

“Spirit of God, Decend Upon My Heart” ~ George Croly

Following Resurrection Sunday, there are two other important Church calendar days which many Christians often neglect to recognize. The first is Day the Lord Jesus Christ Ascending into heaven - forty days following His Resurrection. The second important day is Pentecost-ten days after Jesus Christ's ascension. It is thrilling at Christmas to recall the events of our Savior's birth, or at His Resurrection and his triumph over death. Yet if He had never ascended to make intercession for us or had never sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within and to guide us, our relationship with God would be most incomplete.

One of the finest of all hymns for Pentecost is this hymn, "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart." It was written by the Rev. George Croly, a minister in the Anglican Church. Croly was born in Dublin, Ireland, and was graduated from Trinity College. he came to London, England, around 1810, where he served a small parish church. he was also active during this time as a literary writer of poems and novels as well as biographical, historical and scriptural material. Later, in 1835, he was asked by the church's leadership to re-open a church in the worst slum area of London, St. Stephen's Church, which had been closed for more than a century. His forceful, magnetic preaching soon attracted large crowds. Croly was characterized by his associated as a "Fundamentalist in theology, a fierce conservative in politics, and a intensely opposed to all forms of liberalism."

In 1854, when he was seventy-four years of age, he desired a new hymnal for his congregation and eventually prepared and published his own Psalms and Hymns for Public Worship. This text is from that collection and was originally entitled "Holiness Desired." It is Croly's only surviving hymn from that collection.

The tune, "Morecambe," was written by Frederick C. Atkinson, an English church organist, in 1870. It was originally intended for Henry Lyte's hymn, "Abide with Me." It is thought that the tune was named after an English town in Midland district where music festivals were held periodically.

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art;
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.*

*Hast Thou not bid me love Thee, God and King?
All, all Thine own, soul, heart and strength and mind.
I see Thy cross; there teach my heart to cling:
O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!*

*Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear.
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh,
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.*

*Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The kindling of the heaven descended Dove,
My heart an altar, and Thy love the flame.*