

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

JESUS IS MY LEADER

Romans 15:2 "Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up."

A commentator wrote regarding Romans, chapter fifteen, verses one and two: "Just as loving parents make sacrifices for their children, so the mature believer sacrifices to help younger Christians grow in the faith." A Christian, St. Paul says, "should please his neighbor for their good." (Romans 15:2) The word neighbor refers to Christians, in this case those who are weak in faith.

A strong Christian looks at the needs of fellow Christians, especially those who are new Christians or weak Christians to assist, edify, encourage, support, and guide them always toward Jesus who is the author and perfecter of their faith. (Hebrews 12:2) The benefit of others is the first and foremost thought of the mature Christian.

St. Paul wrote this in 1 Corinthians 10:24, "No one should seek their own good, but the good of others." And, again in Romans 14:19 when he exhorted strong Christians to ". . . aim to build each other up."

These words of St. Paul are like a magnet that draws your heart and thoughts to David's well-known words that send you to Jesus, who says in John 10, He is your Good Shepherd. What that means is found in the very familiar words of Psalm 23: "The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely Your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."

You are a strong Christian because of the faith you have in Jesus that the Holy Spirit has placed in your heart. The weak and struggling Christian can only find the strength they need in Jesus as well. Isaiah wrote, "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; He has become my salvation." (Isaiah 12:2)

The Psalmist writes in Psalm 118:15-21, "Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous: "The LORD's right hand has done mighty things! The LORD's right hand is lifted high; the LORD's right hand has done mighty things!" I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the LORD has done. The LORD has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death. Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD through which the righteous may enter. I will give You thanks, for You answered me; You have become my salvation."

Prayer: Jesus, as a shepherd leads his flock of sheep so lead me onto paths of righteousness for your name's sake. Amen.

Christ be my Leader by night as by day;
Safe through the darkness, For He is the way.
Gladly I follow, my future His care, Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.

Christ be my Teacher in age as in youth,
Drifting or doubting, for He is the truth. Grant me to trust Him;
though shifting as sand, Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;
Death cannot hold me, for He is the life. Nor darkness nor doubting
Nor sin and its stain Can touch my salvation; with Jesus I reign.
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