

# **PRACTICING TO LIVE WITH THE PRESENT CHRIST**

**by Titus Chu**

## **MESSAGE THREE: THE NECESSARY EXERCISES TO OBTAIN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESENT CHRIST PRIVATELY (2): ENJOYING THE HYMNS**

By singing a hymn you can touch the person of Christ. The singing of the right hymn at the right time can bring you to the Lord's presence. Furthermore, nothing can give voice to your condition or enlighten you as to your situation before the Lord quite like a spiritual hymn. We often come to the Lord and find ourselves short of the expressions which would give voice to what is within us. We tell the Lord over and over that we have sinned, that we are sinners. Certain hymns, however, could help us speak out our experiences and weaknesses.

Furthermore, as we sing the hymns, we can be attracted, strengthened, and encouraged. The hymns firstly bring us to the Lord, secondly help take care of our shortage, and thirdly help strengthen us positively.

What are the components of a good hymn? A good hymn should be composed with all, or at least several, of the following:

- A good hymn can be based on inspiration.
- A good hymn can be based on experiences.
- A good hymn should be written with apt expressions.
- A good hymn can be based on revelation.
- A good hymn can be based on truth.

### **EXAMPLES OF HYMNS WHICH CAN HELP US EXPERIENCE THE LORD'S PRESENCE**

In the hymn, “Deep Down into the Depths of this Thy Name” you will find a song written by M. E. Barber. This is a very good song on the experience of God (although the expressions in the Chinese translation are much better than in the English original).

“Since Long Ago at Bethany We Parted,” written by Watchman Nee, is one of the top hymns for beauty of expression. This hymn is also very inspired and full of experience. After you sing such a hymn, you just feel like you are a different person. You are brought out of many things and you realize how romantic the Christian life is.

Many of the hymns, such as “Though Christ a Thousand Times in Bethlehem be Born,” help you to know the inner life. Such songs cause you to seek the deeper experiences. Such songs can really help you to love the Lord.

The hymn, “No Mortal Tongue Can E'er Describe the Freedom of the Soul” is primarily full of inspiration, so it is not the kind of hymn you can sing every day. It is not a hymn focused on truth. It is, however, full of top expressions to convey the reality of consecration. It challenges you, but not in a rude way. Through such a hymn, full of inspiration, experiences and apt expressions, you can be brought into something quite high.

I hope the young people will turn to the hymns and be brought into the Lord's presence through the hymns. Today's generation has been brought up on rhythm instead of music. The crude music of today's culture has caused many of the young brothers to lose their appreciation for what is truly musical. Since many have grown up listening to rhythms, they have lost their ability to enjoy songs.

Now let us come to the hymn, “Thou art all my life, Lord, In Me Thou Dost Live.” Of all the hymns written by Brother Lee, I feel this one is the most approachable. No matter what condition you are in, no matter what you have experience, no matter what is your situation, whenever you come to this hymn you are able to get life. It is filled with inspiration, experience, wonderful expressions, revelations, and truth. Such a song you can sing again and again, and always feel refreshed. This hymn encourages us to do one thing: to open ourselves to Christ. This hymn, I would say, is good for any and all settings: for your private time with the Lord and for the gatherings of the saints.

### **YOU SHOULD PUT YOURSELF INTO THE HYMNS AS YOU SING THEM**

Don’t sing a song as a ritual. Learn to call the songs that will bring those present into the Lord’s presence. As you sing the hymns, you should put your whole person into them. Often when we sing in the meetings, the song and the person singing it are not together. If we come to the hymns ritualistically, our singing will not bring us into the presence of the Lord. Learn to allow the hymns to inspire you, bring you into the experience of Christ, and to bring you to revelation and truth. The expressions contained in the hymns should give you the way to be brought into these things.

A good hymn should have inspirations that inspire you, experiences that enhance and confirm your experience of Christ, expressions that bring the reality to you in its most expressive form, and revelation and truth. Thus, a good hymn can help you to be brought into the very presence of the Lord. I hope that all the saints will come to the hymns for this purpose. Using hymns in this way should greatly help you as you pursue the Lord.

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