

Bread *Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life' - all that satisfies*

My God! I praise you.
Creator of all things throughout the whole universe;
Provider for all my daily living needs;
You satisfy the deepest longings in my life

In the words of Jesus you remind me
that life is more than physical and material satisfaction



Through faith in Jesus
I have often claimed, and known the deep
satisfaction
of peace with you;
of love and happiness;
of strength to face the life's problems;
and an assurance that life in Christ
is life for ever in your presence.
I praise you.

My God! You let me call you *Father!*
You have made me welcome in you world-wide family.

I am always aware of living in an unequal world
where my wealth is another's poverty;
where my plenty represents other people's need.
Too often I take my daily bread for granted,
Just as I often as I become over familiar with Jesus
and his gift of eternal life.
I regret that my material satisfaction
contributes to the injustice of a hungry world.
I want to see all that changed.
As I live close to Jesus and his cross
help me to know that I am forgiven;
to never forget the needs of others
and to put their satisfaction before my own interests.

God, my Father,
I am grateful for these brief times
to worship;
to listen to you in silence and in your words from scripture.
Your words are like food to satisfy my heart and mind
as I yearn for your love and truth,

Christ Jesus, be the bread of my life
- all I need for myself
- all I need to share with others
- with the whole world.

The Canal Boat

I watched the boats on the canal shut in to rise and fall between the lock gates - each taking their turn before proceeding on their journey.

My Father! Almighty and eternal God!
I am amazed at your great love for us! I
have read about it in the scriptures;
I have been shown it in the life, death
and resurrection of Jesus;
I have felt and known it through my
faith and by the witness of your Holy
Spirit in my life



Your gracious gift of love reaches us in
many ways:

Through the beauty of your world;
Through you work in human lives,
Caring and providing,
healing, forgiving and renewing.

In works of love your life flows through ours.
like the canal;
always steady in its course;
flowing on to its destination;
carrying us through both calm and turbulent weathers
like the canal boats
Your love, your life, is unfailing –
We praise you for your love and your gift of life
Just as I wish my praise of you to be.

But, father,
Life is not always calm and smoothly flowing.
There are times when the channel is crowded;
We are eager and impatient to be ahead of others;
Our 'faith-pace' is disturbed;
The lock gates are closed against us and life is at a standstill,
waiting for the levels to change,
and for others to come through first.

Forgive me my intolerance;
my lack of understanding;
my forgetfulness of your love;
my hammering against the closed gate of your purposes;
my reluctance to trust you

Set me on course again.
Give me new faith to be carried along
in the flow of your purpose for all of us – for your whole world.
Jesus makes this possible.
I believe it.
Give me just a little time today to be quiet with you;
To think about my life.
Let me be like the canal boat in the lock-
Engine turned off against the busy pressures of today.
Change the levels of my journey;
Raise me to share the wonder and glory of your love;
Bring me low in obedience and surrender.

I will go on my life's way –
With you –
Renewed and encouraged.

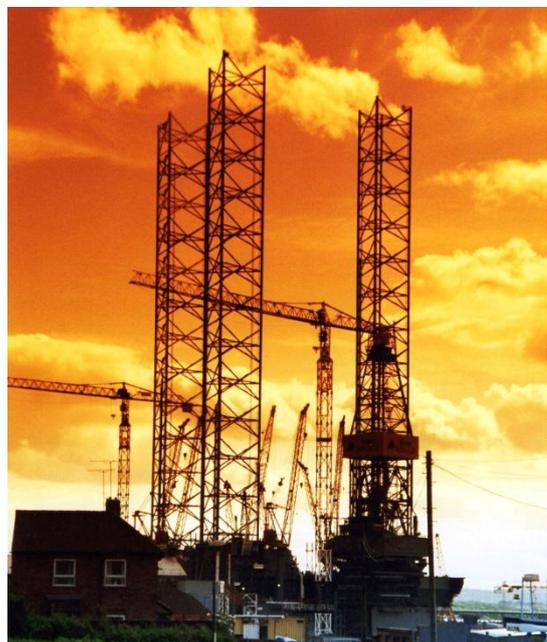
Dockside Crane

Lofty, powerful cranes on the docks towered high over people, ships, lorries, warehouses, timber-stacks. An engineer in the control cabin looks so small

Father! God, without beginning or end!
Great and powerful in every way!
You are like the dockyard crane
Towering over the world.

Your love is the greatest power in the
universe;
the creative force behind all life;
the organising heart behind every movement
of the stars;
of every day of history;
of every human concern.

And yet, like the crane in the hands of its
driver,
You trust your universe
- its life
- its history
- into human hands



You give your power to people;
You believe in us.
In Jesus you placed yourself into human hands;
You shared our life in every way except sin;
you endured the pain of the cross to set us free from all that is wrong.
Great and wonderful God,
powerful in love and judgement.
All glory and wonder fills my being.

Father, our God,
I watch the dockside crane,
lifting heavy loads;
giving ships new buoyancy.
I feel a heaviness in me
– the weight of having let you down.
Lift it from me, like the crane,
and I will know your freedom and peace,
and have strength to put right the wrong
in my life and my relationships

Thank you for Jesus:
By his Cross and resurrection
He has overcome the power of evil and of death;
He has made it possible for the weight
of sadness and despair, sorrow and guilt
to be lifted from my life.
I trust you for this 'love-lift'.

I watch the dockyard crane lift and place the cargo on ships and lorries
- organising them to reach their proper destination safely.
I want this time with you;
listening to your words thoughtfully
to be a time when you help me re-organise my life.
Then your purpose can be worked out in me,
and I can be sure to reach the final destination of heaven
- the presence of Jesus for ever.

The Gritter

I watched the Gritter Lorry scattering a mixture of grit and salt on icy roads: An unpleasant job on a winter's night, but necessary for safety, ease of communication and accessibility]



God! Father!

Your overriding desire is for our safety, now and for eternity.

I find it comforting to think of you like the gritter,

big and powerful,

working for our good

- to save us from harm

- to ensure that nothing prevents our being able to come close to you:

You are all Love!

Wonder! Glory!

You gave yourself,

sacrificing everything in Jesus

- by the work of his cross you keep us free

from the power and the guilt of sin

Your Holy Spirit works in us

like salt to make us clean;

and sometimes like the grit,

disturbing our complacency;

hurting our pride;

piercing the icy hardness of self;

and all to keep us safe.

Help me to understand those gritty, disturbing life experiences –

difficult and hurtful times which you use

to bring me back to you;

to see they are times to learn repentance.

I know that often, by selfishness and carelessness,

I put myself at risk of harm:

But I know too

how you long for my safety;

how you gladly forgive me when I turn to you for a clean re-start

The cross of Jesus is my sign of your promise –

My peace, when the grit is swept away

The Magnifying Glass



Used to light a fire, the magnifying glass concentrates all the rays of the sun on to one spot, bringing the fire of the sun into that place - to warm - to cook - to destroy the garbage. To be effective, the glass needs to be clean and held at the right angle to the sun. In the same way, coming close to God and living right with him can enable the fire of his Spirit.

God!

Great and powerful!

You are unapproachable light;

Yet we can catch the rays - all your light and power may be concentrated through my prayer!

Your love which creates and sustains all things;

Your love which changes and heals all those who trust in you;

Your love - the source of all our life - the foundation of our being has reached us through Jesus.

Your glory is magnified in him.

My Father!

I often feel sad that I miss so much of your glory in everyday life;

in acts of worship;

in my understanding of the Gospel

I know it is because I have been in the wrong position - not properly lined up with you -

too inclined to selfish ambitions, thoughts and feelings..

The fact that many things I do are not motivated by holy love;

are not always concerned for others;

are sometimes tinged with bitterness and anger;

has stood in the way of your love,

preventing it becoming powerful in others,

and diminishing the fires of faith.

Happily, I know I can leave my regrets by the Cross of Jesus, where your voice says: *Go in peace. You are forgiven.*"

Let me be a magnifying glass for you, as Jesus is.

The Supermarket

I went to the Supermarket - the shopping experience – the enormous store of 'everything' - - except the item I really want. I sometime think of God in terms of the supermarket. He doesn't have everything I want, but he's never out of stock of the things I need!



Praise

God! Lord!
Wonderful Creator! Provider!
Caring about the smallest item for my life!

Father,
your resources are like a great store where everything we need may be found
You provide for our physical needs and comfort;
through the gifts of your creation;
through the knowledge and skills you give to your people;
through the natural resources of your created world;
through the works of your people who dedicate themselves
to the tasks of care and healing

Your wise gifts of moral and spiritual resources
have helped us to live up to your holy standards of love, truth and justice.

You have given us new life through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Through your Holy Spirit you have given us fruits of your love,
and gifts of your grace.

Generous, loving, gracious Father,
Glory! Praise! Thanks!

Father, I live in a world of plenty.
I do not know what it is to be hungry.
It is so easy to forget the needs of others in an unequal world.
It is so easy to take your gifts for granted;

To turn a deaf ear to the cries of those in need.
In the same way,
I do not know what it is to be persecuted for my faith in Jesus.
I take for granted the privileges of our salvation,
of freedom to worship,
to share fellowship
and benefit from the ministries of your Holy Spirit.

Open my eyes to see myself;
open my heart to know myself;
open my mind to acknowledge the faults within myself

Help me prove my repentance and your forgiveness by a changed life.
Re-create me in the image of my Lord and friend, Jesus Christ

Thank you Lord for worship
To be in the sanctuary of your presence,
in the fellowship of your people,
is to share in a feast of good things
the joy of your presence
the truth of your word
the power of your love which makes us whole

To be in your presence
is to want to give everything back to you
for you to use, for my good, for the good of others
and chiefly to bring you greater glory.

May we in this worship
not waste the opportunity to take the gifts you offer
nor miss the chance to give all we can of ourselves in gratitude for these free
gifts
nor cease to show our thanks by bringing others to share the wealth of your love,
peace and glory

The Window Cleaner

The kingdom of God is like the window cleaner! In spiritual terms God alone can clean the windows of our mind and spirit – the windows we cannot reach - enabling us to see out - to see him – to let other people see us



Praise

Lord! God!

Amazing creator of a beautiful world
of ordered schemes amid what may seem chaotic to us!
You have established laws to be obeyed.

You are savior!

When your own people spoiled your world
And turned it into a house of dirty windows,
blurring our sight of you,
You came to clean up and restore us and all your marred creation
through Jesus, his word and his cross

You have given us the scriptures to make this truth known to us;
You have given us the fellowship of your Church
through which this truth is lived, shared and proclaimed.
You have given us your Holy Spirit
to break through the gloomy parts of our lives
- letting love in
- like light through the dirty windows
- a radiance and a glory to transfigures all our life

My God. Our Father:
With all this in mind
I am conscious of the dirty windows in my life;
The selfishness and pride which keeps other people from seeing the real me;
Forgetfulness of you;
Moments when I would prefer you not to look into my thoughts
or see my actions
Times when I am not ready to share with other people.

Come. Lord and clean my life-windows:
take away the dust of my neglect of you
till I see you again in your glory
and am stirred to love and obey you in a new and more determined way

It is written that *'the blood of Jesus' sacrifice cleanses us from all sin, and if we confess our sins you are always faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every kind of wrong.'*

Lord I believe it!

Let me see your splendour in every room in the house of my life.