

Rockin' My Soul – by the Hand of God



Righteous ways (vv.12-13)



Real Presence (vv.14-17)



Revealed glory (vv.18-23)

In the name of Christ, the Rock, dearly redeemed children of God:

Students who grew up in politically correct America would naturally think of steel guitars and drums whenever they think of “rockin’.” But I went to school when we could still respectfully talk about “Negro spirituals,” like “Rockin’ My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham.” We were taught that African-American slaves sang these songs while working the fields of their white masters before President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation and the Civil War ended slavery in America. But I believe that many African-American Christians continued to sing these songs the way my six siblings and I did because their simple words in many cases express God’s truth. Here is a beautiful word picture of the peace we have in Jesus as our Savior: a baby rocking in its mother’s arms. As our souls find rest in God alone, it’s worth our time and attention. **Rockin’ My Soul – by the Hand of God.** Truly His are...



Righteous ways (vv.12-13)

The lack of rest in the American soul is closely related to the disappearance of the Ten Commandments from our courtrooms. Sadly, the true lesson of God’s law is long gone from American churches. If American churches had been faithful proclaiming the Ten Commandments God’s way from the Bible, no one would question their presence in our courtrooms as the basis of American law.

God wants us to have rest in our souls **by the Hand of God.** So He has to take us back to Mount Sinai and show how powerless the Ten Commandments were to keep the Israelites from sinning. The basic stipulations of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament for Gentiles too, but we need to know how to use them properly or there are catastrophic results for body and soul.

If terror could make people obey God, Sinai was the place. The LORD God came down on the mountain in thunder and lightning and a heavy dark cloud. Moses himself said, **“I am trembling with fear.”** (Hebrews 12:21) The Israelites begged Moses to speak to God and relay His message to them so that they would not have to see such a terrifying sight again. These Israelites had also witnessed just three months earlier the Ten Plagues that nearly destroyed Egypt convincing Pharaoh to let God’s people go. And when Pharaoh trapped all 2-3 million of them on the shore of the Red Sea, these Israelites had walked through overnight on a wide path that lured the Egyptians to drowning when the sea returned. If miracles and fear could make people obey, Sinai should have done it all the way.

But it took only 40 days with Moses on the mountain for the whole nation to break the First Commandment worshipping the golden calf. God threatened to destroy them all and make Moses into a great nation. But Moses appealed to God’s Name-reputation. What would the Egyptians think? Now Moses asks for divine guidance to rest in God’s grace. ***Moses said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, ‘I know you by name and you have found favor with me.’ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people.”***

His request exposes our sin. We charge into far too many days with barely a prayer to God for help. When we run into a problem, our first thought is “What am I going to do?” instead of, “God help

me!” We choose our own ways in spite of all that the LORD has done for us. We too are stubborn and rebellious, daily giving God every reason to destroy us in the eternal fires of hell. Our sin makes God’s **Righteous ways** a terror to our souls with no **Rockin’ my Soul** at all. But God has a solution for sin.



Real Presence (vv.14-17)

If every American could face up to the fact that we repeatedly break God’s commands and deserve individually and as a nation to suffer eternal destruction, then we would be well on our way to God’s deliverance. Because the kind of God He is, the LORD always wants to help and heal rather than destroy.

Try to imagine how Moses and the Israelites felt when God got so angry that He said literally, “My face will not go with you.” The entire nation broke down and wept that the **Real Presence** of God would not be there. God had promised to send His Angel to lead them and destroy all the armies attacking front and rear until they rested safe and sound in the Promised Land. Not having Him was worse than losing your entire Air Force just when war breaks out and having no factories or engineers to rebuild. Distressed Moses said, *“If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?”*

Isn’t that still true today? If you have to face life without God, or you think God is scowling at you because of something you said or did or failed to do, who can sleep or eat or feel happy – unless you fool yourself into thinking God doesn’t care about sin. God wants you the way you are, but first to clean you by His gracious forgiveness. And He doesn’t want us fighting Him like little babies wailing to take a bath. He does not want us questioning whether His Word-powered water can wash away sins when He says, *“Baptism doth also now save us.”* (1 Peter 3:21 KJV) And He certainly does not want us seeing only a symbol when He says, *“This is my body....This is my blood...”* in His Holy Supper. God wants us to snuggling close to His **Real Presence** like a baby resting in his mother’s arms. Then we can appreciate how *the LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest....I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”*



Revealed glory (vv.18-23)

In humble faith Moses asks, *“Now show me your glory.”* We can’t see all of God’s glory any more than Moses could, for *“no one may see me and live.”* We can only see God and live to tell about it if we see His **glory Revealed** in the face of Jesus Christ. And as the LORD Jesus kindly hid Moses in a cleft of the rock while covering him with His hand, so we sing,

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood From thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure: Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.*

If you honestly our failings under the Ten Commandments, then it’s only natural for faith to sing,

*Not the labors of my hands Can fulfill thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save and thou alone.*

We too find rest in God alone and don’t even want to try to earn our own way into heaven. We come as beggars before Him, as children and infants crying out,

*Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress, Helpless, look to thee for grace.
Foul, I to the fountain fly -- Wash me, Savior, or I die!*

From this mountain of God where Christ comforts us with His Gospel of forgiveness, we see life in a whole new way. While I'm **Rockin' My Soul – by the Hand of God**, He's "rockin'" my life with His grace, His mercy, His power to love as I've been loved, to forgive as I've been forgiven. Instead of terror to run from God's law, I have thankfulness in Jesus to keep it more and more day by day. There is no greater life than the life we have by faith in Jesus as our Savior. When we put our trust in His perfect life and innocent death in our place, God gives us Christ-credit for keeping all Ten Commandments and every other law God ever made which can all be summed up in love for God and love for neighbor. This Good News wakes us up with joy in the morning and tucks us in with peace at night. We do good works not because we must, but because we can and because we want to for Jesus' sake.

Again, the hymn writer said it for all of us bound for heaven's glory,

*While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown, See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee!*

And there, dear friends, we will forever enjoy God's true peace and promised rest. For then we shall see Him as He is in all His glory, fully, face-to-face to live in bliss forever. This is as true and solid as the Rock of Ages, Jesus Christ. Amen.