

Select Parts of Herbert (1773)¹

[Baker List, #349]

Editorial Introduction:

George Herbert (1593–1633) was ordained a priest in the Church of England and devoted the last three years of his short life to pastoral ministry. During this time he also wrote a series of religious poems that were collected and published after his death as *The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations* (Cambridge, 1633). This work became a favorite of the Caroline Divines and later Anglicans.

The fans of Herbert included John Wesley. As a student at Oxford Wesley transcribed five poems from *The Temple* into his MS Poetry Miscellany. He then included six entirely different poems in his first published *Collection of Hymns and Poems* (1737), and added five more to the *Collection of Hymns and Poems* (1738). Wesley's deep appreciation came through particularly in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739), which contains 42 items for Herbert. A few others instances occur in later works (see the combined list in the Appendix at the end of this file). In these published settings Wesley frequently updated Herbert's spelling and adapted in other ways.

In 1773 Wesley returned to Herbert once again, preparing a new selection for his people to read devotionally. It included many that he had used in other settings and ten new selections. But Wesley takes them all directly from Herbert's original, not reproducing his earlier adaptations. This collection testifies to Wesley's life-long appreciation of Herbert's religious poetry.

Editions:

John Wesley. *Select Parts of Mr. Herbert's Sacred Poems*. London: Hawes, 1773.

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**THE
CHURCH PORCH.**

Perir[r]hanterium.

Thou, whose sweet youth and early hopes inhance
Thy rate and price, and mark thee for a treasure;
Hearken unto a verser, who may chance
Rhyme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure.
A verse may find him, who a sermon flies,
And turn delight into a sacrifice.

Beware of lust, it doth pollute and foul
Whom God in baptism wash'd with his own blood.
It blots the lesson written in thy soul;
The holy lines cannot be understood.
How dare those eyes upon a Bible look,
Much less towards God, whose lust is all their book?

Wholly abstain, or wed. Thy bounteous Lord
Allows thee choice of paths: take no by-ways;
But gladly welcome what he doth afford;
Not grudging that thy lust hath bounds and stays.
Continnence hath its joy: weigh both, and so
If rottenness have more, let heaven go.

Drink not the third glass, which thou can'st not tame,
When once it is within thee; but before,
May'st rule it, as thou list; and pour the shame,
Which it would pour on thee, upon the floor.
It is most just to throw that on the ground,
Which would throw me there, if I keep the round.

He that is drunken, may his mother kill,
Big with his sister: he hath lost the reins,
Is out-law'd by himself: all kind of ill
Did with his liquor slide into his veins.
The drunkard forfeits man, and doth divest
All worldly right, save what he hath by beast.

Yet, if thou sin in wine or wantonness,
Boast not thereof, nor make thy shame thy glory,
Frailty gets pardon by submissiveness,
But he that boasts, shuts that out of his story:
He makes flat war with God, and doth defy.
With his poor clod of earth and spacious sky.

Take not his name, who made thy mouth, in vain;
It gets thee nothing, and hath no excuse.
Lust and wine plead pleasure, avarice gain:
But the cheap swearer through his open sluice
Lets his soul run for nought, as little fearing:
Were I an epicure, I could bate² swearing.

When thou dost tell another's jest, therein
Omit the oaths, which true wit cannot need:
Pick out of tales the mirth, but not the sin.
He pares his apple that will cleanly feed.
Play not away the virtue of that name,
Which is thy best stake, when griefs make thee tame.

²Ori., "hate"; an error.

The cheapest sins most dearly punish'd are;
Because to shun them also is so cheap:
For we have wit to mark them, and to spare,
O crumble not away thy soul's fair heap!
If thou wilt die, the gates of hell are broad:
Pride and full sins have made the way a road.

Lie not; but let thy heart be true to God,
Thy mouth to it, thy actions to them both:
Cowards tell lies, and those that fear the rod;
The stormy, working soul spits lies and froth.
Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lye:
A fault which needs it most, grows two thereby.

Fly idleness, which yet thou canst not fly
By dressing, mistressing, and compliment.
If those take up thy day, the sun will cry
Against thee: for his light was only lent.
God gave thy soul brave wings; put not those feathers
Into a bed to sleep out all ill weathers.

Art thou a magistrate? Then be severe:
If studious, copy fair what time hath blurr'd;
Redeem truth from his jaws: if soldier,
Chase brave employments with a naked sword
Throughout the world. Fool not, for all may have,
If they dare try, a glorious life or grave.

O England, full of sin, but most of sloth!
Spit out thy phlegm, and fill thy breast with glory:
Thy gentry bleats, as if thy native cloth
Transfus'd a sheepishness into thy story:
Not that they all are so; but that the most
Are gone to grass, and in the pasture lost.

When thou dost purpose ought (within thy power)
Be sure to do it, though it be but small:
Constancy knits the bones, and makes us tower,
When wanton pleasures beckon us to thrall.
 Who breaks his own bond, forfeiteth himself:
 What nature made a ship, he makes a shelf.

Do all things like a man, not sneakingly:
Think the king sees thee still; for his king does.
Simp'ring is but a lay-hypocrisy:
Give it a corner, and the clue undoes.
 Who fears to do ill, sets himself to task:
 Who fears to do well, sure should wear to mask.

Slight those who say amidst their sickly healths,
Thou liv'st by rule. What doth not so but men?
Houses are built by rule, and common-wealths.
Entice the trusty sun, if that you can,
 From his ecliptic line; beckon the sky.
 Who lives by rule, then keeps good company.

Who keeps no guard upon himself, is slack,
And rots to nothing at the next great thaw.
Man is a shop of rules, a well truss'd pack.
Whose every parcel under-writes a law.
 Loose not thyself, nor give thy humours way:
 God gave them to thee under lock and key.

By all means use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thy self: see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest: for 'tis thy own:
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
 Who cannot rest till he good fellows find,
 He breaks up house, turns out of doors his mind.

Be thrifty, but not covetous: therefore give
Thy need, thine honour, and thy friend his due.
Never was scraper brave man. Get to live:
Then live and use it: else it is not true
 That thou hast gotten. Surely use alone
 Makes money a contemptible stone.

Spend not on hopes. They that by pleading clothes
Do fortunes seek, when worth and service fail,
Would have their tale believed for their oaths,
And are like empty vessels under sail.
 Old courtiers know this: therefore set out so,
 As all the day thou may'st hold out to go.

In clothes cheap handsomeness doth bear the bell.
Wisdom's a trimmer thing than shop e're gave.
Say not then, this with that lace will do well;
But this with my discretion will be brave.
 Much curiousness is a perpetual wooing,
 Nothing with labour, folly long a doing.

In conversation boldness now bears sway.
But know that nothing can so foolish be,
As empty boldness: therefore first assay
To stuff thy mind with solid bravery;
 Then march on gallant: get substantial worth,
 Boldness gilds finely, and will set it forth.

Laugh not too much: the witty man laughs least:
For wit is news only to ignorance.
Less at thy own things laugh; lest in the jest
Thy person share, and the conceit advance,
 Make not thy sport abuses: for the fly,
 That feeds on dung, is coloured thereby.

Pick out of mirth, like stones out of thy ground,
Profaneness, filthiness, abusiveness.
These are the scum, with which course wits abound:
The fine may spare these well, yet not go less.
 All things are big with jest: nothing that's plain
 But may be witty, if thou hast the vein.

Wit's an unruly engine, wildly striking
Sometimes a friend, sometimes the engineer;
Hast thou the knack? Pamper it not with liking:
And if thou want it, buy it not too dear.
 Many affecting wit beyond their power,
 Have got to be a dear fool for an hour.

When baseness is exalted, do not bate
The place its honour for the person's sake.
The shrine is that, which thou dost venerate;
And not the beast, that bears it on his back.
 I care not though the cloth of state should be
 Not of rich arras, but mean tapestry.

Thy friend put in thy bosom: wear his eyes
Still in thy heart, that he may see what's there.
If cause require, thou art his sacrifice;
Thy drops of blood must pay down all his fear;
 But love is lost, the way of friendship's gone,
 Though David had his Jonathan, Christ his John.

In thy discourse, if thou desire to please,
All such is courteous, useful, new, or witty,
Usefulness comes by labour, wit by ease;
Courtesy grows in court, news in the city.
 Get a good stock of these, then draw the card
 That suits him best, of whom thy speech is heard.

Entice all neatly to what they know best;
For so thou dost thyself and him a pleasure:
But a proud ignorance will loose his rest,
Rather than shew his cards: steal from his treasure
 What to ask further. Doubts well rais'd do lock
 The speaker to thee, and preserve thy stock.

If thou be master-gunner, spend not all
That thou canst speak at once; but husband it,
And give men turns of speech: do not forestal
By lavishness thine own and others wit,
 As if thou mad'st thy will. A civil guest
 Will no more talk all, than eat all the feast.

Be calm in arguing: for fierceness makes
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.
Why should I feel another man's mistakes
More than his sicknesses or poverty?
 In love I should; but anger is not love,
 Nor wisdom neither; therefore gently move.

Calmness is great advantage: he that lets
Another chafe, may warm him at his fire:
Mark all his wand'rings, and enjoy his frets;
As cunning fencers suffer heat to tire.
 Truth dwells not in the clouds: the bow that's there
 Doth often aim at, never his the sphere.

Be useful where thou livest, that they may
Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.
Kindness, good parts, great places, are the way
To compass this. Find out mens wants and will,
 And meet them there. All worldly joys go less
 To the one joy of doing kindnesses.

Pitch thy behaviour low, thy project high;
So shalt thou humble and magnanimous be:
Sink not in spirit; who aimeth at the sky,
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree.
 A grain of glory mix'd with humbleness
 Cures both a fever, and lethargickness.

Let thy mind still be bent, still plotting where,
And when, and how the business may be done.
Slackness breeds worms; but the sure traveller,
Though he alights sometimes, still goeth on.
 Active and stirring spirits live alone.
 Write on the others, "Here lies such an one."

Slight not the smallest loss, whether it be
In love or honour; take account of all:
Shine like the sun in every corner: see
Whether thy stock of credit swell or fall.
 Who say, "I care not," those I give for lost;
 And to instruct them, will not quit the cost.

Scorn no man's love, though of a mean degree;
Love is a present for a mighty king;
Much less make any one thine enemy,
As guns destroy, so may a little sling.
 The cunning workman never doth refuse
 The meanest tool, which he may chance to use.

Keep all thy native good, and naturalize
All foreign of that name; but scorn their ill.
Embrace their activeness, not vanities,
Who follows all things, forfeiteth his will.
 If thou observest strangers in each fit,
 In time they'll run thee out of all thy wit.

Affect in things about thee cleanliness,
That all may gladly board thee, as a flower.
Slovens take up their stock of noisomness
Beforehand, and anticipate their last hour.
Let thy minds sweetness have its operation
Upon thy body, clothes and habitation.

In alms regard thy means, and others merit;
Think heav'n a better bargain than to give
Only thy single market-money for it.
Join hands with God to make a man to live.
Give to all something; to a good poor man,
Till thou change names, and be where he began.

Man is God's image; but a poor man is
Christ's stamp to boot; both images regard.
God reckons for him, counts the favour his:
Write, "So much giv'n to God"; thou shalt be heard.
Let thy alms go before, and keep heav'ns gate
Open for thee; or both may come too late.

Restore to God his due in tithe and time;
A tithe purloin'd, cankers the whole estate.
Sundays observe: think when the bells do chime,
'Tis angels musick; therefore come not late.
God then deals blessings; if a king did so,
Who would not haste, nay give, to see the show!

Though private prayer be a brave design,
Yet publick hath more promises, more love;
And love's a weight to hearts, to eyes a sign.
We all are but cold suitors; let us move
Where it is warmest. Leave thy six and seven;
Pray with the most; for where most pray, is heav'n.

When once thy foot enters the church, be bare.
God is more there than thou: for thou art there
Only by his permission. Then beware,
And make thy self all reverence and fear.
 Kneeling ne'r spoil'd silk stockings: quit thy state.
 All equal are within the churches gate.

Judge not the preacher, for he is thy judge:
If thou mislike him, thou conceiv'st him not.
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot:
 The worst speak something good: if all want sense,
 God takes a text, and preacheth patience.

Sum up at night what thou hast done by day;
And in the morning, what thou hast to do.
Dress and undress thy soul: mark the decay
And growth of it: if with thy watch, that too
 Be down, then wind up both: since we shall be
 More surely judg'd, make thy accounts agree.

In brief, acquit thee bravely: play the man.
Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.
Defer not the least virtue. Life's poor span
Make not an ell,³ by trifling in thy wo.
 If thou do ill, the joy fades, not the pains:
 If well, the pain doth fade, the joy remains.

³An old measurement equal to 45 inches.

[THE CHURCH.]

The Agony.

Philosophers have measur'd mountains,
Fathom'd the depths of seas, of states and kings,
Walk'd with a staff to heav'n, and trac'd fountains:
But there are two vast, spacious things,
The which to measure it doth more behove;
Yet few there are that sound them, sin and love.

Who would know sin, let him repair
Unto Mount Olivet; there shall he see
A man so wrung with pains, that all his hair,
His skin, his garments bloody be.
Sin is that press and vice, which forceth pain
To hunt his cruel food through every vein.

Who knows not love, let him assay,
And taste that juice, which on the cross, a pike
Did set abroach; then let him say,
If ever he did taste the like.
Love is that liquor sweet and most divine.
Which my God feels as blood, but I as wine.

Redemption.

Having been tenant long to a right lord,
Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
And make a suit unto him to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel th' old.

In heaven, at his manor I him sought:
They told me there that he was lately gone
About some land, which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.

I strait return'd, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts,
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks and courts:
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of thieves and murderers: there I him espied,
Who strait, "Your suit is granted," said, and died.

Sin.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!
Parents first season us; then school-masters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,

Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow-dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprizes,

Blessings before-hand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within our consciences:
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.

Yet all these fences and their whole array
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

Love.

I.

Immortal love, author of this great frame.
 Sprung from that beauty which can never fade;
 How hath man parcel'd out thy glorious name,
And thrown it on that dust which thou hast made,

While mortal love doth all the title gain!
 Which siding with invention, they together
 Bear all the sway, possessing heart and brain,
(Thy workmanship!) And give thee share in neither.

Wit fancies beauty: beauty raiseth wit.
 The world is theirs; they two play out the game,
 Thou standing by: and tho' thy glorious name
Wrought our deliverance from the infernal pit,

 Who sings thy praise? Only a scarf or glove
 Doth warm our hands, and make them write of love.

[Love.]

II.

Immortal heat, O let thy greater flame
 Attract the lesser to it: let those fires
 Which shall consume the world, first make it tame,
And kindle in our hearts such true desires,

As may consume our lusts, and make thee way.
 Then shall our hearts pant thee, then shall our brain
 All her inventions on thine altar lay,
And there in hymns send back thy fire again.

Our eyes shall see thee which before saw dust:
Dust blown by wit, till that they both were blind:
Thou shalt recover all thy goods in kind,
Who were disseized by usurping lust:

All knees shall bow to thee: all wits shall rise,
And praise him who did make and mend our eyes.

Constancy.

Who is the honest man?
He that doth still and strongly good pursue,
To God, his neighbour and himself most true:
Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin, or wrench from giving all their due.

Whose honesty is not
So loose or easy, that a ruffling wind
Can blow away, or glitt'ring look it blind:
Who rides his sure and even trot,
While the world now rides by, now lags behind.

Who, when great trials come,
Nor seeks nor shuns them; but doth calmly stay,
Till he the thing, and the example weigh:
All being brought into a sum
What place or person calls for, he doth pay.

Whom none can work or woo,
To use in any thing a trick or slight;
For above all things he abhors deceit:
His words, and works, and fashion too,
All of a piece, and all are clear and streight.

Who never melts or thaws
At close temptations: when the day is done,
His goodness sets not, but in dark can run:
The sun to others writeth laws,
And is their vertue; virtue is his sun.

Who, when he is to treat
With sick folks, women, those whom passions sway,
Allows for that, and keeps his constant way:
Whom others faults do not defeat;
But though men fail him, yet his part doth play.

Whom nothing can procure,
When the wide world runs bias, from his will
To writhe his limbs, and share, not mend the ill.
This is the marks-man, safe and sure,
Who still is right and prays to be so still.

Affliction.

My heart did heave, and there came forth, O God!
By that I knew that thou wast in the grief,
To guide and govern it to my relief,
Making a sceptre of the rod:
Hadst thou not had thy part,
Sure the unruly sigh had broke my heart.

Thy life on earth was grief, and thou art still
Constant unto it, making it to be
A point of honour, now to grieve in me,
And in thy members suffer ill.
They who lament one cross,
Thou dying daily, praise thee to thy loss.

Sighs and Groans.

O do not use me
After my sins! Look not on my desert,
But on thy glory! Then thou wilt reform,
And not refuse me: for thou only art
The mighty God, but I a silly worm:
O do not bruise me!

O do not urge me!
For what account can thy ill steward make?
I have abus'd thy stock, destroy'd thy woods,
Suck'd all thy magazines: my head did ake,
Till it found out how to consume thy goods:
O do not scourge me!

O do not blind me!
I have deserv'd that an Egyptian night
Should thicken all my powers; because my lust
Hath still sew'd fig-leaves to exclude thy light;
But I am frailty, and already dust;
O do not grind me!

O do not fill me
With the turn'd vial of thy bitter wrath!
For thou hast other vessels full of blood,
A part whereof my Saviour emptied hath,
Ev'n unto death: since he died for my good:
O do not kill me!

But O reprieve me!
For thou hast *Life* and *Death* at thy command;
Thou art both *Judge* and *Saviour*, *Feast* and *Rod*,
Cordial and *Corrosive*: put not thy hand
Into the bitter box; but O my God,
My God, relieve me!

Virtue.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shews ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to a coal,
Then chiefly lives.

The Pearl. Matt. XIII.

I know the ways of learning: both the head
And pipes that feed the press, and make it run;
What reason hath from nature borrowed,
Or of itself, like a good housewife, spun
In laws and policy; what the stars conspire;
What willing nature speaks, what forc'd by fire:
Both th' old discoveries and the new found seas;
The stock and surplus, cause and history:
All these stand open, or I have the keys:
Yet I love thee.

I know the ways of pleasure, the sweet strains,
The lullings and the relishes of it;
The propositions of hot blood and brains;
What mirth and music mean; what love and wit
Have done these twenty hundred years, and more:
I know the projects of unbridled store:
My stuff is flesh, not brass; my senses live,
And grumble oft that they have more in me
Than he that curbs them, being but one to five:
Yet I love thee.

I know all these and have them in my hand:
Therefore not sealed, but with open eyes
I fly to thee and fully understand
Both the main sale, and the commodities;
And at what rate and price I have thy love;
With all the circumstances that may move:
Yet thro' the labyrinths not my goveling wit,
But thy silk-twist let down from heav'n to me,
Did both conduct and teach me, how by it
To climb to thee.

Life.

I made a posy while the day ran by:
Here will I smell my remnant out and tye
 My life within this band.
But time did beckon to the flowers, and they
By noon most cunningly did steal away,
 And wither'd in my hand.

My hand was next to them, and then my heart;
I took, without more thinking, in good part
 Time's gentle admonition;
Who did so sweetly death's sad taste convey,
Making my mind to smell my fatal day,
 Yet sug'ring the suspicion.

Farewell dear flowers; sweetly your time ye spent,
Fit while ye liv'd, for smell or ornament,
 And after death for cures.
I follow streight without complaints or grief,
Since if my scent be good, I care not if
 It be as short as yours.

Justice.

I cannot skill of these thy ways.
Lord, thou did'st make me, yet thou woundest me;
Lord, thou dost wound me, yet thou dost relieve me:
Lord, thou relievest, yet I die by thee;
Lord, thou dost kill me, yet thou dost reprieve me.

But when I mark my life and praise,
Thy justice me most fitly pays;
For I do praise thee, yet I praise thee not;
My prayers mean thee, yet my prayers stray.
I would do well, yet sin the hand hath got;
My soul doth love thee, yet it loves delay.
I cannot skill of these my ways.

Misery.

Lord, let the angels praise thy name.
Man is a foolish thing, a foolish thing;
Folly and sin play all his game.
His house still burns; and yet he still doth sing,
 “Man is but grass;
 “He knows it:—fill the glass.”

How can'st thou brook his foolishness?
Nay, he'll not lose a cup of drink for thee
 Bid him but temper his excess;
Not he; he knows where he can better be,
 As he will swear,
 Than to serve thee in fear.

What strange pollutions doth he wed,
And make his own, as if none knew but he!
 No man shall beat into his head,
That thou within his curtains drawn can'st see;
 They are of cloth,
 Where never yet came moth.

The best of men, turn but thy hand
For one poor minute, stumble at a pin:
They would not have their actions scan'd,
Nor any sorrow tell them that they sin,
 Though it be small,
 And measure not their fall.

They quarrel thee, and would give over
The bargain made to serve thee: but thy love
Holds them unto it, and doth cover
Their follies with the wing of thy mild dove,
 Not suff'ring those
 Who would, to be thy foes.

My God! Man cannot praise thy name:
Thou art all brightness, perfect purity:
The sun holds down his head for shame,
Dead with eclipses, when we speak of thee.
 How shall infection
 Presume on thy perfection?

Man cannot serve thee; let him go
And serve the swine; there, there is his delight:
He doth not like this virtue, no;
Give him his dirt to wallow in all night:
 These preachers make
 His head to shoot and ach.

Oh foolish man! Where are thine eyes?
How hast thou lost them in a crowd of cares!
Thou pull'st the rug, and wilt not rise,
No, not to purchase the whole pack of stars:
 There let them shine,
 Thou must go sleep, or dine.

The bird that sees a dainty bower
Made in the tree where she was wont to sit,
Wonders and sings, but not his power,
Who made the arbour: this exceeds her wit.
But man doth know
The spring whence all things flow;

And yet, as tho' he knew it not,
His knowledge winks and lets his humours reign:
They make his life a constant blot,
And all the blood of God to run in vain.
Ah wretch! What verse
Can thy strange ways rehearse?

Indeed at first man was a treasure,
A box of jewels, shop of rarities,
A ring, whose posy was "My pleasure!"
He was a garden in a paradise:
Glory and grace
Did crown his heart and face.

But sin hath fool'd him.—Now he is
A lump of flesh, without a foot or wing
To raise him to the glimpse of bliss:
A sick toss'd vessel dashing on each thing:
Nay, his own shelf:
My God, I mean myself.

Prayer.

Of what an easy, quick access,
My blessed Lord, art thou! How suddenly
May our requests thine ear invade!

To shew that state dislikes not easiness.
If I but lift mine eyes, my suit is made:
Thou can'st no more not hear, than thou can'st die.

Of what supreme almighty power
Is thy great arm, which spans the east and west,
And tacks the centre to the sphere!
By it do all things live their measur'd hour:
We cannot ask the thing which is not there,
Blaming the shallowness of⁴ our request.

Of what unmeasurable love
Art thou possest, who when thou couldst not die,
Wert fain to take our flesh and curse,
And for our sakes, in person, sin reprove;
That by destroying that which ty'd thy purse,
Thou might'st make way for liberality!

Since then these three wait on thy throne,
Ease, power and love; I value prayer so,
That were I to leave all but one,
Wealth, fame, endowments, virtues all should go:
I and dear prayer would together dwell,
And quickly gain for each inch lost, an ell.⁵

Business.

Can'st be idle, can'st thou play,
Foolish soul, who sin'd to day?

Rivers run, and springs each one
Know their home and get them gone:
Hast thou tears, or hast thou none?

⁴Ori., "of of."

⁵An old measurement equal to 45 inches.

If poor soul, thou hast no tears,
Would thou had'st no faults or fears!
Who hath these, those ills forbears.

But if yet thou idle be,
Foolish soul, who died for thee?

Who did leave his Father's throne,
To assume thy flesh and bone?
Had he life or had he none?

If he had not liv'd for thee,
Thou hadst dy'd most wretchedly;
And two deaths had been thy fee.

He so far thy good did plot,
That his ownself he forgot.
Did he die, or did he not?

If he had not died for thee,
Thou had'st liv'd in misery,
Two lives, worse than ten deaths be.

And hath any space of breath
'Twixt his sins and Saviour's death?

He that loseth gold, though dross,
Tells to all he meets his cross:
He that sins, hath he no loss?

He that finds a silver vein,
Thinks on it and thinks again:
Brings thy Saviour's death no gain?

Who in heart not ever kneels,
Neither sin nor Saviour feels.

Giddiness.

Oh what a thing is man! How far from power,
From settled peace and rest!
He is some twenty sev'ral men at least,
Each sev'ral hour.

One while he counts of heav'n, as of his treasure:
But then a thought creeps in,
And calls him coward, who for fear of sin,
Will lose a pleasure.

Now he will fight it out, and to the wars;
Now eat his bread in peace,
And snudge in quiet; now he scorns increase;
Now all day spares.

He builds a house, which quickly down must go,
As if a whirlwind blew
And crush'd the building: and it's partly true,
His mind is so.

O what a sight were man, if his attires
Did alter with his mind!
And like a dolphin's skin, his clothes combin'd
With his desires!

Surely if each one saw another's heart,
There would be no commerce,
No sale or bargain pass: all would disperse,
And live apart.

Lord, mend, or rather make us: one creation
Will not suffice our turn:
Except thou make us daily, we shall spurn
Our own salvation.

Love Unknown.

Dear friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad:
And in my faintings I presume your love
Will more comply than help. A Lord I had,
And have, of whom some grounds, which may improve,
I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.
To him I brought a dish of fruit one day,
And in the middle plac'd my heart. But he
(I sigh to say)

Look't on a servant, who did know his eye
Better than you knew me, or (which is one)
Than I myself. The servant instantly
Quitting the fruit, seiz'd on my heart alone,
And threw it in a font, wherein did fall
A stream of blood, which issued from the side
Of a great rock: I well remember all,
And have good cause: there it was dipt and dy'd,
And wash'd and wrung: the very wringing yet
Enforceth tears. "Your heart was foul, I fear."
Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit
Many a fault more than my lease will bear;
Yet still ask'd pardon, and was not denied.

But you shall hear. After my heart was well,
And clean and fair, as I one even-tide
(I sigh to tell)

Walkt by myself abroad, I saw a large
And spacious furnace flaming, and thereon
A boiling caldron, round about whose verge
Was in great letters set *AFFLICTION*.

The greatness shew'd the owner. So I went
 To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,
 Thinking with that, which I did thus present,
 To warm his love, which I did fear grew cold.
 But as my heart did tender it, the man
 Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,
 And threw my heart into the scalding pan;
 My heart that brought it. (Do you understand?)
 The offerer's heart. "Your heart was hard, I fear."
 Indeed tis true, I found a callous matter
 Began to spread and to expatiate there:
 But, with a richer drug than scalding water,
 I bath'd it often, ev'n with holy blood,
 Which at a board, while many drunk bare wine,
 A friend did steal into my cup for good,
 Ev'n taken inwardly, and most divine,
 To supple hardnesses. But at the length
 Out of the caldron getting, soon I fled
 Unto my house, where to repair the strength
 Which I had lost, I hasted to my bed:
 But when I thought to sleep out all these faults,
 (I sigh to speak!)
 I found that some had stuff'd the bed with thoughts,
 I would say *thorns*. Dear, could my heart not break,
 When with my pleasures, ev'n my rest was gone?
 Full well I understood who had been there:
 For I had giv'n the key to none but one:
 It must be he. "Your heart was dull, I fear."
 Indeed a slack and sleepy state of mind
 Did oft possess me so, that when I pray'd,
 Though my lips went, my heart did stay behind.
 But all my scores were by another paid,
 Who took the debt upon him.—"Truly friend,
 "For ought I hear, your master shews to you
 "More favour than you wot of. Mark the end.
 "The font did only what was old renew;

“The caldron suppld what was grown too hard;
“The thorns did quicken what was grown too dull;
“All did but strive to mend what you had marr’d.
“Wherefore be chear’d, and praise him to the full
“Each day, each hour each moment of the week,
“Who fain would have you be new, tender, quick.”

The Pulley.

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
Let US (said he) pour on him all we can:
Let the world’s riches, which dispersed lye,
Contract into a span.

So Strength first made a way:
Then Beauty flow’d, then Wisdom, Honour, Pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone of all his treasure
Rest in the bottom lay.

And if I should (said he)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in nature, not the God of nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If Goodness lead him not, yet Weariness
May toss him to my breast.

A True Hymn.

My joy, my life, my crown!
My heart was meaning all the day,
Somewhat it fain would say:
And still it runneth mut'ring up and down,
With only this,—“My joy, my life, my crown!”

Yet slight not these few words;
If truly said, they may take part
Among the best in art.
The fineness which a hymn or psalm affords,
Is, when the soul unto the lines accords.

He who craves all the mind,
And all the soul, and strength, and time,
If the words only rhyme,
Justly complains, that somewhat is behind
To make his verse, or write a hymn in kind.

Whereas if th' heart be mov'd,
Although the verse be somewhat scant,
God doth supply the want:
As when th' heart says, (sighing to be approved)
“O, could I love!” and stops; God writeth, “Loved.”

Grace.

My stock lies dead, and no encrease
Doth my dull husbandry improve:
O let thy graces without cease
Drop from above.

If still the sun should hide his face,
Thy house would but a dungeon prove,
Thy works night's captives: O let grace
Drop from above!

The dew doth ev'ry morning fall;
And shall the dew outstrip thy dove?
The dew, for which grass cannot call,
Drop from above!

Death is still working like a mole,
And digs my grave at each remove:
Let grace work too, and on my soul
Drop from above.

Sin is still hammering my heart,
Unto a hardness void of love:
Let suppl'ing grace to cross his art
Drop from above.

O come! For thou dost know the way:
Or if to me thou wilt not move,
Remove me where I need not say,
Drop from above.

Peace.

Sweet peace, where dost thou dwell? I humbly crave,
Let me once know.
I sought thee in a secret cave,
And ask'd if peace were there.
A hollow wind did seem to answer, No:
Go seek elsewhere.

I did; and going, did a rainbow note:
Surely thought I,
This is the lace of peace's coat:
I will search out the matter.
But while I look'd, the clouds immediately
Did break and scatter.

Then went I to a garden, and did spy
A gallant flower,
The crown imperial: sure, said I,
Peace at the root must dwell.
But when I digg'd, I saw a worm devour
What shew'd so well.

At length I met a rev'rend good old man:
Whom, when for peace
I did demand, he thus began.
There was a prince of old
At Salem dwelt, who liv'd with good increase
Of flock and fold.

He sweetly liv'd; yet sweetness did not save
His life from foes.
But after death out of his grave
There sprang twelve stalks of wheat:
Which many wond'ring at, got some of those
To plant and set.

It prosper'd strangely, and did soon disperse
Through all the earth:
For they that taste it do rehearse,
That virtues lie therein;
A secret virtue, bringing peace and mirth
By flight of sin.

Take of this grain, which in my garden grows,
 And grows for you;
 Make bread of it; and that repose
 And peace which every where
With so much earnestness you do pursue,
 Is only there.

Submission.

But that thou art my wisdom, Lord,
 And both mine eyes are thine,
My mind would be extremely stir'd
 For missing my design.

Were it not better to bestow
 Some place and power on me?
Then should thy praises with me grow,
 And share in my degree.

But when I thus dispute and grieve,
 I do resume my sight;
And pilf'ring what I once did give,
 Disseize thee of thy right.

How know I, if thou should'st me raise,
 That I should then raise thee?
Perhaps great places and thy praise
 Do not so well agree.

Wherefore unto my gift I stand;
 I will no more advise:
Only do thou lend me a hand,
 Since thou hast both mine eyes.

[APPENDIX: George Herbert Poems from *The Temple* used by Wesley in Various Collections]

| | MS 1730 | CPH 1737 | CPH 1738 | HSP 1739 | HSP 1740 | CPH 1741 | MSP 1744 | Herbert 1773 |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Perirrhanterium; Or, The Church Porch. [<i>Temple</i> #1 (1–16)] | | | | | | | 1:23 | 1–10 |
| The Thanksgiving. [<i>Temple</i> , #5 (27–28)] | | | 41–42 | 29–30 | | | | |
| The Reprisal. [<i>Temple</i> , #6 (28–29)] | | | | 30 | | | | |
| The Agony. [<i>Temple</i> , #7 (29)] | | | | 28–29 | | | | 11 |
| The Sinner. [<i>Temple</i> , #8 (30)] | | | | 67–68 | | | | |
| Redemption. [<i>Temple</i> , #10 (31–32)] | | | | | | | | 11–12 |
| Sin (1). [<i>Temple</i> , #17 (37–38)] | | | | | | | | 12 |
| Affliction. [<i>Temple</i> , #18 (38–40)] | | | | 39–40 | | | | |
| Repentance. [<i>Temple</i> , #19 (40–41)] | | | 61–62 | 68–69 | | | | |
| Love (1) [<i>Temple</i> , #24 (45–46)] | | | | | | | | 13 |
| The Temper (1). [<i>Temple</i> , #25 (46–47)] | | | | 53–54 | | | | |
| The Temper (2). [<i>Temple</i> , #26 (47–48)] | | | | 54–55 | | | | |
| Employment. [<i>Temple</i> , #28 (49)] | | | | 32 | | | | |
| Grace. [<i>Temple</i> , #31 (52)] | | | | 43–44 | | | | 29–30 |
| Matins. [<i>Temple</i> , #34 (54)] | | | | 31 | | | | |
| Frailty. [<i>Temple</i> , #46 (62–63)] | | 49–50 | | 41 | | | | |
| Constancie. [<i>Temple</i> , #47 (63–64)] | 175 | | | | | | | 14–15 |
| Affliction. [<i>Temple</i> , #48 (64–65)] | | | | 48–49 | | | | 15 |
| Sighs and Groans. [<i>Temple</i> , #58 (75)] | | | 54 | | | | | 16 |
| Vanity. [<i>Temple</i> , #61 (77–78)] | | | | 16–17 | | | | |
| Virtue. [<i>Temple</i> , #63 (80)] | | | | 9–10 | | | | 17 |
| The Pearl. [<i>Temple</i> , #64 (81–82)] | | | | | | | | 18 |
| Life. [<i>Temple</i> , #69, (87)] | 176 | | | | | | 3:86 | 19 |
| Submission. [<i>Temple</i> , #70 (87–88)] | 177 | | 63 | | | 33 | | 32 |
| Justice [<i>Temple</i> , #71 (88)] | | | | | | | | 19–20 |
| Misery. [<i>Temple</i> , #76 (92–94)] | | | | 65–67 | | | | 20–22 |
| Jordan. [<i>Temple</i> , #77 (95)] | | | | 119–20 | | | | |
| Prayer. [<i>Temple</i> , #78 (95–96)] | | 37–38 | | 140–41 | | | | 22–23 |
| Home. [<i>Temple</i> , #82 (99–101)] | | | 63–64 | 70–72 | | | | |
| The Dawning. [<i>Temple</i> , #86 (104–105)] | | | | 96–97 | | | | |

