

# DAILY FOOD FOR THE LORD'S FLOCK!

by James Smith

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*Smith's devotional providing spiritual nourishment for believers through portions of biblical truth intended to inform the mind, cheer the soul, and regulate behavior, emphasizing the need for prayer and meditation.*

3 Chapters

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## **00 Green Pastures!**

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Green Pastures!

Daily Food for the Lord's Flock! By James Smith, 1848

## 00p PREFACE

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### PREFACE

The great Shepherd has made ample provision for His sheep — and His pastures are always fresh and green. But too many neglect the provision made for them — and are therefore . . .

weak in faith,

feeble in effort, and

uncomfortable in their lives. This little work is intended to attract the flock to the pastures which God has provided; it presents a portion of spiritual food for daily use — each calculated to . . .

inform the mind,

cheer the soul,

and regulate the life. In busy times like the present — brevity is important; and in such a season of temptation — spirituality is necessary. Reader . . .

turn every portion into prayer,

then meditate upon it, and then

endeavor to reduce the whole to practice. This is the way to enjoy peace, obtain blessings, and do good. May the Holy Spirit, who alone can render any work effectual — bless this little volume to thousands, and exalt the Savior through its feeble instrumentality!

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# 01

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"My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Php 4:19  
"The unsearchable riches of Christ!" Ephesians 3:8 The wealth of the universe is in Jesus — and this fountain is opened for all our supply! What more can we desire? The grace that is in Jesus — is for us! And the weaker we feel — the more earnestly we should seek and expect it. The poorer we are — the more we need the Savior; and the more we need him — the more welcome we are to Him! There is grace in Jesus for us this day — just that grace which we need — and all we can need! Let us therefore look to Jesus for all we can need.

All fullness is in Jesus — and it is there for His people! They are always welcome to it! You cannot be more welcome, than you are at this moment — go and receive, and thus glorify Him!

Jesus never forgets or loses sight of us for one moment! He will very soon come and fetch us to be with Him forever! The constant presence of Jesus is at once our safety and our comfort. He will sustain, supply, and console us! Whoever leaves us — Jesus remains!

"Surely, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age!" Matthew 28:20 In life My grace shall strength supply,

Proportioned to your day!

At death you still shall find Me nigh,

To wipe your tears away!

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"Cast your burden upon the Lord — and He shall sustain you!" Psalms 55:22 Why should this heavy load, Press down your weary mind?

Haste to your heavenly Father's throne, And sweet refreshment find! The Lord is willing to receive whatever we carry to Him. He will either remove our load — or give us more strength to bear it.

All our concerns are under His divine direction — even the most minute. Let us therefore fix the eye on God's hand — and acquiesce in His will. The sympathy of the Savior is exquisitely tender; this should cheer and console us in the darkest day. There is nothing too hard for Jesus to do — and He is willing to do anything for us which will promote His glory and our good.

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"You are my hiding place! You protect me from trouble." Psalms 32:7

Jesus will preserve us from all that is really hurtful — and sanctify to us all that is painful. He is our protector. The strength that supports us is omnipotent — the refuge that preserves us is eternal! Why then should we fear?

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"I, the Lord, made you, and I will not forget you!" Isaiah 44:21 The Lord's people are always in His thoughts, and under His eye! Let it cheer and comfort me today to remember: God thinks upon me!

God's care is extended to the whole of His creatures — but His care of His people is special and particular!

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"Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

Looking to Jesus, as the sin-bearing Lamb of God, will . . .

quiet the conscience,

calm the mind,

sanctify the heart,

and correct the life!

Everything we need is in Jesus, and in Jesus for us! Let us, therefore, look away from self to Him!

Jesus loves and values us beyond description; and it is ours to glorify Him by our devotedness, activity, and gratitude.

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith!" Hebrews 12:2

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Nothing can be more irrational and absurd — than for a sinful creature to strive with His Maker.

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"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17

Real religion is not merely reformation — but it is a new creation! The heart must be thoroughly changed — and then views, motives, desires, and pursuits all become new!

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"Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me!" Psalms 19:13 There is no sin so evil — but, if left to ourselves, we shall fall into it!

We have need to daily pray, "Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psalms 119:117

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There is no 'chance' where God reigns!

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We need divine wisdom to . . .

manage our trials,  
exercise our graces,  
perform our duties,  
and conquer our foes!

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"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God!" Php 4:6 Prayer is . . .

always seasonable,  
always necessary,  
and always profitable!

We should do with our cares as we do with our sins — carry them to Jesus, and cast them on Him. In every place the throne of grace is near, at all times God is accessible to us, and every trouble furnishes as with a message to Him.

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"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us!" Galatians 3:13  
What a mystery is this! The Blessed One made a curse — that we accursed ones might inherit a blessing!

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"Here we do not have an enduring city — but we are looking for the city that is to come!" Hebrews 13:14 This is an enemy's land!

We are only passing through it! No wonder then, that we meet toils, trials, and troubles!

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"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances!" Php 4:11

Few learn this lesson of contentment. It is no wonder — for but few pray and strive to learn it. Carnal nature cannot love it. No one but the Lord can teach us this lesson.

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"Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls!" Matthew 11:29

Never was there such a teacher as Jesus, nor are any lessons like His! Let us take our place at His feet, and learn of Him today.

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"He guides the humble in what is right, and teaches them His way." Psalms 25:9 The humble . . .

bow to God's sovereignty,  
yield to His will,  
consult His Word,  
and aim at His glory!

And such He guides and teaches.

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It is one thing to admit that God is unchangeable — and another to realize the fact under all our changes!

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"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution!" 2 Timothy 3:12 Some persecute with the temper,

some with the tongue,

some with the sword. But all the godly suffer from persecution — more or less.

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"If the Son shall make you free — you shall be free indeed!" John 8:36

If Jesus is our Savior — He will set us free from . . .

the bondage of sin,

the slavery of Satan, and

the tyranny of the present evil world.

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The union between Jesus and His people can never be dissolved; His love which formed it is changeless and eternal.

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If Satan can get us to take our eye off Jesus, or withdraw our confidence from Him — he can conquer us with ease!

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If we did but believe in God's love to us — we would be satisfied with the provision He has made for us!

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Sin would have sunk us to the lowest Hell — but grace raises us to the highest Heaven!

Sin deceives us — and then hardens us; but grace teaches, humbles, and then restores us!

Let us beware of sin — and daily cry for grace!

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Self-denial is the first Christian duty.

Jesus must be Lord! He will be both imitated and obeyed.

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"He has done all things well!" Mark 7:37 The conduct of Jesus is always right — for love, wisdom, and power regulate all His actions.

How sovereign, wonderful, and free,

s all His love to sinful me!

He plucked me as a brand from Hell,

My Jesus has done all things well!

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Faith believes God's word,

hope expects God's blessing, and

love devotes us to the Lord's glory.

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"You shall guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory!" Psalms 73:24

If we are willing to be guided by the Lord's counsel — we shall escape innumerable snares and disappointments, and shall certainly reach Heaven at last.

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"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men!" Matthew 12:31 No sin is too great for God to forgive,

no stain is too deep for the blood of Jesus to remove,

and no sinner is too vile for God to accept and bless.

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It is difficult to say which is the more astonishing:

that God should be our portion, or

that He should take us to be His portion!

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"A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out!" Isaiah 42:3 No heart is so kind;

no eye so penetrating;

no ear so quick;

no hand so gentle;

— as the heart, eye, ear, and hand of Jesus!

Here is our comfort and security.

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"I want you to be without care." 1 Corinthians 7:32

Confidence in God is the cure of care! And that we may have confidence in Him — He has given us . . .

His Word,

His oath,

His promises, and

His only begotten Son!

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"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life!" Psalms 23:6 The mercy of God will sympathize with us in all our sorrows; and His goodness will supply all our needs — until we reach His holy habitation.

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The promises of God are . . .

the offspring of His love,

the proofs of His grace, and

the pledges of His mercy!

They are . . .

as changeless as His nature;

as certain as His existence;

as immutable as His throne!

Faith believes the promise,

hope expects it, and

patience quietly waits for it.

Believing, hoping, and quiet waiting, make a Christian happy!

Faith in God's promises is a preservative for overwhelming fears, and gloomy despair.

Nothing can be more plain than God's promises, or more simple than faith; and yet it requires the power of the Holy Spirit to make us believe them!

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"For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men!" 1 Peter 2:15 The ungodly are to be silenced by our deeds — rather than by our words. They may refuse to hear us speak — but they cannot help seeing us walk!

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Assurance is a blessing we cannot too highly value or too earnestly seek. It is the flower of faith, and a source of sweetest joy!

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"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!" 2 Corinthians 9:15

God can give us nothing greater than His Son! Can we think that He will withhold anything less? Having given Jesus — He will give all that is good.

"He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" Romans 8:32

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"It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain. Jesus has entered there on our behalf as a forerunner." Hebrews 6:19-20

Jesus has entered the inner sanctuary for us. We now follow in His footsteps, and shall soon sit down on His throne. Until then, let us copy His example.

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Our safety is in our God. Let us therefore cleave to Him, walk with Him, and expect deliverance from Him. Nothing is more likely to promote our holiness than to live under the impression, "I am the Lord's!"

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"The love of Christ, which passes knowledge!" Ephesians 3:19 The love of Jesus is infinite as His nature, and eternal as His existence — therefore beyond our knowledge. O to enjoy it more. When we think of love like this,

Joy and shame our hearts possess,

Joy — that You could pity thus,

Shame — for such returns from us!

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"Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." Luke 10:39 The humble soul, who sits with attention at the feet of Jesus, will learn His will, and imbibe His spirit.

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"Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us along the way!" Luke 24:32 Fellowship with Jesus will . . .

soften the heart,  
inflame the affections,  
awaken holy desires,  
and impart solid joy!

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"I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." John 13:15 If Christ is our pattern — our lives will be both attractive and useful. Let us daily strive to imitate Him!

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"Take heart, son — your sins are forgiven!" Matthew 9:2 A sense of the pardon of sin is one of the most powerful antidotes to the miseries of human life — and should be earnestly sought until enjoyed.

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Our God is a rock — on which we may rest; and a fountain — from which we may always obtain supplies!

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"Ask for whatever you want me to give you." 1 Kings 3:5

Prayer is asking God to give us what He has promised — and He has promised to give us all that we need. Prayer, if it is fervent and believing prayer — is sure to obtain for us the blessing we need. If the mind is spiritual, it will naturally lift up the eye to God; and, in answer to prayer, God will graciously look down upon us.

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"The soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way!" Numbers 21:4 The road to Heaven is rough and rugged — it tries every principle. But the rough road, is the only road to Heaven. Your way is rough, your foes are strong,

But God will be your guard;  
The conflict here will not be long,

And great is your reward!

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"O Lord, I will praise you!" Isaiah 12:1

Praise should ascend to God daily, yes hourly! And yet there is no duty to which we are more backward — this proves our ingratitude.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ "Great is our Lord, and of great power! His understanding is infinite!" Psalms 147:5 The Lord's goodness and greatness are equal; we may therefore expect much from Him, while we bow in deepest reverence before Him.

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"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." John 10:27

Jesus speaks in His word. He speaks to His people — the Holy Spirit opens their ears, they hear Him, approve of what He says, and obey Him.

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"If you love me — you will keep my commandments." John 14:15

True Christian love always produces a practical conformity to the Lord's precepts. He who does not obey the Savior — does not love Him. The friends of Jesus do whatever He commands them.

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"He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." Psalms 107:7 The Lord's way is often rough — but it is always right. There is but one right way — and that is the path the Lord is leading us.

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"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you: continue you in my love." John 15:9 As the Father cannot love Jesus more than He does — so Jesus cannot love us more than He does! This should fix our hearts and our thoughts on Him.

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By looking on the forbidden fruit — our first parents fell; and by looking to the Lord Jesus, the tree of life — we rise and live forever.

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"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick." Matthew 9:12 The very things that deject and distress us — are the things that fit us for the Savior. If we were not sinners — we would not need the Savior.

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"The end of all things is at hand! Be therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." 1 Peter 4:7 Death will shortly remove us from this world; therefore sobriety and prayer should characterize us.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ "It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him." 1 Samuel 3:18

All God's appointments are wise, and all His dispensations are gracious. It befits us, therefore, not only to submit — but to be pleased with them.

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"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have." Hebrews 13:5

Covetousness is a bitter root — and a prolific source of unhappiness. Contentment is a Christian grace, and a living spring of comfort and peace. Are you a sinner, O my soul?

Then how can you complain?

What are your troubles here, if weighed

With everlasting pain?

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"Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne!" Revelation 5:6

Jesus, who was once in the manger, and on the cross — is now on the throne! There He reigns, and receives homage from all the inhabitants of Heaven!

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"He will certainly accomplish what He has decreed for me!" Job 23:14 The dispensations of divine providence toward the saints, are but the fulfillment of the Lord's purposes of grace. All is love — however bitter!

God's hand is in every event, and all things are directed to accomplish His will, and glorify His name.

Jesus appoints my dally lot,

And He does all things well,

I soon shall leave this wretched spot,

And rise with Him to dwell.

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Real religion always begins with God. There is . . .

no life — until He quickens;

no light — until He shines;

no seeking Him — until He seeks us.

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We can never be happy — but as our wills are conformed to the will of God. Resignation should ever characterize Christians.

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"Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever!" Psalms 125:1 When we feel as weak as a bruised reed, and like the feather exposed to the winds — trusting to Jesus, we are as stable as the mountains, and as secure as the rock!

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"The humble will have joy after joy in the Lord!" Isaiah 29:19 The more humble we are — the happier we shall be; for joy is the offspring of humility.

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The union between Jesus and His people is most close, tender, and profitable — and it is forever!

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"By the grace of God I am what I am!" 1 Corinthians 15:10

Grace originates, carries on, and completes, our salvation! Grace claims, deserves, and should have, all the glory. By grace we are saved!

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"Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if You had been here — my brother would not have died!" John 11:21

We often think, if God were with us, and for us — such trials would not befall us. But He sends the trials in order to display His kindness and care! Whatever the Lord does for us, however painful, is a benefit — and therefore calls for praise and thanksgiving.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ "Yes! He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend!" Song of Solomon 5:16

Jesus is unspeakably sweet and precious to the spiritual mind. The more spiritual we are — the more precious Jesus is. If we can live without Christ — we are dead in our sins. But if He is our daily food — we are undoubtedly born of God.

Christ is everything to the believer! He is all he needs as a sinner, and all he desires as a saint!

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A happy Christian is an ornament to his profession — but a gloomy professor dishonors it; let us aim to be happy in God under all circumstances.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Your statutes." Psalms 119:71

Every child of God is sent to the school of affliction. Here the most valuable lessons are taught, and so taught that they cannot be forgotten.

Afflictions make us love the Word,  
Stir up our hearts to prayer;  
And many a precious proof afford,  
Of our Redeemer's care!

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"Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood — you have no life in you." John 6:53

What food is to the body — that Christ is to the true believer's soul! The body could as well live without food — as the soul without Christ!

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"Help me, O Lord my God! O save me according to your mercy!" Psalms 109:26 A sense of weakness is a preservative from danger — -for this preserves from self-dependence, and urges us to cry to the Strong for strength.

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The attributes of God are to His people what the wings of the parent bird are to her young — at once their protection and their comfort.

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"For the good that I would do — I do not; but the evil which I would not do — that I do." Romans 7:19 The Christian's heart is turned against all sin! He hates it, and longs to be free from it — but it still dwells in Him!

Lord, free me from this deadly foe,  
Which keeps my faith and hope so low;  
I long to dwell in Heaven my home,  
Where not one sinful thought can come!

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"Your shoes shall be iron and brass; and as your days — so shall your strength be!" Deuteronomy 33:25 The day and the strength are always connected. Not strength before the day — but in the day, and as the day.

Let not your heart despond and say,  
"How shall I stand the trying day?"  
He has engaged by firm decree,  
That as your days — your strength shall be!

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"For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have, that you did not receive?" 1 Corinthians 4:7

If we differ from the lost world around us — then grace alone has made the difference! If grace made us to differ — then we ought to be humble.

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We are not more indebted to the work of Christ for our justification — than we are to the work of the Holy Spirit for our sanctification.

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If we know anything of nearness to God, we sigh for greater nearness, and daily mourn over our distance from Him.

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Let us think of Heaven as the residence of God and His saints — as the region of holiness and love.

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"What is man, that You are mindful of him?" Psalms 8:4

Man, as a sinner, is a criminal — and yet God pities him;

he is a rebel — and yet God pardons him;

he is a worm — and yet God communes with him.

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"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11 The only foundation of a sinner's hope is Jesus; on Him we must rest the entire weight of our eternal concerns.

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"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James 2:26

Genuine faith in Christ conforms us to Christ. If our faith is real — it will be active — and its effect will be good works. No good works — no genuine faith.

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Filial fear is our great preservative in all times of temptation; we shall not fall into that which we fear!

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"Happy is that people whose God is the Lord!" Psalms 145:15 To have Jehovah for our God is to be truly blessed; for He will hear our prayers, redress our grievances, and supply our needs! When

I can say, "My God is mine,"  
When I can feel your glories shine,  
I tread the world beneath my feet,  
And all that earth calls good or great!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Our God is in the Heavens — He does whatever pleases Him!" Psalms 115:3 Our God is an absolute Sovereign — His will is law. He does just what pleases Him — but He will only choose to do what is holy, just, and good.

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