

Anthem Notes for January 29, 2017

My Soul Finds Rest Stuart Townend, Aaron Keyes

*My soul finds rest in God alone,
My Rock and my salvation,
a fortress strong against my foes,
and I will not be shaken.
Though lips may bless and hearts may curse,
And lies like arrows pierce me,
I'll fix my heart on righteousness,
I'll look to Him who hears me.
O praise Him, hallelujah, My Delight and my Reward;
Everlasting, never failing, My Redeemer, my God.*

*Find rest, my soul, in God alone
Amid the worlds temptations;
When evil seeks to take a hold
I'll cling to my salvation.
Though riches come and riches go,
don't set your heart upon them;
the fields of hope in which I sow
Are harvested in heaven.
O praise Him, hallelujah, My Delight and my Reward;
Everlasting, never failing, My Redeemer, my God.*

*I'll set my gaze on God alone,
and trust in Him completely;
with every day pour out my soul,
And He will prove His mercy.
Though life is but a fleeting breath,
a sigh too brief to measure,
My King has crushed the curse of death
and I am His forever.
O praise Him, hallelujah, My Delight and my Reward;
Everlasting, never failing, My Redeemer, my God.*

This morning's anthem is a choral arrangement of a recently composed 'new hymn' written as a collaboration by Aaron Keyes and Stuart Townend. The text is based on Psalm 62, a Psalm of assurance that God is our refuge, our rock and our salvation, on whom we can trust completely. The anthem text closely mirrors the Psalm text as found in the first two verses of the Psalm in the New International Version of the Bible:

¹ Truly my soul finds rest in God;
my salvation comes from him.

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² Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will never be shaken.

The melody for this anthem is gentle, almost ballad like, except for the refrain, which is a strong statement of praise in straightforward four-part harmony. Arranger Craig Courtney introduces the anthem with phrases from the familiar—and ancient—hymn tune *Lasst Uns Erfreuen*, most commonly known as “All Creatures of Our God and King.” We hear snippets of that hymn towards the end of the anthem when the choir alternates in singing “O praise Him”—a phrase which is taken directly from “All Creatures of our God and King.” The anthem presents some minor rhythmic challenges since the meter alternates between 5/4 and 3/4, but it closes in a strong statement, firmly in 3/4 meter.

The text and melody are a collaboration between the well-known English contemporary musician Stuart Townend and an American contemporary musician from Georgia named Aaron Keyes.

Townend is one of the leading worship songwriters of his generation. He is known for creating new hymns in a contemporary idiom that are singable and which are becoming accepted in the broader Church's repertoire. Some of his new hymns are being included in mainline hymnals and choral repertoires.



Stuart Townend

Townend, who is the son of an Anglican vicar, believes that current worship practices have tended to focus so heavily on subjective experience and personal feelings, that the proclamation of objective, life-changing truths about God and our position in Christ is often ignored. He seeks to redress that imbalance and provide corporate worship music that faithfully proclaims the great truths about God, the stories of the Bible, the seriousness of sin, and the beauty of the gospel of grace. He leads worship in a pioneering a distinctive style of acoustic folk that sets his music apart from the mainstream ‘rock worship’ style that dominates much contemporary music.

Aaron Keyes served as the worship pastor for ten years at Grace Fellowship Church in Atlanta. He now serves at The Church of the Apostles in Atlanta. He also travels with his band nationally & internationally, leading worship and training worship leaders.



Aaron Keyes