

## The Life and Theology of John Newton

*"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be; but, by the grace of God, I am not what I was."*

**1725- Born**

**1736 – Begins sailing on slave ships with his father**

**1739ish – Two years of intense religious fervor.** *"I endeavored to renounce society, that I might avoid temptation. But it was a poor religion; so far as it prevailed, only tended to make me gloomy, stupid, unsociable, and useless."*

**1742 – Continues pagan ways, meets Mary Catlett**

**1742 - The Dream**

**Mid-late 1740s – Back to old ways.** *"I loved sin, and I was unwilling to forsake it."*

**1744 – Rejected by Catlett family. Court martialled**

**Late 1740s – Sierra Leone > Back on the slave ship** *"I have never met so daring a blasphemer. Not content with common oaths I daily invented new ones so that even the Captain, who was not a Christian, rebuked me."*

**1748 – Day of humiliation and "Deliverance."** *"I stood in need of an Almighty Saviour, and such a one I found described in the New Testament. The Lord had wrought a marvelous thing; I was no longer an infidel: I heartily renounced my former profaneness, and in all appearances I was a new man, yet I was still greatly deficient in many respects. I was little aware of the innate evils of my heart. I had no apprehension of the spirituality and extent of the law of God or of the hidden life of a Christian as it consists in communion with God by Jesus Christ, a continual dependence on him for hourly supplies of wisdom, strength, and comfort. I acknowledged the Lord's mercy in pardoning my past, but depended chiefly upon my resolution to do better for the time to come, for I had no Christian friend or minister to advise me. I did not hear evangelical preaching or conversation for six years."*

**1749 – Back to his old ways again.**

**1750 – Marriage to Mary. Goes sailing again.** *"Alas, I rested in the gift and forgot the Giver. My poor narrow heart was satisfied. A cold and careless frame as to spiritual things took place,"*

**1754 – Seizure. Quits slave trade. Preparation for ministry**

**1764 – Ordained. Begins ministry at Olney.** *"He was not eloquent. He had neither grace in his manner nor music in his voice to recommend him. His sermons were not the fruit of great study; indeed his preparation for the pulpit was too often very imperfect."*

**1767 – Begins friendship with William Cowper**

**1779 – Publishes "Olney Hymns"**

**1779 – Begins ministry in London**

**1780 – Publicly expresses regret about involvement in slave trade**

**1785 – Speaks out against slavery to help with the abolitionist movement**

**1807 – Death**

*"When I get to heaven I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be, to see many people there whom I did not expect to see—the second wonder will be, to miss many people whom I did expect to see; and the third and greatest wonder of all, will be to find myself there."*

*"I am not what I ought to be! How imperfect and deficient I am! I am not what I wish to be, although I abhor that which is evil and would cleave to what is good! I am not what I hope to be, but soon I shall be out of mortality, and with it all sin and imperfection. Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor yet what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was: a slave to sin and Satan. I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge that by the grace of God I am what I am! . . . Now let us pray!"*

*"Although my memory's fading, I remember two things very clearly: I am a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior."*

### **Begone Unbelief**

Begone unbelief, my Savior is near,  
And for my relief will surely appear:  
By faith let me wrestle, with God in the storm,  
And help me, my savior, my faith to adorn

Though dark be my way, since He is my Guide,  
'Tis mine to obey, 'tis His to provide;  
Though cisterns be broken, and creatures all fail  
The Word He has spoken shall surely prevail.

*Be gone, unbelief (the Savior is here)  
Though cisterns be broken, and creatures all fail  
The Word He has spoken shall surely prevail.*

Why should I complain of want or distress,  
Temptation or pain? He told me no less:  
The heirs of salvation, I know from His Word,  
Through much tribulation shall follow their Lord.

Since all that I meet shall work for my good,  
The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food;  
Though painful at present, wilt cease before long,  
And then, O! how glorious, the conqueror's song!

*[[His love in time past forbids me to think  
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;  
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,  
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite  
through.*

*Determined to save, He watched o'er my path,  
When Satan's blind slave, I sported with death;  
And can He have taught me to trust in His Name,  
And thus far have brought me, to put me to  
shame?]]*

### **No Sweeter Subject**

Now may the Lord reveal his face,  
And teach our stammering tongues  
To make his sovereign, reigning grace  
The subject of our songs.

No sweeter subject can invite  
A sinner's heart to sing,  
Or more display the glorious right  
Of our exalted King.

Grace reigns to pardon crimson sins,  
To melt the hardest hearts;  
And from the work it once begins  
It never once departs.

The world and Satan strive in vain  
Against the chosen few;  
Secured by grace's conquering reign,  
They all shall conquer too.

'Twas grace that called our souls at first;  
By grace thus far we've come;  
And grace will help us through the worst,  
And lead us safely home

### I Asked The Lord

I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In faith and love and every grace  
Might more of His salvation know  
And seek more earnestly His face

'Twas He who taught me thus to pray  
And He I trust has answered prayer  
But it has been in such a way  
As almost drove me to despair

I hoped that in some favored hour  
At once He'd answer my request  
And by His love's constraining power  
Subdue my sins and give me rest

Instead of this He made me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart  
And let the angry powers of Hell  
Assault my soul in every part

Yea more with His own hand He seemed  
Intent to aggravate my woe  
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,  
Cast out my feelings, laid me low

Lord why is this, I trembling cried  
Wilt Thou pursue thy worm to death?  
"Tis in this way" The Lord replied  
"I answer prayer for grace and faith"

"These inward trials I employ  
From self and pride to set thee free  
And break thy schemes of earthly joy  
That thou mayest seek thy all in me,  
That thou mayest seek thy all in me."

### Of a Rebel Made a Son

Saved by blood I live to tell,  
What the blood of Christ hath done;  
He redeemed my soul from hell,  
Of a rebel made a son:  
O, I tremble still, to think  
How secure I lived in sin;  
Sporting on destruction's brink,  
Yet preserved from falling in.

In His own appointed hour,  
To my heart the Savior spoke,  
Touched me by His Spirit's power,  
And my dangerous slumber broke.  
Then I saw and owned my guilt.  
Soon my gracious Lord replied,  
"Fear not, I my blood have spilt,  
'Twas for such as thee I died."

Shame and wonder, joy and love,  
All at once possessed my heart;  
Can I hope Thy grace to prove,  
After acting such a part?  
"Thou hast greatly sinned," He said,  
"But I freely all forgive;  
I myself thy debt have paid,  
Now I bid thee rise and live."

Come, my fellow-sinners, try,  
Jesus' heart is full of love;  
Oh that you, as well as I,  
May His wondrous mercy prove!  
He has sent me to declare,  
All is ready, all is free;  
Why should any soul despair,  
When He saved a wretch like me?

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home*