

## Our God, He Is Alive

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • January 6, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2019  
Scripture Reader and Reading: Dan Calvert – Daniel 2.26–28  
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs about God

### Prelude:

#### **I. In 2012, we had brother Tyler Young for one of our seminars.**

- A. He and I have been friends ever since.
- B. On social media he posted a photo that I found fascinating.
  - 1. He was flying somewhere and his seat was 28b.
  - 2. However, he put a 7 in front of that number,
    - a) making it 728b.
    - b) If you have been in the church for several decades,
      - (1) you know that number.
      - (2) In *Songs of the Church*, our most popular song book at one time,
        - (a) that was the number for the song,
        - (b) “Our God, He Is Alive.”
- C. Some congregations did not have that song book, but
  - 1. they got permission to make copies of the song and
  - 2. they pasted it on the inside front cover,
    - a) so that although it was the first song in that book,
    - b) it still had the number 728b.

#### **II. What other song has so claimed a number?**

- A. Back in those days, you could have simply said,
- B. “Let’s sing 728b,” and everyone would know what song it was.
  - 1. Now in all the different song books it is scattered all over the place.
  - 2. Personally, I think they should have retired the number just like a super athlete’s jersey and number!

### III. What is it about this song that made it the number one song in Churches of Christ in a bracket competition?

- A. The music and the lyrics have been matched perfectly.
- B. You cannot sing the song slowly or quietly (at least not without damaging it),
  - 1. instead you sing not only as the music is written, but
  - 2. as the words demand.
    - a) In an age of growing skepticism, secularism, and atheism and evolution,
    - b) we love what Aaron Wesley Dicus wrote.

### IV. From the first two notes and the first two words,

- A. we are moving in this song,
- B. declaring loudly that there is a God!
  - 1. Every verse makes powerful statements about our God and then
  - 2. we hit that chorus with the base lead.

### Persuasion:

#### I. Verse 1

**There is, beyond the azure blue,  
A God, concealed from human sight,  
He tinted skies with heav'nly hue  
And framed the worlds with His great might.**

- A. Brother Otis Gatewood wrote a book on apologetics,
  - 1. titling it, *There Is a God in Heaven*,
  - 2. which with a title like that I bought it.
- B. When I think of brother Gatewood's book or brother Dicus's song,
  - 1. I remember when King Nebuchadnezzar asked Daniel,

**26 "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?" (Daniel 2.26).**

2. Then Daniel made this awesome declaration:

**27 “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. 28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days” (Daniel 2.27–28).**

a) Amen, brother Daniel, and

b) amen, brother Gatewood!

C. When we sing this song,

1. we get an imagery of blue,

2. we think of the sky, and

a) we know that beyond that sky,

b) beyond this dimension,

(1) there is a God.

(2) We cannot see Him.

(a) And it is a good thing that we cannot see Him right now, for

(b) no one can see God and survive the experience.

D. The world tells us that there is no God.

1. However, we see the heavenly-hue tinted skies and we know otherwise.

2. We know that His great might framed the worlds!

**3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible (Hebrews 11.3).**

## II. Verse 2

**There was, a long, long time ago,  
A God whose voice the prophets heard,  
He is the God that we should know,**

## **Who speaks from His inspired Word.**

A. Verse 2 also starts off with a mighty declaration.

1. This age of ours denies that God has spoken through the Bible, but
2. we know better and we like singing it powerfully.
  - a) Don't you tell me
  - b) that God has not spoken to us.
    - (1) We have read the Bible and
    - (2) we know that the God of heaven used His Holy Spirit to give it to us.

B. Brother A. W. Dicus spoke for us

1. when he affirmed that a long time ago,
2. prophets heard the voice of God.
  - a) Let that sink into your mind.
  - b) They wrote down what He said.

**20 ...no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation [origin],  
21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God  
spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1.20–21).**

C. This is the God we should know.

1. He is the One who tinted the skies with heavenly hue.
2. He is the One who framed the worlds with His great might.
3. He is the One who spoke to the prophets.
4. He is the One who speaks to us from His inspired Word.
  - a) For me, the song makes the connection between
    - (1) the God who created nature and
    - (2) the God who speaks in the Bible.
  - b) Not everyone makes that connection.

- (1) However, brother Dicus knew the connection and
  - (2) everyone of us who sings with delight knows the connection also.
5. It is as though we are singing part of Paul's sermon to the Athenians,

**23 "...The One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: 24 God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands" (Acts 17.23–24).**

6. That moves us into verse 3 of the song.

### III. Verse 3

**Secure, is life from mortal mind,  
God holds the germ within His hand,  
Tho' men may search, they cannot find,  
For God alone does understand.**

- A. Man keeps trying to create life,
1. hoping to show that you do not need God to have life.
  2. However, if they were ever do succeed,
    - a) which I do not believe they will,
    - b) they will only prove that it requires intelligence to make life.
- B. [Smithsonian article]
- C. Evolutionists and atheists accuse us of believing in a God of the Gaps,
1. meaning that for things we cannot explain,
  2. we just simply say that God did it.
    - a) I would say that God did it for things we cannot explain and
    - b) I would say that God did it for things we can explain.
- D. I don't think man truly knows what life is.
1. He certainly does not know how to create it from scratch.
  2. I have always thought he should try with a dead body.

- a) All the material ingredients are in place.
  - b) Wait four days like Jesus did before raising Lazarus from the dead.
- E. What brother Dicus declared John declared ages ago:

**4 “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men” (John 1.4).**

#### IV. Verse 4

**Our God, whose Son upon a tree,  
A life was willing there to give,  
That He from sin might set man free,  
And evermore with Him could live.**

- A. By the time we get to verse 4, brother Dicus has taken us
- 1. from the heavens
  - 2. to the word
  - 3. to the germ of life.
    - a) Then He turns our attention over to Jesus.
    - b) With the natural creation, God meets all of our needs.
      - (1) In Jesus, God meets our spiritual needs.
      - (2) We have a need in the spirit that only God could meet.
- B. We see God’s Son upon a tree.
- 1. Both Paul and Peter referred to the cross as a tree.
  - 2. What was God’s Son doing on that tree?
- C. Here was a life willing to give.
- 1. He gave that life that we might be set free from sin.
  - 2. He gave that life that we might forevermore live with Him.
    - a) Here was this mighty God
      - (1) creating the sky and

- (2) creating the worlds we see in the sky and
- (3) creating man with the germ of life.

b) However, what did man do?

(1) We violated God's creation by doing things we should not have done.

(2) What did God do?

(a) He gave the most valuable life

(b) for our lives

i) that we might have life forever

ii) with Him.

D. As Paul wrote:

**13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") (Galatians 3.13).**

E. Then as Peter said:

**24 [He] Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed (1 Peter 2.23–24).**

## V. Chorus

**There is a God, He is alive, in Him we live, and we survive;  
From dust our God created man, He is our God, the great I AM.**

A. I would not be surprised if brother Aaron Wesley Dicus

- 1. heard of the God Is Dead movement in the 60s and
- 2. responded with this powerful song!
  - a) God is not dead and
  - b) you should be glad that He is not.

- (1) He is very much alive, for
- (2) by Him we have life in the body and in the spirit.

B. We hear so much atheism today

1. that we sing loudly in response four times:
2. "There is a God, He is alive, in Him we live."

**25 "...He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being..." (Acts 17.25–28).**

C. As the chorus ends,

1. we make one final declaration
2. that from dust God created man:

**7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being (Genesis 2.7).**

D. This is our God the great I AM.

1. As Exodus 3.14 says,

**14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3.14).**

2. He is the One who always has been,
  - a) is now and
  - b) forever will be.

**Exhortation:**

**I. Mr. Atheist, there is a God in heaven.**

**II. Mr. Liberal Theologian,**

- A. this God spoke to His prophets and
- B. they tell us what He said.

**III. Mr. Evolutionist,**

- A. the God of creation and of the Scriptures,
- B. holds the germ of life in His hand, and
  - 1. you can spend all the money you want,
  - 2. you can perform every imaginable experiment, but
    - a) you will not find how to create life, because
    - b) God alone holds the germ and understands.

**IV. Mr. Sinner,**

- A. this same God put His Son on a tree
- B. that He might set us free from our sin and now
  - 1. we can evermore with Him live.
  - 2. The choice is now yours.

**V. What will you do?**