

Creative cations Communications Sample

A Worship Series on Romans

With Themes from the Theology of Martin Luther

Leader's Guide

### A Worship Series on Romans

With Themes from the Theology of Martin Luther

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A Worship Series on Romans

With Themes from the Theology of Martin Luther

### About the Series

This is a 4-week worship series for summer or any time of the year to highlight major themes of Martin Luther's theology found in the Book of Romans. The weekly themes of justification by faith, Law and Gospel, vocation and the Word are perfect for our focus on in light of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and Luther's discovery of God's free gift of righteousness in Christ.

### A Worship Series on Romans

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# Service One: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (Justification by Faith) Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

### **Newsletter Notice**

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. The first service in this series focuses on justification by faith as revealed in Romans 1:16-17. Specially selected Scripture readings, a children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us see, as Luther did, that we are justified by faith, not by works.

### **Bulletin Notice**

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, welcome to this service special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. This first service focuses on justification by faith as revealed in Romans 1:16-17. Let the specially selected Scripture readings, children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help you see, as Luther did, that we are justified by faith, not by works.

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### Service Two

Service Two: God Has Done What the Law ... Could Not Do (Law and Gospel) Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

### Newsletter Notice

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. The second service in the series focuses on law and gospel as revealed in Romans 3:19-26. Specially selected Scripture readings, a children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us celebrate, as Luther did, the Gospel message that Jesus did what was required of the Law by dying on the cross for us.

### **Bulletin Notice**

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, welcome to this service special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. This first service focuses on law and gospel as revealed in Romans 3:19-26. Specially selected Scripture readings, children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us celebrate, as Luther did, the Gospel message that Jesus did what was required of the Law by dying on the cross for us.

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### Service Three: Love Your Neighbor as Yourself (Love for Neighbor/Vocation) Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

### Newsletter Notice

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. The second service in the series focuses on love for neighbor and vocation as revealed in Romans 13:8-10. Specially selected Scripture readings, a children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us see, as Luther did, that we are called by God to love our neighbor as ourselves.

### **Bulletin Notice**

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. This second service in the series focuses on love for neighbor and vocation as revealed in Romans 13:8-10. Specially selected Scripture readings, children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us see, as Luther did, that we are called by God to love our neighbor as ourselves.

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## Service Four: The Encouragement of the Scriptures (The Word) Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

### Newsletter Notice

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. The fourth service in the series focuses on the importance of the Word of God as revealed in Romans 15:4-6. Specially selected Scripture readings, a children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us see, as Luther did, that our lives should grounded in Scripture.

### **Bulletin Notice**

In honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, join us for a special worship series on the Book of Romans, highlighting major themes of Martin Luther's theology found there. This fourth service in the series focuses on the importance of the Word of God as revealed in Romans 15:4-6. Specially selected Scripture readings, children's message, sermon, hymns and prayers in this service will help us see, as

Luther did, that our lives should grounded in Scripture.

### A Worship Series on Romans

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### A Worship Series on Romans

With Themes from the Theology of Martin Luther

## Service One: The Righteous Shall Live by Faith (Justification by Faith)

### Order of Service

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times." (Martin Luther, Preface to Romans, 1522)

Opening Hymn.....Es Ist Das Heil 87 87 887

Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favor;
Good works cannot avert our doom,
They help and save us never.
Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer.

Let me not doubt, but trust in Thee,
Thy Word cannot be broken;
Thy call rings out, "Come unto Me!"
No falsehood hast Thou spoken.
Baptized into Thy precious name,
My faith cannot be put to shame,
And I shall never perish.

The Law reveals the guilt of sin
And makes men conscience-stricken;
The Gospel then doth enter in
The sinful soul to quicken.
Come to the cross, trust Christ, and live;
The Law no peace can ever give,
No comfort and no blessing.

Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
Yet faith alone doth justify,
Works serve thy neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.

ons

Opening Litany

- P Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
- the conviction of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1)
- P By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God,
- **©** so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (Heb. 11:3)
- P The word [of faith] is near you,
- in your mouth and in your heart. (Romans 10:8)
- P Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord
- and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9)

### A Worship Series on Romans

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## Service Two: God Has Done What the Law ... Could Not Do (Law and Gospel)

### Complete Script For Worship Leaders

• If desired, an **Environmental Projection** of the cross of Calvary to represent the Gospel message that Jesus paid the price for our sins is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

http://www.shutterstock.com/pic-97664798/stock-photo-calvary-crucifixion-with-sun-setting-behind. html?src=cQWrPvbVNOC0CT-qR1zGVw-1-5

• The **Theme Verse** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times." (Martin Luther, Preface to Romans, 1522)

• The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Anthes 76 76 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Today your mercy calls us
To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass,
Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy
Our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us
And make us clean today.

Today your gate is open,
And all who enter in
Shall find a Father's welcome
And pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten,
A present joy be given,
A future grace be promised,
A glorious crown in heaven.

tions

Today our Father calls us;
His Holy Spirit waits;
His blessed angels gather
Around the heavenly gates.
No question will be asked us,
How often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered,
It is our Father's home.

O all embracing Mercy,
O ever open Door,
What should we do without you
When heart and eye run over?
When all things seem against us,
To drive us to despair,
We know one gate is open,
One ear will hear our prayer

- This **Opening Litany** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation with verses sung by the congregation to the tune Erhalt Uns, Herr LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:
- P The Bible contains two main teachings. We call them the Law and the Gospel. The Law has many purposes, but it especially shows us our sin, as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 3:20: "Through the law comes knowledge of sin." The Gospel shows us God's grace, especially in Jesus Christ, whose blood shed on the cross justifies us through faith. The following Bible and hymn verses will assure us that God's grace always triumphs over the Law's accusations.
- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24)
- P For the wages of sin is death.
- The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word; Curb those who by deceit or sword Would wrest the kingdom from your Son And bring to nought all he has done.

- P Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.
- Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. (Galatians 3:10b, 13a)

Lord Jesus Christ, your power make known,
For you are Loud of lords alone;
Defend your holy Church that we
May sing your praise triumphantly.

- P You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked.
- **B**y grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your doing; it is the gift of God. (Ephesians 2: 1-2a; 8)

O Comforter of priceless worth, Send peace and unity on earth; Support us in our final strife And lead us out of death of life.

- P Yes, the Gospel of God's grace triumphs over the Law's accusations.
- There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)
- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:
- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. So we confess our sins and ask for God's grace to forgive us:
- Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;
- P According to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. (Psalm 51:1)
- Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!
- P For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. (Psalm 51:2-3)
- Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight,
- P Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. (Psalm 51:4a, 9) God's grace triumphs again! He has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. Though the Law judges you guilty, I, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- Amen. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)
- A **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Thomas SM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

O bless the Lord, my soul!

Let all within me join

And aid my tongue to bless his name

Whose favors are divine.

O bless the Lord, my soul!

Not let his mercies lie

Forgotten in unthankfulness

And without praises die!

#### His wondrous works and ways He made by Moses known, But sent the world his truth and grace By his belovéd Son.

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Gracious Father, You have justified us through the blood shed by our Savior. We thank you for declaring us righteous in Your sight by this gift of grace. We ask that you give to us an ever growing and stronger faith that holds on to Jesus to silence the Law's accusations. Lead us to boast not in ourselves but only in the Gospel, the good news of Your rich blessings given to us because of Jesus. We pray this in Your holy Name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for You live and reign as the one true God, now and forever. Amen.
- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

[Prepare a number of note cards. On half of them print some sin or enemy that the children could identify with and on the other half have crosses, pictures of Jesus, images of the empty tomb. You keep the Law cards and give out the Gospel cards to some of the children.]

P How many of you have played the card game War? In that game you and the person you're playing against each turn over one card. Whoever has the highest card wins both cards. To win you need to have the highest cards. I have some cards today, only this time it's not a game. The cards show two sides that actually are at war with each other. We need to be on the winning side in this war. You're see what I mean.

I'll turn over the first card. It says, "I got really angry and was mean to someone." Now you [pick just one child] turn over yours. Look it has a picture of the cross on it. Jesus forgives that sin. You win because you have Jesus on your side. Here is my next card. "Satan tempts us to do something bad." What card do you have? It's a picture of Jesus! Jesus beats Satan every time. Keep doing this with the other cards. [Some other cards could be: A friend tries to get you to steal something. You don't do something Mom tells you to do. You say a really bad word. You get afraid of all the bad things going on in the world. You told a lie.]

Do you see what happens every time? Jesus always wins. We want to be on His side, that's for sure! Amen.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Jeremiah 31:31-34, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though

I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

- The **Epistle Reading**, Romans 3:19-26, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.
- The Gospel Reading, John 1:14-18, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:
- P And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.") For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.
- A **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Woodworth LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

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

Just as I am, Thy love unknown Hath broken every barrier down; Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come. ons

• If desired, this **Mini Movie** (purchased by you from Worship House Media: worshiphousemedia.com) is presented on a screen at this time to highlight the theme of the service:

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/30297/the-gospel-via-the-roman-road

- The **Sermon**, "The Law Gives a Grade, The Gospel Gives Grace," is delivered by the pastor:
- P When you read through the Bible, you find that God's Law has three major purposes or three ways to be used. One use is help curb evil and chaos in the world. Laws are put in place to keep people safe and allow for life to go on with a sense of order and justice. A stop sign keeps cars from crashing into each other, and you usually know what to expect as you are driving. Another purpose of God's Law is help believers know what is pleasing to our Heavenly Father. It tells us what is the right thing to do in His eyes. One of the commandments is "Do not steal." So we know that if something is not ours, we don't try to get it anyway. Instead, God wants us to help our neighbor keep what is his and be honest in all financial matters. The Law curbs evil behavior in society and guides Christians in the ways to obey God.

But the most significant purpose of the Law is to show us our sins. Once again, the end of verse 20: "since through the law comes knowledge of sin." We use God's Law to see just how badly we've messed up in God's eyes. It accuses us of doing what is wrong and convicts us when we fail to do

what is right. Later in this letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul bares his soul to the church. After telling his readers that because of the Law, he knows what sin is and how it wreaks havoc in his own life. Listen to what he says the Law shows him: "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me" (Romans 7:19-20). Now if the great Apostle Paul says that, we're is the same boat as he is. Yes, the Law shows us just how sinful we really are.

Take that 7th commandment for example. We are not to steal. Now most of us have not broken into someone's house and taken all the computers and big screen TVs. We haven't stolen a large sum of money from a store or bank. But that doesn't mean we haven't broken this commandment. You see, it's not just the really bad things that count as a sin; it's also the little things. It's actually all too easy for ordinary believers like you and me to break this commandment way too often.

One way we steal is by being lazy or sloppy workers. We're stealing time and productivity from our employers. I'm guilty. I'll check Facebook in the middle of the day and start looking at a couple links. The next thing I know, 20 minutes have gone by; 20 minutes I should have been doing work. Or I wonder how much time is lost at work because someone was surfing the Internet or playing a computer game.

Another way we steal is by not being generous toward others who are in need. We can find the money to buy stuff for ourselves. Credit cards bills add up when we keep spending money on this gadget or going out to eat or buying another pair of shoes or more jewelry. Then when the opportunity comes to give to someone else as our Lord wants us to, the money is not there to help.

Another way is by wasting food or gas or some other natural resource. For one week I challenge you to keep track of how much food you throw away out of the refrigerator or leave on your plate. Or how much more food you've eaten than you actually need. Or the gas you used on trips that didn't need to be taken. Or how much garbage you put at the curb. Wasting natural resources is another way of stealing as we fail to practice good stewardship of God's gifts of creation.

One more. Another way we steal is when we take advantage of someone when it comes to money. Servers in restaurants depend on tips. You can get away with adding less than is expected, but doing so cheats someone else out of part of their income they need to live on.

I could do this kind of list for every commandment. Big sins. Little ones. In between. They all add up. The Law shows us our sins, as Romans 3 says, "For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22b-23a). The Law simply accuses us of falling short, way short, of God's glory, of what God expects of us.

Look at the bulletin insert. Notice what the Law does. It gives a grade. It tells how we're doing. It shows us how badly we've fallen short. So what is the grade? That minus sign. Think of it as a pass/fail course. You either get 100% and pass because you never broke God's law even once or you mess up

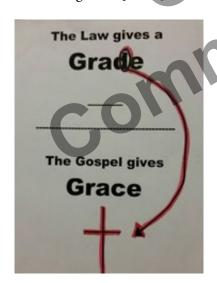
and get a minus sign – you fail – even if you've only done little sins. Because there's no distinction. All of us have sinned and fallen short. We all deserve the minus grade.

Now for the final nail in the coffin. Later in this letter, Paul says this: For the wages of sin is death. Physical death. Eternal death. Separation from God forever. The horrifying future of hell and all its torment. God is angry at sin, and He punishes it with the sentence of death.

And that's where we would be left if it were not for reading through the Bible and finding another teaching that trumps the Law's accusations. He is not only a God of justice and Law. He is also a God of love and grace. This message is called the Gospel. The Gospel shows us Jesus.

Here is where I need you to take a pen or pencil and do something to that bulletin insert. When it comes to the Law, the problem is the word "I." I messed up. I sinned. I wasted my money. I didn't help someone in need. I failed God. I said the wrong thing. I stared at something bad on the computer. I desired what I shouldn't have. I didn't worship God as often as I could have. I swore. I. I. I. I'm the problem.

So we need to get the word "I" out of the word Grade. You don't see the "I" in Grade? It's there. It's the stem of the letter "d." Just cross out that up and down part of the "d" and it turns into a "c." Take out the "I' in Grade and you end up with Grace. And what do you do with that "I"? Put it on the bottom minus sign and turn it into a cross. Now you see the Gospel. The Gospel gives us grace because it gives us Jesus. [I had a larger version of the insert and held up what I wanted them to do.]



Listen to the second half of those Bible verses: "For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith" (Romans 3:22b-25a). "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). The Law shows us our sin and death. The Gospel shows us God's grace and life

in Jesus.

Now one word was used that we don't hear much anymore. The word was "Propitiation." Does anyone have an idea what that word means? Well, I had to look it up myself just to be sure. What I found is that it has more than one meaning. Propitiation can refer to how something turns God's anger away from us. It gets at how God's wrath is appeased and taken care of. It also has the sense of sin being obliterated. Sin is somehow taken away and with it the punishment of death is removed. The third way it is used is when it stands for the mercy seat.

The mercy seat was above the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The Holy of Holies was the one place where no one went in the Temple back then. It was sealed off from everyone except the high priest. He would enter that holiest of spaces just once a year, on the Day of Atonement. He would carry in some blood of the sacrifices. It would be sprinkled on the mercy seat. By this blood, the sins of the people would be forgiven because of God's mercy and grace.

Put them all together. Sin and punishment need to be obliterated in our lives. God's anger needs to be turned away from us. We need blood shed on a mercy seat for us. And when you turn a minus sign into a cross you see propitiation happen. Jesus' blood is shed for us. He turns God's anger away from us. The punishment of our sin is placed on Jesus and so is obliterated when He rises from the dead on Easter morning. We are now justified by God's grace because of Jesus, His blood shed for us. The Gospel gives us God's grace.

One of the classic, all-time favorite hymns brings us this Law and Gospel message so wonderfully. [I quoted the first verse stopping to point out the Law—a wretch like me, lost, blind—and the Gospel—Amazing grace that saved, found, see.]

I found two quotations that summarize this message. Please look on the back of the insert. [Read them.]

Yes, Jesus turns a failing grade into grace. He turns God's anger away from us. He obliterates sin's punishment. So you know what we need to do with this Gospel message? I like how Martin Luther's wife Katie put just before she died. Her last words were reported to be, "I will stick to Christ as a burr to a topcoat." The Gospel shows me Jesus, and I will stick with Him. Yes, we need to stick with Jesus. Amen.

• The **Offering** is collected at this time. If desired, this **Mini Movie** (purchased by you from Worship House Media: worshiphousemedia.com) is presented on a screen at this time for reflection on the theme of the service:

http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/59591/grace

### A Worship Series on Romans

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### Service Three: Love Your Neighbor as Yourself (Love for Neighbor/Vocation)

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• The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Ich Will Dich Lieben 98 98 86, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Thee will I love, my Strength, my Tower;
Thee will I love, my Hope, my Joy;
Thee will I love with all my power,
With ardor time shall ne'er destroy.
Thee will I love, O Light Divine,
So long as life is mine.

Thee will I love, my Life, my Savior, Who art my best and truest Friend; Thee will I love and praise forever, For never shall Thy kindness end; Thee will I love with all my heart, Thou my Redeemer art.

I thank Thee, Jesus, Sun from heaven, Whose radiance hath brought light to me; I thank Thee, who hast richly given All that could make me glad and free; I thank Thee that my soul is healed By what Thy lips revealed.

Oh, keep me watchful, then, and humble
And suffer me no more to stray;
Uphold me when my feet would stumble,
Nor let me loiter by the way.
Fill all my nature with Thy light,
O Radiance strong and bright!

Oh, teach me, Lord, to love Thee truly
With soul and body, head and heart,
And grant me grace that I may duly
Practice fore'er love's sacred art.
Grant that my every thought may be
Directed e'er to Thee.

Thee will I love, my Crown of gladness;
Thee will I love, my God and Lord,
Amid the darkest depths of sadness,
Not for the hope of high reward-For Thine own sake, O Light Divine,
So long as life is mine.