

Graces (1746)¹

[Baker list, #134]

Editorial Introduction:

After providing a series of hymn pamphlets designed to resource worship during the major Christian festivals,² Charles showed equal concern for daily practices of worship by issuing a set of graces to be sung before and after meals. He was returning to a form that was present in his earliest published verse—see *HSP* (1739): 34–37.

We can be confident the hymns in this new collection come from the pen of Charles Wesley because twelve of them survive in a bound manuscript volume, in his hand (MS Family).

The first printings of this collection appeared with neither publisher nor date indicated. The collection was first advertised in the second volume of John's *Sermons on Several Occasions*, which was published in January 1748, so it was in print by that point. Setting the other parameter, the pamphlet includes for each hymn a suggested tune setting from *Festival Hymns*, which was issued in October 1746, so it must have been printed after that. The few other indications available suggest that it was published in December 1746 or early 1747.

Editions:

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²See *Nativity Hymns* (1745), *Resurrection Hymns* (1746), *Ascension Hymns* (1746), and *Whitsunday Hymns* (1746). Another that might fit in this series was *Gloria Patri* (1746).

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GRACES.

Before Meat.

I.

To: "Father, our hearts we lift."*

Father of earth and heaven,
Thy hungry children feed,
Thy grace be to our spirits given,
That true immortal bread:
Grant us, and all our race
In Jesus Christ to prove
The sweetness of thy pard'ning grace,
The manna of thy love.

II.

To: "With pity, Lord, a sinner see," (Hymn 7).

- [1] Jesus, to whom alone we live,
Let us from thyself receive
Our consecrated food,
In nature's acts thy will pursue,
And do with faith whate'er we do
To glorify our God.
- 2 O let us of the gift partake
Only for the giver's sake,
And not ourselves to please,
In all our conversation here
Be thou our joy, our hope, our fear,
Our total happiness.
- 3 Our meanest deeds exalt, improve,
On the altar of thy love
Accept them, Lord, as thine;
Consume us in that sacred fire,
And let our hallow'd lives expire
A sacrifice divine.

III.

To: "Jesus, dear departed Lord," (Hymn 15).

Lord of all, thy creatures see
Waiting for their food on thee,

* The first of [the tune settings in] the *Hymns on the Great Festivals*.

That we may with thanks receive
Give, herewith thy blessing give;
Fill our mouths with food and praise:
Taste we in the gift the grace,
Take it as thro' Jesus given,
Eat on earth the bread of heaven.

IV.

To: "Sinners, obey the gospel-word," (Hymn 18).

- [1] Father, accept our sacrifice
Thro' Christ well pleasing in thine eyes,
Thy glory here we make our aim,
And eat and drink in Jesu's name;
- 2 Our food we now with fear receive,
Nor live to eat, but eat to live,
To live, till all our work is done,
And serve thy blessed will alone.

V.

To: "Hearts of stone, relent, relent," (Hymn 6).

- [1] Jesus, we thy promise plead,
Grant the things for which we pray,
Give us, Lord, our daily bread
This and every happy day,
Now our bodies' strength renew,
Feed our needy spirits too.
- 2 Comfort every longing heart
Longing thee alone to know,
Nourishment divine impart,
Immaterial bread bestow,
Bread, by which our souls may live,
Give, thyself for ever give!

VI.

To: "'Tis finish'd, 'tis done!" (Hymn 13).

- [1] O Father of all
Who fillest with good
The ravens that call
On thee for their food;
Them ready to perish
Thou lov'st to sustain,
And wilt thou not cherish
The children of men?

- [2] On thee we depend
Our wants to supply,
Whose goodness shall send
Us bread from the sky:
On earth thou shalt give us
A taste of thy love,
And shortly receive us
To banquet above.

VII.

To: "O love divine, &c." (Hymn 19).

- [1] O thou, whose bowels yearn'd to see
The hungry crowd that follow'd thee
And nothing had to eat,
Pity again the famish'd throng,
Who have with thee continued long,
And faint for want of meat.
- 2 Jesus, our outward wants relieve,
But O! The food immortal give
Our empty souls to fill;
Sustain us by thy pard'ning grace,
And bring us thro' this wilderness
To thy celestial hill.

VIII.

To: "Spirit of truth descend," (Hymn 16).

- [1] Life of the world, come down,
And stir within our breast,
And by thy presence crown
The sober Christian feast:
Jesus, of life the bread and well,
Come at thy creature's call,
And give our inmost souls to feel
That thou art all in all.
- 2 The tender life of God
By thee in us begun,
Sustain with heavenly food,
And ever keep thine own:
Our faith and hope and joy increase,
Till strong in perfect love
We all with holy violence seize
The crown of life above.

For Mourners.

IX.

To: “Happy Magdalene, to whom,” (Hymn 10).

- [1] Waiting for the Comforter,
 Hungring for immortal food,
Can I taste a blessing here
 In the absence of my God?
No: till Christ again return,
 Christ, whose word the sinner hears,
Still I obstinately mourn,
 Eat my bitter bread with tears.
- 2 Love was once my pleasant meat,
 Meat that season'd all the rest,
Jesus to my taste was sweet,
 Jesus was my constant feast:
But the Comforter is fled,
 But the pard'ning God is gone,
He who turn'd my stone to bread,
 He hath turn'd my bread to stone.
- 3 Tastless all the world to me
 Till his favour I regain,
Happiness is misery,
 Joy is grief, and pleasure pain:
But my Lord for whom I grieve
 Shall at last my want supply,
Bid me taste his love and live,
 Bid me see his face, and die.

X.

To: “Jesu, dear departed Lord,” (Hymn 15).

- [1] Perishing for hunger I,
 Ever at the point to die,
Languishing for want of God
 Can I taste my outward food?
- 2 Yet for thy commandment sake,
 Lord, my outward food I take,
Strength for farther sufferings gain,
 Lengthen out a life of pain.
- 3 Lo! My necessary meat
 Still with bitter herbs I eat,
Till I out of Egypt pass,
 Till I know thy pard'ning grace.

- 4 Spare, my friends, your vain expence,
Take your tastless dainties hence,
Give your idle reasonings o'er,
Grieve me with your love no more.
- 5 Well I know the promise sure
"All things to the pure are pure;"
But to me of lips unclean
Good is ill, and pleasure sin.
- 6 Leave me then without relief,
Obstinately fixt in grief,
Stedfastly resolv'd to know
No enjoyment here below.
- 7 Pleasure will I never taste
Till the pain of sin is past,
Never take delight in food
Till I feed upon my God.

XI.

To: "Ah! Lovely appearance of death," (Hymn 22).

- [1] Oh how can a criminal feast
In chains, and appointed to die?
Oh how can a sinner be blest
With only an outward supply?
Till him at the table I meet
Who chases my sorrows and fears,
The bread of affliction I eat,
And mingle my drink with my tears.
- 2 For mercy I languish and faint,
My only refreshment and food,
Thy mercy, O Jesus, I want,
I hunger and thirst after God:
No blessing or good I desire
On earth, or in heaven above,
But grant me the grace I require,
But give me a taste of thy love!

At or After Meat.

XII.

To: “Jesus, shew us thy salvation,” (Hymn 9).

- [1] Jesus, life-inspiring Saviour,
Life's continual nourisher,
How have we abus'd thy favour,
Rashly feeding without fear,
Fondly our own souls insnaring
By the gifts thy grace bestow'd,
Nothing for the giver caring,
Pois'ning all our pleasant food.
- 2 But thy love hath taught us better,
Ransom'd now from sensual thrall,
Thee we find in every creature,
Thee we sweetly taste in all;
Pure delight from thee receiving
We these outward blessings share,
Still accepted with thanksgiving,
Hallow'd by the word and prayer.

XIII.

To: “Angels speak, let man, &c.” (Hymn 2).

- [1] Glory, love, and praise, and honour
For our food
Now bestow'd
Render we the donor.
- Bounteous God, we now confess thee,
God, who thus
Blessest us,
Meet it is to bless thee.
- 2 Knows the ox his master's stable,
And shall we
Not know thee,
Nourish'd at thy table?
- Yes, of all good gifts the giver
Thee we own,
Thee alone
Magnify for ever.

XIV.

To: "Away with our fears!" (Hymn 3).

[1] O God of all grace,
Thy bounty we praise,
And joyfully sing,
Poor beggars admitted to feast with a King.

The honour we claim
In Jesus's name,
Ev'n now we receive,
And happy in Jesus's presence we live.

2 How royal the cheer
When Jesus is here!
The scantiest meal
Is feasting indeed when his favour we feel.

In his pardoning peace
We all things possess,
And richly enjoy
A fulness of pleasures that never can cloy.

3 Thee, Saviour, to know
Is heaven below,
Thy witnesses we
That heaven is found in the knowledge of thee:

Thee, Jesus, we taste;
But oh let it last,
This sense of thy love,
Till with all the assembly we banquet above.

XV.

To: "Rejoice the Lord is King," (Hymn 8).

[1] Praise him who by his word
Supplies our every need,
And gives us Christ the Lord
Our fainting souls to feed:
Thanks be to God, whose Son we feel
His gift unknown unspeakable.

2 The gospel mystery
Unknown to ages past
The hidden manna we
In Jesu's mercy taste:
Thanks be to God, whose Son we feel,
His gift unknown unspeakable.

- 3 O that the world might prove
 Our happiness divine,
 And in the song of love
 With all his people join
 Thanks be to God, whose Son we feel,
 His gift unknown unspeakable.

XVI.

To: “Hail the day that sees him rise!” (Hymn 11).

- [1] Father, friend of human race,
 Thee let all thy children praise,
 By thy merciful supplies
 Nourish'd till we reach the skies:
 Thither we with joy repair,
 Sings our heart already there,
 Fill'd with chearful melody,
 Feasting with thy saints on thee.
- 2 We that on thy goodness feast
 Antedate our heavenly rest,
 On the hidden manna feed,
 On the everlasting bread;
 Thee by faith in Christ to know
 O 'tis heaven begun below:
 Thee t' injoy by glorious love
 O 'tis heaven compleat above!

XVII.

To: “Angels speak, let men give ear,” (Hymn 2).

- [1] Thankful for our every blessing
 Let us sing
 Christ the spring,
 Never, never ceasing.
 Source of all our gifts and graces
 Christ we own,
 Christ alone
 Calls for all our praises.
- 2 He dispels our sin and sadness,
 Life imparts,
 Cheers our hearts,
 Fills with food and gladness.

Who himself for all hath given
Us he feeds,
Us he leads
To a feast in heaven.

XVIII.

To: “Lamb of God, whose, &c.” (Hymn 5).

Father, thro’ thy Son receive
Our grateful sacrifice,
All the wants of all that live
Thine open hand supplies,
Fills the world with plenteous food;
For the riches of thy grace,
Take, thou universal God,
The universal praise.

XIX.

To: “Hail, holy, holy, holy Lord,” (Hymn 17).

- [1] Thee, Father, Son, and Spirit, we
Our kind preserver praise,
While in thy three-fold gifts we see
And taste thy three-fold grace.
Thou feedst the needy sons of men,
Thou dost our strength renew,
With corn, and wine and oil sustain
Our fainting spirits too.
- 2 Father, in thee we taste the bread
That cheers the church above,
And drink, from sin and sorrow freed,
The wine of Jesu’s love.
The oil of joy, the spirit of grace,
To us himself imparts,
The oil that brightens every face,
And gladdens all our hearts.
- 3 With awful thanks we now receive
Our emblematic food,
On Father, Son, and Spirit live,
And daily feast on God:
We to thy glory drink and eat,
Till all from earth remove,
The endless praises to repeat
Of all-sustaining love.

XX.

To: "Hail, Jesus, hail, &c." (Hymn 12).

- [1] Father, we render thee thine own:
Man doth not live by bread alone,
 But every gracious word of thine:
By thy continued act he lives,
Thy blessing with his food receives
 That balmy quintessence divine.
- 2 Thy blessing feeds us in the food;
Our utmost strength hereby renew'd
 To thee we chearfully restore,
Sustain'd by thy preserving grace
We live to our preserver's praise,
 And bless and love thee evermore.

XXI.

To: "Sinners, rejoice, your peace is made," (Hymn 13).

Blessing to God, forever blest,
To God the Master of the feast,
Who hath for us a table spread,
And in this howling desart fed,
And doth with all his gifts impart
The crown of all, a thankful heart.

XXII.

To: "Jesus, we hang upon thy word," (Hymn 14).

- [1] Thanks be to God, whose truth we prove!
 Thou art not, Lord, a wilderness
To those that know thy pard'ning love,
 To those who but desire thy grace,
Thou dost our souls and bodies feed,
And richly grant whate'er we need.
- 2 Still, gracious Lord, on us bestow
 The meat which earthly minds despise,
And let us all thy sweetness know,
 And sup with thee in paradise,
Our meat thy counsel to fulfil,
Our heaven on earth to do thy will.

XXIII.

To: “Thanks be to God alone,” (Hymn 24).

- [1] When shall we see the day
That summons us away
To the realms of light and love,
To the beatific place,
To the marriage feast above
To the sight of Jesus's³ face?
- 2 For this alone we pine,
To see the face divine,
Him who veil'd his majesty,
To restore our paradice,
Stoop'd to earth to death for me,
Me to mount above the skies.
- 3 Jesu, descend again
With all thy heavenly train,
Our eternal life appear
With thy robes of glory on,
Manifest thy kingdom here,
Take us up into thy throne.

XXIV.

To: “Head of thy church, &c.” (Hymn 20).

- [1] Away with all our trouble
And caring for the morrow,
The God of love
Shall still remove
Our every want and sorrow.
- [2] Still, Lord, with joy we bless thee
Of all good gifts the giver,
For Christ our Lord
Hath spoke the word
Which seals thee ours forever.

XXV.

To: “Ye servants of God,” (Hymn 21).

- [1] And can we forbear in tasting our food
The grace to declare and goodness of God!
Our Father in heaven, with joy we partake
The gifts thou hast given for Jesus's sake.

³“Jesus's” changed to “Jesu's” in 1777 edn.

- 2 In thee do we live: thy daily supplies
As manna receive dropt down from the skies:
In thanks we endeavour thy gifts to restore,
And praise thee forever, when time is no more.

XXVI.

[To:] “All ye that pass by,” (Hymn 4).

- [1] And can we forget
In tasting our meat
The angelical food which ere⁴ long we shall eat:
When inroll'd with the blest
In glory we rest
And forever sit down at the heavenly feast!
- 2 O the infinite height
Of our solemn delight
While we look on the Saviour and walk in his sight!
The blessing who knows,
The joy he bestows
While we follow the Lamb, wheresoever he goes?
- 3 What good can we need,
Whom Jesus doth feed,
And to fountains of life beatifical lead?
Lo! He sits on his throne,
Lo! He dwells with his own,
And enlarges our souls with his mercies unknown.
- 4 Not a spirit above
To perfection can prove
Or count his unsearchable riches of love:
But we all shall obtain
What none can explain,
And in Jesus's bosom eternally reign.

⁴Ori., “e'er”; but clearly intended in sense of “before”.