

## **My Story – Covenant Women, Sept 9**

### **The Red Thread**

#### **Life Verse**

Psalm 27:4,5

#### **Life Song**

Great is Thy Faithfulness

#### **Life Relationships**

Steve, Tim, Phil, Chantal, Steph and families

#### **Life Passions**

Jesus – family – art - music

#### **Life Resume – geographic moved 24 times, this will be 25**

Lansing, Michigan – brother, sister, Sexton HS, YFC, music

Moody Bible Institute – Music major, met Steve, God's call

Married 1968, Campus Ministry, MSU, Indiana State

Lafayette – 1972 - 74

France 1976 – 1990

California 1990 -97 Fresno, Bakersfield

Michigan 1997 – 2002 Hillsdale

Illinois 2002 – 2012 Collinsville

Indiana 2012 – present

**What would I tell my younger self? (there are seasons of life, so this is hypothetical, Steve's statement wishing to be 35 again....)**

- 1.** That there is a “red thread” – through it all, there is One Thing *Painting Bible Journals*
- 2.** Be Grateful – notice
  - a. This is the day the Lord has made Psalm 118:24
  - b. Gratitude Journal “Simple Abundance”

3. Live with margins – “life is what happens when you are busy making other plans”, Allen Saunders, John Lennon
  - a. Set deadlines a week or two in advance
  - b. Take time to listen, not think about myself-conscious effort
4. Be gentle with yourself – God is not a slave driver/we are to ourselves
  - a. Busyness b. France –Michel Klapsia’s statement
  - b. What is God not calling me to?
  - c. It does not all depend on you, “the need is not the call”
5. Remember you are not a human doing but a human being
  - a. Bakersfield b. Books
6. Live in the present, not the past or the future
  - a. Childlike, not childish b. Picasso statement c. yesterday is history... *Painting Roses*
  - b. Take time to smell the roses
7. Live expectantly but not with expectations for others or events
  - a. Sets me up for disappointment b. dissatisfaction c pressure on others
  - b. Marriage – Carol Mayhall’s advice, counselor’s advice, years as to “how”
8. My joy and well being do not depend on how my children are doing *Paintings*
  - a. Chasing Joy: Musings on Life in a Bittersweet World Edward Hays
9. That weeping may endure for a night, but joy really does come in the morning Psa 30:5
  - a. Our Marriage – Surely there is a future, Prov 23:18
  - b. Baby Chantal – Mt 11:28,29; Covenant ; Poppy
10. That the gifts and call of God are irrevocable – call to France Romans 11:29
11. Less is more
  - a. 7 on enneagram/gluttony b. simplicity
  - b. Seasons and stages of life – “Falling Upward” Richard Rohr, A Spirituality for the Second Half of Life
12. Be Generous – Live from abundance not lack –
  - a. Unnamed woman – Matt.2:6-13 alabaster box b. give away art
13. Take time for yourself – self care – it is not selfish
  - a. Mom’s quote – take time to paint/take time to \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Galatians 6:4,5 Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life
  - c. Fill the well – automatic overflow, for me, the art world
14. Quiet Time – not a “routine but a relationship,” *Painting - Zentangle*
  - a. Westminster confession – worship God and ENJOY Him forever
  - b. Contemplative Reading –“ Ceruleun Sanctum”

15. That prayer is a way of life not an “activity”

16. That there is true wisdom and perspective in Ecclesiastes

## Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be

Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love

Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow  
Blessings all mine with 10, 000 beside

Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Morning by morning new mercies I see  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness  
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

One of the most wonderful things about being a follower of Christ is the peace that attends even when life is difficult. *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, a testament to God’s unchanging nature, was written by a man who suffered prolonged trials in life, yet chose to see God’s faithfulness through it all. This hymn, deeply rooted in Scripture, continues to inspire and bless those who sing it.

## The Inspiring Journey of Hymn Writer Thomas O. Chisholm



**Thomas Chisholm** was born in Kentucky, 1866. From a young age, Thomas was highly intelligent and ambitious. He became a school teacher at the age of sixteen and an associate editor for his hometown newspaper at the age of twenty-one. Though he achieved success in his early years, Thomas found his greatest success at the age of twenty-seven when he became a follower of Christ. From that moment on, he used his intelligence and ambition for God.

Thomas Chisholm was also a Methodist minister who had always been a lover of poetry. Now able to use that love to its fullest in glorifying God, he wanted to do even more – dedicate his life fully – so he pursued the life of a minister. Sure enough, Thomas was ordained and given a congregation of his own in Scottsville, Kentucky.

In 1903, Thomas started a family by marrying the love of his life: Catherine Vandervere. It seemed to Thomas that his path in life was now set, that he would be a minister for the remainder of his days, but the following years showed him otherwise.

Thomas experienced a decline in health during his time as a minister, and in 1909, those health issues forced him to leave his congregation. In the years that followed, financial issues arose as well from numerous hospital bills. Many people would have become bitter with God during a time of health and financial crisis, but Thomas became quite the opposite.

Yes, he was no longer a minister but now had more time to focus on writing hymns.

Yes, he had health problems but also had loving support from his wife and two daughters.

Yes, he faced financial struggles but found a job selling life insurance, allowing him to keep up with the bills.

No matter the struggle, Thomas always chose to see God's faithfulness.



Thomas' positive outlook on life never shifted, and in 1923, he took up pen and paper and wrote his most famous poem: *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*. He sent the poem to Reverend **William Runyan**, musician of Moody Bible Institute and editor of Hope Publishing Company in Chicago.

Runyan's position brought in many a poem submission, but Thomas' moved Runyan so much that Runyan quickly took to praying that God would reveal a tune worthy of the lyrics. With divine guidance, Runyan composed a beautiful tune to accompany the poem and named it FAITHFULNESS. Reflecting on this creative process, Runyan later wrote, "This particular poem held such an appeal that I prayed most earnestly that my tune might carry over its message in a worthy way, and the subsequent history of its use indicates that God answered prayer."

### **Great Is Thy Faithfulness: A Timeless Hymn Gains Momentum**

Once Runyan found the tune, *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* as a hymn was born. It was an instant favorite amongst Moody Bible Institute staff and students, quickly becoming the college's unofficial hymn.

Past the college, the hymn took a bit longer to reach great heights, that is until a certain man by the name of Billy Graham heard it and began using it in his crusades during the 1950's. What began as a simple poem from a simple man was suddenly reaching the ears of millions, and has continued to do so each year since.

During the rest of his life, Chisholm spent many years residing in New Jersey, working as a life insurance agent to support himself and his family. Despite having an office job, he continued to express his love for God through poetry and wrote nearly 1,200 poems throughout his life. Many of these poems became published hymns that have further spread the message of God's faithfulness.

"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Lamentations 3:22-23 KJV