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GOD BE WITH YOU

Dr. Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828-1904

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. (Romans 16:20)

It is my joy in life to find at every turn of the road,
The strong arms of a comrade kind to help me onward with my load.
And since I have no gold to give, and love alone can make amends—
My daily prayer is, while I live, “God, make me worthy of my friends.”
~Unknown

Often we hear someone tell us glibly to “have a good day!” Would not a far better farewell for Christians be the loving wish of today’s hymn text – “God be with you”? The added thought of “till we meet again” suggests a sincere desire for continued friendship.

The writer of this hymn text, Dr. Jeremiah Rankin, pastored several prominent Congregational churches throughout the East until 1889, when he became president of Howard University, the noted school for the education of black students. A powerful preacher and an excellent leader and promoter of congregational singing, Rankin wrote much poetry, including the still popular hymn “Tell It to Jesus.” He also edited a number of well-known gospel songbooks.

No other hymn except perhaps “Blest Be the Tie That Binds” has been widely used as this one as a closing benediction in church services. “God Be With You” was a favorite in the Moody and Sankey meetings throughout North America and England. It became the official closing song for the Christian endeavor Conventions around the world. And still today, no finer farewell can be expressed by Christians to one another as they leave a place of worship than the sincere wish, “God be with you till we meet again.”

- ♪ *God be with you till we meet again, by His counsels guide, uphold you, with His sheep securely fold you – God be with you till we meet again.*
- ♪ *God be with you till we meet again, ‘neath His wings protecting hide you, daily manna still provide you - God be with you till we meet again.*
- ♪ *God be with you till we meet again, when life’s perils thick confound you, put His arms unflinching round you - God be with you till we meet again.*
- ♪ *God be with you till we meet again, keep love’s banner floating o’er you, smite death’s threat’ning wave before you – God be with you till we meet again.*

CHORUS: *Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Jesus’ feet, till we meet, till we meet –
God be with you till we meet again. AMEN.*

Amazing Grace – 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions
By Kenneth W. Osbeck

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:18 – 20

