



by Shari Miller

## What one hymn is a favorite of yours? Why?

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When I was young, I would accompany my father as he led worship in nursing homes on Sunday afternoons. As a young pianist, I was there to offer musical support for the service. He would periodically ask for suggestions from the group on what song to sing. I could predict with certainty that one of those hymns would be “How Great Thou Art!” — even before it became part of our Lutheran hymnody. Often poetry and song combine to make a meaningful hymn. Why do you suppose that this once relatively obscure Swedish poem by minister Carl Boberg, partnered with a traditional Swedish folk tune, is now a favorite of many? Look it up in *Lutheran Service Book*, page 801, for the words.

During this Bible study, we will look at the timeless truth that our Lord — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — is truly great. We will rejoice in our loving God’s greatness and praise Him for the great things He has done for us.

## Opening Prayer

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*Dear Father, We thank You for creating us and the awesome world where we live. We are sorry for the times we have sinned against You and have separated ourselves from You. We have marred that perfect creation that You called “very good.” Thank You for Your great love for us in sending Jesus to be our Savior from sin. We praise You for Your Word and Sacraments. Thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit who enables us to share the Good News of Jesus with those in our lives, in our communities, and even into the world. Bless our study of Your Word. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.*

## How Great Is Our God!

What do these passages reveal about the greatness of our God?

**Deuteronomy 7:21** \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Samuel 7:20–22** \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Chronicles 16:25; 29:10–13** \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 48:1; 95:3; 99:2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 145:3** \_\_\_\_\_

In the first verse of “How Great Thou Art,” the author pens the words: “O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder . . .” The word “awesome” is used (or misused) frequently in today’s jargon

and can be synonymous with the word “great.” For example, we might have an awesome experience, an awesome car, or even an awesome outfit. In the Bible, the word awesome is used over 30 times. Most of the time, and perhaps all the time, it is used in connection with God: Who He is or what He has done, has made, or will do for His people. In **Deuteronomy 10:17a**, what words or phrases are used to describe God? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Faith Talk

Share with a partner or the small group how you would describe your great God. Be specific. See **Psalms 68:35** for additional help.

## Great Things He Has Done!

Many Scripture passages connect the greatness of God with what He has done. Read the following examples. Identify what great things God has done in these verses:

**Genesis 1:1, 31a** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deuteronomy 7:6–10; 17–21** \_\_\_\_\_

1 Chronicles 16:8–9; 12–22 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 92 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 118:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 15:3–4 \_\_\_\_\_

### If Time Permits

Share with a partner or the small group your favorite place in God's creation and why.

The third verse of the hymn "How Great Thou Art" begins with these words, "But when I think that God, His Son not sparing ..." This verse is pivotal as it tells the Good News of the great act of our loving Father in sending His Son Jesus to live a perfect life, suffer, and die to free us from our bondage to sin. Identify phrases in the following Bible verses that speak of this salvation:

Psalms 40:11–12; 16–17 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 145:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 53:5–6 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 1:31–33 \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:1–10 \_\_\_\_\_

Titus 2:11–14 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Our great Lord and Savior did not stay dead, but arose, so that we who believe in Him will be raised to new and eternal life in heaven with Him. The fourth hymn verse of "How Great Thou Art" continues with these words: "When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart ..." Read **Ephesians 1:15–23**; **1 Thessalonians 4:16–17**; and **1 Peter 1:3**. How do these verses describe the Christ's resurrection from the dead ... and yours? \_\_\_\_\_

### Faith Talk

Share with a partner or the small group the importance of knowing about the greatness of Jesus' resurrection in your daily life.

How does the Good News of Jesus — His life, death, and resurrection — as well as the certainty of your own resurrection because of Jesus, motivate your actions?

What gifts does the Holy Spirit give to His Church to give us faith and to strengthen and nurture that faith?

### Then Sings My Soul!

"Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee. How great Thou art, how great Thou art!" This certainly sums up the Christian's response to the great things God has done! Each verse of the hymn ends with this refrain. How do the following Scripture passages reaffirm this hymn phrase?

1 Chronicles 16:8–9, 24–36 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 40:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 92:1–4 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 145:1–3 \_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 66:1–4 \_\_\_\_\_

### Faith Talk

Share with the small group one great thing that the Lord has done for you.

### Faith Walk

1. Sing the hymns heartily during your worship services this month. Think about the words and thank God for giving this gift of music to you.
2. By the power of the Spirit, rejoice in your salvation in Christ and share the joy of your salvation with a special woman in your life.
3. Use a Bible concordance and meditate on the many Scripture verses that contain the words "great" and "awesome."
4. Memorize the words to the hymn, "How Great Thou Art," during the next month.
5. Read **Psalms 136** for a praise account of the great things God has done.
6. Make a list of the great things God has done in your life.

### Closing Prayer (from Psalms 145 and Jude 24–25):

Leader: I will extol You, my God and King,

**Group: And bless Your name forever and ever.**

Leader: Every day I will bless You

**Group: And praise Your name forever and ever.**

Leader: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised.

**Group: I will declare Your greatness.**

Leader: Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority,

**Group: Before all time and now and forever. Amen.**

### Closing

Sing together "How Great Thou Art" (LSB #801).