

Lord, Here Am I

*Master Thou callest I gladly obey
Only direct me and I'll find Thy way
Teach me the mission appointed for me
What is my labor and where it shall be*

*Willing my Savior to take up the cross
Willing to suffer reproaches and loss
Willing to follow if Thou will but lead
Only support me with grace in my need*

*Master Thou callest and this I reply
Ready and willing Lord here am I*

You may never have heard of Fanny Crosby, but there's a good chance that you've heard and sung some of her hymns. During her lifetime (1820-1915), she wrote the words to more than 8,000 songs. Though most have passed into obscurity, a few are in our Baptist hymnal. "*To God Be the Glory*," "*Blessed Assurance*," "*I Am Thine, O Lord*" are just a few of the many hymns she has written. "*Lord, Here Am I*" has become my favorite hymn and will always have a place in my heart.

Six weeks after Frances Jane Crosby was born, a medical error left her blind. Her father died a year later, and the family was poor, yet her mother and grandmother made sure that Fanny was educated. Crosby began her education before Braille was available and never used the system. Fanny studied and taught at the New York Institution for the blind. Her grandmother helped her to memorize long passages of the Bible. As a result, Fanny always could draw upon scripture, even though she could not pick up a Bible to read it.

Fanny Crosby will probably always be best known for her hymns, yet she wanted to be seen primarily as a rescue mission servant. Her desire was not to be remembered as a celebrated gospel songwriter, but that of a city mission worker. Many of Fanny's hymns emerged from her involvement in city missions like "*Rescue the Perishing*" which became the theme song of the home missions movement. There is no reference as to when she wrote "*Lord, Here Am I*" but it is likely that it was during this time as she served in the rescue mission.

The scripture reference in our hymnal is Isaiah 6:8, "*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'*" May our heart's desire grow stronger in support and service to mission work locally, nationwide, and internationally. Our Lord has commissioned us to "GO" and my prayer is that we would answer like Isaiah and Fanny Crosby by responding, "*Lord, Here Am I!*"

Fight the Good Fight,

Bro. Andrew