



Beloved Hymnist – Paul Gerhardt

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Like Martin Luther, Paul Gerhardt is one of the most well-known German Lutheran theologians and hymn-writers in our church.

Unfortunately, he had to endure much personal and family misfortune, since two thirds of his life was spent during the Thirty Years War.

In his later life, he was called upon as an assistant in the great cathedral in Berlin. During his time spent there, he composed many of the long-lasting hymns which provided solace for imprisoned individuals.

However, he was deposed from office because he differed in his religious views and refused to expound the views of his superiors to others.

All the hymns he has written cannot be listed here, but you will probably agree that the following familiar ones are very memorable (LSB):

- 375 Come Your Hearts and Voices Raising (Christmas)
- 438 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth (Lent)
- 453 Upon the Cross Extended (Holy Week)
- 596 All Christians Who Have Been Baptized (Baptismal Life)
- 683 Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me (Sanctification)
- 726 Evening and Morning (Trust)
- 880 Now Rest Beneath Night's Shadow (Evening)

My favourite is an Easter hymn in which the melody, text and the glorious picture created, bring me joy every time it is sung.

Awake, My heart, With Gladness, LSB 467

V1

Awake, my heart, with gladness,
see what today is done;
Now, after gloom and sadness,
comes forth the glorious sun.
My Saviour there was laid,
where our bed must be made
When to the realms of light
our spirit wings its flight.

V7

He brings me to the portal
that leads to bliss untold,
Whereon this rhyme immortal
is found in script of gold:
“Who there My cross has shared
finds here a crown prepared;
Who there with Me has died,
shall here be glorified.”

Text and tune: Public Domain



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