

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

1

Walter C. Smith, 1867; alt.

1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 36:6

1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3 Your life is life - giv - ing— to both great and small;
 4 So per - fect your glo - ry, so bril - liant your light,

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 not want - ing, not wast - ing, but rul - ing in might;
 in all life you're liv - ing, the true life of all;
 your an - gels a - dore you, all veil - ing their sight;

Most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 Your jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove,
 We blos - som and flour - ish as leaves and as flowers,
 All praise we now ren - der as your an - gels do:

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, your great name we praise.
 your clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 then with - er and per - ish— but naught dims your powers.
 in awe at the splen - dor of light hid - ing you.

Walter C. Smith, minister of the Free Church of Scotland and later moderator of the Assembly, wrote poetry as a retreat from work and to say what could not be fully expressed in the pulpit.

Tune: ST. DENIO 11.11.11.11.
 Adapt. from a Welsh ballad in John Roberts' Caniadaeth y Cysegr, 1839

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

439

Martin Luther, c. 1529

Ps. 46

Transl. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853; adapt. Ruth Duck, 1981

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er fail - ing,
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be los - ing,
 3 And though this world with dev - ils filled should threat - en to un - do us,
 4 That word be - yond all earth - ly powers for - ev - er is a - bid - ing;

Our pres - ent help a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choos - ing.
 We will not fear for God has willed the truth to tri - umph through us.
 The Spir - it and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us sid - ing.

For still our an - cient foe does seek to work us woe with craft and pow - er
 You ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus sets us free! With might - y power to
 The powers of e - vil grim, we trem - ble not for them; their rage we can en -
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; the bod - y they may

great, and armed with cru - el hate, on earth with - out an e - qual.
 save, vic - to - rious o'er the grave, Christ will pre - vail tri - um - phant.
 dure, for lo, their doom is sure: one lit - tle word shall fell them.
 kill; God's truth shall tri - umph still; God's reign en - dures for - ev - er.

There is speculation that this psalm paraphrase was written in 1527 when Martin Luther's friend was burned at the stake, or in 1529, when Lutheran German princes protested the revocation of their liberties. It has been translated into more than fifty languages.

Tune: EIN' FESTE BURG (isometric) 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.6.7.
 Martin Luther, c. 1529
 Harm. The New Hymnal for American Youth, 1930; alt.
 For another version, see 440

JUSTICE AND PEACE

573

Lead On Eternal Sovereign

Ernest W. Shurtleff, 1887; alt.

1 Lead on e - ter - nal Sov - ereign, we fol - low in your way;
2 Lead on e - ter - nal Sov - ereign, we fol - low not with fear,
3 Lead on e - ter - nal Sov - ereign, till sin's fierce war shall cease,

loud rings your cry for jus - tice, your call for peace this day:
for in each hu - man con - flict your words of strength we hear:
and all your saints to - geth - er will sing a hymn of peace;

Through prayer-ful prep - a - ra - tion, your grace will make us strong,
That when we serve with glad - ness, you will not let us fall,
Then all in your do - min - ion will live with hearts set free,

to car - ry on the strug - gle to tri - umph o - ver wrong.
our trust is in your prom - ise that love will con - quer all.
to love and serve each oth - er for all e - ter - ni - ty.

At Andover Seminary, fellow students asked Ernest W. Shurtleff to write a hymn for their graduation. This is the result. Shurtleff became a Congregational minister and in his last years established churches in Europe and did relief work during World War I.

Tune: LANCASHIRE 7.6.7.6.D.
Henry T. Smart, 1836