



FOR WOMEN STUDYING IN THE QUIET

It Is Well With My Soul — Hymn Study

A free printable study companion for the hymn and the hope behind it

Before we start

When a hymn has survived more than a century of sorrow, it usually has something solid underneath it. 'It Is Well With My Soul' is one of those hymns. It was written out of real grief, but it does not ask you to pretend grief is small. Instead, it gives language for trusting God in the middle of loss, confusion, and the long wait for peace to settle. This free study companion is a simple way to sit with the story behind the hymn, the Scripture that steadies it, and a few reflection prompts you can use on your own or with a friend.

1

The Story Behind the Hymn

Horatio Spafford's life was marked by losses that would flatten most of us. After the Great Chicago Fire damaged his business and, not long after, the family lost four daughters at sea, he wrote a hymn that does not deny the ache but dares to place it inside a larger hope. That matters because the strength of the hymn is not emotional optimism; it's the conviction that God's presence is still real when circumstances are not kind. Read the story slowly, and let the weight of it keep the words from becoming sentimental wallpaper.

IN PRACTICE

- Read the hymn as a testimony, not a mood
- Notice how the story keeps the hope honest
- Let the losses stay losses; don't rush to tidy them up

2

The Scripture Beneath the Lines

The hymn draws its strength from passages about peace that does not come from circumstances and a Shepherd who stays near in the dark valley. Philippians 4 names a peace that guards the heart and mind; Psalm 23 names the shepherd who leads, restores, and stays. Read those texts alongside the hymn and notice that biblical peace is not pretending nothing hurts. It is the settled confidence that God is still God in the middle of the hurting.

IN PRACTICE

- Pair the hymn with Philippians 4:4-7
- Pair the hymn with Psalm 23:1-4
- Ask what kind of peace these passages actually promise



Reflection Questions

A study like this should do more than inform you; it should give you a place to be honest. Where do you most need the words 'it is well' to stop sounding like a slogan and start sounding like trust? What grief, disappointment, or fear have you been carrying without naming it before God? And what would it look like to bring that honestly into prayer instead of hiding it behind tidy language? There is no prize for sounding strong. The point is to be real before the One who already knows the truth.

IN PRACTICE

- Name the specific thing you keep avoiding in prayer
- Write the honest sentence before you write the polished one
- Share only as much as feels safe; private reflection counts

A Simple Way to Use It

Print the pages, tuck them into a binder, and sit with them once all the way through before you try to teach them to anyone else. You can use the study in a quiet morning with coffee, take it into a small group, or save it for a hard week when you need a steadying reminder. It is short on purpose: enough to be useful, not so long that it becomes another thing to manage. Let it do its work gently.

IN PRACTICE

- Use it as a one-sitting quiet-time companion
- Print extra copies if you want to use it with a friend
- Keep it for a hard week; the best free resources are the ones you will actually reopen

