

Behind the Hymn: The Only Good Is Jesus

In my younger years I collected old hymnals. It was a very enjoyable and meaningful activity. Around 1987 I sold the bulk of my collection, about 1,000 volumes, to my composer friend, Tom Fettke. He eventually donated the books to David Lipscomb University in Nashville, where they are now housed in their rare book collection.

With my proceeds from the sale I bought my first computer, which proved to be a key purchase for me. I believe God has worked His will in the whole matter.

When I sold the books, I held onto most of the German language hymnals, as well as to some older devotional volumes I had picked up along the way. One of those was *Theologia Germanica*. My copy is an 1855 translation from German into English by Susanna Winkworth.

The book is full of beautiful expressions of simple devotion to Christ. They've deeply inspired me through repeated readings. In late 1994 and early 1995, I summarized many of those ideas in this hymn text, *The Only Good Is Jesus*.

The text had no musical setting till I came across it again in February, 2002. I then wrote this musical setting and named it for my dear wife, Gloria Lynn Bible.

As life goes along, I am realizing more deeply and completely that indeed, *the only good is Jesus*. As Paul says in Philippians 3, many things I valued and sought, that I considered priceless assets, I now realize are liabilities. I've written them off as losses, as worthless investments, that I might purchase the one pearl of great price: knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

--Ken Bible

Hymn: [The Only Good Is Jesus](#)