



Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati
405 West Seventh Street
Cincinnati, OH 45203
(513) 381-3858
www.union-baptist.net
Rev. Dr. Orlando Yates, Pastor

GLORIOUS THINGS OF THEE ARE SPOKEN

Author-John Newton, 1725-1807

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge.
(Psalm 48: 1,2,3)

John Newton, clerk, once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slavers in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, preserved, restored, pardoned, and appointed to preach the faith he had long labored to destroy.

This fitting testimonial, written by Newton himself prior to his death, describes aptly the unusual and colorful life of this man, one of the great evangelical preachers of the eighteenth century. The granite tombstone bearing this inscription can still be seen in the small cemetery adjoining the parish churchyard in Olney, England, where John Newton ministered so effectively for fifteen years.

The story of John Newton's early life is generally quite well known. He was born on July 24, 1725, in London. His mother, a godly woman, died when he was not quite seven years of age. When he was eleven years old, he went to sea with his sea-captain father and followed this life for the next eighteen years. These years were filled with adventure but were one continuous round of rebellion and debauchery. He became known as one of the most vulgar and blasphemous of men. Following his dramatic conversion experience, in 1748, and his call later at the age of thirty-nine to the Christian ministry, Newton became pastor of the Anglican parish in the little village of Olney, near Cambridge, England, and began writing hymn texts that expressed his spiritual experiences and convictions. His most popular hymn, "Amazing Grace" (101 Hymn Stories, No. 6), is really a testimony of Newton's early life and conversion.

"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" is from Part 1 of the Olney Hymns and is generally considered to be one of Newton's finest. It is said to be the only joyful hymn in the entire collection. The hymn gives a stirring description of God's protection of His chosen people.

- ♪ Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God; He whose word cannot be broken Formed thee for His own abode: On the Rock of Ages founded, What can shake thy sure repose? With salvation's walls surrounded, Thou mayst smile at all thy foes.
- ♪ Sea, the streams of living waters, Springing from eternal love, Well supply thy sons and daughters And all fear of want remove: Who can faint while such a river Ever flows their thirst to assuage? Grace which, like the Lord, the Giver, Never fails from age to age.
- ♪ Round each habitation hovering, See the cloud and fire appear, For a glory and a covering, Showing that the Lord is near! Glorious things of Thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God; he whose word cannot be broken Formed thee for His own abode.
- ♪ Savior, if of Zion's city I through grace a member am, Let the world deride or pity, I will glory in Thy name; Fading is the worldling's pleasure, all his boasted pomp and show; Solid joys and lasting treasure, none but Zion's children know.
- ♪ Blest inhabitants of Zion, washed in the Redeemer's blood! Jesus, whom their souls rely on, makes them kings and priests to God. 'Tis His love His people raises, over self to reign as kings, And as priests, His solemn praises each for a thank-off'ring brings. AMEN.

"One Hundred and One More Hymn Stories"
– By Kenneth W. Osbeck

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:18 – 20

