



s But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
(Romans 5:8)

This devotional hymn of praise has no known author and first appeared in 1800. The hymn made it into the 1826 Hymnal and was set to the tune of *St. Bees* – the tune to which it is now most often sung, by John Bacchus Dykes in 1854. *St. Bees* is a tune also shared by *Jesus, Name of Wondrous Love* composed by Wm. Walsham How. (#323)

Christian hymns are never sung from carnal, but the spiritual, nature of mankind. The tendency today is to mix carnal and sensual music with lyrics that express Christian faith. The result: total depravity of meaning and emotion! This hymn asks nothing, but extols the glorious richness of God's Creation and His Kingdom. I came to love this exuberant little hymn from many visits to St. Peter's in Statesville, N.C. over the past 25 years. The hymn was always sung or played during the Communion Service – usually with the preparation of the Lord's Table.

Sing My Soul, His Wondrous Love

Sing, my soul, his wondrous love,
who from yon bright throne above,
ever watchful o'er our race,
still to us extends his grace.

Heaven and earth by him were made;
all is by his scepter swayed;
what are we that he should show
so much love to us below?

God, the merciful and good,
bought us with the Savior's blood,
and, to make our safety sure,
guides us by his Spirit pure.

Sing, my soul, adore his Name!
Let his glory be thy theme:
praise him till he calls thee home;
truth his love for all to come.

Sing, my soul, his wondrous love, who from yon bright throne above, ever watchful o'er our race, still to us extends his grace. Only the soul itself can sing praises to God. The flesh is only the conduit for the music. Our souls can sing in jubilation, or in the solitude of the cloistered Garden alone with one's Maker and Friend. His Providential gaze is always upon His Elect both day and night: *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.* (2 Chron 16:9a) His grace is an abundant and ever-flowing Fountain in a Wilderness of dry ground. All Light of Truth and Life streams in brilliant beams from His Throne on High just as the brilliant rays of the sun flood the morning glens and hills. *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* (John 1:5)

Heaven and earth by him were made; all is by his scepter swayed; what are we that he should show so much love to us below? It is true that *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* (John 1:3) This necessarily includes the expanse of Heaven – both the lower heavens of the Universe, and the High Heaven of God's abode. God is All-Powerful (Omnipotent) so that nothing happens without His approbation. Being so disposed as to hate sin, He turns His face away and allows man to bury himself in the most egregious of them. Sufferings, disease, wars, death – all come about on the part of man's own volition to sin and to reject the Law of God. It is a great lapse of faith and truth to blame calamities upon God – they are manmade! We may inquire, as did the Shepherd Psalmist of old: *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.* (Psalms 8:3-6)

God, the merciful and good, bought us with the Savior's blood, and, to make our safety sure, guides us by his Spirit pure." I have officiated at some funerals at which I was not sure of the state of salvation of the deceased. But I was able to comfort the family of the deceased by the truth that God is a GOOD God, He is a JUST God, and He does all things well. Whatever is just and right for the deceased will dictate His reception, or rejection, of them. Of course, if we have laid claim to His grace (a righteousness imputed by the blood of Christ), we shall be spared the justice to which we are entitled. Without that Grace, we have no righteousness and no defense from the blistering fires of Hell. Once having known Christ, and received redemption through His shed blood, we are born anew, but a newborn baby has just begun to grow! If the newborn is not fed a wholesome and nutritious diet of mother's milk, it will be deficient in its growth, or even perish as those seed that fell among thorns. The Holy Spirit is given – not to spoon feed the believer – but to cast blinding light upon truths which are gleaned by the believer from Holy Scripture. If the believer is not a daily scholar of the Word, he is deformed in his faith. We not only have One to comfort and console us, but One to Guide us into all truth in the Person of the Holy Ghost!

Sing, my soul, adore his Name! Let his glory be thy theme: praise him till he calls thee home; truth his love for all to come. Do you believe on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, you must ADORE that NAME! The Name of Jesus is one which signals many emotions that are uplifting to the soul! He is Redeemer, Savior, Lord, King, and Emmanuel. He is pure and unadulterated LOVE. His Name evokes these thoughts in the deep and hidden chambers of our hearts. How can we not glorify Christ? We do not glorify Him in the dark shadows and corners of the vineyard, but publicly proclaim His Name and His Glory! I am often asked when I intend to retire from the ministry. I answer, "Never." The calling of God for either minister or lay person is not time limited. If I retire, it will be the decision of those under whose love

and compassion I have served these years due to my becoming senile or senseless. We never do "retire" as Christians and who glorify and proclaim His Gospel. I believe that the Night Prayer for Family Prayer in the Book of Common Prayer to best summarize our last two lines of this worshipful hymn:

O LORD, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and evening comes (that is, the evening of life), and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at last. *Amen*