

Sweet Peas

Scripture: [2 Peter 1:2–4](#)

Introduction: After evangelist D. L. Moody passed away in 1899, his great Northfield Bible Conference Center in Northfield, Massachusetts, came under the management of the popular Bible expositor, G. Campbell Morgan. In the middle of the busy 1904 Bible conference season, Howard Morgan, Campbell's three-year-old son, became desperately ill and wasn't expected to survive. As his family attended to him at his bedside, the multitudes attending the summer Bible conferences prayed earnestly for his recovery. One day Howard turned his face toward his mother and requested she sing a hymn for him, one he had often heard in some of the Bible conference sessions. "Sing to me about the sweet peas," he asked. She didn't understand which hymn he had in mind, but when she hesitated, he added, "You know, the sweet peas, gift of God's love." Then she understood he was referring to Peter Bilhorn's famous hymn, "Sweet Peace, the Gift of God's Love." Well, in counting our blessings, it seems that so many of them begin with the letter "P." God has given us a cornucopia of "Sweet P's," and I'd like to remind you of some of them today, so that we can thank God for the gifts of His love.

- 1. His Pardon—Isaiah 55:7.** All of us have, to a lesser or greater extent, ruined our own lives. We all have areas of moral failure and sin. Not a person here has lived a life free from mistakes and regrets. But in a way we cannot fully comprehend, God through Jesus Christ became sin for us, bearing our guilt, that we might have a complete and irreversible pardon through the power of His shed blood (Isa. 1:18; 1 John 1:9).
- 2. His Purpose—Isaiah 14:27.** Sometimes when we slow down enough to think, we become troubled, and we ask ourselves the great philosophic questions of life—Why am I here? What is the meaning of life? Does my life really have meaning and purpose? Millions of people spend their money on alcohol, drugs, and entertainment just to fill the void and emptiness of a purposeless life. But Isaiah 14:27 tells us that the Lord of Hosts is a God of purpose, and Psalm 139:16 tells us that we fit into His purposes, that is, that He has a meaningful purpose for our lives.
- 3. His Precepts—Isaiah 40:8.** Without the Word of God we would be sheep in a desert, without pasture. We would be hungry children without food. We would be pilgrims without a map. We would be questioners with no answers. Thank God for His infallible Word!
- 4. His Providence —Isaiah 46:9–10.** God watches over this world, and He watches over His children, working all things together toward the fulfillment of His purposes and His will. To the child of God, there are no accidents. We travel an appointed way (Ps. 139:16).
- 5. His Provision —Isaiah 33:16.** John and Sophia Ironside were ardent Christian workers, but when John died suddenly at age 27 of typhoid fever, Sophia was left with two small boys and no income. One of the boys, Harry Ironside (later the world-famous Bible teacher and the pastor of Moody Memorial Church), watched his mother closely. On one occasion, Sophia gathered her two sons to the table for breakfast, but their plates were empty, and there was only water to drink. "We will give thanks, boys," she said. Closing her eyes, she prayed a prayer she based on Isaiah 33:16, saying, "Father, Thou hast promised in Thy Word, 'Your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure.' We have the water, and we thank Thee for it. And now, we trust Thee for the bread, or for that which will take its place." Just as she finished praying, the doorbell rang, and the boys ran to the door to find a man there. "Mrs. Ironside," he said, "I feel very bad. We have been owing you for months for that dress you made for my wife. We've had no money to pay you. But just now we're harvesting our potatoes, and we wondered if you would take a bushel or two on account of the old bill." In a few minutes, the potatoes were sizzling in the frying pan, and the boys had answered prayer for breakfast. How wonderfully God has promised to meet all our needs (Ps. 23:1; Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:19).
- 6. His Presence —Isaiah 41:10.** This is one of the sweetest promises in the Bible. As it is put in the hymn "How Firm a Foundation": "Fear not, I am with thee / Oh, Be not dismayed / For I am thy God; I will still give thee aid. / I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand / upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand."

7. **His Peace—Isaiah 26:3–4.** The words here “perfect peace” are, literally from the Hebrew, “shalom, shalom.” It indicates a deep kind of peace which Isaiah later describes as a river of peace (Isa. 48:18). As the aforementioned hymn writer, Peter Bilhorn, put it:

There comes to my heart one sweet strain,

A glad and a joyous refrain,

I sing it again and again,

Sweet peace, the gift of God’s love.

Conclusion: What thankless people we would be to remain depressed and full of self-centered pity when we have all of God’s sweet P’s to enjoy. Thank You, Heavenly Father! Thank You, Holy Spirit! Thank You, God the Son! Thank You for Your pardon, Your purpose, Your precepts, Your providence, Your provisions, Your presence, and Your peace!