

John Calvin (born July 10, 1509, died May 27, 1564) put this hymn in the *Strasbourg Psalter*, 1545. It is likely, though we cannot know for sure, that Calvin himself even wrote the lyrics. Calvin was a strong supporter of congregational singing. This was a (re)new(ed) concept for the church, since professional choirs and clergy did all the singing while everyone else watched.

Calvin said there are two kinds of prayer: one with words alone, and one with singing. In the preface to the 1543 Genevan Psalter, he wrote "singing has great force and vigor to move and inflame the hearts of men to invoke and praise God." The value of a hymn book, then, is "to have songs...which will be like spurs to incite us to pray to and praise God, and to meditate on his works in order to love, fear, honor and glorify him."

Read Galatians 1:3-5

1. What kind of statement is stanza 1?
  - a. What does that indicate about prayer?
  - b. Why can we be confident that Jesus will listen to us sing this hymn?
2. Based on stanza 2, describe the attitude the worshiper has toward himself?
3. Stanza 3 illustrates what question (s) of the *Heidelberg Catechism*?
4. What is the difference between "true and perfect gentleness" and other kinds of gentleness?
  - a. Matthew 11:28-30
  - b. Does gentleness equal weakness? Matthew 26:53
  - c. Does gentleness equal blind tolerance of sin? Galatians 1:6-10
  - d. Does "true and perfect gentleness" bring any fruit?
  - e. Does the focus of this hymn on Christ's gentleness affect your perceptions of John Calvin and the Reformed faith?
5. Why is this closing stanza important for Christians to sing in faith, in every generation down thorough the centuries?