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ECHOES FROM THE UNDER SHEPHERD

STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS MONTH

“SEASON OF LENT”

‘JESUS CALLS US’

(Mrs. Cecil F. Alexander, 1818-1895)

*“Whoever serves Me must follow me; and where I am, my servants also will be.
My father will honor the one who serves Me.” (John 12:26 NIV)*

God’s call for discipleship comes to every believer, not just a special few. Whether or not we hear God’s call depends on our spiritual sensitivity.

The last Sunday in November is known as St. Andrew’s Day. It has traditionally been an important day in the liturgical worship of the Anglican church. It commemorates the calling of Andrew by Jesus as recorded in Matthew 4:18-20 and Mark 1:16-18. “At once they [Simon and his brother Andrew] left their nets and followed Him.” Andrew has become the patron saint of Scotland, and the oblique cross on which tradition says he was crucified is part of the Union Jack of the British flag.

This is another of the quality hymn texts written by Cecil Frances Alexander, recognized as one of England’s finest women hymn writers. It is one of the few of Mrs. Alexander’s hymns not specifically written for children; nearly all of her more than 400 poems and hymn texts were intended for reaching and teaching children with the gospel.

Following her marriage in 1850 to the distinguished churchman, Dr. William Alexander, who later became archbishop for all of Ireland, Mrs. Alexander devoted her literary talents to helping her husband with his ministry, including writing appropriate poems that he could use with his sermons. One fall day, two years after their marriage, Dr. Alexander asked his wife if she could write a poem for a sermon he was planning to preach the following Sunday for his St. Andrew’s Day sermon. The pastor closed his sermon that day with the new poem written by his wife. These words have since been widely used in all churches to challenge God’s people to hear Christ’s call as Andrew did and then to follow, serve, and love Him “best of all.” AMEN.

Jesus calls us o’er the tumult of our life’s wild, restless sea; day by day His sweet voice soundeth, saying, “Christian, follow Me.”

Jesus calls us from the worship of the vain world’s golden store, from each idol that would keep us, saying, “Christian, love Me more.”

In our joys and in our sorrow, days of toil and hours of ease, still He calls, in cares and pleasures, “Christian, love Me more than these.”

Jesus calls us: by Thy mercies, Savior, may we hear Thy call, give our hearts to Thy obedience, serve and love Thee best of all. AMEN.

— Amazing Grace —

366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions

— 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

