Open Mine Eyes
Devotional

Page 5 in **Hymns of Our Redeemer**
Clara H. Fiske Scott, 1841-1897

Unless noted otherwise, scriptures are
taken from the **King James Version**
and lightly edited for the modern reader.

Hello friends! Welcome to another time of devotion together. Let us open our hearts to God's Word for encouragement and strength in our walk by faith with our Savior, Jesus Christ. My name is Jerry Johnson. Today we are looking at the beloved hymn, ***"Open Mine Eyes,"*** which has been prayerfully sung by God's children for many, many years.

This hymn, written in 1895, was one of several composed by Clara Fiske Scott. She was originally from Chicago, Illinois, and later settled with her husband in Iowa. She published three collections of Christian anthems for choirs and congregations. Mrs. Scott suffered an untimely death in 1897 at the age of 56. A fatal accident was caused by a runaway horse, spooked as it pulled the buggy she was traveling in.*

The penetrating message of ***"Open Mine Eyes"*** reflects a deep spiritual Christian maturity in the heart of the author. As we look at it, we will see that the song is really a prayer. Though we may have sung the words of this hymn many times in the past, let us consider again the challenge to a consecrated life that we encounter as we sing this prayer to God together:

* https://hymnary.org/person/Scott_Clara

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Open Mine Eyes

1. Open mine eyes, that I may see
   Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
   Place in my hands the wonderful key
   That shall unclasp and set me free.

2. Open mine ears, that I may hear
   Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
   And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
   Everything false will disappear.

3. Open my mouth, and let me bear,
   Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
   Open my heart and let me prepare
   Love with Thy children thus to share.

Chorus:
   Silently now I wait for Thee,
   Ready my God, Thy will to see,
   Open mine eyes, illumine me,
   Spirit divine!

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Thoughts On
"Open Mine Eyes"
and Holy Scripture

Ask of God

If any of you lack wisdom, ask of God, Who gives to all liberally, and upbraids not; and it shall be given to you. James 1:5

Dear, precious children of God, as we look at the message of this hymn, the first thing we may notice is that this song is a petition before the throne of our Father in Heaven. Whether one is new to the Christian faith or a "seasoned saint," no matter how young or old, no matter how unfamiliar with the Bible or how schooled in Scripture: when we approach the Throne of Heaven, all of us come to God as needy souls. We are all dependent on our loving Creator for guidance and comfort and strength. We all need, in our own minds, wisdom and understanding and truth. We all need *Heavenly Light* - "light" that we can walk in, "light" that gives us divine direction, "light" that is relevant to the circumstances of our lives. As we sing this hymn, may we be mindful that we are praying to our Heavenly Father to give us His wisdom for guidance in our own life. ***AND***, in this hymn we are asking God for His wisdom, His spiritual truth...wisdom and truth that we can lovingly share with Christian brothers and sisters whom He brings into our lives.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Matthew 7:11

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Come Unto Me

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Matthew 11:28-29

Do you remember this invitation from Christ recorded for us in Scripture? What a wonderful, precious thing that Almighty God would entreat us to come to Him! He does not push us away when we are in trouble. He does not reject us when we are weighed down by the circumstances of our life. NO! He invites us, He beckons us to come to Him for rest. Rest from fighting our circumstances on our own. Rest from trying to straighten out our lives without Him. Rest from trying to take control of others around us. Rest from the hopeless goal of saving ourselves and feeling like we must have all the answers.

And, our Lord invites us to come to Him for instruction! He says, **"Learn from ME!"** The One who created all things and for whom all things exist (Colossians 1:15-17), asks us to let Him teach us the pathway to rest for our souls! Think about it! What a gift! Wouldn't it be foolish not to take Him up on His invitation? The Son of God says to any and all "Come to Me, learn from me, and you will discover in your own hearts and minds what true rest is!" When we sincerely sing ***"Open Mine Eyes"*** to Jesus, we are opening our hearts up to His instruction. We are saying, I need You, Lord! Teach me Your ways, Your truth, Your wisdom. If we take them seriously, the words to this hymn are a humble request to God. We are asking Him to teach us by His kind, meek voice in our hearts as we patiently meditate on His blessed written Word.

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First Verse

Open mine eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Open Mine Eyes

In this opening stanza of ***"Open Mine Eyes,"*** we are asking God to open our spiritual eyes, to give us spiritual vision. We are reaching out to Him, asking Him to enable us to see His eternal truth, miraculously, even if in just small "glimpses." Indeed, in asking we are admitting that we are dependent on Him to be our source of divine illumination and guidance. Why wouldn't we ask Him to open our spiritual eyes to the wisdom we need for the stressful circumstances of our lives? Why wouldn't we want God to open our eyes to the wonderful truths of Holy Scripture?

Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law. Psalm 119:18

You will notice that this passage from Psalm 119 is also a prayer. It is a cry to God in the Psalmist's heart as he meditates on the Scriptures: "Dear Lord, open my eyes, show me the wonderful truths that You have invested in Your written Word. As I submit to you, Master, give me fresh understanding of your instructions, your guidance, your laws for my life!"

If You Continue In My Word

"Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, 'If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'"

John 8:31-32

Based on this passage from the Gospel of John, one could say a true disciple of Jesus fastens their faith on Jesus' words and endeavors to obediently walk in His teaching as their way of life. (See also John 15:1-8) It strikes us that maybe Clara Scott had these words of Jesus in mind when she wrote of the "wonderful key" that will "set us free." As with all prayer, we would do well to prayerfully sing her hymn with thoughtfulness and serious consideration.

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Surely, Sister Scott did not pen this wonderful poem without deep thought and reflection on Holy Scripture. Even so, as we sing this prayer it should be accompanied by a commitment in our heart to carry our request into our attitude and motives and deeds as God gives us strength and light. *Here is the **"wonderful key": "continue" in the teachings of Jesus.*** This is the key that sets us free from the chains of bad habits and sin. Faithfulness over time to Jesus' word is the key that leads to freedom from spiritual blindness. Constantly pursuing obedience to Jesus is the key that frees us from immaturity, ignorance and moral weakness in our walk with Him. **"If** you continue in My word, **then** are you My disciples indeed!" **Then** you will know the truth, and **then** you will have the light, and **then** you will have the understanding **that will set you free.**

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock."

Matthew 7:24-25 (ESV)

Please note that we are not talking here about our salvation or our eternal home in heaven. That is sealed by the Holy Spirit when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior by faith (think of John 3:16 and Ephesians 2:8-9). What we are talking about here is accepting Jesus as our Lord...our Master...our constant Guide. Many (maybe we should say, "ALL") Christians struggle and fight against bad habits and persistent sins. Let us set our sights on the promise of our King: "Faithfully seek to obey Me and you will learn the Truth that will set you free!" Indeed! Open our eyes, Lord. Grant that we see the amazing gift of Your wonderful key that will break the chains of sin and worry and doubt and set us free!

Dear Christian Brothers and Sisters, if you struggle with obeying Jesus, do not give up! If you have fallen, get up! If you have sinned - again - admit it to your Heavenly Father now, ask Him to forgive you, and renew your cry for Him to open your eyes and set you free!

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Second Verse

"Open mine ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Everything false will disappear!"

"And when He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:4-5

They Know His Voice

The second stanza of this prayerful hymn asks our Heavenly Father to open our ears that we may hear His voice clearly! What a liberating thought! We can hear from our Lord HIS truth. Rest assured, if you are a lamb in the fold of the Great Shepherd, you can hear his voice speaking to you in your heart! Maybe you are one of His sheep and you are not so sure you have heard Him. If you sincerely sing this prayer you can embrace the hope of beginning to hear Him clearly in your own heart. For example, we "hear" Him by the Holy Spirit in our innermost being as we read His written Word. We "hear" Him as we intently listen to our godly pastor preach from God's Word. We "hear" Him as He illuminates our understanding when we read Christian materials that reflect on His written Word. We "hear" Him as we enter in fellowship with other believers who share the impact of His Word in their lives. Though not necessarily all inclusive, these are good examples of how the Holy Spirit enlightens, or speaks to our hearts and minds.

Please understand, we are not talking here about randomly "hearing voices" in our head. If you know Him, you probably remember the first time you "heard" the Lord. Maybe a pastor was preaching the Good News about Jesus and you understood it for the first time as the Holy Spirit revealed to you in your heart and mind your need to surrender to the message. This is the kind of "hearing" that characterizes our relationship with God.

A Stranger They Will Not Follow

Also in this middle verse there is a priceless observation: when we hear with our spiritual ears the voice of our Master, the fallacies and wrong

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assumptions and deceptions of the enemy of our soul are blown away! The way of the natural world around us, on many levels, is influenced, manipulated and deceived by the enemy of our soul. The "way of this world" is in conflict with the Truth of God. The "world" does not want to follow the Great Shepherd. The "world" does not know our Savior, Jesus Christ. The "world" does not think like God, because it cannot (Isaiah 55:8-9; 1Corinthians 2:14). And we, the sheep of His pasture, are surrounded by the "thieves" and "robbers" and "strangers" of the world's ways. Oh, how vital it is that our spiritual ears be opened and attuned to the voice of our Great Shepherd! This is Clara Scott's prayer. John 10:4-5 bears reading again:

"And when He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:4-5

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Third Verse

Open my mouth, and let me bear,
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.

Rivers of Living Water

In the third verse of ***"Open Mine Eyes"*** we are petitioning our King with a desire to be a blessing to others: Picture in your mind someone walking - sometimes through desert terrain, sometimes in green pastures, sometimes in a forest, sometimes among jagged rocks, sometimes in the frozen tundra of the north, and sometimes in the scorching desert. In all cases, wherever that person goes you notice that clover and flowers and fruit spring up in their footsteps. In the same way that our imaginary friend leaves behind lush, colorful footprints, this prayer in the last stanza is that we will be a blessing to everyone we meet everywhere we go. We are asking that our impact in others' lives will be a testimony of the "warm truth" of the Gospel. We are asking that our words will be a joyful, kindly, consistent witness to the beauty and grace and love and saving power of God. We are asking that, spiritually speaking, the Holy Spirit would cause "clover and flowers and fruit to spring up in our footsteps," everywhere we go!

It is important for us to understand that we are not just wanting to bark instructions and accusations and judgments at others. NO! We want to cooperate with our Master as we ask Him to open our heart, and do a work in our heart, that we would embrace others with His unselfish love. We want our attitude and our actions and our motives to be governed by the love of the Holy Spirit within us. We want to intentionally share, more and more, the tender-mercy and long-suffering and loving-kindness of God coming from the depths of our being: *"Open my heart and* ***let me prepare love*** *with Thy children thus to share."* Let us see this quote from our sister's poem in this light: "***Open my heart with Your love, Lord. Let me intentionally prepare my heart with Your love, Lord. And let me lovingly share Your Love with Your children, Lord."***

He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his inner-most being shall flow rivers of living water. John 7:38

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Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another. Romans 12:10

The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you.
Thessalonians 3:12

Chorus

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready my God, Thy will to see,
Open mine eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

There is an over-arching concept we need to associate with this, the Chorus, of our hymn. That concept is "consecration." Have you ever thought of the meaning of this word? Drawing from an early edition of Webster's Dictionary*, we can define our use here of the word "consecration" as: "**to set one's self apart, to dedicate one's self,** or **to devote one's self** to the service and worship of God."

In this light, let us paraphrase the words of the chorus this way:

Now, in this moment of time, I set myself apart to wait upon the voice and the revealing light in my heart of my Lord and my God. Jesus, as I wait I am ready to see and embrace Your will for my motives, Your will for my attitudes, Your will for my thoughts, Your will for my words, Your will for my deeds, and Your will for my time. Open my spiritual eyes, illuminate my thoughts and mind...this I cry with a deep longing in my heart to You, O divine Holy Spirit!

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Romans 12:1

*https://webstersdictionary1828.com/Dictionary/consecrate

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There are many voices in the World that would discourage us from consecrating our lives to Jesus. There are many reasons that may pop up in our own thoughts that would suggest that it would be a waste of time or a futile effort to say we were going to consecrate ourselves to The Lord. Let us take heart! We are appealing to our Savior to save us from a life of futility and frustration and defeat! We are calling on God to take our humble efforts of devotion and meet us with His Spirit to embolden us and empower us to take real steps toward victory in service to our King. You may be assured that He sees our hearts and He knows our weakness. He knows the battle we fight against doubt and fear of failure. Come to Him, the One Who truly loves you. Take His Word as truth. Find His will as freedom. See and hear His wisdom as real and relevant in your life today!

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, *and* beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service *and* spiritual worship.

Romans 12:1 (The Amplified Bible - Classic Edition)

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Our Closing Prayer

To end our focus today on **"Open Mine Eyes,"** such a marvelous hymn of devotion and consecration, let us prayerfully sing together to our heavenly Father these words of petition as our closing prayer:

Shall we bow our heads.

1. Open mine eyes, that I may see
   Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
   Place in my hands the wonderful key
   That shall unclasp and set me free.

2. Open mine ears, that I may hear
   Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
   And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
   Everything false will disappear.

3. Open my mouth, and let me bear,
   Gladly the warm truth everywhere;
   Open my heart and let me prepare
   Love with Thy children thus to share.

Chorus:
   Silently now I wait for Thee,
   Ready my God, Thy will to see,
   Open mine eyes, illumine me,
   Spirit divine!

Amen!

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