

# GIVE ME JESUS

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*We are what we love. If we love God, in whose image we were created, we discover ourselves in him and we cannot help being happy: we have already achieved something of the fullness of being for which we were destined in our creation. If we love everything else but God, we contradict the image born in our very essence, and we cannot help being unhappy, because we are living a caricature of what we are meant to be. – Thomas Merton, A Book of Hours*

What brings deepest satisfaction, fulfillment, and identity in life? What is the goal, the purpose of our existence, of our being? If we are created in *God's image* (see Genesis 1:26-27), it makes sense that our deepest satisfaction, fulfillment, and identity would become realized in pursuit of the things that resonate with God's blueprint in us. All outside pursuits are worthless and leave us frantically searching for meaning and satisfaction in external ventures that turn up empty and are fleeting.

The lyrics to *Give Me Jesus* are as sacred as they are simple. The sweet melody and lyrics are a bridge across the lifespan—as easily understood to the small child as to the seasoned, well-worn pilgrim walking into the sunset of his or her life. The lyrics speak both literally and metaphorically of life's journey from “the morning when I rise” to the sunset of life “when I come to die.” The middle verse captures the years between birth and death where our *separateness* from others and from God creates a longing, “when I feel alone.”

These lyrics are a soothing balm to the weary traveler. They express faith in the most powerful and fundamental way, devoid of flowery theological statements, the words are intimate and profound. They are resolute and unmistakable as they convey the message, “No matter my situation or emotional state, the one thing I need the most is Jesus.”

*Give Me Jesus* does not describe a pursuit, an endeavor, or anything achieved by will-power. The words are a recognition of the eternal, of our place in the universe, and of ultimate fulfillment as we learn what it means to commune with Jesus.

## §PIRITUAL EXERCISE:

Contemplative Prayer is an ancient Christian practice that helps us cultivate a deep sense of being in the present-moment with God. The goal of Contemplative Prayer is not to “seek God” as much as it is to “rest in God.” Our modern, hectic lifestyles lead us to live in the “what’s next” rather than living in the present, and our lives pass by us in a fog of busy-ness. Silence is a great teacher, but most of us avoid it in order to escape the frantic voices in our head that keep reminding us to “get something done.” As a spiritual exercise, carve out ten minutes to sit in a favorite spot where you can purposefully disconnect from everything else. Listen to the song, *Give Me Jesus* and reflect on the lyrics printed below. Once the song ends, practice sitting in the presence of Jesus for a few more minutes...without agenda...without confession or petition. Practice being in the moment. This exercise will help reorient your day by focusing on Jesus and by drawing you into communion with him.

*In the morning when I rise, in the morning when I rise, in the morning when I rise, give me Jesus*

*Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus, You can have all this world, but give me Jesus*

*And when I am alone, and when I am alone, and when I am alone, give me Jesus*

*Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus, You can have all this world, but give me Jesus*

*And when I come to die, and when I come to die, and when I come to die, give me Jesus*

*Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus, You can have all this world, but give me Jesus*