



# Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour

hymn study guide with audio



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Welcome to Helping Hymns.

Firstly, a quick introduction (and a confession). I'm Erin — pastor's wife, worship director, and homeschooling mom. When I was in junior high, I quit piano lessons, much to my mother's dismay (she had just sacrificially purchased a brand new Yamaha piano that was probably way beyond her single-mom budget at the time!). My piano teacher had seen potential in me and pushed me a little too hard, and I lost any interest in playing classical music as a result. Thankfully, soon afterwards, I was drawn back to the piano by my pastor's daughter who offered to give me lessons using music I could play at church. She had an amazing singing voice, and I loved learning to play contemporary songs to accompany her. She also taught me how to play hymns. We sang a lot of them in my church growing up. She showed me ways to make the accompaniment in the hymnal sound a little fuller, and thus began my adventure with worship music. I have been leading worship for over twenty years, but it all began with nervously playing hymns for our Sunday evening services in my early teens.

We still sing some hymns in our church, although we sing lots of modern hymns and worship songs too. A heart-song of praise to God isn't good just because it's old! But the old ones are worth sifting through; there are a lot of gems that have stood the test of time. They are filled with truth that I want to plant deep in my children's hearts. And, like folk songs, their easily singable melodies (and harmonies) make them a perfect choice for family worship, which often encompasses a vast range of ages and musical abilities. Hymn study is a chance to furnish our minds with truth and goodness and beauty that will serve us in sunshine or shadow. We can reach for them when our spirit rises in worship at the sight of God's magnificence in creation. We can also hum them in our deepest, darkest valleys and prophetically preach their truths to our own hurting hearts.

Secondly, a word about how this guide works. Let me reassure you that simply singing the hymn is enough! You might choose to sing it each school day for the whole month. Or maybe you'd like to alternate with a folksong. Or maybe you can only fit it in one morning per week. That's fine. Do what works for you and your family's schedule!

The linked mp3 file, which will play when you click , is a simple version of the hymn with just piano and voice, very easy to follow and sing along with.

I have also included a copy of the sheet music so you can follow along and watch the timing and where the melody is going. (Please note that it may not match the key of the audio file if I have lowered it to a more comfortable range.)

If you want more to engage with, I've given suggestions for each week to “do, discuss, or dig a little deeper.”

There are links to audio files and scripture references in this study guide, and for this reason, it works well for the homeschool mom who uses her phone or tablet or laptop during Morning Time. If that's not you, then by all means print it out, download the music file ahead of time, and look up the Bible verses in your Bible.

I hope these hymn study helps will give you everything you need at your fingertips to make hymn singing a hassle free experience in your homeschool!

In His Sight,



Sources consulted in the preparation of this study guide:

[hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org)

Wikipedia

Then Sings My Soul by Robert J. Morgan

Baptist Hymnal

[lifewayworship.com](http://lifewayworship.com)



# Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour

Words: Fanny J. Crosby

Music: William H. Doane



Frances Jane Crosby  
1820-1915

1. Pass me not, O gen - tle Sav - ior, Hear my hum - ble cry;  
 2. Let me at Thy throne of mer - cy Find a sweet re - lief;  
 3. Trust - ing on - ly in Thy mer - it, Would I seek Thy face;  
 4. Thou, the spring of all my com - fort, More than life to me,

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,  
 Hear my humble cry;  
 While on others Thou art calling,  
 Do not pass me by.  
 Saviour, Saviour,  
 Hear my humble cry;  
 While on others Thou art calling,  
 Do not pass me by.

While on oth - ers Thou art call - ing, Do not pass me by.  
 Kneel - ing there in deep con - tri - tion, Help my un - be - lief.  
 Heal my wound - ed, bro - ken spir - it, Save me by Thy grace.  
 Whom have I on earth be - side Thee? Whom in heav'n but Thee?

Let me at Thy throne of mercy  
 Find a sweet relief;  
 Kneeling there in deep contrition,  
 Help my unbelief.  
 Saviour, Saviour,  
 Hear my humble cry;  
 While on others Thou art calling,  
 Do not pass me by.

*Chorus*

Sav - ior, Sav - ior, Hear my hum - ble cry;

Trusting only in Thy merit,  
 Would I seek Thy face;  
 Heal my wounded, broken spirit,  
 Save me by Thy grace.  
 Saviour, Saviour,  
 Hear my humble cry;  
 While on others Thou art calling,  
 Do not pass me by.

While on oth - ers Thou art call - ing, Do not pass me by.

Thou, the spring of all my comfort,  
 More than life to me,  
 Whom have I on earth beside Thee?  
 Whom in heav'n but Thee?  
 Saviour, Saviour,  
 Hear my humble cry;  
 While on others Thou art calling,  
 Do not pass me by.



## Week 1 Notes for Mom

Many hymns were first written as poems. Before listening to this month's selection, you might want to read the lyrics through together as a poem first. Next, click to listen to a simple version of the hymn and begin to learn the tune.

### Discuss. Do. Dig a little deeper.

Talk about what stood out to you.  
Are there any words you don't understand?  
What did you like?  
Was there anything you didn't like?  
Did this song remind you of anything?

Read [Luke 18:35-43](#). Discuss how this story may have inspired the lyrics of this month's hymn.



## Week 2 Notes for Mom

"Pass Me Not, O Gentle Saviour" was written by one of the most prolific hymnists in history, an American woman named Frances Jane Crosby. As a baby, Fanny received treatment for an eye infection that left her blind for the rest of her life. Fanny wrote thousands of hymns, but it might not always be obvious which ones are her creations. She was so prolific in her hymn writing that she published many of them under pen names. She had as many as fifty pseudonyms!

### Discuss. Do. Dig a little deeper.

Do you have an atlas or globe or wall map handy? Fanny was born in Brewster, New York in 1820 and died in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1915. Can you locate these places?

Do you keep a Book of Centuries or a timeline? What other events in world history have you learned about from the same time that Fanny lived?



## Week 3 Notes for Mom

Shortly after Fanny became blind, her father died. Her mother was then forced to go to work, leaving Fanny in the care of her grandmother who read to her extensively from the Bible and encouraged her to memorize scripture. Fanny had an incredible memory and attributed this keen ability to memorize to her lack of sight. Her first poem was published in 1831. At eight years old she wrote...

"O what a happy soul am I!  
Although I cannot see,  
I am resolved that in this world  
Contented I will be.  
How many blessings I enjoy,  
That other people don't;  
To weep and sigh because I'm blind,  
I cannot and I won't."

### Discuss. Do. Dig a little deeper.

Hymns continue to be "reimagined" by modern musicians. Sometimes they change the melody completely or add a new refrain. Here are a few versions of this month's hymn for you to compare:

- by Fernando Ortega
- by Red Mountain Church
- by Don Moen
- by The Booth Brothers
- by Bart Millard
- by Eric Reed (a jazzy instrumental version)



## Week 4 Notes for Mom

In the final verse of our hymn we get a glimpse of Fanny's devotion to her Saviour. He was her one aim in this life and the next. She once said, "When I get to heaven, the first face that shall ever gladden my sight will be that of my Saviour!" In her 95th year she went to her heavenly home. All those years she had lived without something we probably take for granted when we wake up everyday — sight! Yet she once said that, "If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

### Discuss. Do. Dig a little deeper.

Have you ever lost something? Did it cause you to look to God for help or comfort or guidance?

With older children you could discuss the following George MacDonald quote about losing things, maybe having them journal about the idea of how losing something can drive us to seek that thing in God.

With little ones, perhaps talk about Fanny's perspective on her blindness, that it kept her praise and attention from being preoccupied by anything but God. Have you ever thought about why we bow our heads and close our eyes to pray? It helps us to remember we are talking to God and keeps us from being distracted by other things.

*“We, too, dull our understandings with trifles, fill the heavenly spaces with phantoms, waste the heavenly time with hurry. When I trouble myself over a trifle, even a trifle confessed—the loss of some little article, say—spurring my memory, and hunting the house, not from immediate need, but from dislike of loss; when a book has been borrowed of me and not returned, and I have forgotten the borrower, and fret over the missing volume...is it not time I lost a few things when I care for them so unreasonably? This losing of things is of the mercy of God: it comes to teach us to let them go. Or have I forgotten a thought that came to me, which seemed of the truth?...I keep trying and trying to call it back, feeling a poor man till that thought be recovered to be far more lost, perhaps, in a notebook, into which I shall never look again to find it! I forgot that it is live things God cares about.”*

George MacDonald