

## **Amazing Grace! how sweet the sound.**

In Olney, England, the parish church of Saints Peter and Paul was built in the fourteenth century. In the corner is a grave, the tombstone engraved with these words:

John Newton. Clerk: once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa, was by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ preserved, restored, pardoned and appointed to preach the faith he had long laboured to destroy.

Newton was the son of a sea captain who sailed the Mediterranean. His mother died when he was six. He became a sailor with his father when he was eleven. His young life was filled with rebellion, immorality, and debauchery. He was rejected by his father, in trouble with his employers, and jailed. Later he sailed on slave ships when as a result of a storm he almost lost his life. It was during this time he was converted. He became a cleric at age 39 and gave his life to the service of the church.

The hymn Amazing Grace is the song of his testimony.

When he was older, he said "My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a Great Saviour.

Amazing Grace how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear,  
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers toils and snares,  
I have already come.  
'Tis grace hath bought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise,  
Than when we first begun.