

Foundations
for
Faith

HARRY ALMOND

MORAL RE-ARMAMENT

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P R E F A C E

Many people seek a faith; many others would like to find more reality and effectiveness in the faith they have. They ask, 'What is God like?', 'How can I live the way I should?', 'I try to read the Bible in the morning, and I know many people get so much from it; but, honestly, I often fall asleep trying to understand.' 'What can I do?' This book is offered as a help in finding answers to such questions.

Many have helped in its preparation, but the greatest obligation is to Dr. Frank N.D. Buchman and those who carry forward the work he began. Through that fellowship have come many of the truths gathered here and an experience of the Cross which makes everything new and is infectious.

A particular debt is owed to Miles G.W. Phillimore, to whose privately printed booklet, *Just for Today*, this collection is a sequel. Before his death he gave permission to use his material, including his own poem, *Not as one*.

The Old Testament for Modern Explorers, Blandford Press, London, by Roland W. Wilson is a useful introduction as are the *J. B. Phillips New Testament Commentaries*, published in paperback editions by Macmillan. A thorough treatment of God's guidance is found in Canon B.H. Streeter's *The God Who Speaks* (Macmillan, London and New York); or in an abridgement by Roger Hicks, obtainable from Grosvenor Books, London.

Unless otherwise noted, biblical quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

Harry J. Almond
Bloomfield, N.J.
1975

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PART 1 : BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

It helps to have an idea of what the Bible is getting at before plunging in. It is a big book, in fact many different books, and you can easily get lost in long genealogies or exotic symbolism.

So try to bear in mind three points:

First, that the Bible tries to show us what's wrong with humanity, with us. It says, 'SIN IS THE DISEASE' rebellion against universally accepted moral standards. Because those standards are God's standards and reflect His nature, sin is rebellion against God.

Then the Bible offers a cure, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth: CHRIST — THE CURE. God chose for His own reasons to reveal these things through a very particular people and a very particular Person. All we need know of God we can see in Jesus Christ. What we do about it is our decision.

Finally, the Bible gives promises and illustrations of the satisfaction and miracles that flow out of the decision to co-operate with God's plan. THE RESULT — A MIRACLE.

Bear in mind the truth of Mark Twain's remark that what bothered him about the Bible was not so much the passages he did not understand as those he did!

So — these Bible Foundations are in three parts:

Sin	—	The Disease
Christ	—	The Cure
The Result	—	A Miracle

SIN – THE DISEASE

A good place to start is with the Ten Commandments.

‘You shall have no other gods before Me.’

‘You shall not make for yourself a graven image . . . or . . . likeness . . . you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.’

‘You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.’

‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.’

‘Honour your father and mother.’

‘You shall not kill.’

‘You shall not commit adultery.’

‘You shall not steal.’

‘You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.’

‘You shall not covet . . .’ *(Exodus 20: 3–17)*

Jesus went further:

‘. . . evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these things come from within, and they defile a man.’ *(Mark 7: 20–23)*

See what Jesus says in Matthew 5: 19 and following:

‘Whoever then relaxes the least of these commandments, and teaches men to do so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven . . . unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.’

Paul puts the need and the answer in capsule form in I Corinthians 6: 9–11.

‘Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of God.’

See also Galatians 5: 19–24 and Colossians 3: 5–10.

For further diagnosis read Romans 1: 18 – 2:11.

Use moral standards as tests:

Honesty

Purity

Unselfishness

Love

They must be **ABSOLUTE**; otherwise they are not standards. Jesus said, Matthew 5: 48:

‘You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.’

Honesty –

Read Matthew 5: 33–37

Also Corinthians 4: 2;

‘We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practise cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.’

‘Therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth with his neighbour. . .’ *(Ephesians 4: 25–28)*

Purity –

Jesus is absolute.

See Matthew 5: 27–28;

‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’, but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.’

See also Psalm 24: 3–5

And I Corinthians 6: 15–20;

‘. . . so glorify God in your body.’

‘. . . do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in your conduct.’ *(1 Peter 1: 14–15)*

Unselfishness

Read Matthew 5: 38–48 about going the extra mile.
Also Matthew 16: 24–26.

‘If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it . . .’

Paul writes to his friends in Rome (12: 3–4)

‘. . . I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought . . .’

and to the Philippians he writes (2: 4–8)

‘Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others . . .’

Read the whole passage.

Love

Again as always Matthew 5 is basic. See verses 43 and following where Jesus begins:

‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you . . .’

‘For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.’
(John 3:16)

‘. . . he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. . . . The commandments . . . are summed up in this sentence, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’’

(Romans 13: 8–10)

I Corinthians 13 is a full exposition of this standard.

See also Ephesians 4: 15–16 and 25, and 31–32.

‘By this we know love, that He (Christ) laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if any one has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and truth.’ *(1 John 3: 16–18)*

To recognize sin it might be good to stop here, and with pencil and paper take a few minutes to note every point that comes to mind and conscience where your life has not corresponded with these absolute standards:

- Honesty**
- Purity**
- Unselfishness**
- Love**

SIN – THE DISEASE

WHAT TO DO WITH IT?

Hate it. See in detail the cost to specific people.

Forsake it. Quit it. Cut it out. Jesus said to the adulteress John 8: 11.

‘ . . . go, and do not sin again.’

‘He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.’
(Proverbs 28: 13)

Get honest with one or two trusted friends. Psalm 51 is believed to be the prayer of David when he faced the depths to which he had sunk in sending a man to be killed in the front line of battle so that he could take the man’s wife.

Read also Psalm 32: 3–5.

‘Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.’
(James 5:16)

‘If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.’
(I John 1: 9–10)

Restore for what you have done, as far as you can, like Zacchaeus in Luke 19:8.

Until you put right everything you can, mend every difficult relationship and cut out every wrong habit, you cannot expect God to put right the rest.

CHRIST – THE CURE

You may find you need something more to live differently. Sooner or later everyone does. You, too, may discover that, however sincere your intentions, you can't quite make it on your own.

Paul was in the same dilemma:

'My own behaviour baffles me. For I find myself doing what I really loathe, but not doing what I really want to do . . . I often find I have the will to do good, but not the power. That is, I don't accomplish the good I set out to do, and the evil I don't really want to do, I find I am always doing . . . For left to myself, I serve the Law of God (the Ten Commandments – the four standards) with my mind, but in my unspiritual nature I serve the law of sin. It is an agonizing situation, and who can set me free from the prison of this mortal body? I thank God there is a way out through Jesus Christ our Lord. The truth is that no condemnation now hangs over the head of those who are 'in' Christ Jesus. For the new spiritual principle of life 'in' Christ Jesus lifts me out of the old vicious circle of sin and death . . . the failure was always the weakness of human nature. But God has met this by sending His own Son to live in sinful human nature like ours . . .'

(Romans 7:15–8:3, Phillips translation)

In other words, we are to put ourselves under 'new management' by deciding to accept Christ's promised pardon for our failures and His power to live the new life.

CHRIST – THE CURE

Paul makes an extraordinary promise:

‘Once the Spirit of Him who raised Christ Jesus from the dead lives in you He will, by that same spirit, bring to your whole being, yes, even your mortal bodies, new strength and vitality. For He now lives in you.’

(Romans 8:11)

And the whole eighth chapter of Romans lays out the thrilling promise of the new life ‘in Christ’, under Christ’s ‘new management.’

It is not complicated. You just give what you know of yourself to God, through Christ’s promises, in faith, and ask to be forgiven for the past and led in the future.

‘God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.’

(John 3: 16–17)

‘. . . if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.’

(I John 1:7)

‘Come unto Me’, Jesus said, ‘all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from Me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.’

(Matthew 11: 28–29)

‘Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.’

(Romans 10:13)

Read about Christ's life – His birth – in Matthew 1:18 – 2:12 and in Luke 2: 1–20.

It is the Christmas story. It is the way God chose to work. It is the way God chose to enter history and save us.

A Christmas hymn:

O little town of Bethlehem,
 How still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 The silent stars go by;
 Yet in thy dark streets shineth
 The everlasting Light;
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
 And gathered all above,
 While mortals sleep, the angels keep
 Their watch of wondering love.
 O morning stars, together
 Proclaim the holy birth!
 And praises sing to God our King,
 And peace to men on earth!

How silently, how silently,
 The wondrous gift is given!
 So God imparts to human hearts
 The blessings of His heaven.
 No ear may hear His coming,
 But in this world of sin,
 Where meek souls will receive Him, still
 The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
 Descend to us, we pray;
 Cast out our sin, and enter in,
 Be born in us today.
 We hear the Christmas angels
 The great glad tidings tell;
 O come to us, abide with us,
 Our Lord Immanuel.

Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)

CHRIST – THE CURE

This universal favourite was written in 1871 for a Sunday School Christmas festival at Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where Brooks was rector. His impressions from a previous pilgrimage to Bethlehem for Christmas, his own poetic gifts and his great love for children produced this beautiful work which was set to music by his organist to whom the music came after he had retired on Christmas Eve. Brooks soon moved to Trinity Church, Boston where he became one of America's most famous and effective preachers, as well as being given a bishopric.

We have already looked at the teaching of Christ under the four absolute standards. Perhaps you should take more time there; but move on now to . . .

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

Paul wrote to a new group of people who had accepted Christ in Corinth to remind them of the heart of his message.

(I Cor. 15:3 ff)

‘For I passed on to you, as essential, the message I had myself received – that Christ died for our sins, as the Scripture said He would; that He was buried and rose again on the third day as the scriptures foretold.’

Paul reminds his friends that Peter, the twelve disciples, hundreds of other followers and he himself had seen the risen Christ.

He repeats:

‘. . . the rising of Christ from the dead is the very heart of our message . . . and if Christ was not raised from the dead then neither our preaching nor your faith has any meaning at all . . . if Christ did not rise your faith is futile and your sins have never been forgiven. But the glorious fact is that Christ was raised from the dead . . . as members of Christ all men shall be raised to life . . . It is sin which gives death its sting . . . All thanks to God, then, who gives us victory over these things through our Lord Jesus Christ.’

For an account of these events, read:

Matthew Chapters 26–28

Luke Chapters 22–24

John Chapters 20–21

Note how Paul staked everything on his faith in the resurrected Christ:

‘the very heart of our message . . .’

‘if Christ was not raised from the dead, then neither our preaching nor your faith has any meaning at all.’

The experience of faith changed Paul and countless millions through the centuries that followed.

Frank Buchman's first experience of change came to him in a church in England's Lake District at Keswick. He entered hurt and discouraged. He listened to a simple talk on the Cross of Christ.

The story continues in Buchman's words: 'I had entered the little church with a divided will, nursing pride, selfishness, ill will, which prevented my functioning as a Christian minister should. The woman's simple talk personalised the Cross for me that day, and suddenly I had a poignant vision of the Crucified.

'With this deeper experience of how the love of God in Christ had bridged the chasm dividing me from Him, and the new sense of buoyant life that had come, I returned to the house feeling a powerful urge to share my experience. Thereupon I wrote to the six committee men in America against whom I had nursed the ill will and told them my experience, and how at the foot of the Cross I could only think of my own sin. At the top of each letter I wrote this verse:

When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

'Then I said,

*My dear Friend,
I have nursed ill will against
you. I am sorry. Forgive me?*

*Yours sincerely,
Frank.'*

That afternoon a Cambridge undergraduate underwent a similar change when Buchman told him what had happened in the morning. It was in 1908.

This experience remained central throughout Buchman's life, and he later said:

'The Cross is not a real Cross if it is only something on a hill 2,000 years ago. It is an awful and devastating contact with the Holiness of God, which breaks but remakes, which condemns but cures, which hates the sin but loves the best in us, which shatters but makes whole, which is the end but also the beginning, and which leads to the death of self and to the newness and the power of the Resurrection life of Jesus Christ.'

Meeting with a group of his closest associates on the eve of his departure for Europe in 1946, he left them his deepest conviction:

'... we are in a global effort to win the world to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Then the great truths of the Gospel will once more become great and Jesus Christ will be King. There is your ideology. It is the whole message of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The message in its entirety is the only last hope that will save the world. God's chance is a revolution under the Cross of Christ that can transform the world. The only hope. Our only answer. Go forth with that message united and you will save the world. And now shall we have a few moments of quiet?'

Oh, Thou best Gift of Heaven,
 Thou Who Thyself hast given,
 For Thou hast died:
 This hast Thou done for me—
 What have I done for Thee,
 Thou crucified?

I long to serve Thee more;
Reveal an open door,
Saviour, to me;
Then, counting all but loss,
I'll glory in the Cross,
And follow Thee.

'The Cross of Christ adequate for a revolution that will bring a renaissance, that will change the world. We pray in Christ's name
Amen.'

(From Buchman's collected speeches, see 'Remaking the World.' London, Blandford Press, 1961, p.148).

Here are all four verses of the hymn Buchman quoted in his letters of apology:

When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down:
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

They were written by Isaac Watts (1674–1748). Watts was born in Southampton, England, where his father, a dissenter, was in prison twice for his religious views. The secret of his inspiration lies in a brief statement recorded in his journal when he was fourteen: ‘Fell under considerable conviction of sin . . . and was taught to trust in Christ.’

Frank Buchman expressed in simple ways the fundamental truths he had experienced:

J E S U S

Just
Exactly
Suits
Us
Sinners

Just
Exactly
Saves
Us
Sinners

Just
Exactly
Satisfies
Us
Sinners

J O Y

Jesus, first
Others, second
Yourself, last

Jesus
Owns
You

Jesus
O – nothing in between
You

SIN – it has an ‘I’ in the middle.

That big ‘I’ must be turned so that it becomes a minus, then, crossed by the vertical of God’s will, it becomes a plus + and with the vertical of God’s will predominant, it becomes a Cross †

THE RESULT – A MIRACLE

‘If any one is in Christ he is a new creature: the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.’

(II Corinthians 5: 17)

‘Behold, I make all things new . . . He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be My Son.’

(Revelation 21: 5–7)

How miracles happen:

‘When man listens,	God speaks:
When man obeys,	God acts;
When men change,	nations change.’

Frank Buchman.

Read Hebrews 11. It tells of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses and many more, who listened, obeyed and saw great changes. The account concludes with their challenge (12: 1–2):

‘Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.’

For accounts of these and other men of faith look up these references:

Abraham	—	begin with Genesis 12.
Moses	—	Exodus 2 and following. Also in Numbers.
Samuel	—	I Samuel 3: 1–19, and 16: 1–13.
Elijah	—	I Kings 17 and following.
Isaiah	—	6: 1–13.
Jeremiah	—	1, 7 and 26.
Ezekiel	—	2.

In Luke 1: 13 God speaks to old Zechariah and in 2: 10 to the shepherds who were afraid.

Jesus tells us about guidance and listening in John 14: 16 and 14: 26.

‘The Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.’

and in 16: 7–15

‘When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; . . .’

‘When man listens,	God speaks:
When man obeys,	God acts;
When men change,	nations change.’

THE RESULT – A MIRACLE

When man listens,

‘God can put thoughts into your mind. Have you ever listened for them? Have you ever tried taking pencil and paper, and writing down the thoughts that come to you? They may look like ordinary thoughts, but be honest about them. You may get a new picture of yourself. Absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness, absolute love. These are Christ’s standards. Are they yours? You may have to put things straight. I had to. I began by writing to six people, admitting that ill will between us was my fault, and not theirs. Then I could really help people. Remember – if you want to get the world straight, get straight yourself.’

Frank Buchman.

(p. 40 – ‘Remaking the World’)

‘The world that you want to transform in a just manner will not be transformed because you yourselves are not transformed. And so long as you refuse to change yourselves, the world will not change. But the world can change if you change.

How do you change? By listening to God; because, as the sun is always shining, so God is constantly speaking. How do you listen to God? The best time is in the morning, before all distractions and activities intervene. How can you listen to God, you ask me? This is the answer: you write. Write, so that you may better hear the Word that is in you and keep His instructions.’

Père Alphonse Gratry, (1805–72)
Order of the Oratory
Member of the French Academy.

THE RESULT – A MIRACLE

‘There are two basic ways to learn, understand and possess the Divine Word.

The first could be defined as external listening, scholastic, catechistic or cultural. It means learning what the Lord has said.

There is another way of listening, to listen to our inmost self. This gives a predominant place to the relationship between God and man . . . Do you hear the voice of the Lord which calls, inspires, orders, counsels, directs and consoles – the true promise and hope of the destiny that awaits us?

It is not an easy matter . . . there are a thousand other voices around us. We are in the midst of a deafening noise. Newspapers, television . . . how can we distinguish . . . the voice of the Lord which is not more resonant than the rest? The Lord in fact does speak in grave and solemn tones, but His Voice is mild and gentle. He speaks to those who want to listen.

He who goes after what he likes, that is temptation, instinct, gain and self-interest, is treading a false path. We must, on the contrary, listen to the voice of the Lord not because we like it . . . but because it is the voice of God with its authority, its mysterious preponderance of all human voices, even the inner ones . . . the desires of the heart come after the absolute primacy of the conversation with God.’

(Extracts from an address given by Pope Paul VI on Palm Sunday, 1968, and published in ‘L’Osservatore Romano.’)

When man obeys,

The Acts of the Apostles is the story of the first Christians' obedience to guidance.

See especially these passages where . . .

Philip obeys and the Ethiopian Minister of Finance is changed. (8: 26–40)

Guidance turns an enemy into a fellow revolutionary. (9: 10–17)

Peter's obedience opens the door to all nations. (Chapter 10)

Obedience leads to an amazing escape. (16: 6–10)

Paul has guidance to go to Europe. (16: 6–10)

And there are many others.

Jesus had promised these very men (Mark 1: 17):
'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.'

Now here they are, changed, and turning the world upside down. This is a chronicle of Christian revolutionaries in action. With all their faults and all their good points, they were 'under new management.'

They listened to God and obeyed.
God still speaks as definitely to man today.

When men change, nations change.

By accepting Christ's promises to pardon, empower and guide, you can enlist in His battle to build a new world, where God runs things.

It is this battle of which Paul wrote to his friends in Ephesus 6: 10–20 in the Phillips translation.

'In conclusion, be strong – not in yourselves but in the Lord, in the power of his boundless strength. Put on God's complete armour so that you can successfully resist all the devil's craftiness. For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organisations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. Therefore you must wear the whole armour of God that you may be able to resist evil in its day of power, and that even when you have fought to a standstill you may still stand your ground. Take your stand then with truth as your belt, integrity your breastplate, the gospel of peace firmly on your feet, salvation as your helmet and in your hand the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Above all be sure you take faith as your shield, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at you. In all your petitions pray at all times with every kind of spiritual prayer, keeping alert and persistent as you pray for all Christ's men and women. And pray for me, too, that I may be able to speak the message here boldly, to make known the secret of that gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may speak out about it, as is my plain and obvious duty.'

To Timothy, a young man he trained, Paul wrote again:

(I Timothy 6:12)

'Fight the good fight of the faith: take hold of the eternal life to which you were called . . .'

Here is the eternal struggle between good and evil. It unites and excludes no one, because while hating the sin you can love the sinner and help him find this experience and join this battle.

‘Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith . . .’
(I Peter 5: 8–9)

‘In the world you may have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.’
(John 16:33)

Read also Romans 8: 35–39.

Enlistment in this battle is the answer to pressures to be ‘with it’ to the appeals of ‘permissive morality’, because you ‘. . . present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.’ Paul goes on with advice from a seasoned warrior: ‘Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.’ Romans 12: 2. Phillip’s translation is more vivid:

‘Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-make you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed.’

To his fellow fighters in the seaport of Corinth, Paul wrote: ‘The truth is that, although we lead normal human lives, the battle we are fighting is on the spiritual level. The very weapons we use are not human but powerful in God’s warfare for the destruction of the enemy’s strongholds. Our battle is to break down every deceptive argument and every imposing defence that men erect against the true knowledge of God. We fight to capture every thought until it acknowledges the authority of Christ. Once we are sure of your obedience, we are ready to punish every disobedience.’
(Phillips – II Corinthians 10: 3–6)

Peter Howard, who worked closely with Frank Buchman in the world programme of Moral Re-Armament, had a copy of Henry Drummond's addresses in which the following passage was underlined:

'Next to losing the sense of a personal Christ, the worst evil that can befall a Christian is to have no sense of anything else. To grow up in complacent belief that God has no business in this great groaning world of human beings except to attend to a few saved souls, is the negation of all religion. The first great epoch in a Christian's life, after the awe and wonder of its dawn, is when there breaks into his mind some sense that Christ has a purpose for mankind, a purpose beyond him and his needs, beyond the Churches and their creeds, beyond Heaven and its saints – a purpose which embraces every man and woman born, every kindred and nation formed, which regards not their spiritual good alone, but their welfare in every part, their progress, their health, their work, their wages, their happiness in this present world.'

In this same context Howard wrote:

'A very small number of people around the world live to shift the thinking of nations and continents. We are at the launching stage of a world advance. It depends on whether we grasp the thinking and living which will make what we do the most relevant thing in the statesmanship of cabinets.'

*'Peter Howard, Life and Letters,'
Anne Wolrige Gordon, Hodder and
Stoughton, London 1969. p. 205*

Fight the good fight with all thy might;
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;
Lay hold on life, and it shall be
Thy joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace;
Lift up thine eyes, and seek His face;
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on thy Guide;
His boundless mercy will provide;
Trust, and thy trusting soul shall prove
Christ is its life, and Christ its love.

Faint not nor fear, His arms are near;
He changeth not, and thou art dear;
Only believe, and thou shalt see
That Christ is all in all to thee.

*John Samuel Bewley Monsell,
(1811–1875)*

Born in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, Monsell attended Trinity College, Dublin. Ordained in 1834, he eventually served as Rector of St. Nicholas in Guildford, England. This hymn was written for the 19th Sunday after Trinity, when the Epistle in the Anglican lectionary is Ephesians 4: 17–32. Here Paul reminds his hearers of Christ's call for a complete change of heart. Paul calls the battle for this change 'the good fight' in his first letter to Timothy, 6: 12; and that verse supplies the first line of this hymn.

Suggestions for Further Bible Reading

Begin with the Gospel of Luke. It is the fullest and perhaps the most orderly. Just get the story of it. Read by natural episodes, not necessarily by Chapters. Find out **Who?** did or said **what?**, **why?**, **when?**, and **where?** Relate it to your own or others needs.

Luke 15: 11–32 Are you like either son?

Luke 10: 25–37 To whom are you a good neighbour?
Whom do you pass by?

Then follow on with Acts of the Apostles. It might also be called 'Acts of men who tried to do what God wanted.' Someone else suggested as a title 'Fifty ways to get into hot water!' It is also by Luke and is a sequel to his Gospel. Note the change in Peter; before (*John 13: 37–38, 18: 15–27, and 21: 9–22*) and after the Resurrection of Jesus (*Acts 1: 15, 2: 14, 3: 1–6, and 5: 1–32*). Watch the change in Saul (*Acts 7: 58, 8: 3*), or Paul as he was later called, and how he shared that experience with others.

Acts 9, and 13:2

Galatians 1: 11–24

Acts 22: 1–21

Acts 26

The letters Paul wrote to the teams of more or less changed people around Greece and Turkey and Italy will now make sense. Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Rome, Corinth, were all places where groups of people began to live the way they thought Jesus wanted them to live. He fought a battle, a moral and spiritual battle, in each letter.

John wrote his Gospel later. It is more interpretive and valuable because it is the interpretation of a committed man who was very close and dear to Jesus (*John 21: 24*). The Letters, or Epistles, of John are the fruit of a long lifetime of faith and prayer.

Matthew wrote his Gospel especially to explain to the Jewish people how Jesus was the Christ foretold in their Scriptures. Mark is the briefest and earliest written. It reflects the stories Peter used in his preaching.

Revelation is a more difficult book, full of Old Testament imagery, and really needs a simple commentary. Its language is veiled as a security measure, since it was written by John, a prisoner, to encourage persecuted underground groups or teams.

Hebrews was written for Christians of Jewish background, but it is relevant for all.

Eventually an Old Testament is needed to make clearer the references to it in the New Testament. A good way to start is to look up the references in the Old Testament to the stories touched upon in Hebrews 11. Many Bibles have the references noted. The Psalms feed the soul. See Psalms 23, 51, 91 and 103.

PART II

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve Thee as Thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil and not to seek for rest;
to labour and not to ask for any reward;
save that of knowing that we do Thy will.

St. Ignatius Loyola

As a Spanish Army Officer in the 16th Century, St. Ignatius was severely wounded. During convalescence he read about Christianity and found a faith. He established a militant and learned order of priests, the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, as they are known.

A Morning Prayer

O Lord, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God,
Who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day;
Defend us in the same with Thy mighty power;
And grant that this day we fall into no sin,
Neither run into any kind of danger;
But that all our doings may be ordered by Thy governance,
To do always that is righteous in Thy sight;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer)

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace.
Where there is hatred may I bring love;
Where there is malice may I bring pardon;
Where there is discord may I bring harmony;
Where there is error may I bring truth;
Where there is doubt may I bring faith;
Where there is despair may I bring hope,
Where there is darkness may I bring Your Light;
Where there is sadness may I bring joy.

O Master,

May I seek not so much to be comforted as to comfort,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in forgiving that we shall be forgiven,
It is in dying that we shall rise up to eternal life.

St. Francis of Assisi
(1182–1226)

A General Thanksgiving

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we Thine unworthy servants do give Thee most humble and hearty thanks for all Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men. We bless Thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for Thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we beseech Thee, give us that due sense of all Thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth Thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to Thy service, and by walking before Thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, world without end,

Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer)

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

A prayer of Sir Francis Drake

O Lord God, when Thou givest to thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning but the continuing of the same until it be thoroughly finished which yieldeth the true glory; through Him that for the finishing of Thy work laid down His life, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Amen

A prayer of George Washington

*(You can name your own country
where he mentions the United States.)*

Almighty God: We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection: that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large; And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the divine author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul.
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine
enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of
my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 23.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger,
and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide: neither will He keep his
anger for ever.

He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded
us according to our iniquities.

For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is
His mercy toward them that fear Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He
removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord
pitieth them that fear Him.

Psalm 103: vv. 8-13

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 Forgive our foolish ways;
 Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
 In purer lives Thy service find,
 In deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
 Beside the Syrian sea,
 The gracious calling of the Lord,
 Let us, like them, without a word
 Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee,
 O calm of hills above,
 Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
 The silence of eternity,
 Interpreted by love!

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
 Till all our strivings cease;
 Take from our souls the strain and stress,
 And let our ordered lives confess
 The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
 Thy coolness and Thy balm;
 Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
 Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
 O still small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier
 (1807–1892)

This popular American Quaker was born on a farm in Haverhill, Massachusetts, and he worked hard for a meagre education. After some success as a poet and in local politics he was planning to run for Congress, but, following his 'inner voice', he sacrificed political ambition to become a champion of the abolition of slavery.

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

I come to the garden alone
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear,
Falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

*(chorus) And He walks with me, and He talks with me
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there
None other has ever known.*

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Tho' the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.

C. Austin Miles

O God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Our shelter from the stormy blast
 And our eternal home ;

Under the shadow of Thy throne
 Thy saints have dwelt secure;
 Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
 And our defence is sure.

Before the hills in order stood,
 Or earth received her frame,
 From everlasting Thou art God,
 To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
 Are like an evening gone;
 Short as the watch that ends the night
 Before the rising sun.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
 Bears all its sons away;
 They fly forgotten, as a dream
 Dies at the opening day.

O God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Be Thou our Guide while troubles last,
 And our eternal home.

Isaac Watts
 (1674-1748)

This hymn, written during the crisis accompanying the death of Queen Anne of England in August 1714, drew its inspiration from Psalm 90.

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Jesus, I my Cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee.
Destitute, despised, forsaken —
Thou from hence my all shalt be.
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought or hoped or known;
Yet how rich is my condition —
God and heaven are still my own.

Henry Francis Lyte
(1793–1847)

Lyte was born in Scotland, and his parents died during his childhood. Plagued by poverty and poor health, he nonetheless studied at Trinity College, Dublin, and was ordained to the Anglican ministry. While serving a small parish, a neighbouring clergyman who lay dying sent for him. Lyte discovered that both he and his dying friend lacked a real experience of Christ's pardon and grace. Together they turned to the Bible in common need and both found a firm faith. Lyte wrote of his friend, 'He died happy under the belief that though he had deeply erred there was One whose death and sufferings would atone for his delinquencies, and that he was forgiven and accepted for His sake.' Of his own change, he added: 'I was greatly affected by the whole matter, and brought to look at life and its issue with a different eye than before; and I began to study my Bible and preach in another manner than I had previously done.' Following this he served over 24 years in the parish of Lower Brixham. On his last Sunday there he returned for an hour to his study and came out with the words of the beloved hymn, 'Abide with Me.'

Beneath the Cross of Jesus
 I fain would take my stand —
 The shadow of a mighty rock
 Within a weary land,
 A home within a wilderness,
 A rest upon the way,
 From the burning of the noontide heat
 And the burden of the day.

Upon that Cross of Jesus
 Mine eye at times can see
 The very dying form of One
 Who suffered there for me.
 And from my stricken heart, with tears,
 Two wonders I confess —
 The wonders of redeeming love
 And my unworthiness.

I take, O Cross, thy shadow
 For my abiding place.
 I ask no other sunshine than
 The sunshine of His face,
 Content to let the world go by,
 To know no gain nor loss —
 My sinful self my only shame,
 My glory all — the Cross.

Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane
 (1830–1869)

Miss Clephane was the daughter of a county sheriff and belonged to the Scottish Free Church. She and her sister settled at Melrose near Sir Walter Scott's home where they gave everything for charity, keeping a minimum for their own maintenance, even selling their horse and carriage.

All I have I give to Jesus
I surrender all.

The dearest idol I have known
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne
And worship only Thee.

William Cowper
(1731–1800)

from his hymn,
'O for a closer walk with God.'

FAITH

Forsaking

All

I

Take

Him

Forsaking All Sin, I take Him, Jesus

For

All

I

Trust

Him

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine:
Now hear me while I pray;
Take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day
Be wholly Thine.

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
Be Thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day;
Wipe sorrow's tears away;
Nor let me ever stray
From Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,
When death's cold, sullen stream
Shall o'er me roll;
Blest Saviour, then, in love,
Fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above,
A ransomed soul.

Ray Palmer
(1808-1887)

Palmer was born in the state of Rhode Island in America, a direct descendant of the original Pilgrims. Working in a store, he heard a sermon in Boston's Park Street Church that made him decide to become a minister. This hymn he wrote at the age of twenty-one. Later the composer, Lowell Mason, asked him to contribute to a hymn book he was about to publish. Palmer gave him these words on the spot. Mason wrote the music and the result is one of America's finest hymns.

Just as I am, without one plea
 Save that Thy blood was shed for me,
 And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
 Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
 Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
 O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, though tossed about
 With many a conflict, many a doubt,
 Fightings and fears within, without,
 O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, and waiting not
 To rid my soul of one dark blot;
 To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
 O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
 Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
 Because Thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am — Thy love unknown
 Has broken every barrier down —
 Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come!

Charlotte Elliott
 (1789–1871)

Miss Elliott was an invalid the last fifty years of her life. These lines came to her in a moment of particular weakness. She deliberately set out for herself the certainties of her faith. The hymn was usually printed with the verse ‘. . . him who comes to me I will not cast out.’ (John 6:37)

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power.

Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy Cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When mine eyelids close in death,
When I soar through tracts unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgement throne:
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Augustus Montague Toplady
(1740–1778)

Frail in body, Toplady had a fighting spirit. He began preaching when he was twelve years old. Listening to a Methodist revivalist as a student in Dublin, he had an experience in which he says he was 'brought nigh to God.'

A militant Calvinist, he was engaged in an often bitter theological dispute with John Wesley. In spite of harsh words exchanged, Toplady published a hymnal two years before his death in which 'Rock of Ages' stood beside Wesley's 'Jesu, Lover of my soul.'

Jesu, Lover of my soul,
 Let me to Thy bosom fly,
 While the nearer waters roll,
 While the tempest still is high:
 Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
 Till the storm of life be past;
 Safe unto the haven guide,
 Oh, receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none,
 Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
 Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
 Still support and comfort me.
 All my trust on Thee is stayed,
 All my help from Thee I bring;
 Cover my defenceless head
 With the shadow of Thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
 More than all in Thee I find.
 Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
 Heal the sick and lead the blind.
 Just and holy is Thy name,
 I am all unrighteousness;
 False and full of sin I am,
 Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found;
 Grace to cover all my sin;
 Let the healing streams abound,
 Make and keep me pure within:
 Thou of life the fountain art,
 Freely let me take of Thee:
 Spring Thou up within my heart,
 Rise to all eternity.

Charles Wesley
 (1707–1788)

This is the most famous of Charles Wesley's 6,500 hymns, written in 1739, the year he moved to Bristol and began his extraordinary fifteen year period of travelling evangelism. His surrender, with his brother John, to the love of Christ and to do God's will in 1738, had been followed by work with prisoners, and this hymn flowed naturally from such sources.

Frank Buchman used frequently to quote 'Make and keep me pure within' as the greatest line in the English language.

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

O Jesus, I have promised
To serve Thee to the end;
Be Thou forever near me,
My Master and my Friend;
I shall not fear the battle
If Thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway,
If Thou wilt be my Guide.

O let me hear Thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion,
The murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou Guardian of my soul.

O let me see Thy Foot-marks,
And in them plant mine own;
My hope to follow duly
Is in Thy strength alone.
O guide me, call me, draw me,
Uphold me to the end;
And then in Heaven receive me,
My Saviour and my Friend.

John Ernest Bode
(1816-1874)

Bode, an Anglican clergyman, wrote this hymn for the confirmation of his daughter and two sons.

O let me feel Thee near me;
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear;
My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But, Jesus, draw Thou nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.

O Jesus, Thou hast promised,
To all who follow Thee,
That where Thou art in glory,
There shall Thy servant be;
And, Jesus, I have promised
To serve Thee to the end;
O give me grace to follow,
My master and my friend.

Once to every man and nation
 Comes the moment to decide,
 In the strife of truth with falsehood,
 For the good or evil side,
 Some great cause, God's new messiah,
 Offering each the bloom or blight —
 And the choice goes by forever
 'Twixt that darkness and that light.

Then to side with truth is noble,
 When we share her wretched crust,
 Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
 And 'tis prosperous to be just;
 Then it is the brave man chooses,
 While the coward stands aside,
 Till the multitude make virtue
 Of the faith they had denied.

By the light of burning martyrs,
 Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,
 Toiling up new Calvaries ever
 With the Cross that turns not back.
 New occasions teach new duties;
 Time makes ancient good uncouth;
 They must upward still and onward
 Who would keep abreast of truth.

Though the cause of evil prosper,
 Yet 'tis truth alone is strong;
 Though her portion be the scaffold
 And upon the throne be wrong —
 Yet that scaffold sways the future,
 And, behind the dim unknown,
 Standeth God within the shadow,
 Keeping watch above His own.

James Russell Lowell
 (1819–1891)

These lines were taken from a longer poem by this American literary figure. Entitled 'The Present Crisis,' it was written in the context of Lowell's efforts to abolish slavery, and makes this point: 'They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin.'

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-ending skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

William Cowper
(1731–1800)

Cowper's own title for this hymn was '*Light shining out of darkness.*' Dated 1779, it is the last he wrote: a triumph of faith over his assaults of mental illness and deep despair. Earlier he wrote '*O for a closer walk with God.*'

Not as One

Not as one I come to plead with Thee,
 Not alone in private shame.
 But our army comes on bended knee
 And each soldier takes the blame.

Not as one I bring my hopeless case,
 Blind and fearful, proud and sham,
 For my brothers meet Thee face to face
 Broken, whose own flesh I am.

Not as one I know Christ died for me,
 Ask His all-sufficient grace.
 But a team stands aching to be free
 And united for the race.

Not in me alone His work is done,
 Revolutionary rebirth.
 Nucleus of the nations, ours the dawn!
 Christ in us has won the earth.

Not as one I seek the battle line,
 Hourly struggle soul with soul.
 But my march is public all the time,
 Centred, shouldering the whole.

And a wracked, divided world awaits
 Spirit-force terrific, sure,
 When Christ's army opens wide its gates,
 Looses its united war.

Miles G. W. Phillimore

Fighters Ever

We shall fight together as one,
 One in the faith that firm we are holding;
We shall see the Kingdom come
 Through sacrifice and sorrow unfolding.
Long ago the battle was joined;
 Strong in the Lord we rally the millions;
Warriors ever, never divided,
 Come what may, we fight as one!

John M. Morrison

Bridgebuilders

On sure foundations
 Build we God's new nations;
 Strong and clear tells each year
 Of new-bridged relations.
 As land reaches to land,
 On a world front will we stand,
 And build together
 What none shall sever —
 Bridges from man to man,
 The whole round earth to span.

Out beyond our knowing
 Are these bridges going,
 Spanning need, hate and greed,
 Far-flung highways growing.
 The call rings clear and plain —
 Work as one with but one aim,
 And build together
 What none shall sever —
 Bridges from man to man,
 The whole round earth to span.

Now for our decision
 Waits the greater vision.
 All we have, Lord, we give!
 Grant us Thy commission.
 Thy strength we claim day by day,
 Thy command gladly obey:
 To build together
 What none shall sever —
 Bridges from man to man,
 The whole round earth to span.

John M. Morrison

SOURCES OF STRENGTH

Onward! Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before.
Christ, the royal Master,
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See! His banners go.

At the sign of triumph
Satan's host doth flee;
On, then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise.

Crowns and thrones may perish,
Kingdoms rise and wane,
But the Church of Jesus
Constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never
'Gainst that Church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise,
And that cannot fail.

Chorus:
Onward! Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before!

Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod.
We are not divided,
All one Body we,
One in hope, in doctrine,
One in charity.

Onward, then ye people;
Join our happy throng;
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumph song:
Glory, Laud, and honour,
Unto Christ the King!
This through countless ages
Men and angels sing.

Sabine Baring-Gould
(1834-1924)

The Rev. Baring-Gould composed this in 1865 as a marching song for children of his village. In 1872 Sir Arthur S. Sullivan, the great English organist, composed the tune which has since been inseparably linked to the stirring words. The inspiration drawn from the sixth chapter of Ephesians is evident. Baring-Gould also wrote, *Now the day is over.*

Father, forgive the cold love of the years,
As here in the silence we bow.
Perish our cowardice, perish our fears!
Kindle us, kindle us now.

Lord, we accept, we believe, we adore,
Less than the least though we be.
Fire of love, burn in us, burn evermore,
Till we burn out for Thee.

O for a passionate passion for souls,
O for a pity that yearns,
O for a love that loves unto death,
O for a fire that burns.

O for the pure prayer-power that prevails,
That pours itself out for the lost,
Victorious prayer in the Conqueror's name —
The Lord of Pentecost.

Amy Wilson Carmichael
of South India.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians 3: 20–21

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

God is able to do – for you
all that you ask or think
above all that you ask or think
abundantly above all that you ask or think
exceeding abundantly above all that you ask or think

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon
you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up the light of His
countenance upon you and
give you peace,
now, and for evermore.

Amen.

(Numbers 6: 24–26)

