



LWML CNH CHRISTIAN LIFE LINE OCTOBER 2021

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A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

Lutheran Service Book #656 (Public Domain)

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need
That hath us now o'er taken.
The old evil foe Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the valiant One,
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this? Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill;
They shall not overpower us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none. He's judged;
the deed is done; One little word can fell him.

The Word they still shall let remain
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Though these all be gone,
Our vict'ry has been won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.

We know Martin Luther was a great reformer, Bible translator, political leader, preacher, theologian, AND a musician. He regarded music as important resources for the development of faith.

Luther once wrote that *next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits. A person who does not regard music as a marvelous creation of God does not deserve to be called a human being.*

At the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, Luther was determined to restore worship to the German Church and to revive congregational singing by writing many, many songs himself along with local skilled musicians.

According to the poet Samuel Coleridge, Martin Luther did as much for the Reformation with his hymns as he did with his translation of the Bible.

Of course, his grandest hymn is *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott – A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. He based this hymn on Psalm 46:

God is our refuge and strength,
 a very present help in trouble.
²Therefore we will not fear though the earth
 gives way,
 though the mountains be moved into the
 heart of the sea,
³though its waters roar and foam,
 though the mountains tremble at its swelling.
Selah
⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the
 city of God,
 the holy habitation of the Most High.
⁵God is in the midst of her; she shall not be
 moved;
 God will help her when morning dawns.

⁶The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
 he utters his voice, the earth melts.
⁷The LORD of hosts is with us;
 the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*
⁸Come, behold the works of the LORD,
 how he has brought desolations on the earth.
⁹He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
 he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
 he burns the chariots with fire.
¹⁰“Be still, and know that I am God.
 I will be exalted among the nations,
 I will be exalted in the earth!”
¹¹The LORD of hosts is with us;
 the God of Jacob is our fortress.

I was just going to include only a section of the Psalm, but what part would I leave out?! This Psalm explains who God is, right?

This hymn became the battle cry of the Reformation. The evangelical leaders were protesting against the attack the Diet of Speyer made on their liberties. The word *protestant* was probably created as a result of these “meetings.”

This was after Luther had posted his Ninety-five Theses on the Wittenberg Church thirteen years earlier. He came to know the gracious power of God’s protecting hands. His life and freedoms were constantly being threatened along with intense spiritual battles. However, Luther always found comfort and inspiration in Psalm 46. It reflects Luther’s intense struggles he had with the politics of the time as well as with Satan. In difficulty and danger, Luther would often steal away and sing Psalm 46.

We live in a world that is consumed with itself, and for the most part ignores the true God of all the heavens and the earth. Does God ignore them in return? *Come, behold the works of the Lord He makes wars cease He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.* When all is said and done, how will all of the nations respond to God? *God WILL be exalted among the nations, and WILL be exalted in all the earth.*

Go in God's strength today; hide yourself in His refuge. There is nothing for the true servant of Christ to fear. *Even though the earth would be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.*

The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms
 And he thrust out the enemy before you and said, ‘Destroy.’ Deuteronomy 33:27 (ESV)

Martin Luther’s Reformation Prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, you did not spare your only Son, but gave him up for us all to be our Savior, and along with him you have graciously given us all things. We thank you for your precious, saving gospel, and we pray that you would help us to believe in the name of our Savior faithfully and steadfastly, for he alone is our righteousness and wisdom, our comfort and peace, so that we may stand on the day of his appearing; through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, our Lord. Amen.

Adapted/Excerpted from
Then Sings My Soul, Robert J. Morgan, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003
The Complete Book of Hymns, William J. Peterson, Ardythe Petersen, Tyndale House Publishers, 2006