




Rock
of Ages
revisited

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CrossRoad song discussions

To God be the Glory

Rock of Ages revisited album
Track 2

Words by Fanny Crosby
Music by William Howard
Doane

Arranged by Luke Powell

“Prodigious writer of hymns, Fanny J. Crosby (b. Putnam County, NY, 1820; d. Bridgeport, CT, 1915) wrote this hymn, which was first published with Doane's tune in Songs of Devotion (1870). This text and "Blessed Assurance" (490) are among the best-known and most-loved hymn texts of the thousands Crosby produced. Initially ignored in the United States, the hymn was sung in British churches after its inclusion in Ira D. Sankey's Sacred Songs and Solos (1903). Because of its use in the Billy Graham Crusades beginning in 1954, the hymn gained great popularity in Britain and Australia as well as in the United States.” - Psalter Hymnal Handbook

When we first recorded our Rock of Ages album, we had Ryan Holmes and Gavin Townsen as the main singers in the band. A few of their songs were on the album. When we decided to re-record the album a few years after they had both left the band, we decided to replace their songs with some favourite hymns which we rearranged in a rock style. First up was this old favourite!

Verse 1

- “To God be the glory, great things He hath done”
 - **What does “glory” mean to you? How do we give God “glory”?**
 - Eerdman’s Bible Dictionary defines glory as “That aspect of a person or God worthy of praise, honor, or respect; often associated with brightness or splendor”. Does this align with your belief about glory?
 - John Piper says that **“God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him”**. Think about that statement for a few minutes. Does this ring true to you? Can you glorify God while considering something else more satisfying than Him?
- “So loved He the world that He gave us His Son”
 - Read John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9.
 - **Do you ever stop to consider that God loves *the world*?** Not just us as individuals. But all of mankind.
- “Who yielded His life an atonement for sin”
 - **Why did Jesus die?** List some reasons you can think of.
 - Read 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, and Romans 3:25.
 - Jesus’ death is described as being offered in the place of those who deserved the wrath of God - us, sinners. We deserved punishment for our sin, but Christ’s sacrifice *atoned* for our sin and set us free.
 - **When last (if ever) did you share this good news with someone?** This is what evangelism and mission is all about, after all.
- “And opened the life gate that all may go in”
 - Read Matthew 7:14

- Jesus opened the way for us to enter into eternity through His sacrifice
- **Do you think the life gate refers to the entrance to heaven? Or could it also be the gate to "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10) here on earth?**
- In what ways has Jesus given you *life*?

Chorus

- "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice!"
 - **What does the word "praise" mean to you?**
 - Eerdman's Bible Dictionary defines praise as: "An expression of worship which recognizes and acknowledges God as the ultimate source and giver of all good gifts."
 - Do you ever "praise the Lord" outside of the church walls? Or on Monday to Saturday? **How can you make praise part of your daily routine?**
 - How can we as a church "let the earth hear His voice"?
- "Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!"
 - **Do you rejoice in God often?**
 - Think back to the quote from earlier in the study: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him". What do you *rejoice* in during a typical day? Money? Food? Entertainment? Family? These are all good gifts. But *God himself* is the ultimate source of our joy.
 - Read Psalm 63:3. **Is God's love "better than life" to you?**
 - Read Philippians 2:17-18. What a wondrous sense of joy Paul had, despite the deep suffering he encountered! **How can we develop the same joy in our relationships with God?**
- "O come to the Father through Jesus the Son"
 - Read John 14:6 and John 10:30.
 - You can't get the Father without Jesus, and you can't get Jesus without the Father.
 - **In your own relationship with God, in which instances do you connect with the Father, and in which do you connect with the Son? Are they always connected?**
- "And give Him the glory great things He hath done"
 - This is the same as the first line of the song.
 - **What "great" things has God done in your life?**

Verse 2

- "O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood"
 - **What does the phrase "the purchase of blood" mean to you?**
 - Easton's Bible Dictionary defines "redemption" this way: "the purchase back of something that had been lost, by the payment of a ransom." He goes on to say "The debt against us is not viewed as simply cancelled, but is fully paid. Christ's blood or life, which he surrendered for them, is the 'ransom' by which the deliverance of his people from the servitude of sin and from its penal consequences is secured."
 - Imagine that you had been captured by ISIS. Now imagine that someone paid a incomparably large sum of money so that you could be freed. What sort of gratitude would you feel towards that person? Shouldn't our gratitude to God be infinitely greater than this?
- "To every believer the promise of God"
 - **What are some of the things God promises believers?**
 - Read 2 Corinthians 1:20.

- “The vilest offender who truly believes, that moment from Jesus a pardon receives”
 - This is a tough pill to swallow.
 - **Who are the vilest offenders you can think of?** Hitler? Osama Bin Laden? Jacob Zuma!?
 - **How do you feel knowing that if these people had to confess and repent from the heart, they would find forgiveness in Christ?**
 - This is particularly hard for people who have been victims of rape or violent crimes. But God’s call to forgive those who sin against us is very real.
 - **How can we develop this same heart of forgiveness that Jesus shows us?**
 - Have you ever considered that someone might put *you* on their list of vilest offenders? Even our best good deeds are as filthy rags to God. (Isaiah 64:6). Do you have a sense that God’s forgiving you is completely unmerited, and based only on what Jesus did on the cross?
 - Chances are, we will be surprised at who we see in heaven - and some will be surprised to see us!

Chorus 2

Verse 3

- “Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done”
 - **What would you say is the greatest lesson you have been taught by God?**
 - **Do you have a *teachable* spirit/attitude?** One of the most dangerous attitudes that can creep into our hearts is the thought that we have learned everything we need to know about Jesus and God.
 - In what ways do you seek to *learn* more about God in your personal life?

- “And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son”
 - This word “rejoice” shows up for a second time in the song here.
 - Read some of these Scripture on joy:
 - Psalm 34:5
 - Psalm 96:11-13
 - 1 Peter 1:6

- “But purer and higher and greater will be our wonder, our rapture when Jesus we see”
 - This line takes on a whole new meaning when you learn that Fanny Crosby, who wrote these words, was *blinded at the age of 7*. What a hopeful, wonderful line to write.
 - Crosby’s husband, a musician, was blind too. Talk about the hope and joy this couple must’ve found in singing “when Jesus we see”.
 - **What are you expecting to *feel* when you see Jesus face to face one day?** Fear? Joy? Relief? Wonder and rapture?

Chorus 3

Listen to the song again, thinking about the words.

Key focus: What main point are you going to take away from today?

Spend some time in prayer and reflection:

- This song is, at its essence, a song praising God for who He is and what He has done. Take some time to praise God together in prayer.
- Take the time to *rejoice* in God in this moment. There can be no greater joy than loving and worshiping our creator!
- Praise God for His great love, and for sending His Son to die on the Cross to *atone* for our sins.
- Thank God for the open life gate that you and I can walk through because of Jesus.
- Thank God for *purchasing* your freedom from punishment, through the blood of Jesus.
- Thank God for always keeping his *promises*.
- Spend time praying for even the *vilest offenders* that you mentioned earlier, that they might find God and be transformed.
- Ask God to create a *teachable* spirit in you, that you would never be prideful or think that you have nothing to learn.
- Thank God for the great joy that is coming when you see Jesus face-to-face.

To God be the glory

Words by Fanny Crosby

Music by William Howard Doane

1

To God be the glory, great things He hath done,
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life our redemption to win,
And opened the life-gate that all may go in.

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!
Let the earth hear His voice;
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!
Let the people rejoice;
Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory; great things He hath done.**

2

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

3

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our transport when Jesus we see.