

I WILL BE WHAT I BELIEVE

See the introduction to the book for how this song came to be. As my wife started teaching this song to our Primary in Minnesota, we were both surprised at how quickly the children picked up the lyrics. The actions really facilitate learning, and help the children remember the words, especially on the chorus.

Tips

- Use the actions when you teach this song. They seem to focus the children's attention and help them retain the words. (See lyrics sheet.)
- When practicing and performing the mash-up part of the chorus at the end, have two choristers at the front for the children to follow.

Performance Suggestions

- If you're crunched for time to learn the whole song, have a small group of soloists for the verses. The first time we performed it, we had two soloists per verse, and those two sang the line, "even though its still hard . . ." together.
- If the children are having a hard time following on beat, use a smaller group of older children (or stronger singers) to sing the "Army of Helaman" mash-up over the final chorus. This also seems to be the right balance of voices for the song.

MY HEAVENLY FATHER LOVES ME / I FEEL MY SAVIOR'S LOVE

The best arrangement I've ever heard of "My Heavenly Father Loves Me" came from Shadow Mountain Records' *Popcorn Bopping* CD. My wife discovered this version of the song, and I became obsessed with it and played it over and over. The timing changes from the original 3/4 to 4/4, which slows the pace down and creates a more palpable sense of awe and reverence especially as you think about the world around us as a symbol of God's love. My daughter has performed this arrangement in church and on other occasions, and the power of the music has brought tears to my eyes more than once.

As I was thinking about some of my other favorite Primary songs, I realized that "I Feel My Savior's Love" shares the same message. So it seemed right to have these two songs sung together. These songs have the message of looking around you, seeing the majesty and beauty of the earth, and realizing it is a sign of God's love for His children. Alma aptly described this as he testified to Korihor the anti-Christ in Alma 30:44, "All things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator."

Tips

- During the mash-up, it is harder to sing "I Feel My Savior's Love" since the piano plays "My Heavenly Father Loves Me," so have the stronger singers or a soloist perform the mash-up.
- During the mash-up when one part is doing triplets and the other quarter notes, put the music down, keep the basic beat, and you will eventually flow to the same spot before you know it.
- On measure 42, watch out for the person singing "I Feel My Savior's Love." Make sure they sing a D there unlike the previous solo verse where they sing an E.

Performance Suggestions

- Duet
- Adult choir or children's choir
 - During the mash-up, the piano plays "My Heavenly Father Loves Me," so put the younger children on that part because it will be easier to follow.
 - I did this with an adult choir and had the women sing "My Heavenly Father Loves Me" and the men sing "I Feel My Savior's Love."

I KNOW THAT YOU LOVE ME

This was a fun song to write. My children and I actually wrote the words to this together while “trying” to go to bed. The funny thing is that we have done everything exactly as written in the song at some point during our years of “attempting” bedtime. In fact, each verse reflects how each one of my three children actually goes to bed in their own special way. My son came up with the start of the third verse as it starts “You lay by my side . . .” because how many times does a father fall asleep in their children’s bed? Here it is, our moment to shine as a father and help out with the children for the day, and we fall asleep on the job. For me, it is a regular occurrence.

So, as the child sings about all the things Dad does to help him or her fall asleep, the song really turns into a lullaby for the dad as he falls asleep before the child does. So even though that happens, you simply pray that the child feels safer and calmer with a sleeping dad next to them and goes to sleep too. The problem occurs when the dad falls asleep, and the child sees a moment of opportunity to escape or stay up later.

BEHOLD YOUR LITTLE ONES

I have always been touched by the scriptural passages that describe the Savior's interactions with children. He always wanted them to stay with Him, and He stated over and over that we must become "as little children" to enter the kingdom of God (see Matthew 18:3–4). I felt that His special moment with the children in the land Bountiful after His resurrection (as described in the Book of Mormon) encapsulated the essence of His attitude toward children (see 3 Nephi 17:20–25). Many songs have alluded to that moment, but I never felt like the children had ever told the story from their perspective. I wondered how their testimonies were affected by that experience and what they would say about it. Who better than a group of Primary children to tell us this story?

When we first introduced this song to the Primary, our chorister had the idea to have all of the teachers go outside the door and get an electric candle. She then turned off the light and had the children close their eyes. Then she read the lyrics of the song to the children. As she read, the teachers came in with their candles and surrounded the children. The children opened their eyes to find themselves "encircled by fire." It was a powerful spiritual moment for both the children and the teachers. I hope that children feel the Savior's love for them as they sing this song, but I suspect that their parents will feel as the ancient parents felt when Christ spoke, "Behold your little ones" (3 Nephi 17:23).

Tips

- For the descant in the final chorus, select a group of older children with strong voices. The descant harmony is only there if you want to get really zealous about it.

Performance Suggestions

- Solos by multiple children seem very nice in this song for the verses as you envision them all telling the story of the Savior's visit.

I'LL KNOW FOR MYSELF

I was driving down the road one day talking about Primary songs with my children, and I simply asked, “What would you like to sing about?” My youngest son said immediately, “Joseph Smith?” It hit me like a bolt of lightning! I agreed with him, and that night I went home to write this song. We had sung “Joseph Smith’s First Prayer” the year before in the Primary program, so this was an obvious mash-up choice. I wanted a song where the children could relate to the central theme in the story of Joseph Smith and the First Vision: If you have a question about anything, have faith, and ask God. He will answer your prayer. Why? Because He did it for Joseph Smith, and He will do it for you too. You’ll notice that on the hymn portion that the lines from each of the verses combine to create one complete verse that tells the story without repeating lines.

Performance Suggestions

- Duet with the harmonies
- Children’s chorus

MOTHER'S DAY MASH-UP

I owe any piano-playing ability that I have to my mother. Thank you mom! She forced me to play the piano as we did the Suzuki method together (learning by ear). She tolerated me when I dove into the couch and yelled, "If you clap your hands one more time, I'll never play the piano again!" According to her, I was her last hope to have one of her six children really learn to play the piano well, and with my closest sibling eight years older than me, she was able to double her efforts and focus on me. And I couldn't be more grateful.

So, I've always wanted to create a Mother's Day Primary arrangement that would capture the mother-child relationship of teaching and receiving, seeing and emulating, and sacrificing and loving. It is powerful to hear the children sing of seeing and listening to their mother pray while the mother tells the child to "Come . . . and together we'll learn."

"When the real history of mankind is fully disclosed, will it feature the echoes of gunfire or the shaping sound of lullabies? The great armistices made by military men or the peacemaking of women in homes and in neighborhoods? Will what happened in cradles and kitchens prove to be more controlling than what happened in congresses?" -Neal A. Maxwell (Neal A. Maxwell, "The Women of God," Ensign, May 1978)

Tips

- There are a lot of triplets and syncopated rhythms in the mash-up section because "Teach Me to Walk in the Light" is 3/4, but the mother's portion of "Love Is Spoken Here" is 4/4. You may want to have the children practice just talking out the rhythm, so they can get the feel of the triplets with the first verse of "Teach Me to Walk in the Light."

Performance Suggestions

- I had the children sing both "Love Is Spoken Here" and the first verse of "Teach Me to Walk in the Light." Then I had a strong female voice sing the "Come, little child . . ." verse over the top of the children in the final mash-up. It creates a very moving final, combined-verse moment like in "A Child's Prayer."

ONE ETERNAL ROUND

The temple represents so many things to people of different ages. As a child, one simply sings about how they “love to see” it with plans of “going there someday.” But as one grows up, the meaning of the temple deepens. It represents families being sealed together forever and the majesty of God and His work for His children on this earth. Then as one enters the temple for the ordinances, the mysteries of God are unfolded, and we learn about the Creation, our life on earth, the Savior Jesus Christ, and our potential as children of God. So this song explores this change (in perspective) by melding “I Love to See the Temple” with “If You Could Hie to Kolob,” which more than any other song captures the profundity of God and His eternal nature. So I’ll let you discover how each segment attempts to express the growing change in perspective throughout the song. You will notice that with only the change of a single half step, the song can be repeated over and over again, like one eternal round.

“Listen to the voice of the Lord your God, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, whose course is *one eternal round*, the same today as yesterday, and forever.” (D&C 35:1; emphasis added. See also D&C 3:2)

WHEN HE COMES AGAIN / JOY TO THE WORLD

As these mash-ups took on a life of their own, my Primary chorister, Lauren Pollock, told me about one of her own mash-up ideas that she had been thinking about for a while. In her own words:

I have always appreciated the traditional Christmas song “Joy to the World,” but I felt a new reverence for it when I realized that it is a song about the Second Coming of Christ, not his lowly advent in a stable in Bethlehem. It is a song about the future day that will surely come when “Earth [will] receive her King” and “every heart [will] prepare him room!” With this new understanding it seemed natural to pair the song with another that also looks forward to the Second Coming of Christ: the children’s tune “When He Comes Again.” In my mind, I could hear the songs fitting together, their harmonies and hopeful messages entwined. Our ward Primary and choir performed this powerful rendition, bearing testimony through music of the certainty of Christ’s return to Earth and the hope and wonderment that every Primary child (and faithful follower of Christ) feels as they ponder, speculate, and look forward to that great day.

Tips

- You will see that I have two versions for the piano on this one. One has a more syncopated rhythm in the bottom hand that gives it a little more zing and character. However, I even had a hard time playing that version to be honest, so I made a simpler version without the syncopation but kept the cool chord progressions that make it interesting. So pick the one you like better.
- The “Joy to the World” part is high for both women and men, but just sing it nice and gentle. No straining needed. The tempo is slower than what you normally sing in the hymnbook, which makes singing the high notes even harder, but it is worth it for the resonating beauty that combines with the piano.

Performance Suggestions

- I had the children sing “When He Comes Again” and my adult choir sang “Joy to the World.”
- Child soloist and choir

I LIVED IN HEAVEN

Our Primary president, Rachel Hammer, was looking for a couple of extra songs for the Primary program and recalled hearing a beautiful rendition of this song on the guitar. She asked if I could try to figure something out. Guitar is not my forte and my repertoire is limited to a handful of my favorite songs by artists like Sting and Keith Urban. So I fiddled around with some chords from these artists and finally realized that the chords from Keith Urban's "Raise 'Em Up" could be applied to "I Lived in Heaven" with some variations. Adding a few extra beats between phrases slows the pace of the song down and gives a little time more meditation upon each line. No other song teaches about our life before earth, Jesus Christ's foreordained mission, the plan of salvation, and the Atonement with such simplicity, brevity, and clarity.

Tips:

- You have to teach the children to hold each phrase out for longer than they are used to doing because there is a measure of six beats added in to slow down the pace of the song.

Performance Suggestions

- If permission is obtained from local Church leaders, having the acoustic guitar accompany the children is a nice option. However, I also created a piano version that reflects the feeling of the original composition on the guitar, if needed.

WE WELCOME YOU TODAY!

After being in Primary for over five years and singing essentially the same song almost every week in over ten different languages, I felt that I needed one other option just to mix it up. As you will see, I love the back and forth between the children as they sing, and I tried to keep that same give-and-take. I also added a simple gospel-themed message to bring a little reverence into this fun moment.

I HOPE THEY CALL ME ON A MISSION / WE'LL BRING THE WORLD HIS TRUTH

I originally did this arrangement as a medley for a missionary farewell, sung by Primary-age boys and young men. However, in keeping with the theme of mash-ups, I decided that the songs could be layered on top of each other if I kept the words from “I Hope They Call Me on a Mission,” but changed the melody during the chorus of “We’ll Bring the World His Truth (Army of Helaman).” Luckily, it flowed directly into “to bring the world his truth.” The tender part of the song is when the men softly and slowly sing the third verse of “We’ll Bring the World His Truth (Army of Helaman),” starting with “we know his plan, and we will prepare.”

Tips

- If the mash-up is too hard because of the tricky rhythm in the final chorus, you can just have the choir sing the “We’ll Bring the World His Truth (Army of Helaman)” chorus in unison.

Performance Suggestions

- I had young men and Primary-age boys sing this together, but it could just as easily be adapted for young women and Primary-age girls.