



# In Christ Alone

I do not like heights. I never would have gone through with it had I not known that the instructor himself had survived the stunt many times before. By his experience, he assured me over and over that everything was perfectly safe. His training allowed him to be in his position helping fearful kids like me. Taking the 90-foot plunge from the top of that tree, down a wire and into the lake below was frightening for any eleven-year-old, but it was especially devastating for this timid, unadventurous little boy. While everything within me told me to never let go of the wooden platform I was sitting on, I leaned off and onto the zip line suspended above my head. I trusted completely in the assuring words of the instructor who now watched me whiz quickly down to the water below. Safe.

Life is full of risky decisions. This is why we place so much energy in showing our trustworthiness. The Better Business Bureau exists to tell us what companies can be trusted. Titles are earned and awarded to those who have proven themselves in their area of expertise. Degrees and other credentials are meant to assure us that doctors and other professionals are worthy of trust. Whether it is with our health or our finances, we work to lower the risks. For the believer, Christ has done this for us.

This hymn is a declaration of the whole life of Christ. The text is credal in that it summarizes the very foundation of our faith as Christians – Christ came, Christ lived, Christ died, and Christ rose again. Our faith is born from this reality and is energized by its continual power in our lives. This is not blind faith that requires a gambler's fortitude. The whole of the Passion event is there to show us that death has been conquered. Christ has been there on our behalf and has come out on the other side victorious. His death, burial, and resurrection are credentials that the believer can trust. The Scriptures state, "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" 1 Cor. 15:17 (TNIV). But thanks be to God, we know otherwise.

In masonry, the first stone, or cornerstone, is set in place as a reference for every other stone that will be used in the construction of a given structure. This stone must be the strongest and most reliable to ensure the structural integrity of the whole building. Christians have in Christ the most reliable and trustworthy cornerstone on which life can be built.

The resurrection power of Christ lives in us. The hands that suffered the nails for you and me remove the fear of death. This death-defying grip ensures that nothing can take us from his hands, not even the powers of hell. Because of this, we can boldly sing with heart and mind, "In Christ alone, I place my trust."

© 2010 Mike Eller