



Jesus Sinners Doth Receive

Text: Erdmann Neumeister (1671-1756)

Tune: *Neuerfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch*,
Darmstadt, 1699

The glorious truth of the Gospel is that, because of Christ, our sins do not separate us from God. Without Christ, we would have no hope. But the Blood of Christ covers all our sins and forgives us. From Scripture we learn that truly Jesus sinners doth receive!

This beautiful Gospel was penned by Erdmann Neumeister, born May 12, 1671. In 1689 he entered the University of Leipzig, where he received a Masters Degree in 1695, but remained to serve as lecturer at the university. He became Assistant Pastor in Bibra in 1697 and Pastor in 1698. He later became Court Preacher in Weissenfels. From 1715 until his death August 18, 1756, he served as Pastor of St. James in Hamburg.



Erdmann Neumeister

Although Neumeister was a prolific hymnwriter (writing an estimated 650 hymns), *the Lutheran Hymnal* contains only two of his hymns, “Jesus Sinners Doth Receive” and “I Know My Faith is Founded.” However, Lutherans are beginning to translate more of his hymns. His first collection of hymns was published in 1705 in *Der Zugang zum Gnadenstuble Jesu Christo*, a manual written to help prepare people for receiving the Lord’s Supper, which contained several hymns interspersed as devotional prayers. His other hymn collection was issued in 1718 in Hamburg. *Evangelischer Nachklang*, or “Lutheran Echo” was a collection of 86 hymns for the Sunday and festival day Gospels. He originally wrote these poetic

pieces as conclusions for his sermons, but they soon passed into use as hymns. Lastly, Neumeister was a contemporary of Johann Sebastian Bach, and Bach used five of Neumeister’s texts for his Sunday Cantata series.

Neumeister was a solid Lutheran who wrote and preached extensively against Pietism and other forces seeking to undermine the Gospel in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Little is known on the tune for this hymn, NUN LOB’, MEIN’ SEEL. It first appeared in *Concentus Novi*, a hymnal prepared in 1540 by Johann Graman and Johann Kugelmann. It is used three times in *the Lutheran Hymnal*: “My Soul, Now Praise Thy Maker,” “O Living Bread from Heaven,” and “I Know My Faith is Founded.”

This hymn was written by Neumeister in 1718, while serving as Pastor in Hamburg and was a part of his *Evangelischer Nachklang*. This hymn was written specifically for today’s Gospel, St. Luke 15:1-10, the Parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin.

The refrain of each stanza, “Jesus sinners doth receive” is the emphasis of these parables. Those who live in sin are received by Jesus, even though “we deserve but grief and pain” (st. 2). Stanza three is particularly comforting because it reminds us that our true Shepherd will never forsake any sheep that strays from His fold. So long as His Word endures, there is forgiveness. In His Word are His invitation and gracious call to sinners to find their forgiveness in Him. In stanza 5, we make our confession that we are sinners and find our comfort in the repeated promise: “Jesus sinners doth receive.” Stanza 6 tells us why this is comforting: our transgressions are washed away “by Thy Blood and bitter Passion.” Because of His Blood and Passion and the faith that comes by His Word, we believe the refrain. We know that because of these things, “from the Law I stand acquitted.” Because of Christ nothing can grieve our souls, for He has received us and forgiven us. Though this Gospel gives comfort here in this life, its greatest comfort is in the life to come. When we leave this earth, “I shall find an open heaven.” Jesus receives sinners in this life to forgive them and in the life to come to make them His children to all eternity!