

## CFBC Hymns Class 47

### **J Wilbur Chapman (1859-1918) Jesus! What A Friend For Sinners...Our Great Savior (1910)**

*"Anything that dims my vision for Christ, or takes away my taste for Bible study, or cramps me in my prayer life, or makes Christian work difficult, is wrong for me; and I must, as a Christian turn away from it."*

*"A man is never fitted for time until he is prepared for eternity."*

Wilbur Chapman

#### **About Wilbur Chapman...**

John Wilbur Chapman was born in Richmond, Indiana, on June 17, 1859. His parents Alexander H. and Lorinda Chapman prepared him for a life of Christian ministry. The young man felt he could never pinpoint a date for his conversion, but did make public his acknowledgment of Christ at age seventeen.

In 1876 Chapman joined the Richmond Presbyterian Church and later that year left to attend Oberlin College. After one year at Oberlin, Chapman transferred to Lake Forest University where he received his B.A. in 1879. His seminary years, 1879-1882, were spent at Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, during which time he was ordained on April 13, 1881.

The young minister married Irene Steddon, in May 1882, prior to assuming his first pastorate. Chapman's first child, Bertha Irene, was born on April 1, 1886, which was followed a month later by his wife's death. The minister then married Agnes Pruyn Strain on November 4, 1888. She bore Chapman four children: Robert (who died in infancy), John Wilbur, Jr., Alexander Hamilton, and Agnes Pruyn. Chapman's second wife died June 25, 1907. He married his third and last wife Mabel Cornelia Moulton on August 30, 1910.

Chapman led several churches prior to his full time evangelistic efforts. The following churches came under Chapman's care from 1882 until 1902: College Corner Presbyterian Church (Ohio) and Liberty Presbyterian Church (Indiana), 1882; Dutch Reformed Church (Schuylerville, NY), 1883-1885; First Reformed Church (Albany, NY), 1885-1890; Bethany Presbyterian (Philadelphia, PA), 1890-1892, 1896-1899; Fourth Presbyterian Church (New York City, NY), 1899-1902.

Chapman began his evangelistic work full time in 1893, preaching with D. L. Moody at the World's Fair and conducting many meetings on his own. He hired William Ashley "Billy" Sunday as an advance man, thus giving him his start in evangelism.

At this same time, the evangelist Sol C. Dickey set up a Bible Conference Center in Winona Lake, Indiana. This center held lifelong interest to Chapman along with the others he helped develop in Montreat, North Carolina, and Stony Brook, Long Island, New York.

After returning to the active pastorate for a short time, at the end of 1895, Chapman was appointed Corresponding Secretary of the Presbyterian General Assembly's Committee on Evangelism. He directed the activities of fifty-one evangelists in 470 cities and also found time to write one of his numerous books, *Present Day Evangelism*. In 1905, John H. Converse, a wealthy Presbyterian layman, offered to underwrite Chapman's expenses if he would return to full time evangelistic work. Converse also set up a trust fund to provide monies even after his own death.

From 1904-1909 Chapman began to develop and promote a new method of urban evangelism. His idea was to hold several meetings throughout a city simultaneously, thereby reaching more people and stirring more hearts to enter into Christian service. The first city to try Chapman's theory was Pittsburgh in 1904. The city was divided into nine districts with nine meeting places as the revival was conducted. Chapman took the central position and his assistants the rest. Another campaign was planned and executed in Syracuse, New York, in 1906; however, there were still unfinished details to be worked out for the method to be widely accepted.

Charles McCallon Alexander, world famous song leader, who had been traveling with R. A. Torrey, joined with Chapman in 1907. The two men became a team and formed the "Chapman-Alexander Simultaneous Campaign." Enjoying the benefits of both their influences, the men were able to build a large group of evangelists and song leaders to assist them in the large city-wide campaigns.

The first joint campaign was held in Philadelphia from March 12 to April 19, 1908. The city was divided into forty-two districts with twenty-one teams of evangelist-musicians. Three weeks were spent in each half of the city with estimates of eight thousand conversions. The following revival held in Boston from January 26 to February 17, 1909, is considered to be Chapman's most successful. The city was divided into twenty-seven districts and recorded seven thousand conversions.

The first Chapman-Alexander worldwide campaign left Vancouver, British Columbia, on March 26, 1909, and returned November 26. Stops along the way included: Melbourne, Sydney, Ipswich, Brisbane, Adelaide, Ballarat, Bendigo, and Townsville in Australia; Manila in the Philippines; Hong Kong, Kowloon, Canton, Shanghai, Hankow, Peking and Tientsin in China; Seoul, Korea; Kobe, Kyoto, Tokyo, and Yokohama in Japan.

Chapman continued his non-stop evangelistic efforts in both the United States and Europe in 1910, including a very successful Chicago meeting from October 16 to November 27. However, Chapman's technique of mass evangelism lost much of its popularity. A series of unsuccessful campaigns were conducted in Bangor and Portland, Maine, and Dayton and Columbus, Ohio. Chapman was not credited with the failures, and so from 1912 on all the revivals were mass meetings led by Chapman.

Many services were conducted by the evangelist in the next couple of years in Australia, Scotland, Ireland, India, New Zealand, and the United States, averaging three to five sermons a day in many places. His career as evangelist ended with the Chapman-Alexander campaign January 6 to February 13, 1918.

The Presbyterian General Assembly elected him Moderator in May 1918. The strenuous routine required for the position combined with all the energy expended during his campaigns created a collapse of Chapman's health. He was forced to undergo emergency surgery for gallstones on December 23 and died on December 25, 1918.

<https://www.wholesomewords.org/biography/bchapman4.html>

## **Jesus! What A Friend For Sinners**

This song praises Jesus for several of the roles which He fills.

### **I. In stanza 1, He is pictured as a Friend**

Jesus! what a Friend for sinners!

Jesus! Lover of my soul;

Friends may fail me, foes assail me,

He, my Savior, makes me whole.

A. Jesus is a Friend: Jn. 15:13-15

B. As a Friend, He loves us: 1 Jn. 3:16

C. His love makes us whole spiritually just as His power made Aeneas whole (healed) physically: Acts 9:34

### **II. In stanza 2, He is pictured as a strength**

Jesus! what a strength in weakness!

Let me hide myself in Him;

Tempted, tried, and sometimes failing,

He, my strength, my victory wins.

A. We can be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might: Eph. 6:10

B. To be strong we must hide ourselves in Him: Ps. 27:5

C. His strength will enable us to gain the victory by faith: 1 Jn. 5:4

### **III. In stanza 3, He is pictured as a help**

Jesus! what a help in sorrow!

While the billows o'er me roll,

Even when my heart is breaking,

He, my comfort, helps my soul.

A. We can come before Christ's throne to find grace to help in time of need: Heb. 4:14-16

B. In such times, God offers comfort through Christ: 2 Cor. 1:3-5

### **IV. In stanza 4, He is pictured as a guide**

Jesus! what a guide and keeper!

While the tempest still is high,

Storms about me, night o'ertakes me,

He, my pilot, hears my cry.

A. The Lord will keep or guard us from the evil one: 2 Thess. 3:3

B. Tempests and storms represent the various trials into which we all fall at times: Jas. 1:2

C. But as our Pilot, He hears our cries: Ps. 40:1

### **V. In stanza 3, He is pictured as our Savior**

Jesus! I do now receive Him,

More than all in Him I find,

He hath granted me forgiveness,

I am His and He is mine.

A. To obtain all these blessings, we must receive Him: Jn. 1:12-13 [some hymnals change the first line to "Jesus! I do now adore Him"]

B. When we do thus receive Him, He grants us forgiveness: Eph. 1:7

C. Then we are His because we belong to Christ: Mk. 9:41

## **The chorus continues to extol the Savior for what He does for us.**

Hallelujah! what a Savior!

Hallelujah! what a Friend!

Saving, helping, keeping, loving,

He is with me to the end.

When we remember that Christ was “Our Great Savior” who died for us even when we were His enemies we are moved to join with those who exclaim “Jesus! What a Friend For Sinners.”

<https://hymnstudiesblog.wordpress.com/2021/04/24/jesus-what-a-friend-for-sinners/>

## **WordWise Hymns Comments on Jesus! What A Friend For Sinners (Our Great Savior)**

It was the original title of this hymn that got me wondering how often in the Scriptures the Lord is spoken of as “great.” The answer is that it is many dozens of times. The Hebrew and Greek words translated great connote such things as: high, chief, mighty, important, splendid. Such terms are surely appropriate for One who is supremely transcendent and infinite in His perfections.

As Moses said to the people of Israel, “The LORD [Jehovah] your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome” (Deut. 10:17). “And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen!’ while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground” (Neh. 8:6).

As we bow before the Lord in praise and prayer, we are also humbly recognizing His matchless superiority. Here is a sampling of the things about God that are celebrated for their greatness.

He is great in glory (Ps. 138:5); great in goodness (Isa. 63:7); great in mercy (Ps. 117:2; 119:156); great in power (Na. 1:3; Jer. 32:17; Rev. 11:17). He is a great Creator (Prov. 26:10); a great King (Ps. 45:11), with a great heavenly army (Jer. 32:18); and He is a great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20); with a great name or reputation (Jer. 44:26; Ezek. 36:23); He is great in His sovereignty over all (Ps. 135:5-6); great in His faithfulness (Lam. 3:23; Dan. 9:4); and He does great deeds or works (Ps. 111:2; 126:3; Mk. 5:19; Rev. 15:3).

Two texts are particularly relevant to this hymn. Titus 2:13 closely parallels Chapman’s original title, speaking of “our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” And because of His greatness, He is surely deserving of great praise, thanksgiving, and worship.

“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable [beyond our ability to fully comprehend]” (Ps. 145:3).

In extolling the Lord Jesus Christ, the hymn reminds us that He is our Friend, who loves us (Stanza 1). He provides His child with both strength and protection (Stanza 2), and comfort when we need it (Stanza 3). He is also our Guide and Keeper in the storms of life (Stanza 4).

1) Jesus! what a Friend for sinners!  
Jesus! Lover of my soul;  
Friends may fail me, foes assail me,  
He, my Saviour, makes me whole.

*Hallelujah! what a Saviour!*  
*Hallelujah! what a Friend!*  
*Saving, helping, keeping, loving,*  
*He is with me to the end.*

Stanza 5 ...Some editors have changed the original, “Jesus! I do now *receive* Him,” to “Jesus! I do now *adore* Him,” which would seem more appropriate to all, reflecting as it does the tenor of the entire hymn. Forgiveness of sins, and “all in Him I find.”

5) Jesus! I do now adore Him,  
More than all in Him I find.  
He hath granted me forgiveness,  
I am His, and He is mine.

<https://wordwisehymns.com/2013/03/13/our-great-saviour/>

**Chapman’s best known hymn is “One Day!” with music by Charles H. Marsh...**

### **One Day!**

1 One day when heaven was filled with His praises,  
One day when sin was as black as could be,  
Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin,  
Dwelt among men, my example is He!

#### Refrain

Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;  
Buried, He carried my sins far away;  
Rising, He justified freely, forever;  
One day He’s coming: O glorious day!

2 One day they led Him up Calvary’s mountain,  
One day they nailed Him to die on the tree;  
Suffering anguish, despised and rejected,  
Bearing our sins, my Redeemer is He! [Refrain]

3 One day they left Him alone in the garden,  
One day He rested, from suffering free;  
Angels came down o'er His tomb to keep vigil;  
Hope of the hopeless, my Savior is He! [Refrain]

4 One day the grave could conceal Him no longer,  
One day the stone rolled away from the door;  
Then He arose, over death He had conquered,  
Now is ascended, my Lord ever more! [Refrain]

5 One day the trumpet will sound for His coming,  
One day the skies with His glory will shine;  
Wonderful day, my beloved ones bringing;  
Glorious Savior, this Jesus is mine! [Refrain]

### **One Day (Comments from WordWise Hymns)...**

While he was guest preacher at Stony Brook Bible Conference around 1908, Dr. Chapman gave the text to his organist, Charles Marsh, who provided the tune. Given that he begins his story about Christ being “born of a virgin,” it’s ironic that the author passed from this earthly scene into the presence of his Saviour on the very day we celebrate the birth of Christ.

If you were called upon to mark the most significant days in someone’s life, I wonder what you’d choose. The day of his birth would seem a good place to begin. And if the person were a Christian, the day of his conversion would be important. If his job, or his career achievements were notable, you’d want to add that. Also, the date of his marriage and, of course, the day of his death, if he has passed away.

In contemplating the eternal history of God the Son, Wilbur Chapman chose four key events to highlight in his hymn.

Stanza 1 deals with the incarnation. The author makes it clear that Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem (in about 5 BC) was not really the beginning of his story. As the second Person of the Trinity, Christ has existed from all eternity (Mic. 5:2). From all eternity, “heaven was filled with His praises.” This means His coming to earth, as Man, was a step of infinite condescension (cf. Phil. 2:6-8).

This would be a good place to take note of the refrain of the hymn as well. Unlike some, that are simply a repetition of a key phrase in the song, this one is loaded with important doctrine. And it actually recapitulates the main points of the hymn, about Christ’s earthly life, His death and burial, His resurrection, and His second coming.

- 1) One day when heaven was filled with His praises,  
One day when sin was as black as could be,  
Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin,  
Dwelt among men, my example is He!

*Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;  
Buried, He carried my sins far away;  
Rising, He justified freely forever;  
One day He's coming—O glorious day!*

Stanza 2 deals with the death of Christ on the cross of Calvary. Though despised and rejected, His loving purpose was “bearing our sins.” Stanza 3 focuses on His burial, and His days in the tomb.

I declare to you the gospel...that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. 15:1-4).

Stanza 4 celebrates the resurrection of Christ when “over death He had conquered.” In fact, “the grave could conceal Him no longer.” It was impossible for Christ to remain dead and buried, because He is the eternal Son of God. And it was essential that He be a living Saviour. “His soul was not left in Hades [the abode of the dead], nor did His flesh see corruption” (Acts 2:31). In fact, He is the only human being who was able to say that He had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again (Jn. 10:17-18).

Finally, in Stanza 5, there is the triumphant prospect of Christ’s return. “One day the trumpet will sound for His coming.” The Scriptures describe the rapture of the church, when the Lord will descend in the air, with the saints who have died, to snatch away the living believers:

“The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (I Thess. 4:16-17).

5) One day the trumpet will sound for His coming,  
One day the skies with His glories will shine;  
Wonderful day, my beloved ones bringing;  
Glorious Saviour, this Jesus is mine!

***The whole of the Christian life is centered on Jesus Christ. Like Paul the contemporary Christian can say: “To me to live is Christ.” But often, in Christian experience, we are tempted to look elsewhere for direction, example, counsel and guidance. We lose sight of the fact that everything we need to live the Christian life is to be found exclusively in Christ. For this reason when we begin thinking about spiritual growth we must think first of all about Christ.***

Sinclair Ferguson



***In Jesus are riches – if you are poor; Honor – if you are despised; Friendship – if you are forsaken; Help – if you are injured; Mercy – if you are miserable; Joy – if you are disconsolate; Protection – if you are in danger; Deliverance – if you are a captive; Life – if you are mortal; and all things – if you have nothing at all***

James Meikle

***O sirs! There is in...Jesus – something proportionate to all the straits, needs, necessities, and desires of His poor people. He is bread to nourish them, a garment to cover and adorn them, a physician to heal them, a counselor to advise them, a captain to defend them, a prince to rule them, a prophet to teach them, a priest to make atonement for them; a husband to protect them, a father to provide for them, a brother to relieve them, a foundation to support them, a head to guide them, a treasure to enrich them, a sun to enlighten them, and a fountain to cleanse them! What more can any Christian desire – to satisfy him and save him; and to make him holy and happy – in time and eternity?***

Thomas Brooks

***He bears the keys – to Him we must go for admission into heaven. He is the door – through Him we must enter. He is the Shepherd – we must hear His voice, and follow Him, if we would not perish in the wilderness. He is the Physician – we must apply to Him, if we would be healed of the plague of sin. He is the bread of life – we must feed on Him, if we would have our souls satisfied. He is the light – we must walk after Him, if we would not wander in darkness. He is the fountain – we must wash in His blood, if we would be cleansed, and made ready for the great day of account.***

J C Ryle

***I have taken all of my bad deeds and put them on a heap, and I have taken my good deeds as well, and I have put them on the same heap. And I have run away from that heap into the arms of Jesus. I die in peace.***

David Dickson

**In conclusion, the testimony of Johnny Farese...**

***In light of my physical condition, I am often asked the age-old question, 'How can an all-powerful God of love allow you to suffer in this way? Surely the Bible says that God always does what is right? Yes it does - and he does! I have come to see that suffering is one of the many ways in which God demonstrates his unfailing love to those who have come to put their trust in him. Writing out of his own painful experience, the Psalmist says, 'It was good for me to be afflicted, so that I might learn your decrees' (Psalm 119:71) - and I gladly endorse every word of that testimony.***

*Among other things, suffering empties us of pride and self-dependence, and makes us realize our complete dependence upon God. When we reach the point where we have nowhere to turn except to God, we begin to get a clearer view of who and what he is. Day by day, I am discovering more and more of his wisdom, love and grace. I am also finding that God's power is made perfect in my weakness, and that 'when I am weak, then I am strong' (2 Corinthians 12:10)*

*Jesus went through appalling suffering, physical, mental and spiritual, yet at the end of it all he was to 'see the light of life and be satisfied' (Isaiah 53:11). I count it a privilege to experience in some small way 'the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings' (Philippians 3:10) Although I am bedridden, struggle to breathe comfortably, and often have to contend with painful bed sores, I count them as 'light and momentary troubles' (2 Corinthians 4:17) For all the difficulties they cause, I know that they are achieving for me 'an eternal glory that far outweighs them all' (2 Corinthians 4:17) How trivial they will all seem in the light of the eternal bliss that awaits God's children in the world to come!*

*In Christ we have a love that can never be fathomed; a life that can never die; a righteousness that can never be tarnished; a peace that can never be understood; a rest that can never be disturbed; a joy that can never be diminished; a hope that can never be disappointed; a glory that can never be clouded; a light that can never be darkened; a happiness that can never be interrupted; a strength that can never be enfeebled; a purity that can never be defiled; a beauty that can never be marred; a wisdom that can never be baffled; and resources that can never be exhausted.*

*One of the psalmists wrote, Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me' (Psalm 66:16) - and I gladly do so. He has turned my mourning into laughter and my desolation into joy. He has made my heart rejoice with 'an inexpressible and glorious joy' (1 Peter 1:8). When I struggled to escape from his grace, he drew me to himself. I bear witness that never servant had such a master as I have, never brother such a kinsman, never spouse such a husband. No sinner ever had a better Saviour than Jesus, no mourner a better comforter. I want none beside him. In life he is my life, and in death he shall be the death of death. In poverty, he is my riches, in sickness my health, in darkness my sun. Jesus is to me all grace and no wrath, all truth and no falsehood: and of truth and grace he is full, infinitely full.*

Johnny Farese

