

# ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS



"Onward, Christian Soldiers" is a hymn from the 19th century that remains popular today. The hymn's theme is taken from references in the New Testament to the Christian being a soldier for Christ, for example, 2 Timothy 2:3 (KJV): "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." It was written to encourage Christians in their ongoing battles with temptations within themselves and the evil forces throughout the world.

## **LYRICS:**

1. Onward, Christian soldiers,  
marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus  
going on before!  
Christ, the royal Master,  
leads against the foe;  
Forward into battle,  
see his banner go!

Refrain:

Onward, Christian soldiers,  
marching as to war,  
With the cross of Jesus  
going on before!

2. At the sign of triumph  
Satan's host doth flee;  
On, then, Christian soldiers,  
on to victory!  
Hell's foundations quiver  
at the shout of praise;  
Brothers, lift your voices,  
loud your anthems raise! [Refrain]

3. Like a mighty army  
moves the church of God;  
Brothers, we are treading  
where the saints have trod;  
We are not divided;  
all one body we,  
One in hope and doctrine,  
one in charity. [Refrain]

4. Onward, then, ye people,  
join our happy throng,  
Blend with ours your voices  
in the triumph song;  
Glory, laud, and honor,  
unto Christ the King;  
This thro' countless ages  
men and angels sing. [Refrain]

**Songwriters** Sabine Baring-Gould **Published by** Public Domain

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## The Story Behind Onward, Christian Soldiers

"[Onward, Christian Soldiers](#)" is a 19th-century English hymn. The words were written by Sabine Baring-Gould in 1865, and the music was composed by Arthur Sullivan in 1871. Sullivan named the tune "St. Gertrude," after the wife of his friend Ernest Clay Ker Seymer, at whose country home he composed the tune. The Salvation Army adopted the hymn as its favored processional. The piece became Sullivan's most popular hymn.

The lyric was written as a processional hymn for children walking from Horbury Bridge to Horbury St Peter's Church near Wakefield, Yorkshire, at Whitsuntide in 1865. It was originally entitled, "Hymn for Procession with Cross and Banners." According to the Centre for Church Music, Baring-Gould reportedly wrote "Onward, Christian Soldiers" in about 15 minutes, later apologizing, "It was written in great haste, and I am afraid that some of the lines are faulty." He later allowed hymn-book compilers to alter the lyrics. For example, The Fellowship Hymn Book, with his permission, changed the phrase "one in hope and doctrine" to "one in hope and purpose." For the 1909 edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern, he changed the fifth line of the same verse from "We are not divided" to "Though divisions harass." However, Baring-Gould's original words are used in most modern hymnals.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Heavenly father we thank you for your continued protection and care for us as we begin a new day. We want to offer our lives to you Lord. To be used as you see fit. Lord we have plans and ambitions not only for today but for the coming weeks months and years. Lord we know that our wisdom is foolishness. Therefore, father we want to filter all our plans and ideas through you, that they may be purified and refined and sanctified. Be with us and guide our thoughts and our feelings this morning. May all that we do and say be pleasing in your sight. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

## *Live in Harmony With Heaven*

**Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

**Matthew 5:48. {UL 47.1}**

God gave Daniel and his companions “knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams” (**Daniel 1:17**).... Babylon was at this time the greatest kingdom in the world. God permitted Daniel and his companions to be taken captive that they might take to the king and nobles of Babylon the knowledge of Him, the only true God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. **God brought Daniel into favor with the prince of the eunuchs because he behaved himself. He kept before him the fear of the Lord.** His companions never saw in his life anything that would lead them astray. Those who had charge over him loved him, because he carried with him the fragrance of a Christlike disposition.... {UL 47.2}

**God cooperates with human effort.** Daniel might have said, “Of course, I must eat as the king commands.” But instead, he resolved to obey God, and God began at once to help him. **So when you are determined that you will obey the divine command, God will cooperate with you, making you witnesses of which Heaven approves....** {UL 47.3}

You know not in what position you may be placed. **God may use you as He used Daniel to take the knowledge of the truth to the mighty of the earth. It rests with you to say whether you will have knowledge and skill. God can give you skill in all your learning.** He can help you to adapt yourselves to the line of study you shall take up. Place yourselves in right relation to God. Make this your first interest.... {UL 47.4}

**God desires you to be witnesses for Him.** He desires you to draw in right lines. As you do this, He will give you skill and wisdom and understanding. **You will advance step by step, for God does not want you to stand still.** He wants you to run in the way of His commandments, constantly moving forward and upward. {UL 47.5}

**God is connected with the threads of our existence.** He knows every thought of the heart, every action of the life. Then, **strive to live in harmony with Him. Seek to reach a high standard....** Heavenly angels will help you, and more than that, Christ will help you. **The Prince of life is more interested than anyone else in your salvation.** You can do Him honor by showing that you appreciate what He has done for you. You can glorify Him and make the angels glad by revealing in your life that He has not died in vain. **Be determined that opposite your names in the books of heaven shall be written the word “Overcomer.”** Then all discontent and unhappiness will vanish. Your hearts will be filled with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.—**Manuscript 13, February 2, 1900, “Words to Students.”** {UL 47.6}

# Top 10 Fitness Facts

Want to be sharper at work? Feel less tired at home? Spend some quality time with your spouse?

If you answered "yes" to these questions (and who wouldn't?), exercise is the answer.

Being physically active offers benefits far beyond the obvious. (Of course, an improved physique and a clean bill of health aren't too shabby, either.)

If you've been looking for the motivation to begin an exercise program or get back into working out regularly, here are 10 fitness facts that may help inspire you to get off the couch.

## **1 Exercise Boosts Brainpower**

Not only does exercise improve your body, it helps your mental function, says certified trainer David Atkinson.

"Exercise increases energy levels and increases serotonin in the brain, which leads to improved mental clarity," says Atkinson, director of program development for Cooper Ventures, a division of the Cooper Aerobics Center in Dallas.

All that makes for a more productive day.

"It is clear that those who are active and who exercise are much more productive at work," says Todd A. Astorino, assistant professor of kinesiology at California State University-San Marcos.

Improved productivity not only makes you a better worker, it makes things better for everyone in the workplace. Companies with less wasted work hours and less sick time end up with lower health care costs -- and an improved bottom line, Astorino says.

## **2. Movement Melts Away Stress**

As much as it may stress you out just to think about exercising, once you actually start working out, you'll experience less stress in every part of your life.

"Exercise produces a relaxation response that serves as a positive distraction," says Cedric Bryant, chief exercise physiologist for the American Council on Exercise. He says it also helps elevate your mood and keep depression at bay.

You're not the only person who will benefit from more happiness and less stress in your life. When you're less stressed, you're less irritable, Atkinson says -- and that could improve relationships with your partner, kids, and co-workers.

### **3. Exercise Gives You Energy**

You might be surprised at how, say, popping in a workout tape for 30 minutes in the morning can change your whole day. When endorphins are released into your bloodstream during exercise, says Astorino, "you feel much more energized the rest of the day."

And when you improve your strength and stamina, it's easier to accomplish everyday tasks like carrying groceries and climbing stairs. This also helps you feel more energetic over the course of the day.

A common excuse among Atkinson's clients is that they're too tired to exercise, he says. While exercise may make you feel more tired at first, he says, that won't last long.

The physical tiredness you feel after working out isn't the same as everyday fatigue, he says. Besides, once your body adjusts to exercise, you'll have more energy than ever.

### **4. It's Not That Hard to Find Time for Fitness**

#### **5. Fitness Can Help Build Relationships**

Think of what exercising with a partner can do for a relationship, whether it's with a spouse, a sibling, or a friend you used to go to lunch with once a week.

Not only that, says Astorino, but exercise is always more fun when there's someone to do it with. So plan to walk with your spouse after dinner every night. Meet your sister or that friend for tennis or an aerobics class instead of lunch.

Besides, Astorino says, people who have exercise partners stay with their programs and reach their goals more often than those who try to go it alone.

"For long-term weight loss, you need to have social support," Astorino says.

### **6. Exercise Helps Ward Off Disease**

Research has shown that exercise can slow or help prevent heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, arthritis, osteoporosis (bone loss), and loss of muscle mass, says Astorino.

It also helps ease some aspects of the aging process.

"Because exercise strengthens the muscles and joints, it is going to reduce your odds of having some of those aches and pains and problems most adults have, mostly because of the inactive lives they lead," Bryant says.

Provided you don't overdo it, he says, exercise can even boost immune function -- so you spend less time down with a cold or flu.

"There isn't a major health problem where exercise cannot have a positive effect," says Bryant.

## **7. Fitness Pumps Up Your Heart**

Not only does exercise help fight disease, says Bryant, it creates a stronger heart -- the most important muscle in the body. That helps makes exercise -- and the activities of daily life -- feel easier.

"Your heart and cardiovascular system will function more effectively," says Bryant. "The heart will build up less plaque. It will become a more efficient pump."

And "when the heart becomes stronger, it pumps more blood per beat, so at rest, the heart rate is lower," says Astorino. "It's not going to have to beat as fast" to expend the same amount of effort.

Within only a couple days after you start exercising, Astorino says, "the body readily adapts to the stimulus it's getting and it becomes easier. You will feel less fatigue. It will not take as much effort when it comes to breathing. You shouldn't have as much pain or soreness."

## **8. Exercise Lets You Eat More**

Pound for pound, muscle burns more calories at rest than body fat. So the more muscle you have, the higher your resting metabolic rate. And, of course, you also burn calories while you're actually exercising.

All this means that "cheating" with a cookie once in a while isn't going to take you back 10 steps. "Can you eat anything? No," says Atkinson. "But you can afford to enjoy some of the things you really like when you exercise regularly. You can better get away with those things in moderation than you can when you're not working out."

## **9. Exercise Boosts Performance**

After a few weeks of consistent exercise, you may feel your clothes fitting differently and see that your muscle tone has improved, Atkinson says.

You may also notice your newly pumped-up muscles in other ways, especially if you're a recreational golfer or tennis player, or like a friendly game of pick-up basketball, says Atkinson. Exercising consistently will strengthen your muscles, increase flexibility, and improve your overall performance.

"Your muscles will work much more efficiently and you'll gain a greater sense of endurance," says Bryant. In addition, he says, your reaction time and balance will improve.

## **10. Weight Loss Is Not the Most Important Goal**

Weight loss is the reason many people exercise in the first place. But it's certainly not the sole benefit of an exercise program.

Bryant says the long-term goal of weight loss is sold too heavily to people starting fitness programs, and that can be discouraging. People have trouble sticking with something if they don't see results quickly.

"Really, they should think about the level of functioning in the activities of daily living," says Bryant. "That can serve as the motivation to keep them coming back for more."

So whatever weight loss goal you have when starting a fitness program, don't make it your only goal. Strive to feel better, to have more energy, to be less stressed. Notice the small things that exercise does for you quickly, rather than getting hung up on the narrow goal of the number on a scale.

"With a goal of losing weight and enhancing health, exercise has to become a part of a person's life, not an afterthought," ....

**CLOSING THOUGHTS:** God is connected with the threads of our existence. He knows every thought of the heart, every action of the life. Then, **strive to live in harmony with Him. Seek to reach a high standard.**....Heavenly angels will help you, and more than that, [Christ will help you](#).

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Holy Father, thank you for all you have been doing in our lives. We know that we are unworthy to be in your presence at this time. Forgive us our weaknesses and shortcomings Lord. Today, while it is still today, we ask for the blessing of your Holy Spirit. To try us, to change us, to help us Father, to be all that you are raising us up to be. We ask this pray in Jesus name, Amen.