

## Behind the Hymn: It's a Gift

I've always enjoyed the old Shaker hymn:

*'Tis the gift to be simple,  
'Tis the gift to be free,  
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,  
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.*

It's so joyful and folksy, in the best sense of the word.

But for years I longed for a text that more fully expressed the simplicity and joy of living in Christ, of walking with Him day by day. Life in Him is so rich and free. All He requires is that we trust Him.

*It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*  
(Philippians 2:13, NIV)

*I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.* (Jeremiah 31:33, NIV)

*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.* (Ezekiel 36:26-27, NIV)

*God has chosen to make known...the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* (Colossians 1:27, NIV)

On Sunday morning, June 28, 1998, Pastor Jesse Middendorf was preaching on freedom in Christ. His message inspired me to write this new hymn, based on the old Shaker hymn. It is written to speak both to seekers and to believers. My prayer is that it draws someone to the beauty, the freedom, and the natural simplicity of life in Christ.

--Ken Bible

Hymn: [It's a Gift](#)