

Safe they feed upon the manna

By [Ted Wardlaw](#)

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All preachers need at least one trusted conversation partner whom we can call in the middle of the night, if necessary--someone with whom we can share our sermon ideas (they even listen to our sermons read out loud), and from whom we can get advice and encouragement and even helpful critiques.

My dear friend Paul Hooker has been such a person for me. Our friendship goes back 36 years, to the days when we were in seminary together. Paul is an Old Testament scholar, a wise pastor grounded in the life of the parish, and now the executive presbyter of the Presbytery of St. Augustine.

I have always appreciated his critiques, and his help made my [Century column](#) for this week far more useful than it otherwise would have been. When he was pastor of the Rock Spring Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Paul preached a masterful sermon on this week's Exodus text. In it he quoted the John Newton hymn "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken," which sadly is not as well-known as Newton's "Amazing Grace." The hymn may be useful this week, especially this verse:

Round
each habitation hovering,
See
the cloud and fire appear
For
a glory and a covering,
Showing
that the Lord is near.
Thus
deriving from their banner
Light
by night and shade by day.

Safe

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Which

God gives them when they pray.