

MS Deliberative Hymns¹

One of the most personal collections of Charles Wesley's manuscript poetry that remains extant is a forty-page volume (4.75 x 7.0 inches in size) containing seventeen hymns that he wrote during the period of his courtship of Sarah Gwynne, as he struggled with the question of whether to marry.² Their personal nature is reflected in the fact that Charles chose to publish only one (shown in blue font in the TOC). Wesley describes the origin of the volume in his *Manuscript Journal* (April 19, 1748):

Today I rode over to Shoreham, and told Mr Perronet all my heart. I have always had a fear, but no *thought*, of marrying, for many years past, even from my first preaching the gospel. ... Mr Perronet encouraged me to pray, and wait for a providential opening. I expressed the various searchings of my heart in many hymns on the important occasion.

Wesley was soon sharing the hymns with friends whose counsel he trusted, as evident in a letter to Sarah Gwynne dated December 19, 1748:

Yesterday I left the Deliberating Hymns with Mrs Blackwell and Mrs Dewal. The first question they asked me, on my return hither this morning, was whether those hymns were wrote for myself? This drew on a full explanation. They expressed the utmost satisfaction, wondered I should not acknowledge the hand of God *in every step*, assured me they had guessed the person, even the first time they saw her; rejoiced over her, as their future friend; spoke of her just as I *think* of her; offered their utmost service in every way; and took, in a manner, the whole matter upon themselves.

The volume which Charles shared with these friends passed down through the family, being placed between wallpaper-covered boards, and now includes on the fly leaf an inscription by Sarah Wesley Jr.:

These Hymns were written by the Revd. Charles Wesley during his intention of marrying Miss Gwynne afterwards his beloved wife.

The Piety and submission of his Mind in the beginning of the Attachment is deeply manifested, and their Children have reason humbly to hope a Blessing at last will rest upon Each of them, whose Father so deprecated taking one step without the Divine Guidance.

Many outward obstacles were removed, during the attachment, and one sign which he requested was granted against all appearance; the consent and full approbation of Mrs. Gwynne (the Mother) who at first was reluctant. Without this approbation they each considered, that Providence opposed the Union.

S. Wesley Junior.

This volume is now held in the Methodist Archive and Research Centre, accession number MA 1977/552 (Charles Wesley Notebooks Box 1). The transcription below is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: August 1, 2010.

²For more on this, see Frank Baker, "A Poet in Love – The Courtship of Charles Wesley, 1747–19," *Methodist History* 29 (1991): 235–47.

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I.³

To the Tune of — Hail holy, holy, holy Lord!

- [1.] All-good, all-wise, almighty Lord,
Supremely just and true,
I cast me on thy faithful Word,
And wait thy Will to do:
Thy Will concerning me reveal,
Thy Heavenly Light impart,
And speak by Signs infallible
The Answer to my Heart.
2. Thee, Lord, in all my Ways I own
My Counsellour and Guide,
I hang upon thine Arm alone,
And in thy Love confide;
Ah! do not then my Soul reject,
But all my Paths attend,
But all my Works and Thoughts direct
To thine Appointed End.
3. Thou readst th' Unutterable Care
That labours in my Breast,
And knowst, till Thou thy Mind declare
I know not what is Best.
A Sinner doubly dark and blind,
A foolish, foolish Worm,
O how shall I the Secret find,
And all thy Will perform?

³Appears also in MS Courtship, 1–2; and MS Occasional Hymns, 4–6. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:217–18.

4. I would not my own Soul deceive,
My own Designs pursue,
I can no more an Heart believe
Which never, yet prov'd true.
Death in the Error of my Life
I would not fondly find;
Declare, O Lord, to end the Strife,
The Thing by Thee design'd.

5. For thy Determining Command
I at thy Footstool lie,
Intent to mark the Pointing Hand,
To catch the Guiding Eye:
To Thee with meek submissive Fear
Th' Important Doubt I leave,
Till Thou in Heavenly Light appear,
Till Thou the *Fiat* give.

6. Jesus, thro' thy or'epowering Grace
I every Wish resign,
Nor can I, till Thou shewst thy Face,
To this or that incline;
Thy Face *conceal'd*, thy Mind *unknown*,
Preserves the Balance even,
And makes me cry Thy Will be done
On Earth as tis in Heaven.

II.⁴

To the Tune of — Happy Magdalene.

- [1.] Heavenly Counsellour Divine,
 Waiting for thy Will I stand:
Both mine Eyes, Thou knowst, are Thine,
 Reach me out an Helping Hand:
Thou my faithful Pilot be,
 While these threatenng Billows roar,
Guide thro' Life's tempestuous Sea,
 Land me on the Happy Shore.
2. In this howling Wilderness
 Lo! I trust on Thee alone,
Thee in all my Ways confess
 Sole Disposer of Thine own:
Sure to err without thy Light,
 Sure to contradict thy Will,
Guide my wandring Footsteps right,
 Bring me to thy holy Hill.
3. Wilt Thou, Lord, Thine own forsake,
 Stop thine Ears against my Cry,
Let me Fatally mistake
 Who on Thee for Light rely?
Canst Thou (while for Help I pray,
 While my Soul on Thee I cast)
Turn the Blind out of the Way,
 Leave me to Myself at last?
4. Surely, Lord, the Fear is vain;
 Thou art Merciful and True,

⁴Appears also in MS Courtship, 2–3; and MS Occasional Hymns, 13–14. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:218–19.

Thou shalt make thy Counsel plain,
Thou shalt teach me what to do,
On my Heart the Answer seal,
Signify thy Love's Decree,
Shew me all thy Blessed Will —
When, and how I leave to Thee.

III.⁵

To [the Tune of] — Jesus, GOD of our Salvation.

- [1.] GOD of Universal Nature,
Author of my Life and End,
My most merciful Creator,
Still thy Weakest Child defend,
Guard thro' Life's Important Hour,
Till my Eden I regain,
Quit the Desart for the Bower,
Die from Earth in Heaven to reign.
2. If I ever felt thy Drawing,
Give me, Lord, to feel it still,
Now to feel thy LOVE or'eawing
All the Motions of my Will:
Now, when most I need Assistance,
Will my GOD his Ear avert?
Canst Thou keep an angry Distance,
Leave me to my wretched Heart?
3. If Thou gav'st the Piercing Fear
Which I every Moment find,
Lest my Heart should linger⁶ here,
Leave a single Wish behind;
Guide me by thy Love's Direction,
From all earthly Passions free,
Seize, O GOD, my whole Affection,
Swallow up my Soul in Thee.
4. Place me in that happiest Station,
Where I most may spread⁷ thy grace,
Most advance my own Salvation,
Most display my Maker's Praise;
Chuse on Earth my whole Condition,
Only give my Spirit Rest,
Fill at last my Soul's⁸ Ambition,
Take me, Father, to thy Breast.

⁵Appears also in Letter to Sarah Gwynne Jr., November 12, 1748; and MS Courtship, 4. Published posthumously in *Poetical Works*, 13:271–72.

⁶Ori., “settle.”

⁷Ori., “taste.”

⁸Ori., “whole.”

IV.⁹

To the Tune of — Jesus, Lord, in pity hear us.

- [1.] Christ, my Life, my Only Treasure,
Thou alone
Mould Thine own,
After thy goodpleasure.
2. Thou, who paidst my Price direct¹⁰ me!
Thine I am,
Holy Lamb,
Save, and always save me.
3. Order *Thou my whole Condition,*
Chuse my State,
Fix my Fate
By thy wise Decision.
4. From all Earthly Expectation
Set me free,
Seize for Thee
All my Strength of Passion.
5. Into absolute Subjection
Be it brought,
Every Thought,
Every fond Affection.
6. That which most my Soul requires
For thy sake
Hold it back,
Purge my Best Desires.
7. Keep from me thy loveliest Creature,
Till I prove
Jesus' Love
Infinitely sweeter;

⁹Appears also in MS Occasional Hymns, 53–54. Published posthumously in *Representative Verse*, 264–65; and *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:248–49.

¹⁰Ori., “shalt have.”

8. Till with purest Passion panting
Cries my Heart
“Where Thou art
“Nothing more is wanting.”
9. Blest with thine Abiding Spirit,
Fully blest
Now I rest,
All in Thee inherit.
10. Heaven is now with Jesus given;
Christ in me,
Thou shalt be
Mine Eternal Heaven.

[blank]

[blank]

V.¹¹

To the Tune of — Thou GOD of glorious Majesty!

1. GOD of my Life, I seek thy Face,
By Thee upheld throughout my Days,
By Thee sustain'd and fed;
Preserv'd from twice ten thousand Snares,
Mine inmost Soul thy Love declares,
And asks thy Present Aid.
2. My Father's Hope, my Father's Fear,
In this Important Hour appear,
And to my Rescue come;
Be Thou my Counsellour and Guide
And with this Awful Doubt decide
Mine everlasting Doom.
3. On This depends our Weal or Woe,
Our All in Earth and Heaven, I know,
And dread to fix my Choice:
In just Anxiety I stand,
And see display'd on either Hand
Eternal Grievs, and Joys.
4. Merciful GOD, what shall I do?
The Counsel of thy Goodness shew,
And order Thou the whole,
Direct my Work, inspire my Thought
Or cut th' Inextricable Knot,
And NOW require my Soul.

¹¹Appears also in MS Courtship, 5–6; and MS Occasional, 14–16. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:219–21.

5. By Death prevent the Evil Day,
Nor let me live to fall away
 Thro' this deceitful Heart,
But rather let it cease to beat;
Extinguish Now the Vital Heat,
 And bid me Now depart.

6. I would not live to cross thy Will,
And frowardly my own fulfil
 In Quest of Comfort here:
With Pity see the Pangs I feel,
And save me, save me from the Ill
 Which next to Hell I fear.

7. I can thro' Thee the World resign:
No Creature-Happiness be mine,
 So Thou Thyself impart;
Vouchsafe the Blessing from above,
And let thine all-sufficient Love
 Possess, and fill my Heart.

8. For This alone on Earth I wait,
Till Thou to its unsinning State
 My newborn Soul restore,
By Sufferings perfected beneath,
Victorious brought thro' Life and Death
 To that Eternal Shore.

VI.¹²

To the Tune of — With pity, Lord, a Sinner see.

- [1.] Lord, if Thou knowst it *good for me*
Friendless and *alone* to be,
While in the Vale I live,
Do Thou supply my every Want,
And still unto thy Servant grant
Thy Saying to receive.
2. Far from the chearful Ways of Men
Lead me in a Path unseen,
To All but Thee unknown;
Fast by the *silent* Waters lead,
And let me find whate'er I need
In thy pure Love *alone*.
3. Thy only Love sufficient is,
Perfect Love is perfect Bliss;
And All, to whom tis given
Thy Love to taste, thy Face to see
They want no other good but Thee,
They want no other Heaven.
4. Yet if thy wise Eternal Will
Foreordain'd me to fulfil
The Social Character,
A Ray of Heavenly Light impart,
And speak thy Counsel to my Heart,
And all thy Mind declare.

¹²Appears also in MS Courtship, 7–8. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:221–22.

5. O for thy Truth and Mercy sake
Do not leave me to mistake
My own weak Will for Thine:
Thou all my Thoughts direct, control;
Or let me Now give back my Soul
Into the Hands Divine!
6. In jealous self-mistrusting Fear
Least my Heart should settle here,
And cleave to Things below,
I pray thee end the doubtful Strife,
And kindly cut the Knot of Life,
And let my Spirit go.
7. If thy Decree, which rules our Mind,
Be by Human Prayer inclin'd,
O let me deprecate
The Thing, which more than Death I fear,
And send the Fatal Messenger
To snatch me from my Fate.
8. Ah! Lord, I know not what to say!
Help my Feebleness to pray
According to thy Will;
Chuse Thou, for O! thy Choice is best,
But let me gain that Final Rest,
And meet Thee on the Hill.
9. Whate'er my Lot or State below,
Give me, Lord, Thyself to know,
Unite my Soul to Thee,
Dispose of All I have or am
As most may glorify thy Name
Thro' all Eternity.

VII.¹³

To the Tune of — Come to Judgment, come away.

- [1.] GOD of All-inviting Grace,
Father of our Fallen Race,
Touch'd with Love thy Creatures see,
Griev'd at Human Misery.
2. See us to the Future blind,
Seeking what we cannot find,
Walking in a Shadow vain,
Joy we want,¹⁴ but Sorrow gain.
3. Still deceiv'd with eager Strife
Still we grasp the Present Life,
Restless or'e the Maze to rove
All the Maze of Creature-Love.
4. Ignorant of what is best,
Opening our unguarded Breast,
Hurried on by Passion's Rage,
Rashly we our Hearts engage;
5. Glide into the Pleasing Snare,
Plunge into a Gulph of Care,
Sink in golden Slumbers down,
Wake, and find ourselves undone.
6. Such the Folly of Mankind,
Such alas! my own I find,
If the Loving GOD depart,
Leave me to my wretched Heart.
7. But, my GOD, Thou wilt not leave
One who would thy Will receive,
Would Himself mistrust, deny,
Would be guided by thine Eye.

¹³Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:249–51.

¹⁴Ori., “seek.”

8. Look me then into thy Peace,
Thy High Way of Holiness,
Into all the Works prepar'd
Me to fit for my Reward.
9. Thou my sole Disposer be,
Chuse my every State for me,
Mould this Passive Clay of mine,
Stamp it with the Stamp Divine.
10. Far from Passion, and from Pride
Into thy whole Counsel guide,
Let me perfectly fulfil
All thy Acceptable Will.
11. While I sojourn in the Vale
Keep me pois'd in even Scale,
Shew me, every Moment shew
What to shun, and what pursue.
12. Canst Thou suffer me to stray,
Lead the Blind out of the Way,
Me, who all my Weakness own,
Me, who trust on Christ alone!
13. [unfinished]

VIII.
To the Tune of — [].¹⁵

- [1.] Light of Dreary Souls appear,
 Shew Thyself the Prince of Peace,
 Friend of Supplicants sincere,
 Help of Sinners in Distress:
 Still, as on the Rack, I languish,
 Tortur'd with Distracting Woe:
 Who shall end the Doubtful Anguish?
 Who thy secret Will shall shew?
2. Trembling on the Brink of Ruin
 Plunging in the Dark Abyss,
 Author of my own Undoing,
 If I judge or chuse amiss,
 Still I stand, perplex'd, confounded,
 Vainly for Direction cry,
 Groan, with thickest Clouds surrounded,
 Save, or I forever die!
3. Keep not silence at my Tears,
 Tears that ever flow in vain:
 Answer, Lord, my clam'rous¹⁶ Fears,
 Make thy hidden Counsel plain:
 End this Horrible Distraction,
 Pure unerring Light impart,
 Shine upon the *Destin'd* Action —
 O inform — or break — my Heart!
4. Break my Heart in kind Compassion,
 Then from Thee I cannot stray,
 Cannot forfeit my Salvation
 Cannot miss the Narrow¹⁷ Way:
 Safe beyond the Dread of Stranding
 Guide by¹⁸ Death this Vessel right,
 Waft me to the Place of Landing,
 Bring me to the World of Light.

¹⁵Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:251–52.

¹⁶Ori., “loudest.”

¹⁷Ori., “Darkned.”

¹⁸Ori., “in.”

5. Crown my Infinite Desire
Of a sudden safe Remove,
Join me to that happy Quire,
Those who rest secure above,
Ended all their Days of Mourning —
Or if still for Man they care,
There they wait for *my* Returning,
Long to see me landed there!

6. Who can speak the Mutual Greeting
Of thy Saints in Light array'd!
Who conceive our Joyful Meeting,
While I grasp a Parent's Shade,
While the listning Sons of Glory
Wonder at my Perils past,
While I fall O GOD¹⁹ before Thee,
Sav'd by Fire — but sav'd at last!

¹⁹Ori., “orewhelmed.”

IX.²⁰

To [the Tune of] — And is the Lovely Shadow fled?

- [1.] Guide of my Early thoughtless Days,
 When young in Nature's Paths I ran,
Whose Hand unseen, and secret Grace
 Has gently led me up to Man,
Attentive to my Father's Fears,
Observant of my Mother's Tears;
2. Pierc'd with the Sense of Mercies past,
 Incourag'd thus to hope for more,
On Thee, O GOD, my Soul I cast,
 Thy kind continued Grace implore
My few remaining Days t' attend,
And bless me with a peaceful End.
3. Ah! Lord, depart not far from me,
 When Trouble is so near at hand,
Thy Will my sure Direction be,
 My Shield the Shadow of thy Hand,
And still my helpless Spirit hide,
And into thy whole Counsel guide.
4. Thou knowst my neverceasing Care
 To walk becoming thy great Name,
Thou seest the Load of Fear I bear,
 Of Fear least I thy People shame,
Out of the Way the Weak ones turn,
Or make them for my Folly mourn.
5. Mine inmost Soul to Thee is known,
 Mine anxious Heart's extreme Desire,
Rather at once to fall alone,
 Rather this Instant Now expire
Than live to taint them by my Breath,
Or drag down One with me to Death.

²⁰Appears also in MS Courtship, 9–11. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:223–24.

6. But wilt Thou, O my Trust, my Fear,
Thine Help to the Distrest deny?
Or hearst Thou, Lord, the Silent Tear,
And *now* observ'st th' imperfect Sigh
That struggles in my Aching Breast,
And pines, and pants for Endless Rest!
7. Not all Thou canst in Life bestow
Is half so dear as Death to me.
O woudst Thou let my Spirit go,
From every Dangerous Blessing free!
Now, Father, now thy Child remove
From All I fear and All I love.
8. In that oblivious Land of Rest
Where all my Hopes and Joys are fled,
Nor Grief shall vex, nor Pain molest,
Nor Shame orewhelm my sinking Head,
Nor Sense of Evil's Growing Load,
Nor Horror of Suspected Good.
9. Peace, lasting Peace, inhabits there,
And pure Eternal Righteousness;
No Fiend to tempt, or Sin t' insnare,²¹
Or pining Want, or fond Excess,
But Heavenly LOVE its sway maintains,
And GOD before his Antients reigns.
10. O could I that Asylum find,
Shake off th' Impediment of Clay,
Leave all my Ills and Goods behind,
Break loose, ascend, and soar away,
Now, now regain my Native Place,
And stand before His Glorious Face!

²¹Originally read: "No Sin to tempt, no Fiend t' insnare."

[blank]

[blank]

X.²²

To [the Tune of] — Jesus, let thy Pitying Eye.

1. Jesus hear, my GOD, my All,
An helpless Sinner's Cry,
Sore perplex'd to Thee I call,
To Thee for Succour fly:
O resolve the Painful Doubt,
And lead me by a Way unknown,
Cut the Knot of Life, and cut
Ten thousand Knots in One.
2. Dark alas! and doubly blind
My Path I cannot see,
Lab'ring all in vain to find
Thy Will concerning me:
End this Agony of Thought,
And let thy secret Will be shewn;
Cut the Knot &c.
3. Sore-distracted I inquire
The Pleasure of the Lord,
Uninform'd by Light, or Fire,
Or Vision or the Word:
Still, O Lord, Thou answerest not,
As deaf to my continued Groan,
Cut the Knot &c.
4. Loath I seem to take the Field,
Like sad devoted Saul,
Grasp, to cast away my Shield,
And only stand to fall;
To the Fatal Mountain brought
As leaning on my Spear I groan
Cut the Knot &c.

²²Appears also in MS Occasional Hymns, 50–52. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:252–54. The last two lines of verse 1 are abbreviated when repeated in verses 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6: “Cut the Knot &c.”

5. Wherefore should I stay to shame
 The Souls in Jesus join'd,
 Stay to leave on Them my Name,
 To leave a Curse behind?
 Rather let me die forgot,
Unmark'd, unpitied, and alone,
 Cut the Knot &c.

6. GOD, the GOD that heareth Prayer,
 Thou hast rejected mine,
 Left as in extream Despair
 I feel the Frown Divine,
 See the Door of Mercy shut,
And faint, and sink despairing down
 Cut the Knot &c.

7. O for Mercy sake restore
 The Comfort of thy Grace,
 Saviour, let me die once more
 To see thy Smiling Face,
 Purge away my Sinful Blot,
And then take home thy Banish'd One
 Cut the Knot of Life, and cut
 Ten thousand Knots in One.

8. Horror of Offending Thee
 Extorts the sad Request,
 End the Fearful Misery,
 And take me into Rest,
 Now bind up whom Thou hast smote,
Revive and raise me to thy Throne,
 Cut the Knot of Life, and cut
 Ten thousand Knots in One.

XI.²³

To [the Tune of] — Sinners, obey the Gospel-Word.

1. Thou righteous GOD, whose Plague I bear,
Whose Plague I from my Youth have borne,
Shut up in Temporal Despair,
Ordain'd to suffer, and to mourn;
2. If now I had forgot to grieve,
As every Penal Storm were or'e,
Forgive, the Senseless Wretch forgive,
And all my Chastisement restore.
3. Asham'd of having hop'd for Rest,
Or ask'd for Comfort here below,
Lo! I revoke the rash Request,
And sink again in desp'rate Woe.
4. Submissive to the Stroke again
I bow my faint devoted Head,
Till Thou discharge the latest Pain,
And write me free among the Dead.
5. Ah! what have I to do with Peace,
Or Converse sweet, or Social Love?
From Man, and all his Help, I cease,
From Earth, and all her Goods remove:
6. Waking out of my Dream of Hope
I see the fond Delusion end,
And give the whole Creation up,
And live, and die—without a Friend.

²³Appears also in MS Occasional Hymns, 19. Published posthumously in *Representative Verse*, 265–66; and *Unpublished Poetry*, 3:145.

[blank]

XII.²⁴

To the Tune of — With pity, Lord, a Sinner see!

- [1.] Merciful GOD, with pitying Eye
See, as at the Point to die,
A Tempted Sinner see,
An helpless gasping, soul befriend,
And shew If Hope is in my End,
If Mercy is for me.
2. Long have I forfeited my Peace,
In this howling Wilderness
My Sin I long have borne,
Stript of my Power to weep and pray
I cannot find the Living Way,
Or to thy Arms return.
3. Still farther have I rov'd from Thee,
Deep in Sin and Misery
Immers'd, and deeper still,
With not One Ray of Heavenly Hope
To bear my sinking Spirit up,
And stop my headlong Will.
4. Forgive me, O Thou injur'd GOD,
If with Waves of Woe or'erflow'd,
In my extream Distress
Support from Man I hop'd to draw,
And eager caught at every Straw
Of Earthly Happiness.
5. With Shame my Wishes I recant;
Thou alone art All I want,
But Thee I cannot find:

²⁴Appears also in MS Occasional Hymns, 16–18; and MS Richmond, 86–87. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:263–64.

I strive alas! yet still in vain,
Thy blisful Favour to regain,
And cast the World behind.

6. O woudst Thou try me, Lord, once more,
Only once my Peace restore,
My Curse of Sin remove;
Then would I All with Joy forego,
And Nothing seek, and Nothing know
But thy Extatic Love.
7. By Thine from Earthly Love set free,
Lo! I plight my Faith to Thee,
My little All I give:
I *will*, if Thou my Heart release,
My Comfort, Joy, and Total Bliss
From Thee *alone* receive.
8. Eternal GOD, be Present Now,
Witness to my Solemn Vow
With all thy Hosts above!
Accept, and answer me by Fire,
And now my parting Heart inspire,
With pure Seraphic Love.
9. This only Happiness be mine,
Every other I resign
Of thy pure Love possest,
Possest of all those heavenly Charms,
I find within thy Mercy's Arms
My Everlasting Rest.

10. To Thee espous'd, and Thee alone,
Thee my One Desire I own,
Thine wholly Thine I am:
And call'd thy Heavenly Feast to share,
I hasten to the Marriage there,
The Marriage of the Lamb.

[blank]

XIII.²⁵

- [1.] Great Author of my Being
 Who seest mine inward Care,
The Ills of thy Decreeing
 Enable me to bear,
The Justice of thy Sentence
 With meekest Awe to own,
And spend in deep Repentance
 My last expiring Groan.

2. The Grief beyond expressing
 To me, to me impart,
I ask this Only Blessing
 An humble broken Heart:
The Spirit of Contrition
 O might I now receive!
For all my Soul's Ambition
 Is worthily to grieve.

3. In sacred Melancholy
 I would thro' Life abide,
And wail my Days of Folly,
 My years of Sin and Pride,
Far from the Paths of Pleasure,
 Disdaining all Relief,
Would count my mournful Treasure,
 And hug my Hoard of Grief.

4. Be this my constant Care
 From all Delight to flee,

²⁵Appears also in MS Occasional Hymns, 20–22. Published in *HSP* (1749), 2:62–64.

And suffer None to share
My sacred Misery:
No Succour, or Compassion
Of feeble Man I crave,
No Earthly Consolation,
Or Refuge—but the Grave.

5. The Friend, whom once I wanted
To mitigate my Woe,
Revok'd as soon as granted,
I calmly now forego:
My latest Strife is over
The fleeting Good to stay,
Nor would I, Lord, recover
Whom Thou hast snatch'd away.

6. Thou knowst, my Heart's Desire
Is only to be gone,
And silently retire,
And live, and die alone:
No sweet Companion near
To catch my latest Sighs,
My dying Words to hear,
Or close my weary Eyes.

7. Only Thou GOD of Power,
Thou GOD of Love attend
In that Decisive Hour
When Pain with Life shall end:
Thou only bear my Burthen,
And help my last Distress,

And give me back my Pardon,
And bid me die in Peace.

8. O for thy Jesus' merit
The Forfeiture restore,
And land my weary Spirit
On yonder happy Shore,
In Safety waft me over,
And harbour in thy Breast,
And let me there recover
Mine everlasting Rest.

XIV.²⁶

To [the Tune of] — And shall we now turn back?

- [1.] O the Tormenting Doubt
I every Moment feel!
How shall I find His Counsel out
By Proofs Infallible?
Who shall discover?²⁷ who
Declare my Lord's Design?
What must an anxious Sinner do
To know the Will Divine?
2. Long have I wept, and pray'd,
And earnestly implor'd
In sore Perplexity the Aid
And Guidance of my Lord:
To all my Prayers and Tears
I find no Answer given,
And not one Ray of Light appears
From any Point of Heaven.
3. Is there in my Distress
No Guardian Angel nigh
On this Distracted Heart t' impress
The Counsel of the Sky?
Will no Departed Saint
That Sovereign Mind reveal,
Or now, to banish my Complaint,
The Heavenly Secret tell?
4. My Earthly Father's Shade,
If sent from Paradise,
Would He deny his needful Aid,
Refuse his Child Advice?

²⁶Appears also in MS Courtship, 11–13. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:225–26.

²⁷Ori., “deliver.”

And shall I dare suspect
My Heavenly Father's Care,
As GOD would finally reject
A weeping Sinner's Prayer?

5. No, my most Gracious GOD,
For whom I ever grieve,
Thou wilt not leave, beneath his Load
Thy Son Thou wilt not leave:
Thy Providence Divine
Its own Intent shall shew:
I know not Now the Will Divine,
But shall hereafter know.

6. If still my Faith to prove
Thou hid'st thy radiant Face,
Thou wilt at last the Clouds remove,
And shine on all my Ways;
The Clouds of Grief and Fear
Before thy Face shall fly,
And not one gloomy Doubt appear
Throughout the joyous Sky.

7. The Sun of Righteousness
Shall quickly rise on me,
And I in Thee shall then have Peace,
Light in thy Light shall see:
Gracious, and wise, and just
Thee I shall then declare,
And never never more mistrust
My Heavenly Father's Care.

8. For this in quiet Hope
Still at thy Feet I lie,
Till Thou in faithful Love lift up,
And guide me by thine Eye:
And I the Truth shall feel,
And I shall taste the Love,
And do on Earth thy perfect Will,
As Angels do above.

XV.²⁸

To the Same [Tune].

- [1.] Thou GOD, whose Will to know
Is Comfort, Life, and Peace,
Who didst with Abraham's Servant go,
And crown him with Success;
Me, O my Father, me
In this my Deed attend,
My Shield, and sure Director be,
And everlasting Friend.
2. Thine Overruling Hand
In all my Ways I own,
And to thy wise Decision stand,
And say, Thy Will be done:
But make thy Counsel plain,
That I may run and read,
And cry, whate'er thy Love ordain,
It is my Father's Deed.
3. Forth in thy Name I go,
With calm Submission wait,

²⁸Appears also in MS Courtship, 13–15. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:227–28.

Thine acceptable Will to know
Determining my Fate:
On Thee I still rely,
With thy Commission sent,
Sedate to mark the Guiding Eye,
And watching each Event.

4. If first thy Wisdom prove
My Faith and patient Hope,
Thou wilt at last the Cloud remove,
And clear thy Counsel up:
Thy Light, for which I look,
On all my Ways shall shine,
And point me to the Open Book
Of Providence Divine.
5. To check my forward Will,
To mortify my Sense,
If still Thou dost thy Face conceal,
And hold me in Suspense,
The Silence speaks to me,
And bids my Soul attend
Thy Purpose manifest to see,
And calmly wait the End.
6. Wherefore on Thee alone
I cast my solemn Care,
Till Thou thy full Design make known,
And seal my faithful Prayer;
Assur'd I cannot stray,
Or cross my Lord's Design,
For never Soul mistook his Way
Who would be led in Thine.

XVI.²⁹
To the Same [Tune].

- [1.] O Thou, whose Pointing Hand
I ever wait to see,
In this Tremendous Crisis stand
Betwixt Myself, and me:
I cannot shun the Ill,
Or chuse the Nobler Part,
If biass'd by a Selfish Will,
And a deceitful Heart.
2. O for a Steady Mind,
(Till Thou remove the Veil)
To this or that alike inclin'd,
And pois'd in even Scale:
Into my Soul infuse
The Sacred Unconcern,
Or let me rather die than Chuse,
Till I thy Pleasure learn.
3. My Duty, Wisdom, Gain
Is simply to depend
On Thee, the Friend of helpless Man,
The neverfailing Friend,
Who carest for Thy own
With wise paternal Zeal,³⁰
And sittest on thy Gracious Throne,
And rulest all things well.
4. What then have I to fear
Of Trouble, Grief, or Loss?
No Room for Disappointment here
When GOD maintains my Cause:
He knows the Things I need
His Supplicating Son,

²⁹Appears also in MS Courtship, 15–16. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:228–29.

³⁰Charles originally wrote “Care,” but there are faint vertical lines through this word and Zeal is placed in the margin as an alternative (that rhymes with “well”).

But will not hear me cry for Bread,
And mock me with a Stone.

5. If Good for me He knows
What I, as Good, require,
The Creatures all in vain oppose
My warranted Desire,
My Strength I well may spare,
My idly-active Skill,
And leave it to my Father's Care,
And let Him work his Will.
6. His greatest Power is shew'd
Where Human Help is none,
Impossibilities subdued
Shall speak the Work His own;
Mountains on Mountains rise,
To bar my Way in vain,
They all, when Jesus bows the Skies,
Shall sink into a Plain.
7. But if what I think best
My Future Bane He sees,
He will not suffer me to rest
In Fancied Happiness,
He will not give me up
To what I always fear,
But tear away my desperate Hope
Of Rest or Comfort here.
8. O tear it now away
The Possible Offence,

'Spite of Myself, I beg, I pray
Thy Zeal to tear it hence,
Defeat my fond Desire,
My surest Counsels blast,
But snatch the Brand from out the Fire,
And save me, Lord, at last!

XVII.³¹

To [the Tune of] — And is the lovely Shadow fled!

1. Thou Awful GOD, whose Smile or Frown
Is Man's Irrevocable Fate,
On Us with pitying Love look down,
Who humbled at thy Footstool wait,
Till Thou declare thy welcom Will,
And bid our trembling Hearts be still!
2. The Hearts of All are in thy Hand,
Obsequious to thy wise Decree,
They rise, or sink at thy Command,
Turn'd as the Rivers of the Sea,
Where'er thy Will appoints to go,
The Heaven-directed Waters flow.
3. All Power in Heaven and Earth is Thine,
Omnipotent Eternal³² Lord,
Nature observes the Nod Divine,
And conscious of thy Powerful Word
The Rock dissolves into a Rill,
The Mountain flies, the Sun stands still.

³¹Appears also in MS Courtship, 17–18. Published posthumously in *Unpublished Poetry*, 1:230–31.

³²Ori., “~~Almig~~” [i.e., Almighty].

4. Thy Love is equal to thy Power,
Thy Love on every Soul descends,
A Gracious neverfailing Shower
Pour'd out on Enemies and Friends,
But most on Those, who watch thine Eye,
And gasp in Thee to live and die.
5. Such Strength of Sanctified Desire
Thou hast, O Lord, on Us bestow'd,
Who Thee beyond thy Gifts require,
Our chief Delight, our Sovereign Good,
Our Fear, and Trust, our Joy and Love,
Our Heaven on Earth, our Heaven above.
6. And wilt Thou leave us in Distress,
Who seek for Help to Thee alone,
Our all-sufficient Happiness!
Can the Good GOD forsake His own?
Himself deny, his Grace forget,
Or spurn us weeping at his Feet?
7. No, Lord, thy Bowels answer No!
Thy Love forbids our needless Fear,
Thy Love the Hidden Path shall shew,
In calm Convincing Light appear,
And lead into thy whole Design,
And mould us to the Will Divine:
8. For this with meekest Awe we wait,
Till Thou display thine utmost Will,
Restore us to our First Estate,
And then thy Heavenly Light reveal,

Shine forth in thy full Round of Rays,
And shew us all thy Glorious Face.