

Classic Poetry Series

Charles Wesley

- 35 poems -

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Charles Wesley (18 December 1707 – 29 March 1788)

Charles Wesley was an English leader of the Methodist movement, son of Anglican clergyman and poet Samuel Wesley, the younger brother of Anglican clergyman John Wesley and Anglican clergyman Samuel Wesley (the Younger), and father of musician Samuel Wesley, and grandfather of musician Samuel Sebastian Wesley. Despite their closeness, Charles and his brother John did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the Church of England into which they had been ordained. Charles Wesley is chiefly remembered for the many hymns he wrote. He ministered for part of his life in The New Room Chapel in Bristol. His house, located nearby, can still be visited today.

Biographical details

Charles Wesley was the son of Susanna Wesley and Samuel Wesley. He was born in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, where his father was rector. He was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford, and formed the "Oxford Methodist" group among his fellow students in 1727 which his elder brother, John joined in 1729 soon becoming its leader and moulding it to his own notions. George Whitefield also joined this group. After graduating with a Masters' in classical languages and literature, Charles followed his father and brother into the church in 1735. On 14 October 1735, Charles and his brother John sailed on The Simmonds from Gravesend, Kent for Savannah in the Georgia Colony in British America at the request of the governor, James Oglethorpe. Charles was appointed Secretary of Indian Affairs and while John remained in Savannah, Charles went as chaplain to the garrison and colony at near-by Fort Frederica, St. Simon's Island, arriving there Tuesday, 9 March 1736 according to his journal entry. However, matters did not turn out well, and he was largely rejected by the settlers. In July 1736, Charles was commissioned to England as the bearer of dispatches to the trustees of the colony. On 16 August 1736, he sailed from Charleston, South Carolina, never to return to the Georgia colony again.

Charles lived and worked in the area around St Marylebone Parish Church and so, just before his death, he sent for its rector John Harley and told him "Sir, whatever the world may say of me, I have lived, and I die, a member of the Church of England. I pray you to bury me in your churchyard." On his death, his body was carried to the church by six clergymen of the Church of England, and a memorial stone to him stands in the gardens in Marylebone High Street, close to his burial spot. One of his sons, Samuel, became organist of the church.

Marriage and children

In April 1749, he married the much younger Sarah Gwynne (1726–1822), also known as Sally. She was the daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne, a wealthy Welshmagistrate who had been converted to Methodism by Howell Harris. They moved into a house in Bristol in September 1749. Sarah accompanied the brothers on their evangelistic journeys throughout Britain, until at least 1753. After 1756 Charles made no more journeys to distant parts of the country, mainly just moving between Bristol and London.

In 1771 Charles obtained another house, in London, and moved into it that year with his elder son. By 1778 the whole family had transferred from Bristol to the London house, at 1 Chesterfield Street, Marylebone, where they remained until Charles' death and on into the 19th century. The house in Bristol still stands and has been restored, however the London house was demolished in the mid 19th century.

Only three of the couple's children survived infancy: Charles Wesley junior (1757–1834), Sarah Wesley (1759–1828), who like her mother was also known as Sally and Samuel Wesley (1766–1837) Their other children, John, Martha Maria, Susannah, Selina and John James are all buried in Bristol having died between 1753 and 1768. Both Samuel and Charles junior were musical child prodigies and, like their father, became organists and composers. Charles junior spent most of his career as the personal organist of the English Royal family, and Samuel became one of the most accomplished musicians in the world and often called "the English Mozart." Furthermore, Samuel Wesley's son, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, was one of the foremost British composers of the 19th century.

Best-known Hymns

In the course of his career, Charles Wesley published the words of over six thousand hymns, writing the words for a further two thousand, many of which are still popular.

Some 150 of his hymns are in the Methodist hymn book Hymns and Psalms, including "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing, and "The Church Hymn Book" (In New York and Chicago, USA, 1872) where "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" is published.

Many of his hymns are translated into other languages, and form the foundation for Methodist hymnals, as the Swedish Metodist-Episkopal-Kyrkans Psalmbokprinted in Stockholm in 1892.

Legacy

He is commemorated in the Calendar of Saints of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on 2 March with his brother John. The Wesley brothers are also commemorated on 3 March in the Calendar of Saints of the Episcopal Church and on 24 May in the Anglican calendar.

As a result of his enduring hymnody, the Gospel Music Association recognized his musical contributions to the art of gospel music in 1995 by listing his name in the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Wesley wrote two of the so-called Great Four Anglican Hymns.

Tercentenary

24 May 2007 was celebrated as the tercentenary of Wesley's birth, with many celebratory events held throughout England, even though Wesley was in fact born in December 1707. The date of 24 May is known to Methodists as "Wesley Day" and commemorates the spiritual awakening of first Charles and then John Wesley in 1738. In particular, in the Village of Epworth, North Lincolnshire, at the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, there was a flower festival, on 26 and 28 May, with flower arrangements representing some of Wesley's hymns, such as O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing, And Can It Be, and O For a Trumpet Voice.

In November 2007, An Post, the Irish Post Office, issued a 78c stamp to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Wesley's birth.

In Film

- * Charles Wesley: Hymns of Praise – Comenius Foundation, 2005, in which Charles Wesley (portrayed by John Jackman) tells the stories behind the writing of many of his hymns
- * A Heart Set Free – T. N. Mohan, 2007, a feature-length documentary on Charles Wesley's life and hymns
- * Wesley – Foundery Pictures, 2009, starring Burgess Jenkins as John Wesley, R. Keith Harris as Charles Wesley, and featuring June Lockhart as Susanna Wesley and Kevin McCarthy as Bishop Ryder

Works:

"And Can It Be That I Should Gain?"
"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"
"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"
"Come, O Thou Traveler unknown"
"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
"Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee"
"Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise"
"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"
"Jesus, Lover of My Soul"
"Jesus, The Name High Over All"
"Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending"
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"
"O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"
"Rejoice, the Lord is King"
"Soldiers of Christ, Arise"
"Ye Servants of God"

All That Pass By, to Jesus Draw Near

All that pass by, To Jesus draw near,
He utters a cry, Ye sinners, give ear!
From hell to retrieve you He spreads out his hands;
Now, now to receive you, He graciously stands.

If any man thirst, And happy would be,
The vilest and worst May come unto me,
May drink of my Spirit, Excepted is none,
Lay claim to my merit, And take for his own.

Whoever receives The life-giving word,
In Jesus believes, His God and his Lord,
In him a pure river Of life shall arise,
Shall in the believer Spring up to the skies.

My God and my Lord! Thy call I obey,
My soul on thy word Of promise I stay,
Thy kind invitation I gladly embrace,
Athirst for salvation, Salvation by grace.

O hasten the hour! Send down from above
The Spirit of power, Of health, and of love,
Of filial fear, Of knowledge and grace,
Of wisdom and prayer, Of joy and of praise;
The Spirit of faith, Of faith in thy blood,
Which saves us from wrath, And brings us to God,
Removes the huge mountain Of indwelling sin,
And opens a fountain That washes us clean.

Charles Wesley

Come, Sinners, to the Gospel Feast

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let every soul be Jesu's guest;
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all mankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call,
The invitation is to ALL:
Come, all the world; come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.

Come, all ye souls by sin opprest,
Ye restless wanderers after rest,
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

Come, and partake the gospel feast;
Be saved from sin; in Jesus rest;
O taste the goodness of your God,
And eat his flesh, and drink his blood!

Ye vagrant souls, on you I call;
(O that my voice could reach you all!)
Ye all may now be justified,
Ye all may live, for Christ hath died.

My message as from God receive,
Ye all may come to Christ, and live;
O let his love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer him to die in vain!

His love is mighty to compel;
His conquering love consent to feel,
Yield to his love's resistless power,
And fight against your God no more.

See him set forth before your eyes,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice!
His offered benefits embrace,
And freely now be saved by grace.

This is the time; no more delay!
This is the acceptable day,
Come in, this moment, at his call,
And live for him who died for all.

Charles Wesley

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone:
By thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to thy glorious throne. Amen.

Charles Wesley

For Christmas Day

Hark, how all the welkin rings,
"Glory to the King of kings;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconcil'd!"

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
Universal nature say,
"Christ the Lord is born to-day!"

Christ, by highest Heaven ador'd,
Christ, the everlasting Lord:
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a virgin's womb!

Veil'd in flesh, the Godhead see,
Hail th' incarnate Deity!
Pleas'd as man with men to appear,
Jesus, our Immanuel here!

Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace,
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth;
Born to give them second birth.

Come, desire of nations, come,
Fix in us thy humble home;
Rise, the woman's conquering seed,
Bruise in us the serpent's head.

Now display thy saving power,
Ruin'd nature now restore;
Now in mystic union join
Thine to ours, and ours to thine.

Adam's likeness, Lord, efface,
Stamp thy image in its place.
Second Adam from above,
Reinstate us in thy love.

Let us thee, though lost, regain,
Thee, the life, the inner man:
O, to all thyself impart,
Form'd in each believing heart.

Charles Wesley

Ho! Everyone That Thirsts, Draw Nigh

Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh!
('Tis God invites the fallen race)
Mercy and free salvation buy;
Buy wine, and milk, and gospel grace.

Come to the living waters, come!
Sinners, obey your Maker's call;
Return, ye weary wanderers, home,
And find my grace is free for all.

See from the Rock a fountain rise!
For you in healing streams it rolls;
Money ye need not bring, nor price,
Ye labouring, burdened, sin-sick souls.

Nothing ye in exchange shall give,
Leave all you have and are behind,
Frankly the gift of God receive,
Pardon and peace in Jesus find.

Why seek ye that which is not bread,
Nor can your hungry souls sustain?
On ashes, husks, and air ye feed;
Ye spend your little all in vain.

In search of empty joys below,
Ye toil with unavailing strife;
Whither, ah! whither would ye go?
I have the words of endless life.

Hearken to me with earnest care,
And freely eat substantial food,
The sweetness of my mercy share,
And taste that I alone am good.

I bid you all my goodness prove,
My promises for all are free,
Come, taste the manna of my love,
And let your souls delight in me.

Your willing ear and heart incline,
My words believingly receive;
Quickened your souls by faith divine
An everlasting life shall live.

Charles Wesley

Hymn VIII: What Could Your Redeemer Do

What could your Redeemer do
More than he hath done for you?
To procure your peace with God,
Could he more than shed his blood?
After all his waste of love,
All his drawings from above,
Why will you your Lord deny?
Why will you resolve to die?

Turn, he cries, ye sinners, turn;
By his life your God hath sworn,
He would have you turn and live,
He would all the world receive.
If your death were his delight,
Would he you to life invite?
Would he ask, obtest, and cry,
Why will you resolve to die?

Sinners, turn, while God is near:
Dare not think him insincere:
Now, even now, your Saviour stands,
All day long he spreads his hands,
Cries, Ye will not happy be!
No, ye will not come to me!
Me, who life to none deny:
Why will you resolve to die?

Can you doubt if God is love?
If to all His bowels move?
Will you not his word receive?
Will you not his OATH believe?
See! the suffering God appears!
Jesus weeps! believe his tears!
Mingled with his blood, they cry,
Why will you resolve to die?

Charles Wesley

Hymn X: Ye Thirsty For God, to Jesus Give Ear

Ye thirsty for God, To Jesus give ear,
And take, through his blood, A power to draw near;
His kind invitation Ye sinners embrace,
Accepting salvation, Salvation by grace.

Sent down from above, Who governs the skies,
In vehement love To sinners he cries,
Drink into my Spirit, Who happy would be,
And all things inherit By coming to me.

O Saviour of all, Thy word we believe!
And come at thy call, Thy grace to receive;
The blessing is given Wherever thou art.
The earnest of heaven Is love in the heart.

To us at thy feet The Comforter give,
Who gasp to admit Thy Spirit, and live;
The weakest believers Acknowledge for thine,
And fill us with rivers Of water divine.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XI: God, the Offended God Most High

God, the offended God most high,
Ambassadors to rebels sends;
His messengers his place supply,
And Jesus begs us to be friends.

Us, in the stead of Christ, they pray,
Us, in the stead of God, intreat,
To cast our arms, our sins, away,
And find forgiveness at his feet.

Our God in Christ! thine embassy,
And proffered mercy, we embrace;
And gladly reconciled to thee,
Thy condescending goodness praise.

Poor debtors, by our Lord's request
A full acquittance we receive!
And criminals, with pardon blest,
We, at our Judge's instance, live!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XII: Come, Ye That Love the Lord

Come, ye that love the Lord,
And let your joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
While ye surround his throne:
Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God;
But servants of the heavenly King
May speak their joys abroad.

The God that rules on high,
That all the earth surveys
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas-
This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love;
He will send down his heavenly powers,
To carry us above.

There we shall see his face,
And never, never sin;
There, from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in:
Yea, and before we rise
To that immortal state,
The thoughts of such amazing bliss
Should constant joys create.

The men of grace have found
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruit on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow:
Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We are marching through Immanuel's grounds
To fairer worlds on high.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XIII: Happy Soul that Free from Harms

Happy soul that free from harms
Rests within his Shepherd's arms!
Who his quiet shall molest?
Who shall violate his rest?
Jesus doth his spirit bear,
Jesus takes his every care;
He who found the wandering sheep,
Jesus still delights to keep.

O that I might so believe,
Steadfastly to Jesus cleave,
On his only love rely,
Smile at the destroyer nigh;
Free from sin and servile fear,
Have my Jesus ever near,
All his care rejoice to prove,
All his paradise of love!

Jesus, seek thy wandering sheep,
Bring me back, and lead, and keep;
Take on thee my every care,
Bear me, on thy bosom bear:
Let me know my Shepherd's voice,
More and more in thee rejoice,
More and more of thee receive,
Ever in thy Spirit live:

Live, till all thy life I know,
Perfect through my Lord below,
Gladly then from earth remove,
Gathered to the fold above.

O that I at last may stand
With the sheep at thy right hand,
Take the crown so freely given,
Enter in by thee to heaven!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XIV: Happy the Man That Finds the Grace

Happy the man that finds the grace,
The blessing of God's chosen race,
The wisdom coming from above,
The faith that sweetly works by love.

Happy beyond description he
Who knows, The Saviour died for me,
The gift unspeakable obtains,
And heavenly understanding gains.

Wisdom divine! Who tells the price
Of wisdom's costly merchandise
Wisdom to silver we prefer,
And gold is dross compared to her.

Her hands are filled with length of days,
True riches, and immortal praise,
Riches of Christ, on all bestowed,
And honour that descends from God.

To purest joys she all invites,
Chaste, holy, spiritual delights;
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her flowery paths are peace.

Happy the man who wisdom gains,
Thrice happy who his guest retains!
He owns, and shall for ever own,
Wisdom, and Christ, and heaven are one.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XIX: Rejoice Evermore With Angels Above

Rejoice evermore With angels above,
In Jesus's power, In Jesus's love:
With glad exultation Your triumph proclaim,
Ascribing salvation To God and the Lamb.

Thou, Lord, our relief In trouble hast been;
Hast saved us from grief, Hast saved us from sin;
The power of thy Spirit Hath set our hearts free,
And now we inherit All fullness in thee;

All fullness of peace, All fullness of joy,
And spiritual bliss That never shall cloy:
To us it is given In Jesus to know
A kingdom of heaven, A heaven below.

No longer we join While sinners invite,
Nor envy the swine Their brutish delight;
Their joy is all sadness, Their mirth is all vain,
Their laughter is madness, Their pleasure is pain.

O might they at last With sorrow return,
The pleasures to taste For which they were born;
Our Jesus receiving, Our happiness prove,
The joy of believing, The heaven of love!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XV: Happy the Souls to Jesus Joined

Happy the souls to Jesus joined,
And saved by grace alone,
Walking in all his ways they find
Their heaven on earth begun.

The church triumphant in thy love,
Their mighty joys we know;
They sing the Lamb in hymns above,
And we in hymns below.

Thee in thy glorious realm they praise,
And bow before thy throne,
We in the kingdom of thy grace:
The kingdoms are but one.

The holy to the holiest leads,
From thence our spirits rise,
And he that in thy statutes treads
Shall meet thee in the skies.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XVI: Happy the Souls That First Believed

Happy the souls that first believed,
To Jesus and each other cleaved,
Joined by the unction from above
In mystic fellowship of love.

Meek, simple followers of the Lamb,
They lived, and spake, and thought the same;
They joyfully conspired to raise
Their ceaseless sacrifice of praise.

With grace abundantly endued,
A pure, believing multitude,
They all were of one heart and soul,
And only love inspired the whole.

O what an age of golden days!
O what a choice, peculiar race!
Washed in the Lamb's all-cleansing blood,
Anointed kings and priests to God!

Ye different sects, who all declare,
'Lo, here is Christ! ' or, 'Christ is here!'
Your stronger proofs divinely give,
And show me where the Christians live.

The gates of hell cannot prevail;
The church on earth can never fail;
Ah, join me to thy secret ones!
Ah, gather all thy living stones!

Scattered o'er all the earth they lie,
Till thou collect them with thine eye,
Draw by the music of thy name,
And charm into a beauteous frame.

For this the pleading Spirit groans,
And cries in all thy banished ones;
Greatest of gifts, thy love impart,
And make us of one mind and heart.

Join every soul that looks to thee
In bonds of perfect charity;
Now, Lord, the glorious fullness give,
And all in all for ever live!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XVII: Jesus, From Whom All Blessings Grow

Jesus, from whom all blessings flow,
Great builder of thy church below,
If now thy Spirit moves my breast,
Hear, and fulfil thine own request!

The few that truly call thee Lord,
And wait thy sanctifying word,
And thee their utmost Saviour own,
Unite, and perfect them in one.

O let them all thy mind express,
Stand forth thy chosen witnesses,
Thy power unto salvation show,
And perfect holiness below!

In them let all mankind behold
How Christians lived in days of old,
Mighty their envious foes to move,
A proverb of reproach - and love.

From every sinful wrinkle free,
Redeemed from all iniquity,
The fellowship of saints make known;
And, O my God, might I be one!

O might my lot be cast with these,
The least of Jesu's witnesses!
O that my Lord would count me meet
To wash his dear disciples' feet!

This only thing do I require:
Thou knowest 'tis all my heart's desire
Freely what I receive to give,
The servant of thy church to live;

After my lowly Lord to go,
And wait upon thy saints below;
Enjoy the grace to angels given,
And serve the royal heirs of heaven.

Lord, if I now thy drawings feel,
And ask according to thy will,
Confirm the prayer, the seal impart,
And speak the answer to my heart.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XVIII: Father, Saviour of Mankind

Father, Saviour of mankind,
Who hast on me bestowed
An immortal soul, designed
To be the house of God;
Come, and now reside in me,
Never, never to remove;
Make me just and good, like thee,
And full of power and love.

Bid me in thy image rise,
A saint, a creature new,
True, and merciful, and wise,
And pure, and happy too.
This thy primitive design,
That I should in thee be blest,
Should within the arms divine
For ever, ever rest.

Let thy will on me be done;
Fulfil my heart's desire,
Thee to know and love alone,
And rise in raptures higher;
Thee, descending on a cloud,
When with ravished eyes I see,
Then I shall be filled with God
To all eternity!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XX: Weary Souls, that Wander Wide

Weary souls, that wander wide
From the central point of bliss,
Turn to Jesus crucified,
Fly to those dear wounds of his:
Sink into the purple flood;
Rise into the life of God!

Find in Christ the way of peace,
Peace unspeakable, unknown;
By his pain he gives you ease,
Life by his expiring groan;
Rise, exalted by his fall,
Find in Christ your all in all.

O believe the record true,
God to you his Son hath give
Ye may now be happy too,
Find on earth the life of heaven,
Live the life of heaven above,
All the life of glorious love.

This the universal bliss,
Bliss for every soul designed,
God's original promise this,
God's great gift to all mankind:
Blest in Christ this moment be!
Blest to all eternity!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXI: Ye Simple Souls That Stray

Ye simple souls that stray
Far from the path of peace,
That lonely, unfrequented way
To life and happiness,
Why will ye folly love,
And throned the downward road,
And hate the wisdom from above,
And mock the sons of God?

Madness and misery
Ye count our life beneath;
And nothing great or good can see,
Or glorious, in our death:
As only born to grieve,
Beneath your feet we lie;
And utterly contemned we live,
And unlamented die.

So wretched and obscure,
The men whom ye despise,
So foolish, impotent, and poor,
Above your scorn we rise:
We, through the Holy Ghost,
Can witness better things;
For He whose blood is all our boast
Hath made us priests and kings.

Riches unsearchable
In Jesu's love we know;
And pleasures, springing from the well
Of life, our souls o'erflow;
The Spirit we receive
Of wisdom, grace, and power;
And always sorrowful we live,
Rejoicing evermore.

Angels our servants are,
And keep in all our ways,
And in their watchful hands they bear
The sacred souls of grace;
Unto that heavenly bliss
They all our steps attend;
And God himself our Father is,
And Jesus is our friend.

With him we walk in white,
We in his image shine,
Our robes are robes of glorious light,
Our righteousness divine;
On all the kings of earth
With pity we look down,
And claim, in virtue of our birth,

A never-fading crown.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXII: Behold the Saviour of Mankind

Behold the Saviour of mankind
Nailed to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that him inclined
To bleed and die for thee!

Hark, how he groans! while nature shakes,
And earth's strong pillars bend;
The temple's veil in sunder breaks,
The solid marbles rend.

'Tis done! the precious ransom's paid,
'Receive my soul,' he cries!
See where he bows his sacred head!
He bows his head, and dies!

But soon he'll break death's envious chain,
And in full glory shine:
O Lamb of God! was ever pain,
Was ever love, like thine?

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXIII: Extended on a Cursed Tree

Extended on a cursed tree,
Besmeared with dust, and sweat, and blood,
See there, the king of glory see!
Sinks and expires the Son of God.

Who, who, my Saviour, this hath done?
Who could thy sacred body wound?
No guilt thy spotless heart hath known,
No guile hath in thy lips been found.

I, I alone, have done the deed!
'Tis I thy sacred flesh have torn;
My sins have caused thee, Lord, to bleed,
Pointed the nail, and fixed the thorn.

The burden, for me to sustain
Too great, on thee, my Lord, was laid;
To heal me, thou hast borne my pain;
To bless me, thou a curse wast made.

In the devouring lion's teeth,
Torn, and forsook of all, I lay;
Thou sprang'st into the jaws of death,
From death to save the helpless prey.

Saviour how shall I proclaim?
How pay the mighty debt I owe?
Let all I have, and all I am,
Ceaseless to all thy glory show.

Too much to thee I cannot give;
Too much I cannot do for thee;
Let all thy love, and all thy grief,
Graven on my heart for ever be!

The meek, the still, the lowly mind,
O may I learn from thee, my God,
And love, with softest pity joined,
For those that trample on thy blood!

Still let thy tears, thy groans, thy sighs,
O'erflow my eyes, and heave my breast,
Till loose from flesh and earth I rise,
And ever in thy bosom rest.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXIV: Saviour, If Thy Precious Love

Saviour, if thy precious love
Could be merited by mine,
Faith these mountains would remove;
Faith would make me ever thine:
But when all my care and pains
Worth can ne'er create in me,
Nought by me thy fullness gains;
Vain the hope to purchase thee.

Cease, O man, thy worth to weigh,
Give the needless contest o'er;
Mine thou art! while thus I say,
Yield thee up, and ask no more:
What thy estimate may be,
Only can by him be told
Who, to ransom wretched thee,
Thee to gain, himself was sold.

But when all in me is sin,
How can I thy grace obtain?
How presume thyself to win?
God of love, the doubt explain:
Or if thou the means supply,
Lo to thee I all resign!
Make me Lord - I ask not why,
How I ask not, - ever thine.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXIX: Come, Ye Weary Sinners, Come

Come, ye weary sinners, come,
All who groan beneath your load,
Jesus calls his wanderers home,
Hasten to your pardoning God!
Come, ye guilty spirits oppressed,
Answer to the Saviour's call,
'Come, and I will give you rest,
Come, and I will save you all.'

Jesus, full of truth and love,
We thy kindest word obey;
Faithful let thy mercies prove,
Take our load of guilt away;
Fain we would on thee rely,
Cast on thee our every care,
To thine arms of mercy fly,
Find our lasting quiet there.

Burdened with a world of grief,
Burdened with our sinful load,
Burdened with this unbelief,
Burdened with the wrath of God;
Lo! we come to thee for ease,
True and gracious as thou art,
Now our groaning souls release,
Write forgiveness on our heart.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXV: Stupendous Love of God Most High!

Stupendous love of God most high!
He comes to meet us from the sky
In mildest majesty;
Full of unutterable grace,
He calls the weary burdened race,
'Come all for help to me.'

Tired with the greatness of my way,
From him I would no longer stray,
But rest in Jesus have;
Weary of sin, from sin would cease,
Weary of mine own righteousness,
And stoop, myself to save.

Weary of passions unsubdued,
Weary of vows in vain renewed,
Of forms without the power,
Of prayers, and hopes, complaints, and groans,
My fainting soul in silence owns
I can hold out no more.

Beneath this mountain load of grief,
Of guilt and desperate unbelief,
Jesus, thy creature see;
With all my nature's weight oppressed,
I sink, I die for want of rest,
Yet cannot come to thee.

Mine utter helplessness I feel;
But thou, who gav'st the feeble will,
The effectual grace supply;
Be thou my strength, my light, my way,
And bid my soul the call obey,
And to thy bosom fly.

Fulfil thine own intense desire,
And now into my heart inspire
The power of faith and love;
Then, Saviour, then to thee I come,
And find on earth the life, the home,
The rest of saints above.

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXVI: I Thirst, Thou Wounded Lamb of God

I thirst, thou wounded Lamb of God,
To wash me in thy cleansing blood,
To dwell within thy wounds; then pain
Is sweet, and life or death is gain.

Take my poor heart, and let it be
For ever closed to all but thee!
Seal thou my breast, and let me we;
That pledge of love for ever there!

How blest are they who still abide
Close sheltered in thy bleeding side,
Who life and strength from thence derive,
And by thee move, and in thee live.

What are our works but sin and death,
Till thou thy quickening Spirit breathe!
Thou giv'st the power thy grace to move;
O wondrous grace! O boundless love!

How can it be, thou heavenly King,
That thou shouldst us to glory bring?
Make slaves the partners of thy throne,
Decked with a never-fading crown?

Hence our hearts melt, our eyes o'erflow,
Our words are lost; nor will we know,
Nor will we think of aught beside,
'My Lord, my Love is crucified.'

Ah, Lord! enlarge our scanty thought,
To know the wonders thou hast wrought;
Unloose our stammering tongues, to tell
Thy love immense, unsearchable.

First-born of many brethren thou!
To thee, lo! all our souls we bow:
To thee our hearts and hands we give:
Thine may we die, thine may we live!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXVII: Saviour, the World's and Mine

Saviour, the world's and mine,
Was ever grief like thine!
Thou my pain, my curse hast took,
All my sins were laid on thee;
Help me, Lord; to thee I look,
Draw me, Saviour, after thee.

'Tis done! my God hath died;
My Love is crucified!
Break, this stony heart of mine;
Pour, mine eyes, a ceaseless flood;
Feel, my soul, the pangs divine;
Catch, my heart, the issuing blood!

When, O my God, shall I
For thee submit to die?
How the mighty debt repay?
Rival of thy passion prove?
Lead me in thyself, the Way;
Melt my hardness into love.

To love is all my wish,
I only live for this;
Grant me, Lord, my heart's desire,
There by faith for ever dwell;
This I always will require,
Thee, and only thee, to feel.

Thy power I pant to prove,
Rooted and fixed in love;
Strengthened by thy Spirit's might,
Wise to fathom things divine,
What the length, and breadth, and height,
What the depth of love like thine.

Ah! give me this to know,
With all thy saints below;
Swells my soul to compass thee,
Gasps in thee to live and move;
Filled with all the Deity,
All immersed and lost in love!

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXVIII: Love Divine! What Hast Thou Done!

Love divine! what hast thou done!
The immortal God hath died for me!
The Father's co-eternal Son
Bore all my sins upon the tree;
The immortal God for me hath died!
My Lord, my Love is crucified.

Behold him, all ye that pass by,
The bleeding Prince of life and peace!
Come, see, ye worms, your Maker die,
And say, was ever grief like his?
Come, feel with me his blood applied:
My Lord, my Love is crucified.

Is crucified for me and you,
To bring us rebels back to God:
Believe, believe the record true,
Ye all are bought with Jesu's blood,
Pardon for all flows from his side;
My Lord, my Love is crucified.

Then let us sit beneath his cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream,
All things for him account but loss,
And give up all our hearts to him;
Of nothing think or speak beside,
'My Lord, my Love is crucified.'

Charles Wesley

Hymn XXX: Where Shall My Wondering Soul Begin?

Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeemed from death and sin,
A brand plucked from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliverer's praise?

O how shall I the goodness tell,
Father, which thou to me hast showed?
That I, a child of wrath and hell,
I should be called a child of God,
Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,
Blest with this antepast of heaven!

And shall I slight my Father's love?
Or basely fear his gifts to own?
Unmindful of his favours prove?
Shall I, the hallowed cross to shun,
Refuse his righteousness to impart,
By hiding it within my heart?

No! though the ancient dragon rage,
And call forth all his host to war,
Though earth's self-righteous sons engage
Them and their god alike I dare;
Jesus, the sinner's friend, proclaim;
Jesus, to sinners still the same.

Outcasts of men, to you I call,
Harlots, and publicans, and thieves!
He spreads his arms to embrace you all;
Sinners alone his grace receives;
No need of him the righteous have;
He came the lost to seek and save.

Come, O my guilty brethren, come,
Groaning beneath your load of sin,
His bleeding heart shall make you room,
His open side shall take you in;
He calls you now, invites you home;
Come, O my guilty brethren, come!

For you the purple current flowed
In pardons from his wounded side,
Languished for you the eternal God,
For you the Prince of glory died:
Believe, and all your sin's forgiven;
Only believe, and yours is heaven!

Charles Wesley

Jesus, We Look To Thee

Jesus, we look to Thee,
Thy promised presence claim;
Thou in the midst of us shall be,
Assembled in Thy Name.

Thy Name salvation is,
Which here we come to prove;
Thy Name is life, and health, and peace,
And everlasting love.

Not in the name of pride
Or selfishness we meet;
From nature's paths we turn aside,
And worldly thoughts forget.

We meet, the grace to take
Which Thou hast freely giv'n;
We meet on earth for Thy dear sake
That we may meet in Heav'n.

Present we know Thou art;
But, O, Thyself reveal!
Now, Lord, let ev'ry waiting heart
The mighty comfort feel.

O may Thy quickening voice
The death of sin remove;
And bid our inmost souls rejoice,
In hope of perfect love.

Charles Wesley

Let the Beasts Their Breath Resign

Let the beasts their breath resign,
Strangers to the life divine;
Who their God can never know,
Let their spirit downward go.
You for higher ends were born,
You may all to God return,
Dwell with him above the sky;
Why will you for ever die?

You, on whom he favours showers,
You, possess of nobler powers,
You, of reason's powers possess,
You, with will and memory blest,
You, with finer sense endued,
Creatures capable of God;
Noblest of his creatures, why,
Why will you for ever die?

You, whom he ordained to be
Transcripts of the Deity;
You, whom he in life doth hold;
You, for whom himself was sold;
You, on whom he still doth wait,
Whom he would again create;
Made by him, and purchased, why,
Why will you for ever die?

You, who own his record true,
You, his chosen people, you,
You, who call the Saviour Lord,
You, who read his written word,
You, who see the gospel-light,
Claim a crown in Jesu's right;
Why will you, ye Christians, why
Will the house of Israel die?

Charles Wesley

Morning Hymn

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night:
Day-spring from on high, be near:
Day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by thee,
Joyless is the day's return,
Till thy mercy's beams I see;
Till thy inward light impart,
Glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin, and grief,
Fill me, Radiance Divine,
Scatter all my unbelief,
More and more thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

Charles Wesley

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace!

My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honours of thy name.

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me.

He speaks, and, listening to his voice,
New life the dead receive,
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
The humble poor believe.

Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,
Your loosened tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

Look unto him, ye nations, own
Your God, ye fallen race;
Look, and be saved through faith alone,
Be justified by grace.

See all your sins on Jesus laid:
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

Awake from guilty nature's sleep,
And Christ shall give you light,
Cast all your sins into the deep,
And wash the Æthiop white.

With me, your chief, ye then shall know,
Shall feel your sins forgiven;
Anticipate your heaven below,
And own that love is heaven.

Charles Wesley

Sinners, Obey the Gospel-Word!

Sinners, obey the gospel-word!
Haste to the supper of my Lord!
Be wise to know your gracious day;
All things are ready, come away!

Ready the Father is to own
And kiss his late-returning son;
Ready your loving Saviour stands,
And spreads for you his bleeding hands.

Ready the Spirit of his love
Just now the stony to remove,
To apply, and witness with the blood,
And wash and seal the sons of God.

Ready for you the angels wait,
To triumph in your blest estate;
Tuning their harps, they long to praise
The wonders of redeeming grace.

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Is ready, with their shining host:
All heaven is ready to resound,
'The dead's alive! the lost is found!'

Come then, ye sinners, to your Lord,
In Christ to paradise restored;
His proffered benefits embrace,
The plenitude of gospel grace:

A pardon written with his blood,
The favour and the peace of God;
The seeing eye, the feeling sense,
The mystic joys of penitence;

The godly grief, the pleasing smart,
The meltings of a broken heart,
The tears that tell your sins forgiven,
The sighs that waft your souls to heaven;

The guiltless shame, the sweet distress,
The unutterable tenderness,
The genuine, meek humility,
The wonder, 'Why such love to me?'

The o'erwhelming power of saving grace,
The sight that veils the seraph's face;
The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.

Charles Wesley

Sinners, Turn, Why Will Ye Die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Maker, asks you why?
God, who did your being give,
Made you with himself to live -
He the fatal cause demands,
Asks the work of his own hands,
Why, ye thankless creatures, why
Will ye cross his love, and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, your Saviour, asks you why?
God, who did your souls retrieve,
Died himself, that ye might live;
Will you let him die in vain?
Crucify your Lord again?
Why, ye ransomed sinners, why
Will you slight his grace, and die?

Sinners, turn, why will ye die?
God, the Spirit, asks you why?
He who all your lives hath strove,
Wooed you to embrace his love:
Will you not his grace receive?
Will you still refuse to live?
Why, ye long-sought sinners, why
Will you grieve your God, and die?

Dead, already dead within,
Spiritually dead in sin,
Dead to God while here you breathe,
Pant ye after second death?
Will you still in sin remain,
Greedy of eternal pain?
O ye dying sinners, why,
Why will you for ever die?

Charles Wesley

Thy Faithfulness, Lord

Thy faithfulness, Lord, Each moment we find,
So true to thy word, So loving and kind!
Thy mercy so tender To all the lost race,
The vilest offender May turn and find grace.

The mercy I feel To others I show,
I set to my seal That Jesus is true:
Ye all may find favour Who come at his call,
O come to my Saviour, His grace is for all!

To save what was lost, from heaven he came;
Come, sinners, and trust In Jesus's name.
He offers you pardon; He bids you be free;
'If sin be your burden, O come unto me!'

O let me commend My Saviour to you,
The publican's friend And Advocate too,
For you he is pleading His merits and death,
With God interceding for sinners beneath.

Then let us submit His grace to receive,
Fall down at his feet And gladly believe:
We all are forgiven For Jesus's sake:
Our title to heaven His merits we take.

Charles Wesley

Wrestling Jacob

FIRST PART.

Come, O thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee;
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

I need not tell thee who I am;
My sin and misery declare;
Thyself hast called me by my name;
Look on thy hands, and read it there;
But who, I ask thee, who art thou?
Tell me thy name, and tell me now.

In vain thou strugglest to get free;
I never will unloose my hold:
Art thou the Man that died for me?
The secret of thy love unfold;
Wrestling, I will not let thee go
Till I thy name, thy nature know.

Wilt thou not yet to me reveal
Thy new, unutterable name?
Tell me, I still beseech thee, tell;
To know it now resolved I am;
Wrestling, I will not let thee go
Till I thy name, thy nature know.

What though my shrinking flesh complain
And murmur to contend so long?
I rise superior to my pain;
When I am weak, then am I strong!
And when my all of strength shall fail,
I shall with the God-man prevail.

SECOND PART.

Yield to me now, for I am weak,
But confident in self-despair;
Speak to my heart, in blessings speak;
Be conquered by my instant prayer;
Speak, or thou never hence shalt move,
And tell me if thy name be Love.

'T is Love! 't is Love! Thou diedst for me;
I hear thy whisper in my heart;
The morning breaks, the shadows flee;
Pure, universal Love thou art;
To me, to all, thy bowels move;

Thy nature and thy name is Love.

My prayer hath power with God; the grace
Unspeakable I now receive;
Through faith I see thee face to face;
I see thee face to face and live!
In vain I have not wept and strove;
Thy nature and thy name is Love.

I know thee, Saviour, who thou art,
Jesus, the feeble sinner's friend;
Nor wilt thou with the night depart,
But stay and love me to the end;
Thy mercies never shall remove;
Thy nature and thy name is Love.

The Sun of Righteousness on me
Hath risen, with healing in his wings;
Withered my nature's strength; from thee
My soul its life and succor brings;
My help is all laid up above;
Thy nature and thy name is Love.

Contented now upon my thigh
I halt till life's short journey end;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On thee alone for strength depend;
Nor have I power from thee to move;
Thy nature and thy name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey;
Hell, earth, and sin with ease o'ercome;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And, as a bounding hart, fly home;
Through all eternity to prove
Thy nature and thy name is Love.

Charles Wesley