

Title: **CHILDREN OF LIGHT**
WALKING IN DARKNESS

Text: Isaiah 50:10-11

Subject: *Instructions for Times of Darkness*

Date: Tuesday Evening — May 25, 2010

Tape # Z-88a

Readings: *Rex Bartley and Larry Brown*

Introduction:

One Sunday night, several weeks ago, Bro. Frank Hall walked into my office and sat down, before any of the other brethren arrived. He was obviously carrying a heavy burden. When I asked, “How are you tonight?” he asked, — “Bro. Don, do all believers go through times of darkness?” I answered, “I can’t speak for all believers. I don’t pretend to know what others may or may not experience; but I do know what it is to experience great times of darkness.”

This I know: Some things can be seen only in darkness. You can’t see the moon and the stars God has set in the heavens, until the sun sets and the darkness of night comes. The same is true in spiritual things. None of us would ever choose seasons of darkness; but those times of darkness through which the Lord God brings his children are times of instruction, learning and benefit to our souls.

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Anyone can learn the letter of Holy Scripture. A person can, by diligent study and repeated instruction grasp...

- The Doctrines of the Bible.
- The Historical Facts of the Bible.
- The Prophetic Revelations of the Bible.

A person can learn these things and teach them to others, and never be affected by them. But there are gems of living, spiritual truth hidden in the Holy Scriptures, like treasures in a deep mine, which no one can learn except by the experience of grace.

Our text tonight is one of those vast, deep mines. As I read the text and begin to declare its message, some of you will find your very souls echoing what I say because you will know by experience what I am talking about. Others will be either unconcerned or bewildered, or perhaps even offended, because what the prophet says in this passage of Holy Scripture will expose the state and condition of your hearts.

The title of my message is a bit unusual, but you will see it clearly justified when we read our text. This is my subject: — **CHILDREN OF LIGHT WALKING.** Read the text with me — Isaiah 50:10-11.

(Isaiah 50:10-11 AV) “Who *is* among you that **feareth** the LORD, that **obeyeth** the voice of his servant, that

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walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. ¹¹ Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

Here two distinct characters are traced out by the hand of God the Holy Spirit. One is a child of God, an heir of heaven, a child of light. The other is a child of Satan, an heir of hell, a child of darkness, reprobate and cast off by the hand of Divine judgment.

- The child of light is described as one walking in darkness. But the child of darkness is said to walk in light.
- The one walking in darkness is comforted.
- But the one walking in light is warned of eternal ruin.

Proposition: These two verses teach us that true believers are often distressed and troubled about the state of their souls, while mere hypocrites are very confident and full of assurance.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT

Verse 10 describes children of light walking in darkness. I will spend the bulk of my time here because my object is to

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help you whose souls are heavy; and a clear understanding of verse 10 will make the next verse perfectly clear. — First, Isaiah shows us **the character of every true child of God**. These two things are true of all who are born of God.

The believer is a person who fears the LORD.

- Not a Slavish, Legal Fear
- Not a Fear of Judgment, Wrath, or Punishment
- A Loving Reverence and Believing Fear — A desire to please and honor him.

The prophet is hear talking about that reverence and godly fear that is the fruit of grace, “*whereby we may serve God acceptably*” (Hebrews 12:28; Psalm 2:11; 5:7).

(Psalms 2:11 AV) “Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.”

(Psalms 5:7 AV) “But as for me, I will come *into* thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: *and* in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.”

This fear of God is always the fruit of grace. It always accompanies saving faith. It is the very beginning of wisdom, the very beginning of the knowledge of God in Christ, and only increases as the believer grows in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As **John Gill** put

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it, — This fear of the Lord, the Triune Jehovah, is “an internal principle in the heart, a reverential affection for God, a godly fear of him; is attended with faith in him, and joy of him; which makes holy, and keeps humble, and takes in the whole worship of God.”

All who are born of God fear the Lord; and all who are born of God **obey the voice of his servant**. Without question, the Lord’s Servant in this passage is **our Lord Jesus Christ** (vv. 4-8; 42:1-4)

(Isaiah 50:4-8 AV) “The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is weary*: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. ⁵ The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. ⁶ I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. ⁷ For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. ⁸ *He is near* that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who *is* mine adversary? let him come near to me.”

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(Isaiah 42:1-4 AV) “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. ² He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. ³ A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. ⁴ He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.”

Jehovah’s Servant is Christ the Lord, by whom our redemption was accomplished, by whom justice was satisfied, by whom our sins were put away. But the Lord’s Servant, whose voice his people obey is also **God the Holy Spirit**, our Divine Comforter, Teacher and Guide (Romans 8: 8-17).

(Romans 8:8-17 AV) “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. ¹⁰ ¶ And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. ¹¹ But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal

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bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. ¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. ¹³ For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. ¹⁴ **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.** ¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. ¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ ¶ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”

Christ is Jehovah’s Servant, by whom and in whom the Lord God reveals himself. God the Holy Spirit is Jehovah’s Servant, who takes the things of Christ and shows them to chosen sinners. All who are born of God obey the doctrine of Christ and the direction of the Holy Spirit, as it is given in Holy Scripture. And that instruction and direction is given to God’s elect by faithful Gospel preachers, who are also Jehovah’s servant (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

(Hebrews 13:7 AV) “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.”

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(Hebrews 13:17 AV) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”

Yes, God’s people obey their pastors, those men who teach them the Gospel, who teach them the Word of God.

- In matters of Faith
- In matters of Doctrine
- In Matters of Worship
- In matters of Duty
- In matters of Conduct

C. H. Spurgeon wrote, — “Holy reverence within the heart, and careful obedience manifested in the life, these are the two infallible marks of the true man of God.” That is the character of a true believer: – He fears God and obeys him!

WALKING IN DARKNESS

Next, the prophet describes the condition in which believers often find themselves: — Walking in darkness and having no light! This is not the condition God’s

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children are in all the time; but it is the condition many of God's elect are in much of the time.

When Isaiah says that God's dear saints walk in darkness and have no light, he does not mean for us to understand that in an absolute sense (1 John 1:7; Ephesians 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:5).

(1 John 1:7 AV) “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

(Ephesians 5:8 AV) “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:”

(1 Thessalonians 5:5 AV) “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”

Yes, all who are born of God walk in the light of life. Yet, our text speaks of God's saints, children of light, walking in darkness. The word “*light*” in Isaiah 50:10 is a very distinct word for light. It means “brilliance,” or “clear-shining light.” **The fact is, though we always have the light of God's truth, we do not always enjoy the light, the**

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brilliance and clear shining light of his countenance –
(Psalms 4:6; 80:3; Song of Solomon 5:2).

(Psalms 4:6 AV) “*There be* many that say, Who will shew us *any* good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.”

(Psalms 80:3 AV) “Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.”

(Song of Solomon 5:2 AV) “I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.”

I never have any difficulty knowing the light of my duty, I often find myself without the brilliant, clear shining light of God’s favor (Psalm 88:1-6; Lamentations 3:1-18).

(Psalms 88:1-6 AV) “O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day *and* night before thee: ² Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry; ³ For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. ⁴ I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man *that hath* no strength: ⁵ Free

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among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more: and they are cut off from thy hand. ⁶ **Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.**”

(Lamentations 3:1-22 AV) “I *am* the man *that* hath seen **affliction by the rod of his wrath.** ² He hath led me, and **brought me into darkness, but not into light.** ³ Surely against me is he turned; **he turneth his hand against me all the day.** ⁴ **My flesh and my skin hath he made old;** he hath **broken my bones.** ⁵ He hath **builded against me,** and **compassed me with gall and travail.** ⁶ He hath **set me in dark places,** as *they that be* dead of old. ⁷ He hath **hedged me about,** that I cannot get out: he hath **made my chain heavy.** ⁸ Also when I cry and shout, he **shutteth out my prayer.** ⁹ He hath **inclosed my ways** with hewn stone, he hath **made my paths crooked.** ¹⁰ He **was unto me as a bear lying in wait,** *and as a lion* in secret places. ¹¹ He hath turned aside my ways, and **pulled me in pieces:** he hath **made me desolate.** ¹² He hath bent his bow, and **set me as a mark for the arrow.** ¹³ He hath **caused the arrows of his quiver to enter into my reins.** ¹⁴ I was a derision to all my people; *and* their song all the day. ¹⁵ He hath **filled me with bitterness,** he hath **made me drunken with wormwood.** ¹⁶ He hath also **broken my teeth with gravel stones,** he

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hath covered me with ashes.¹⁷ And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot prosperity.¹⁸ And I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD:¹⁹ Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall.²⁰ My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.²¹ ¶ This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.²² It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.”

We have the light of God's goodness and grace in Christ always, but not of assurance. We have the light of God's promises always, but not of his presence. The fact is, true believers often walk in darkness.

- Concerning the State and Condition of Our Souls
— “For my own part, since first my unbelief was felt, I have been praying for years for faith, and praying with some earnestness, and m not yet possessed of half a grain” (John Berridge).
- Spiritual Trials and Conflicts
- Satan's Temptations

“Was the Lord Jesus tempted like I am? How can that be? He was pure, spotless, and holy; but I am full of corruption from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. The Lord of life and glory had a perfect,

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unfallen nature, a holy human body, and a holy human soul, taken into union with Deity; but I have a fallen nature, defiled in body and polluted in soul. Can there be a resemblance in our temptations?" I would ask, what is it in you that feels the burden of temptation when Satan injects his blasphemies into your mind? Is there not a something in you which is grieved, I was going to say tortured, by these fiery darts? Is it not the **new nature**? and is not that nature spotless and holy? Is it not born of God, and therefore as holy as God is holy, and pure as God is pure? Thus just in the same way as your pure and holy nature that is born of God is grieved and distressed by the fiery darts of Satan, so was the holy soul of the Lord Jesus ten thousand times more grieved and tortured by the temptations of Satan presented before his pure and spotless mind."

J. C. Philpot

- **Worldly Trouble, Care, and Sorrow** — Domestic Trouble — Sickness — Bereavement
- **Slander and Reproach**
- **Depression, Mental and Emotional Agony**

GOD'S PURPOSE

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Why does the Lord our God, ever wise and good and gracious, direct the paths of his children through darkness? What good purpose can such trials serve? I do not pretend to know any full, complete answer; but I can assure you of this: —

- The darkness is our teacher. The best of text books are printed with black letters.
- Times of darkness tend to humble us.

“If today He deigns to bless us
With a sense of pardoned sin,
He tomorrow may distress us,
Make us feel the plague within,
All to make us
Sick of self, and fond of Him.”

- Trials of darkness make us more sympathetic.
- These times of darkness make us more useful.

Though we often walk in darkness, we are not excused or absolved from daily duty. — Our text speaks of those who **walk in darkness**! True believers never quit, even when they cannot see for the darkness!

GRACIOUS COUNSEL

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Third, may God give us grace to hear and heed the gracious counsel he gives us by his prophet Isaiah. The prophet says to God’s children walking in darkness, — “**Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.**”

Trust The name of the Lord – Jehovah.

- God’s Revealed Character!
- The Son of God!
- The God of Past Deliverances!
- Your Personal, Covenant Experience of Your God!

“Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.”

When the valley is deep, when the darkness is thick, trust in the Name of the Lord. Stay yourself upon your God!

- **JEHOVAH-JIREH** — “The Lord will provide.” — “*And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen*” (Genesis 22 :14).
- **JEHOVAH-RAPHA** — “The Lord that healeth thee.” — “*And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice*

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of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee” (Exodus 15:26).

- **JEHOVAH-NISSI** — “The Lord our Banner.” — “*And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi” (Exodus 17:15).*
- **JEHOVAH-M’KADDESH** — “*The Lord which doth sanctify you.*” — “*Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you” (Exodus 31:13).* — “*And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the Lord which sanctify you” (Leveticus 20:8).*
- **JEHOVAH-RA-AH** — “The Lord my Shepherd.” — “*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1).*
- **JEHOVAH-HOSEENU** — “The Lord our Maker.” — “*O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Psalm 95 :6).*

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- **JEHOVAH-ELOHEENU** — “The Lord our God.” — *“Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy...He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them. Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions”* (Psalm 99:5,7,8).
- **JEHOVAH-ELOHEKA** — “The Lord thy God.” — *“I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: ... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me...Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain”* (Exodus20:2,5,7).
- **JEHOVAH-ELOHAY** — “The Lord my God.” — *“And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee”* (Zechariah 14:5).

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- **JEHOVAH-SHALOM** — “The Lord our Peace.” — *“Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites”* (Judges 6:24).
- **JEHOVAH-TSEBAHOTH** — “The Lord of Hosts” — *“And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there”* (1 Samuel 1:3). — *“And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha”* (Romans 9:29). — *“Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth”* (James 5:4).
- **JEHOVAH-HELEYON** — “The Lord Most High.” — *“I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high”* (Psalm 7:17). — *“For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth”* (Psalm 47:2). — *“For thou, Lord, art high above all the earth: thou art exalted far above all gods”* (Psalm 97:9).

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- **JEHOVAH-TSIDKEENU** — “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” — *“In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”* (Jeremiah 23:6). — *“In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness”* (Jeremiah 33:16).
- **JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH** — “The Lord is there.” — *“It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there”* (Ezekiel 48:35).

This is both a gracious invitation and a direct command. — “Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.” — **If we cannot trust God in the darkness, we do not trust him at all.**

Illustrations: A Husband — A Father.

If I trust God only in the light, my trust is not in God but in myself, my feelings, my experience.

“Feelings come, and feelings go,

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And feelings are deceiving;
I trust the living Word of God,
Naught else is worth believing!”

God’s promises were made for the dark times, not for the light! Spirit of God, teach me to trust God my Savior the darkness.

- Without any Evidences of Grace!
 - a. Without anything to Confirm His Word! — Faith without support is God honoring faith.

“And when thine eye of faith is dim,
Still hold on Jesus, sink or swim:
Still at his footstool bow the knee;
And Israel’s God thy strength shall be.”

CHILDREN OF DARKNESS

Verse 10 speaks of God’s children, children of light walking in darkness. Now, look just briefly at verse 11. Here the prophet speaks of children of darkness walking in light.

(Isaiah 50:10-11 AV) “Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. ¹¹

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Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.”

These children of darkness kindle a fire to enlighten and warm themselves in their unbelief. Rejecting Christ the Light of the world, and despising the glorious light of his Gospel, and loving darkness rather than light, they set up the light of nature and reason as the rule of faith and practice. They choose the traditions and doctrines of men as their guide. They choose their own righteousness for their justification before God and acceptance with him:

Unbelieving, self-righteous rebels, are described as people “that compass yourselves about with sparks.” — You compass yourself with the sparks that fly out of the fire you have kindled, little sparks of light have neither warmth nor light, sparks that quickly die and constantly have to be replaced. The sparks of self-righteousness are short living sparks of useless religion. Self-righteousness is a bed too short to stretch yourself upon it. It is a covering too narrow to wrap yourself in it.

If you insist on having our own righteousness, if you refuse to trust the Lord Jesus...

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- If you will not have his blood to cleanse you,
- If you will not have his righteousness to justify you,
- If you will not have his grace to save you,

The Lord God will leave you to walk in the light of your own fire, and to do so with great confidence and peace, until you are in hell! — “**This shall ye have of mine hand!**” Then, in the end God will give you everlasting sorrow. — “**This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.**” — To find rest and peace apart from faith in Christ is man’s highest folly!

“My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteous;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all supports are washed away,
He then is all my hope and stay.

When he shall come with trumpet sound,

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Oh, may I then in him be found,
Robed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne!

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.
All other ground is sinking sand!”

Amen.