

CFBC Hymns Class 36

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879)

"Take my will, and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine; Take my heart, it is Thine own; It shall be Thy royal throne."

"In perplexities-when we cannot tell what to do, when we cannot understand what is going on around us, let us be calmed and steadied and made patient by the thought that what is hidden from us is not hidden from Him."

"Every year, I might almost say every day, that I live, I seem to see more clearly how all the rest and gladness and power of our Christian life hinges on one thing; and that is, taking God at His word, believing that He really means exactly what He says, and accepting the very words in which He reveals His goodness and grace, without substituting others or altering the precise modes and tenses which He has seen fit to use."

The Life of Frances Ridley Havergal

Frances Ridley Havergal was born on December 14, 1836, at Astley, Worcestershire, England. She was the youngest child of the family. Her father, William Henry Havergal, was an influential Anglican clergyman, who spent many years composing and improving hymns, being a noted poet and church musician.

Frances began reading and memorizing Scripture when only four years old. She began writing poems when only seven. She was fearful she would not be one of God's elect, and each day as a child tried to beg God to be saved. The fear caused bouts of depression and an always bowed head when walking. In her teen years, she was reading the New Testament in Greek, and came to I John 1:7, where she noticed the tense of the verb says that the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing the believer from all sin. The result was a powerful change in her life. She was converted, and the fearful stranglehold was over.

As with all of her poems, before she ever wrote a line, she first prayed over it, and then gave God credit for the composition...

I believe my King suggests a thought, and whispers me a musical line or two, and then I look up and thank Him delightedly and go on with it. That is how my hymns come.

Writing is praying with me. I never seem to write even a verse by myself, and feel like a little child writing. You know how little child would look up at every sentence and say, 'And what shall I say next?' That is just what I do. I ask that at every line He would give me, not merely thought and power, but also every word – even the very rhyme.

Frances lived a consecrated life and her hymns carry this important theme and develop it. Whenever someone had a spiritual or physical need, she had genuine concern for them and would help if she could. ***She was an avid student, even as an adult. She memorized most of the New Testament as well as the Psalms, Isaiah and the Minor Prophets.*** She had a pleasing singing voice, and was sought after as a concert soloist. She also was a well known pianist, skilfully playing the music of the masters...Handel, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven. But she turned away from potential world fame and fortune, to sing and work for the Savior.

During her lifetime, Frances turned down several offers of marriage, and severed friendships that brought her keen pain to renounce, because she felt they hindered full consecration to Christ. ***Her devotion to the Savior was great and obvious.***

Her favorite title for the Savior was "Master." "Because it implies rule and submission and this is what love craves. Men may feel differently, but a true woman's submission is inseparable from deep love."

Most of her life she was an invalid, but her incessant determination surpassed most people in good health in both literary and charity work. Part of her secret was her firm rule to be at her study table by 7 am in the Summer, and 8 am in the Winter for Bible study. Her sister would beg her to do her reading by the fire, where her feet could be warmed, but she refused, saying she would not be able to highlight the treasures she found neatly. To keep this schedule, she refused to keep late hours and talks at night. Early rising and early studying were her rule through life.

Although Frances, being frail, could have used the excuse to avoid attending church, she wrote the following reasons for why she attended:

1. God has blessed the Lord's Day, making no exceptions for stormy days.
2. I expect my minister to be there. I would be surprised if he stayed at home because of the weather.
3. I might lose out on the prayers and the sermon that would have done me great good.
4. For important business, rain doesn't keep me home; and church is, in God's sight, very important.
5. Bad weather will prove how much I love Christ. True love rarely fails to keep an appointment.
6. Those who stay home from church because it's rainy frequently miss on fair Sundays, too. I mustn't take one step in that direction.
7. Christ said that "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).
8. I don't know how many more Sundays God may give me. It would be poor preparation for my first Sunday in heaven to have slighted my last one on earth.

Later, as she thought upon what it meant to truly follow the Lord and submit to His perfect will, she said:

I saw clearly the blessedness of true consecration. There must be full surrender before there can be full blessedness. God admits you by the one into the other. He showed me this most clearly.

The following year, in 1874, she visited a house where the people were either unsaved or in need of consecration. She prayed that God would work and all would be converted in the five days she had to spend there. God answered her prayer, and the final night was spent in prayer and thanksgiving, being unable to sleep in thankfulness. During that night she wrote: "Take My Life and Let It Be." Every December 2 after that she would sing that hymn and make changes in her life to move deeper in consecration to God.

In August, 1878, she was thrilled to give the Lord her "silver and gold" and to do so, sent her jewelry to the church mission house. There were about 50 pieces of fine and valuable treasures surrendered to the Lord's work. She wrote that she never had so much fun!

She lived the same time the blind poet, Fanny Crosby, of America, being 17 years younger than Fanny. The two ladies never met, being separated by the Ocean, but they had high admiration for each other. Frances wrote Fanny the following:

Dear blind sister over the sea—
An English heart goes forth to thee.
We are linked by a cable of faith and song,
Flashing bright sympathy swift along.

One in the East and one in the West,
Singing for Him whom our souls love best.
Singing for Jesus! Telling His love
All the way to our home above,

Where the severing sea, with its restless tide
Never shall hinder and never divide.
Sister, what shall our meeting soon be
When our hearts shall sing and our eyes shall see?

When she was 42, she caught a severe cold, and her lungs were inflamed. She was told that her physical condition was serious and that she did not have long to live. Her reply to her doctor was, “If I am really going, it is too good to be true.” She put her favorite verse at the foot of her bed where she could easily see it: “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

On her last day on earth, she asked a friend to read her Isaiah 42. When the friend got to the Isaiah 42:6, where it says “I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee,” Frances stopped her friend, and whispered, “Called, held, and kept! I can go home on that!” Then later, as she was dying, she sang clearly but faintly one of her hymns, “Jesus, I Will Trust Thee, Trust Thee With My Soul.” Then she looked up and had a glorious radiance on her face, that nothing less than seeing her Savior could bring. For ten minutes her sister and friends watched her, and then she tried to sing, but after one sweet high note, her voice failed, and her brother commended her soul to the Lord Jesus, and she passed away.

She died while at Caswell Bay, Swansea, Wales, June 3, 1879, at the young age of 43. Her tombstone, by her request, has her favorite verse carved into it: “The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”

http://www.bereanbibleheritage.org/extraordinary/havergal_frances.php

The legacy and spiritual growth of Frances Ridley Havergal

Few lives have left behind them a sweeter fragrance or holier influence than that of beautiful, talented, consecrated, Frances Ridley Havergal, who wrote "Take my life and let it be," and others of our most popular hymns. In tens of thousands of homes all over the world Miss Havergal's name is a household word. Countless multitudes have received blessing through her hymns and devotional works. Her little booklets, My King, Royal Commandments and Royal Bounty, Daily Thoughts on Coming to Christ, Kept for the Master's Use, and so on, have been the means of deepening the spiritual life of many of God's children. To Miss Havergal, Christ was indeed "a living bright Reality "more dear, more intimately nigh, than e'en the sweetest earthly tie." One of her final whispers in life was "I did so want to glorify Him in every step of my way." Many Christians sincerely desire to know the secret of such a life as hers, and to attain its lofty heights of joy and peace.

From the time of her conversion Frances lived a very earnest Christian life. She was in schools and colleges in England and Germany, and afterwards visited different parts of England, Switzerland, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, but everywhere she went she took a bold stand for Christ. She received a splendid education both in England and in Germany, and grew into a very beautiful and accomplished young lady. She won many of the highest honors, and became proficient in several languages, including Latin, Greek, French, German, and Hebrew. She was a talented musician, a gifted singer, and wrote many poems of considerable merit. She was the only truly converted person among the hundred and ten young ladies in her school in Germany, but she took a firm stand for Christ, and suffered much persecution on that account but won the hearts of some of her schoolmates.

After a season of sickness, she wrote, " Oh, that He may make me a vessel sanctified and meet for the Master's use! I look at trial and training of every kind in this light, not its effect upon oneself for oneself, but in its gradual fitting of me to do the Master's work. So, in every painful spiritual darkness or conflict, it has already comforted me to think that God might be leading me through strange dark ways, so that I might afterward be His messenger to some of His children in distress."

Reflecting on God's purposes in her various afflictions, she thought perhaps the Lord was letting her learn what trial was, so that her sweet songs might better comfort others in distress.

She said, "I suppose that God's crosses are often made of most unexpected and strange material. Perhaps trial must be felt keenly, or it would not be powerful enough as a medicine in the hands of our beloved Healer; and I think it has been a medicine to me latterly." Again, she said, "I have learned a real sympathy with others walking in darkness, and sometimes it has seemed to help me to help them." **Concerning her trials she also wrote, "Did you ever hear of anyone being very much used for Christ who did not have some special waiting time, some complete upset of all his or her plans first;** from St. Paul being sent off into the desert of Arabia for three years, when he must have been boiling over with the glad tidings, down to the present day?"

She spent much time in studying and marking her Bible, and this increased her longings to lay hold of the "exceeding great and precious promises by which we are made partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). She wrote, "I have been appropriating all of the promises with a calm sort of twilight happiness, waiting for a clearer light to show me their full beauty and value."

Later, Frances would write, reflecting on appropriating the precious promises of God... "Why should we pare down the promises of God to the level of what we have hitherto experienced of what God is 'able to do' or even of what we have thought He might be able to do for us? Why not receive God's promises, nothing doubting, just as they stand? Take the shield of faith, whereby ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked... 'He is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things' and so on, through whole constellations of promises, which surely mean really and fully what they say.

"Both as to the commands and promises, it seems to me that everything short of believing them as they stand is but another form of yea, hath God said?" Thus accepting, in simple and unquestioning faith, God's commands and promises, one seems to be at once brought into intensified views of everything. Never, oh never before, did sin seem so hateful, so really intolerable, nor watchfulness so necessary, and a keenness and uninterruptedness of watchfulness too, beyond what one ever thought of, only somehow different, not a distressed sort but a happy sort. It is the watchfulness of a sentinel when his captain is standing by him on the ramparts, when his eye is more than ever on the alert for any sign of the approaching enemy, because he knows they can only approach to be defeated. Then, too, the 'all for Jesus' comes in; one sees there is no half way, it must be

absolutely all yielded up, because the least unyielded or doubtful point is sin, let alone the great fact of owing all to Him. And one cannot, dare not, temporize with sin. I know, and have found, that even a momentary hesitation about yielding, or obeying, or trusting and believing, vitiates all, the communion is broken, the joy is vanished. One does not shrink from painful discoveries of evil, because one so wants to have the unknown depths of it cleansed as well as what comes to the surface. ‘Cleanse me thoroughly from my sin’ and one prays to be shown this. But so far as one does see, one must ‘put away sin’ and obey entirely; and here again **His power is our resource, enabling us to do what without it we could not do.**

Many were the letters of comfort and consolation that she sent to all parts of the earth. Her books also carried a blessing with them wherever they went. Children flocked to her in crowds, and grown people corresponded with her from all quarters. ***From morning to night she was occupied in the Master’s service.***

Even when suffering from poor health, or after some great temporal loss, she could still “rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of her salvation” (Habakkuk 3: 18). When her American publishers failed, and she did not receive the money due for her books, she wrote, “I have not a fear, or a doubt, or a care, or a shadow upon the sunshine of my heart.” Later, when many valuable stereotype plates of her music and songs were destroyed by fire, she was still happy, believing that God had a purpose in allowing adversities. ***She was a daily illustration of “Without Carefulness (i.e. undue concern or worry)”***

When her friends sympathized with her sufferings in her last illness, she whispered, “Never mind! It’s home the faster ! God’s will is delicious; He makes no mistakes.” Shortly before she expired she requested that her favorite text, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin,” should be placed on her tomb. On her dying bed she frequently exclaimed, “So beautiful to go!” Near the end she said, Oh, I want you all to speak bright, bright words for Jesus! Oh, do! It is all perfect peace, I am only waiting for Jesus to take me in.”

<https://womenofchristianity.com/biography-of-frances-ridley-havergal/>

The Hymns Of Frances Havergal

Frances Ridley Havergal was very widely known and highly regarded on both sides of the Atlantic. Likely four million of her books (not pamphlets or leaflets, but books) were published between 1870 and 1910, and a number of her books were published in several languages in Europe, South Africa, India, etc. Those knowledgeable of her in 1880 or 1900 would not have guessed that she would become so very obscure. Early in the 21st century few recognize her name at all, and most of those few only know of her as a hymnwriter. "Take my life" (called the Consecration Hymn) is her most widely known piece, and a few of her other hymns are found in many hymnbooks.

A musician to the core, she was blessed with very fine gifts. A very advanced pianist, she accompanied herself at the keyboard. She sang with heart and true communication that deeply moved those who heard her. ***Music to praise and worship the Lord, both alone, with others in homes, and in churches and public places, was a very dear priority to her.***

<https://www.havergaltrust.com/hymns/the-hymns-of-havergal/>

Jesus, Master, Whose I Am

Jesus, Master, whose I am,
Purchased Thine alone to be,
By Thy blood, O spotless Lamb,
Shed so willingly for me;
Let my heart be all Thine own,
Let me live to Thee alone.

Other lords have long held sway;
Now, Thy name alone to bear,
Thy dear voice alone obey,
Is my daily, hourly prayer.
Whom have I in heaven but Thee?
Nothing else my joy can be.

Jesus, Master! I am Thine;
Keep me faithful, keep me near;
Let Thy presence in me shine
All my homeward way to cheer.
Jesus! at Thy feet I fall,
Oh, be Thou my All-in-all.

I am trusting thee, Lord Jesus

I am trusting thee, Lord Jesus
Trusting only thee:
Trusting thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting thee for pardon;
At thy feet I bow,
For thy grace and tender mercy,
Trusting now.

I am trusting thee for cleansing
In the crimson flood;
Trusting thee to make me holy
By thy blood.

I am trusting thee to guide me;
Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev'ry day and hour supplying
All my need.

I am trusting thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall;
I am trusting thee for ever,
And for all.

Take my life, and let it be

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing,
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold
Take my intellect, and use
Ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it thine;
It shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
It shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for thee.