

# Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

708

Author 7th century Latin hymn

Composer [Dale Wood](#)

[1 Peter 2: 2-24](#)

[Isaiah 28: 16](#)

[Matthew 18: 20](#)

[2 Corinthians 13: 11-14](#)

[2 Chronicles 6: 17-21](#)

[1 Corinthians 3: 11-16](#)

[2 Timothy 1: 1-14](#)

[Ephesians 2: 11-22](#)

## Thoughts on the Text

Hymns have lives and journeys in much the same way that people have lives and journeys. This hymn, for instance, is ancient. It first came into being in the Latin language in the 7th century. A hymn born in a distant time and language has shown up in your new hymnal. Some would say that's the weakness of hymns...their age and "distance." It makes more sense to me to see its longevity and journey as evidence of its strength.

Its journey?...yes. This hymn was not only born long ago, it has come to us through a translator whose time was more recent, but still distant as we think of time in our day. And, as everyone "knows," something is always lost in translation; lost, unless the translation is also a transformation. I cannot compare the Latin and the English, but I know this: something is also gained in moving a thought from one language to another. The text in the translation process is affected by, colored by, brought into the now by the life and time and experience of the translator. This brings new life, even if it is "a" new life to the message of the hymn.

"Christ is made the sure foundation" didn't complete its journey when it was included in the Celebrating Grace hymnal. The journey of the message of this hymn is now assured of continuance at least through the span of your life. You will now translate and transform the message of this hymn into the language of your life and time. It will happen in your living. It will happen as you continue to develop as a person, a worshiper and a Christ-follower.

The translation and transformation of this hymn also commits the singer(s) to life in community with all others who sing it. The hymn, in the singing and the living of it, acknowledges all others who are now affected by its translation and transformation. It is not uncommon for people to comment that they didn't feel any transformation take place in worship. Transformation is not so much a feeling as it is awareness. We become aware that we now carry with us an ancient message that has attached to our developing Christ-likeness and is using us as a vehicle for a while, finding its way through our bit of time and experience here on earth. This ancient "thing" is as new as the day we are living right now.

On-going translation and transformation must have a foundation, something that remains constant while the things on top of it change and develop and grow. Christ is the sure foundation of Christian life and maturing discipleship.

People will be affected by Jesus' message in us; the songs we know and the scripture we know and the Christ we emulate. Its how the message stays alive "while unending ages run." Sing and taste timelessness.

Terry W. York

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