

Thanks Be Unto God

O LORD God, help us now really to worship Thee. We would thank Thee for this occasion. We bless Thy name for setting apart this hallowed season. Lord, wilt Thou shut the door upon the world for us? Help us to forget our cares. Enable us to rise clean out of this world. May we get rid of all its down-dragging tendencies. May the attractions of these grossest things be gone and do Thou catch us away to Thyself.

We do not ask to be entranced nor to see an angel in shining apparel, but we do ask that by faith we may see Jesus and may His presence be so evidently realized among us that we may rejoice as well as if our eyes beheld Him, and love Him and trust Him and worship Him as earnestly as we should do if we could now put our fingers into the print of the nails.

O, Thou precious Lord Jesus Christ, we do adore Thee with all our hearts. Thou art Lord of all. We bless Thee for becoming man that Thou mightest be our next of kin, and being next of kin, we bless Thee for taking us into marriage union with Thyself and for redeeming us and our inheritance from the captivity into which we were sold. Thou hast paid Thy life for Thy people. Thou hast ransomed Thy folk with Thy heart's blood. Be Thou, therefore, forever beloved and adored.

And now Thou art not here for Thou art risen. Our souls would track the shining way by which Thou hast ascended through the gate of pearl up to Thy Father's throne. We seem to see Thee sitting there, man, yet God, reigning

over all things for Thy people and our ears almost catch the accents of the everlasting song which rolls up at Thy feet, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor, and power, and glory, and dominion, and might forever and ever." Lord, we say, "Amen." From the outskirts of the crowd that surround Thy throne, we lift up our feeble voices in earnest "Amens," for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood and hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign with Thee, for though far off by space, we know that we are very near to Thy heart.

Thou lookest over the heads of the angelic squadrons to behold us and Thou dost hear the praises—aye, and the groans of Thy well-beloved, for are not we most near Thee, Thy flesh and Thy bones? We know we are. We feel the ties of kinship within us. We our best Beloved's are, and He is ours, and we are longing to get through the crowd that surround Him, and to get to the forefront, and there to bow prostrate at the dear feet that were nailed to the tree for us, and worship the Lamb who liveth forever and ever, who has prevailed to take the book and loose the seven seals thereof, to Whom be glory, world without end. Hallelujah!

O, Savior, accept these our poor praises. They come from those Thou lovest, and as we prize any little things that come from those we love, so do we feel that Thou wilt accept the thanksgiving, the reverential homage of Thy people, redeemed ones who are a people near unto Thee, whose names are graven on the palms of Thy hands, of whom Thou art the active head and for whom Thy heart beats true and full of love even now.

Oh, we can say we love Thee. We wish we loved Thee more, but Thou art very dear to us. There is nought on earth like Thee. For the love of Thy name we would live and die. If we think we love Thee more than we do, we pray that we may yet love Thee more than we think. Oh, take these hearts right away and unite them with Thine own, and be Thou heart and soul and life and everything to us, for whom have we in heaven but Thee and there is none upon earth we desire beside Thee.

We worship the Father, we worship the Son, we worship the Holy Ghost with all the powers of our being. We fall prostrate before the awful yet glorious throne of the Infinite Majesty of heaven. The Lord accept us since we offer these praises in the name of Jesus.

And now most blessed Lord, look down upon those who do not love Thee. O Redeemer, look upon them with those eyes of Thine which are as flames of fire. Let them see how ill they treat Thee. May they consider within themselves how dire is the ingratitude which can be negligent of a Savior's blood, indifferent from a Savior's heart. Oh, bring the careless and the godless to seek for mercy. Let those that are postponing serious things begin to see that the very thought of postponement of the claims of Christ is treason against His Majesty. O Savior, dart Thine arrows abroad and let them wound many that they may fall down before thee and cry out for mercy.

But there are some who are wounded, broken hearts that seek peace—men and women, like Cornelius, that want to hear the words which God commands.

Oh, come divine Physician and bind up every broken bone. Come with Thy sacred nard which Thou hast compounded of Thine own heart's blood, and lay it home to the wounded conscience, and let it feel its power. Oh! give peace to those whose conscience is like the troubled sea which cannot rest.

O God, our God, let not the teaching of the Sunday school, the preaching of the evangelists, the personal visitations of individual minds, let not any of these efforts be in vain. Do give conversions. We groan out this prayer from our very heart, yet can we also sing it, for Thou hast heard us plenteously already, and our heart doth rejoice in God the Savior who worketh so graciously among the children of men.

We have been astonished as the Holy Ghost has fallen even upon the chief of sinners, and men afar off from God have been brought in. But, Lord, do more of this among us. Let us see greater things than these. Where we have had one saved, let us have a hundred to the praise of the glorious name and the Well-beloved.

Lord, keep us all from sin. Teach us how to walk circumspectly. Enable us to guard our minds against error of doctrine, our hearts against wrong feelings, and our lives against evil actions. Oh, may we never speak unadvisedly with our lips, nor give way to anger. Above all, keep us from covetousness which is idolatry and from malice which is of the devil. Grant unto us to be full of sweetness and light. May love dwell in us and reign in us. May we look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others. Give us to live for Jesus.

There is no life like it. Help us to be Christly men, Christ's men, and may we in all things reflect the light which we receive from Him.

Bless our beloved Church and all its organizations. O God, take care of it. Oh! do thou make every member of the Church a pastor over others. Let all strive together for the good of all and so may Thy kingdom come among us.

And do Thou prosper all the churches of Jesus Christ. What we ask for ourselves we seek for them. Let missionaries especially be helped by Thy Spirit and may there come a day in which the minds of men may be better prepared to receive the Gospel, and may Messiah's kingdom come to the overthrow of her that sitteth on the Seven Hills, and to the eternal waning of Mohammed's moon, to the overthrow of every idol, that Christ alone may reign. Our whole heart comes out in this. Reign, Immanuel, reign. Sit on the high throne. Ride on Thy white horse and let the armies of heaven follow thee, conquering and to conquer. Come, Lord Jesus, even so, come quickly. Amen and amen.