



LORD, *who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? ² He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. ³ He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. ⁴ In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. ⁵ He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.* (Psalm 15:1-5)

I am very happy to re-discover this gracious old hymn – it is one I heard often on WBLJ Radio, a local public radio station in my hometown after the end of World War II. In those days, every local radio station would seem better than Christian radio today for they played the old classic hymns and no light and fluffy child’s music masquerading as Christian. They also had at least one hour of preaching from different pastors, but always it was from the King James Bible. Shakespeare claimed, *All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players; They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts.* This is true, however, the parts are not lightly and randomly played – they are directed from a Sovereign on high who has written the play and who will call the curtain at last. Even in our years of wild abandon, the Lord looks on and directs us in the path He will have us go. What a joy and comfort for the elect to know and believe!

The lyrics of this hymn are, unfortunately, by the old Oxford Movement proponent, John Keble. He had a spiritual streak in his poetry that belied his Roman-leaning tendencies. We owe the peacock-like vestments of the high church with their pointy hats to John Keble. But he struck a gold vein in the writing of this hymn. Keble completed the lyrics on November 25, 1820. The tune is, HURSLEY, named after the home village of Keble, though there are varying claims on the origin of the tune. The hymn was even adapted for use by the French Protestant Huegenots.

Sun of my Soul, Thou Savior Dear

SUN of my soul, Thou 'Savior dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
O may no earth - born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant' s eyes.

When the soft dews of kindly sleep
My wearied eyelids gently Steep,
Be my last thought how sweet to rest
Forever on my SAVIOUR' S breast.

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without Thee I cannot live;
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without Thee I dare not die

If some poor wandering child Of Thine
Have spurned to-day the voice divine,
Now, LORD, the gracious work begin;
Let him no more lie down in sin.

Watch by the sick enrich the poor
With blessings from thy boundless store
Be every mourner' s sleep to- night,
Like infant' s Slumbers, pure and light.

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take
Till in the Ocean of Thy love
We lose ourselves in Heaven above. Amen

SUN of my soul, Thou 'Savior dear, It is not night if Thou be near; O may no earth- born cloud arise To hide Thee from Thy servant' s eyes. As we grow older, we look upon the sure promises of God with ever increasing regularity. As one of my youthful students said, The elderly read the Bible more often because they are cramming for the FINALS. There is some truth to that. In youthful years, we may believe that we shall live forever, but the trials of time and age prove us wrong as we feel the increasing physical limitations imposed by years of careless living. If 'life's evening sun is sinking low', it is only the sign of a more glorious Sunrise in our Lord. He is our Sun of Righteousness that shall arise for us with healing in His wings. (Malachi 4:2) To be sure, our Lord is the brightest and nearest Star in our Heaven. He is the Day Star to lighten our path and brighten our soul. *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:* (2 Peter 1:19)

When the soft dews of kindly sleep My wearied eyelids gently Steep, Be my last thought how sweet to rest Forever on my SAVIOUR' S breast. It is difficult, especially for the young and healthy, to imagine a time when we shall close our eyelids on this earth forever. There will come a day when we arise from our beds for the last time in morning and enter into the eternal rest of the righteous at evening. As we draw closer to that event, our prayers may be that we have a smooth and happy passage. The Christian has nothing to doubt or fear about this final sleep in the bosom of our Lord.

What better care could we seek – far better than any we sought in our troubled lives. We shall arise in joy even if we lie down in sorrow: *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* (2 Corinthians 5:8)

Abide with me from morn till eve, For without Thee I cannot live; Abide with me when night is nigh, For without Thee I dare not die. Christ is LIFE. Death cannot cohabit with life in Christ. He has conquered death once-and-for-all for His people. *But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.* (Luke 24:29) Well, Christ cannot be constrained – He knew that He would enter into the home of the two men long before they ventured out on the Road to Damascus. I believe every faithful Christian will rest in the sure hope of his resurrection in Christ at the moment death approaches, and he will not fear.

If some poor wandering child Of Thine Have spurned to-day the voice divine, Now, LORD, the gracious work begin; Let him no more lie down in sin. If we are not to allow the sun to set on our anger, even more so, we should not allow the same on our sins. *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* (Ephesians 4:26) Yes, it is possible to be angry with righteous indignation, but not falsely so. Going through the night with unrequited anger is harmful both to its object as well as to its owner.

Watch by the sick enrich the poor With blessings from thy boundless store Be every mourner's sleep to-night, Like infant's Slumbers, pure and light. The Christian is the emissary of Christ to the poor, the halt, the sick, the dying. We are not to pass by any in need and leave them to perish by the Road to Jericho. Let those who mourn turn their hope and trust to the Lord and He is certain to give comfort in waking and in sleeping.

Come near and bless us when we wake, Ere through the world our way we take Till in the Ocean of Thy love We lose ourselves in Heaven above. Amen The Lord need not come near us when we wake for He never left our side while we were sleeping. He is ever present. The Lord blesses according to our response to His gift of Love. Since it is His love that first generated the little love we return, we must remember always to echo that love back to its source in Christ. Our morning and evening prayers generate blessings untold throughout the day. I love the old hymn, *The Love of God*, from which comes the precious lines,

Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made. Were every stalk on earth a quill And every man a scribe by trade, To write the love of God above. Would drain the ocean dry Nor could the scroll contain the whole. Though stretched from sky to sky.

