



## A New Way

Murray Wylie - Brisbane Christian Fellowship

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# A New Way

Congregational chorus

by Murray Wylie

Arranged by Dean Fanning

May 2009

Keep me, Lord Jesus, in the new way

Led by Your Spirit in the true way

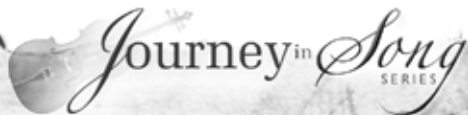
Living bread is broken in every word that's spoken

In the light where new creation is revealed

Let every word run swiftly and be gloried now in me

Grow mightily in us and prevail.

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## Easter 2009

At Easter of this year, singing along with the 1,000 strong congregation, I reflected on the theme of the weekend, 'Treasure in Earthen Vessels – Celebrating our Pilgrimage'. Our treasure! Our pilgrimage! The choir and orchestra were leading us in anthems old and new. The opening song was a 30 year old favourite, from 'The Jerusalem Passion', our first original oratorio. This was the closing celebration anthem, 'The Communion Chorus', and suited this year's Easter convention. 'We've chosen this to celebrate the specific treasure of community', said the evening's hosts. 'I'll meet you here at one table of friends.'

### The treasure of fellowship

'How true', I thought, for indeed one of our greatest treasures has been to find true community, as friends of Christ and of one another. 'Where there once were many, let there now be one, And let the royal blood begin to flow' (The Communion Chorus from The Jerusalem Passion). We have found friendship, my wife and family, and so many others, in the fellowship of the body of Christ, where the blood of Christ brings true cleansing and real change.

The second song of the evening, by David Hall, was 'I Will Walk in the Light', and the third was, 'Coming Now as

Households', sung by the couple who wrote the song, with a number of other families.

After a brief interlude, we were treated to Jon Hall's suite of choral pieces entitled, 'Treasure in Earthen Vessels'. 'There on the wheel was a potter's vessel'; 'Why do you strive with your Maker'; 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels'; the choir arose, the orchestra triumphed, and the message was ministered most strongly to us all. I enjoyed the opportunity to sing in the 120 strong choir, surrounded by vibrant basses giving voice to the sure 'treasure' in their earthen vessels. 'If we're in Christ, we're a new creation!'

The festival of song rolled on for the three days of Easter. On the Saturday, I had the chance to visit our associated fellowship in Stanthorpe, three hours away, where a smaller regional choir was singing a locally produced Easter musical, 'The Joy of Calvary'. The whole weekend was exceptionally rich, and in terms of our pilgrimage in song across thirty years, it was a real highlight.

## Journey in Song – Easy Reading Series

I had been planning this 'Journey in Song' series for some time, as a way of sharing and reflecting on the songs of my own pilgrimage. I had also been wondering where to begin. Should I begin at the beginning, with my very first original song, or

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with the most recent presentations and work backward? In the end, I was so richly surrounded by the word of God at Easter, that a new song was born right there - 'A New Way' - hence the title of this first booklet in the series.

So many song-lines and testimonies were living on in my heart and mind after that amazing weekend. This really was new creation being manifested among us, I thought. The word, expressed in song and sermon, had been a living demonstration, a testimony to us as to who we were, in Christ. There was no room for any afterthought, or other thought. Christ in us, 'the hope of glory!' Col 1:27 My reflections were full of the treasure of Christ in us.

## The word of God prevails

Prior to this weekend, and in preparing for it, I had been very refreshed by the accounts in the book of Acts of how the word of God grew and multiplied. Acts 12:24. In the case of Paul's extended and fruitful ministry to the Ephesian church, we read that 'the word of God grew mightily and prevailed'. Acts 19:20. The disciples there had been ready and keen to hear something more of the word of God, from Paul's mouth. He had stayed for three months, speaking daily in the synagogue, and then for a further two years in a public venue owned by Tyrannus. Before long, 'all who dwelt in Asia heard the word'. Acts 19:10. Then the account ends with the triumphant report,

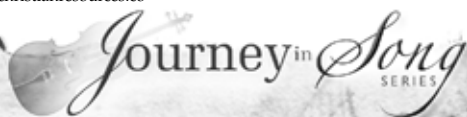
quoted above: 'The word of God grew mightily and prevailed'.  
Acts 19:20.

I reflected for quite a while on what this meant. 'The word grew mightily'. At first, we might think that the preaching, teaching and testimony of the word expanded mightily, and that would have been the case. But perhaps there's more. I believe the word grew mightily and prevailed because it was being fulfilled in a community of believers who were living in the truth of the word. The apostle's word had proclaimed the 'new creation' in Christ, the new community of those who were the vessels of His glory, His divine nature. This growing community was defined, absolutely, in every aspect of life, by the word. The 'word' was not merely an expanding volume of instruction. The word that was growing and prevailing was the actual predestination of individuals, not just Bible knowledge. Life was growing! Individuals, families and whole communities were being transformed. The word of God, spoken and planned before the beginning, His election and purpose for His many sons, was now growing like seed, flourishing like vibrant garden plantings, and overcoming everything that was of the world.

## Prayer – Keep me in the new way

With this mediation from Acts, and with the 'pilgrimage' music of Easter fresh in my mind, the seed of a new chorus

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13 **Gm** **F/A** **B<sup>b</sup>** **G<sup>7</sup>/B** **C<sup>7</sup>sus**

light, where new\_ cre-a - tion is\_\_ re - vealed. *cresc.* *mf*

16 **C** **F/A** **B<sup>b</sup>** **Am**

— Let ev - ery word run swift - ly And be

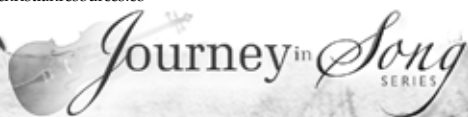
19 **Gm<sup>11</sup>** **Dm** **Gm** **F/A**

glor - i - fied\_ now in\_\_ me Grow might - i - ly\_\_ in us

22 **B<sup>b</sup>** **C<sup>7</sup>** **F**

— and pre - vail.\_\_\_\_\_

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sprang up in my own heart. It began as one line of a prayer. 'Keep me, Lord Jesus, in the new way'.

That was all, at first. I felt an overwhelming desire to be preserved and constrained in the living way of the new creation. 'For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.' Gal 6:15. Paul continues on in the very next verse to speak about the 'rule' of the way we live, meaning that there is a living mode by which to walk, a complete culture, which we could call the rule of the new creation. Gal 6:16. Hebrews refers to it as the 'new and living way'. Heb 10:20. 'Keep me', I prayed, 'in this new way'.

The next day, Dean Fanning joined me for an informal music discussion, and we found ourselves deliberating upon the seeds of this new song. 'Keep me, Lord Jesus, in the new way', grew further to 'Led by Your Spirit in the true way'. Our conversation soon produced a page full of thoughts that were growing out of the initial seed. 'Living bread is broken in every word that's spoken'; we added to the song as it grew, across the next hour of trial and error.

As I sang and suggested various chordal constructions, Dean took up, on the piano, what he thought he was hearing. 'Living bread is broken in every word that's spoken – in the light, where new creation is revealed'.

## The word of God runs swiftly

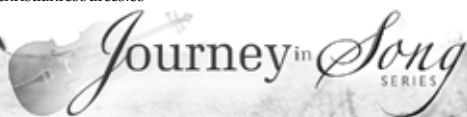
Then a verse from 2nd Thessalonians came to mind. In the NKJV, it reads, 'Pray for us that the word ... may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you'. 2 Thess 3:1. This verse carried the same excitement as the similar verses from the book of Acts. As Paul said, when he was in chains, the 'word of God is not chained'. 2 Tim 2:9.

I could feel a refreshing excitement coming to me over the following days. The song really began to live in my own experience. 'Let the word of God run swiftly and be glorified now in me, Grow mightily in us, and prevail'. The song was complete. Of course, it was only a brief reflection of the vast content that had been growing in our hearts, for this whole year.

## Behold the Lamb

For some months, Victor Hall had been ministering on the theme, 'Behold the Lamb', as per the Vision One book title. Briefly, what Vic had focussed in his teaching was that the Lamb was the source of the new creation. His offering, the pouring out of His blood, made it possible for the very life that was offered by God Himself, to become our new life, in Him. The impact of this entire subject, in practical terms, was not just an inspiration, but a transformation. When John

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the Baptist cried out, 'Behold the Lamb', and some disciples left him to follow Christ, this was what John had in mind. He had cried, 'Prepare the way', and made preparation for the coming of the Lamb. Now the disciples had to move beyond preparation, to new creation.

The disciple John, who followed the Lamb, then wrote his entire gospel with a motivation to call us forward to the new creation. We were to receive a new birth, of water and spirit (John 3), living water to drink (John 4), and living bread from heaven to eat (John 5-6). We were to follow a new commandment (John 13) and enter into a new covenant in the blood of Christ.

## A new patch – new wine

This is the 'new way' referred to in the chorus. Luke and Matthew, in their gospels, warn that we cannot just take a patch from a new garment and stitch it on to the old. Nor can we put new wine in an old wineskin, or it bursts the vessel.

'Then He spoke a parable to them: "No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one; otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved. And no one,

having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, 'The old is better.'" Luke 5:36-39.

Jesus' illustration is very apt. We have all tried to take just a portion of the new life of Christ, and 'patch' it into the old, into our existing mode of living. What happens when we do this? Jesus' parable says that this produces a tear. Our hearts are split and we are double-minded. Not only does the new piece not match, but there's a sense of tearing and rending.

So we may not simply choose the aspects of the new Christian life that we favour: the friendship, the forgiveness, the answered prayer. What about offences and trials? Are we willing to accept discipline so that we can grow up as mature sons?

The parable continues on to the aspect of new wine in an old wineskin. In this case, Jesus adds another element. He speaks about a new wineskin. If there's a new skin, a whole new vessel, we might say, then 'both are preserved', we read. Matt 9:17. What does this suggest? There is a completely new work. Instead of a split, divided and mixed culture in the way we live, both the new wine and the new wineskin are maintained in harmony. Both are preserved, just as Jesus said.

Yes, it's been dawning on us that there must be a completely new work, in Christ. He makes 'all things new', not just some of our faulty attributes.

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As the word of God grows mightily and prevails, we are completely new. If we try to adapt the new into the old, it will tear us apart. Indeed, there is nothing more destructive than placing the new wine of the Spirit into an unchanged and corrupt vessel.

## New creation unites the heart

There's a marvellous Psalm in which we sing, 'Unite my heart to fear your name.' Psa 86:11. It's encouraging to know that new creation unites the heart. We are at one within ourselves. Yes, the word of God does pierce and divide the heart, but it does so for the purpose of uniting us with God's will. Heb 4:12. As we yield to the One who makes 'all things new', the word heals us internally. Rev 21:5. We are healed of a broken spirit. We are no longer at war within ourselves.

Of course, we must no longer choose the old. There's one more element in Jesus' parable, as we read earlier. 'And no one, having drunk old wine, immediately desires new; for he says, "The old is better."' Luke 6:39.

Here we are warned about a response that is very typical. We prefer the old. We like the way things are, as long as everything is working out well for us. According to Jesus' teaching, it is at the point when the new comes to us that we must take care not to contain it, or limit it, to the old. Everything must

change to the accommodate what is new. We must receive, and walk in, what is new, in its entirety.

## Testimony about ‘A New Way’ – Dean Fanning (arranger)

When working with Murray on the song ‘A New Way’, I felt an amazing excitement and joy. I could see that ‘the new and living way’, spoken of in the New Testament, was becoming a reality in our lives. Inspired by the song, I looked again in the gospels where Jesus spoke the parables of the ‘sower’ and the ‘wineskins’. I was reminded of the necessity to receive the messengers of the word of God and the message they bring. How often we hear the word and place our own interpretation on it, or pick and choose the aspects that appeal to our lifestyle. If we live this way, we rob the word of its power to produce everlasting life. We make the word of no avail. We must heed Christ’s words as little children, receiving its simplicity and knowing its power as we proceed on in obedience.

‘Living bread is broken in every word that’s spoken, In the light where new creation is revealed.’ Hallelujah! This is my testimony and the testimony of so many around me. As I fellowship with those who walk in the light, then the word of truth is available, and the new and living way is made known.

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This song has become my prayer, a prayer that this reality will continue to grow mightily and prevail! I know with assurance that if I hear the word, and apply it to my life, He will keep me in the new way.

## Conclusion – Murray Wylie

This brief background, and reflection from Dean, help us to understand the heart behind the song, 'A New Way'. Furthermore, our testimony illustrates, in our current experience, just how the Spirit gives us songs to accompany our pilgrimage, our journey in song. The message concerning the new creation has been an enormous challenge, but a great blessing as well. While this brief chorus, 'A New Way', doesn't say a great lot about the new creation, it does carry a sense of commitment and of a prayer concerning that commitment. Let us take it to heart, in that way.

Keep me, Lord Jesus, in the new way.