains to futility and death; it's a woman in labor, in the agony of painful contractions until the child—the original goodness—“gets out,” and makes the world flourish forever. So the “bentness” of what we know to be good is not the last word; God has given us the HOPE of better things to come.

Today we have the privilege of claiming, in the seal of baptism, all the fruit of the finished work of Christ for little Hope Smull. What a great name for a newborn child—Hope! Hope is one of the so-called “gospel virtues”: Faith, Hope, and Love. Love may be the greatest of these, as Paul teaches us, because it lasts forever, but now, right in the midst of the birth pangs, while the world is still wrecked and wounded, *hope is critical*. No one, really, can live without it. That's why Paul goes on in Romans 8 to say this: **And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it** (Romans 8:23-25).

On this Resurrection Day, a commemoration of Easter, the first day of the New Creation, we have good reason to be thankful as we reflect on our own baptisms in which God has sealed to us as believers in Jesus Christ, our place in the new world that is coming—*this world renewed*, with all true brothers and sisters of Christ ruling over it, under him, forever.

—Ron Lutjens