

“Tis So Sweet To Trust in Jesus” ~ Louisa Stead

The precious hymn of the church had its origin in the crucible of a tragic loss.

Louisa Stead (1850-1917), had planned a family outing with her husband and four-year-old daughter Lily at the beach on Long Island Sound. As the family was enjoying their picnic lunch they heard, coming from the sound, desperate cries for help. They spotted a young boy drowning in the sea. Mr. Stead rushed to rescue the boy, but, as often happens, the struggling and terrified child pulled his rescuer under the water with him. Both drowned as his horrified wife and daughter watched helplessly.

Louisa Stead struggled with the question of why her husband, who with her was committed to serving Christ, should lose his life in such a tragedy, leaving her and her daughter bereft and all of the promise of his life lost. She surrendered her doubts and despair and, in this dark hour of her life, composed the words that have been a comfort to many in times of stress and loss:

*'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus,
And to take Him at His Word;
Just to rest upon His promise,
And to know, "Thus says the Lord!"*

Refrain

*Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus!
O for grace to trust Him more!*

*O how sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just to trust His cleansing blood;
And in simple faith to plunge me
'Neath the healing, cleansing flood!*

Refrain

*Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus,
Just from sin and self to cease;
Just from Jesus simply taking
Life and rest, and joy and peace.*

Refrain

*I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee,
Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;
And I know that Thou art with me,
Wilt be with me to the end.*

Refrain

In the tragic drowning of her husband, a young wife and mother affirmed through her tears that there is comfort and grace in Christ. Louisa Stead, soon after the tragedy, went with her daughter to serve faithfully for twenty-five years as a missionary in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Her Missionary comrades in Southern Rhodesia wrote this tribute after her death: "Her influence goes on as our five thousand native Christians continually sing her hymn in their native language."

We too may be called upon to enter the bleak deserts of barrenness or the dark canyons of anguish. In such times we can also know the peace that comes through trust in the Saviour and go on to fruitful service for him. Trust will bring triumph. May we in our sunlit days, as well as in our darkest hours, know the sweetness, the serenity, and the strength that comes when we trust in Jesus.

-----From, *Songs in the Night* by Henry Garipey. Eerdmans Publishing.